The Kelsey Pendant:
Participation and Lived Experience of a Bronze Amulet in Late Antique Society

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of one amulet, the Kelsey Pendant, held within the collections of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The Kelsey Pendant is an example of an amulet within the collections of a museum bereft of a definitive find context, which has limited its use in research outside of general visual analyses and sweeping comparisons. The thesis has approached the study of the pendant through the lens of material religion, which, unlike much of the extant scholarship on amulets, does not differentiate between, or categorise objects, within the realms of magic or religion. Instead, material religion provides a nuanced perspective of material culture focused on a societal outlook inclusive of experience and participation.

I provide a holistic perspective of the Kelsey Pendant and regard the pendant to be an active, equitable participant within the society in which it was created. The thesis analyses the amulet's iconography in combination with other material culture as a means to reveal its activated histories and gain insight into aspects of society that were pertinent in Late Antiquity. The methodological approach of the thesis incorporates theories housed under the umbrella of new materialism (object-oriented ontology, gathering, bundling, and agential realism) which underscore the agency and continuous becoming of the pendant within itself whilst taking into account the potential within an experiential inter/intra-action with a bearer. Furthermore, the analysis combines ekphrasis with hypothetical scenarios in order to provide context to what may be occurring within the gathering of the pendant and its experience with a bearer.

The Kelsey Pendant is examined by way of how it was created, its material, materiality, and potential function. Throughout the thesis, the Kelsey Pendant and the intricacies of its inter/intra-actions are central to the analysis. The chapters of the thesis provide an in-depth analysis of the elements of the pendant as a means to underscore the histories, lore, and socio-political influences that the amulet embodies as it continuously recodes, redefines, and assimilates anew within its autonomous gathering. They further contextualise the inter/intra-actions between the bearer and the pendant from the outlook of two active participants of a late antique society. Succinctly, the thesis's utilisation of one amulet as a case study holistically demonstrates (through multiple lenses) how amulets participate and provide insight into the everyday life of past societies.

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Figure 81. Detail of Wall Painting (necklace and medallion). Pigment on plaster, secco technique. Late sixth to early seventh centuries CE. Caesarea. H: 103 x W: 303 cm. (Israel Antiquities Authority. IAA: 2000-803. © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. https://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/198258-0#:~:text=This%20wall%20painting%20decorated%20the,The%20Israel%20Museum%2C%20Jerusalem%2C%202015 [accessed 17 August 2025]).

Figure 82. Limestone Statuette of Temple Boy. Limestone. Hellenistic period, fourth century BCE. Cyprus. H: 39.5 cm. Object number: 74.51.2754. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain.)

Figure 83. Pottery: fragment of a white-ground *lekythos*: seated woman, woman with baby, man. Fifth century BCE. Attica (Greece). Dia: 15.85 cm. British Museum number: 1905,0710.10 (© The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license.)

Figure 84. Terracotta squat *lekythos*. Fifth century BCE. Classical Greek. H: 9 cm. Dia:7.1cm. Object number: 30.11.8. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain).

Figure 85. Detail of Terracotta squat *lekythos*. Fifth century BCE. Classical Greek. H: 9 cm. Dia:7.1cm. Object number: 30.11.8. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain).

Figure 86. Mummy Portrait: Woman with [gorgon] Necklace. Encaustic on wood. Second century CE. Egypt. H: 365 cm X W: 215 cm. Inventory name: ANSA x

301(Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien. http://www.khm.at/en/collections/collection-of-greek-and-roman-antiquities).

Figure 87. Figurine. Clay. Hellenistic period, second-first centuries BCE. Symrna/Izmir. H: 5.8 cm x W: 3.8 cm x D: 2.7 cm. (Musée du Louvre CA 5231, Paris. © 1970 Louvre Museum, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Maurice and Pierre Chuzeville. https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010262130)

Figure 88. Saint Theodore the Anatolian, Coptic art, manuscript illumination, tenth century CE. L: 33.4 cm x W: 26 cm., M.613, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. (Rodriguez Peinado, 2024, 59).

Figure 89. Saint Theodore the Anatolian, Coptic art, fresco, eleventh century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Convent of Saint Anthony, Egypt (Rodriguez Peinado, 2024, 60).

Figure 90. Pilgrim's Ampulla with (Symbolic) Crucifixion and Mary's at the Tomb. Lead. (Obverse and Reverse) sixth-seventh centuries CE. Dimensions: n/a. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. BZ 1948.18 (© Dumbarton Oaks Museum).

Figure 91. Bust of Christ, Fresco, fourth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Catacombs of Commodilla, Rome. (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13606466 [accessed 20/12/2024]).

Figure 92. Reliquary in the form of a church or shrine. Top and one of the four sides, limestone, sixth-seventh centuries CE. H: 20.7cm x W:16.6cm x D:16.9 cm. Object number: 2003-88 (Princeton Art Museum, https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/41864 [accessed 20/12/2024]).

Figure 93. Reliquary in the form of a church or shrine. View of different side, limestone, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Measurements same as Figure 82. Object number: 2003-88 (Princeton Art Museum, https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/41864 [accessed 20/12/2024]).

Chapter One. The Kelsey Pendant: Participation and Lived Experience of a Bronze Amulet in Late Antique Society

1.1 Project Aims and Objectives

The thesis examines the Kelsey Pendant and its being as an amulet in terms of its participation and lived experience (including how it may have been experienced) in late antique society through the methodological lens of New Materialism. The study endeavours to provide new pathways of investigation for amulets based on gaining an understanding of how they may have been active, equal actors within the society in which they were created. Through an analysis of the pendant's iconography, materials, and materiality coupled with the iconographies and materialities of the late antique "everyday," this investigation's objective is to apply New Materialist research approaches to the Kelsey Pendant as a means to provide a holistic purview of the amulet whilst interpreting its multivalent, active participation in society. Furthermore, the thesis will underscore the concepts of agency and experience which will offer new and revised methods of investigation beneficial for amulet studies overall, but more specifically for amulets and other objects bereft of a definitive find context.[1]

1.2 Structure of Thesis

The thesis is structured to best exemplify how the Kelsey Pendant participated in, embodied, reflected, experienced, and was experienced within society. The chapters are presented in a manner that first deconstruct the pendant and its attributes in relation to the amulet's inter/intra-actions both autonomously and with its late antique society. This is followed by a

[1] The methods utilised in this study are also beneficial for amulets and objects with find contexts. The results are not predicated upon the lack of a recorded provenance.

reconstruction of the amulet for a better understanding of the object holistically in terms of its potential, intended functionality, portability, perceived efficaciousness, and inter/intra-actions with the late antique bearer (an object).

Chapter One introduces the Kelsey Pendant and the project; it sets out the New Materialist theories and methods by which the amulet will be analysed. This chapter underscores that the thesis is focused on one object of study, an amulet bereft of a definitive find context, and discusses the thesis's objective to provide a holistic purview of the amulet as an active participant within its late antique society. The literature review within this chapter situates the thesis within the extant discourse on ancient magic, publications involving the Kelsey Pendant, amulet studies, and object agency and interaction. Chapter Two discusses how the Kelsey Pendant was likely created. It also provides a detailed description of each element and engraved mark of the obverse and reverse sides of the pendant inclusive of textual translations, explanation of the amulet's iconography, and ekphrastic analyses. Chapter Three delves into the iconography and text of the obverse side of the amulet with regard to its potential influences, e.g., the Bible, visual iconography, history, literature and lore, and lived memory. The attributes (text and iconography) of the Kelsey Pendant are discussed in correlation to pertinent contemporaneous comparanda. It is important to note that the imagery and text of the Kelsey Pendant are found on amulets as well as other objects, thus, though the focus of the thesis is about amulets, comparanda will be culled from a variety of source material. Chapter Four follows the methods utilised in Chapter Three for its analysis and discussion of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendent. Even though Chapters Three and Four are examined separately, it is made clear throughout the thesis that both sides of the amulet are considered to inter/intra-act with one another and thus inform each other in their autonomous and experiential actions, reactions, and moments of

temporary stillness. Once the pendant has been thoroughly interpreted as an autonomous, activated object and equitable participant in society, Chapter Five examines the amulet's potential inter/intra-actions with another object, the bearer. Here, the lens focuses on how the bearer and pendant may experience each other and inter/intra-act based on the experiences, memories, and histories within society (civic and liturgical spaces) that they each embody and bring to the inter/intra-action. This chapter examines how the pendant may have been carried by the bearer as well as provides scenarios of how the pendant may have been considered to be efficacious. Furthermore, Chapter Five illustrates how other objects may be analysed utilising the New Materialist approach that the thesis has employed. Chapter Six provides concluding remarks.

1.3 The Kesley Pendant: Object of Study

The Kelsey Pendant is a bronze medallion amulet (54 mm in diameter, ~1mm thick, and weighs 17.384 g) housed within the collections of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (See Kelsey Pendant Video).[2] The pierced pendant, thought to have been produced in Syria or Palestine between the fifth and early seventh centuries, is comprised of a myriad of elements.[3] On the obverse side of the pendant, Biblical verses encircle a nimbate rider in the process of spearing a female demon, an eight-pointed

[2] The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan. The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology has not officially named the amulet, and its collection identification is: US-AA-KMA_26119. I refer to the amulet as the 'Kelsey Pendant' in order to facilitate the discussion; See Bonner, 1942, 466-471. YouTube link to the Kelsey Pendant Video: https://youtu.be/SgciM9DLhAU

[3] The Kelsey Pendant does not have a definitive chronological attribution or provenance. The general consensus is that this amulet was likely created between the fourth and seventh centuries CE in the areas of Syria or Palestine. Bonner, 1942, provides the widest range (fifth to seventh CE), 471; Maguire, et al., 1989, 215, Krueger, 2006, 28, Garipzanov, et al., 2017, 236, and Garipzanov, 2018, 46 all provide a range from the fifth to sixth CE; the Kelsey Museum's website states that the chronological range of the Kelsey Pendant is '100-500AD,' https://quod.lib.umich.edu; Spier (1993, 3, 61) suggests a range for this type of amulet from the sixth to seventh CE, and specifically references the Kelsey Pendant in a footnote (#162), but does not discuss the pendant directly.

star, additional text, and an angel. On the reverse side, images of Christ in a mandorla surrounded by the symbols of the four evangelists, *charaktêres*, a scorpion, a lion leaping over a snake, and undeciphered markings are also encircled by text (See Figures 1 and 2). From this description coupled with late antique evidence, one may infer that the Kelsey Pendant is a material microcosm of the world within which it was created—a manifestation of beliefs in the (super)natural as well as an expression of an experienced 'everyday'—which were likely influenced by various sources of knowledge (e.g., literature, imagery, memory, and verbal lore). However, what is not as readily apparent is the concept of the pendant as an assemblage of continuous becoming, which speaks to late antique perceptions and engagement with its material culture.

Overall, both sides of the Kelsey Pendant offer a varied illustrative programme that capture the viewer's attention and provide visual cues that link the two sides of the pendant to each other. This perceptible connectivity underscores what can be understood as the creator's intention to employ diverse elements, place them within multiple (yet interactive) textual and pictorial scenarios, and create a referencing system that subtly encompasses the entire illustrative programme, whilst elucidating the amulet's inherent potential to act as a unified object. An amulet has the potential to reflect societal constructs, cross religious boundaries, act autonomously, experience, participate in an experience, and assimilate into multiple traditions through time, physical movement, accumulated histories, biographies, memory, literary transmission, and the translation of oral folkloric legends; all of which speak to the premise of material religion as an interdisciplinary area of study.[4] In lieu of solely relying upon theoretical underpinnings of the text or iconography of an object coupled with extant

[4] For the purposes of this study, an amulet is an object that is portable (carried or worn on the body) that may be perceived to be apotropaically efficacious or have (super)natural potency.

critical approaches utilised to conceptualise and construct religion, material religion considers the lives of objects, their relations to other objects (inclusive of humans), sensorial experiences as material events, objects's travel history, how they were utilised, as well as humans contacting (or connecting with) (super)natural forces.[5] This study endeavours to underscore that material religion has the capability to provide new understandings not only of how iconography, text, and materials reflect, provide foundational support for, and recreate the above aspects, but also how amulets embody an agential dynamism that participates both individually and relationally within the world in which they were created.

The project will utilise the Kelsey Pendant as a case study to infer how amulets are reflective of, and participate in, a multifaceted society. Employing an interdisciplinary, holistic method of inquiry the project intends to ascertain how societal factors, materials, and concepts of materiality permeated into the late antique and early Byzantine experience; and how this permeation translated into an object's participation with, the creation of, the understandings about, and the utilisation of amulets. Furthermore, the project aims to provide insight into the purpose and use of amulets and other portable objects (irrespective of size and variations in iconographic detail) that were created in Anatolia and the Southern Levant (Israel, Palestine, Jordon, Lebanon, and Syria) between the fifth and early seventh centuries CE.[6] The geographic area of study was chosen for two reasons. First, the Kelsey Pendant is thought to originate from Syria or Palestine. Second, the study aims to provide new insights and pathways of research to current studies on amulets (which are firmly rooted in the arena

[5] Meyer, et al., 2010, 209; Coates, 2024, 113; Maldonado-Estrada, 2024, 102.

[6] In this thesis, 'early Byzantine amuletic traditions' embody (super)natural or apotropaic beliefs and 'societal factors' (or 'societal contexts') are the political, economic, cultural, literary, and religious arenas that lie within the temporal and geographic boundaries of the project.

of research about magic and magical beliefs) with an orientation towards Anatolia and the Levant since the extant scholarship is primarily focused upon Greece and Egypt.

The thesis's focus on one object will endeavour to create a pathway of research that allows for an in-depth exploration into how an object is able to provide insight into various aspects of the lived "everyday" of late antique society. The project will argue that amulets are entities that embody their own histories, continuously become, and, in their gathering, have the potential to veil and unveil aspects of themselves as they deem necessary. Furthermore, amulets have the propensity to mirror aspects such as the material, spatial, religious, and political of a society in which they were created and actively participated. The examination of one amulet thus untangles elements of the tightly interwoven social realm in which the object lived, participated, and was experienced by others. Even one amulet's analysis then offers a guided investigation (by way of the object's explicit and implied attributes) of the multiple levels of society that were translated into the amulet in a miniaturised fashion.

In short, the study's aim is two-fold. First, it endeavours to suggest pathways for future research that consider amulets (and otherwise) as active, integrated participants in society rather than being static products of a society. This method of investigation is pivotal to current and future scholarship of material religion as it offers a different lens by which to consider how amulets may have been perceived and utilised in the space and time in which they were created. Second, the study has chosen to engage with an amulet bereft of a definitive find context, held within a museum collection to underscore the research potential that decontextualised amulets such as the Kelsey Pendant, of which sadly enough there are many, still embody.

The thesis looks to suggest, and address queries regarding, how early Byzantine amulets, irrespective of the availability of a recorded find context, can be better understood. For example: how were ideas concerning the (super)natural translated into amulets? How were changes in religious beliefs and culture absorbed within societies, and how were these aspects given shape within and shaped by amulet's textual and visual repertoire? How did literature and lore as well as the socio-political climate influence the population, and how did these socially driven elements give shape to (and reflect) the early Byzantine material culture? More specific to the Kelsey Pendant, how does the amulet's material composition and materiality add to its perceived efficacy as well as its performative qualities? Could the Kelsey Pendant have been worn? If so, how would the pendant or other amulets have been carried in Late Antiquity? Why was the Kelsey Pendant considered to be efficacious?

Historically, the study of amulets has been inherently entwined to the study of magic and undertaken by classicists and philologists who have focused upon religious and mythological links, the textual components, or the visual aspects of a "magical" object in order to ascertain its meaning. Art historians, historians, as well as archaeologists have also contributed to the study of magic utilising their specific field of expertise as a base from which to analyse and compartmentalise amulets. Even though studies on amulets in Late Antiquity have been conducted through the lens of various academic disciplines, most studies are not interdisciplinary, thus excluding interpretations from multiple perspectives, which often leaves the object of study in a fragmented state of analysis.

Overall, the field of amulet studies is filled with debate regarding categorisations; more specifically, how objects with (super)natural characterisations should be defined. Studies have largely focused on translating or categorising elements or motifs (from various

traditions) of magical texts and objects into their '"original" linguistic, religious, or cultural contexts.'[7] Moreover, as previously noted, studies in the field of amulets have primarily focused on the geographical areas and cultural spheres of Greece and Egypt, which in turn, relegate current studies to utilise Graeco-Egyptian material as a central point of reference irrespective of the origin or cultural multivalency of the amulet in question. Even though some amulets may contain visual or textual aspects reminiscent of the Greco-Egyptian tradition, grouping motifs based on religious or cultural systems (or one specific context) should be approached with caution since the meaning of these motifs has the propensity to change over time along with the societies in which they participated.[8] Amulets are often categorised upon, and become embedded in, a religious affiliation despite the fact that religious boundaries (in the context of daily life) in the late antique or early Byzantine period were likely fluid. This deconstructive method of interpreting amulets through categorisations is restrictive and creates a gap in scholarship whereby all other aspects of amulets are ignored when they are categorised. Thus, it is crucial that 'scholars of late antique magic' also consider amulets, and other objects, in light of their materiality as well as the historical and social conditions from which they came alongside an analysis of the objects's religious or philological influences.[9]

Information about amulets is inconsistent. Some amulets have a recorded find context, while others have been obtained with questionable provenance or have little to no identifying information whatsoever, which leads to an inconclusive chronological attribution.[10]

[7] Boustan and Sanzo, 2017, 218.

[8] Insoll (2004*,* 141) Insoll specifically references the categorisation of symbols in religious contexts, however, his observation can be applied more broadly to incorporate other contexts as well as texts and images. See also Gordon, 2014, 253-300; Boustan and Sanzo, 2017.

[9] Boustan and Sanzo, 2017, 225.

[10] Nagy, 2011, 75.

Moreover, many amulets from excavations have not been published. Other amulets are interspersed within museums and private collections and have yet to be studied individually or cannot be studied as a group due to location or limitations in accessibility. Hence, objects bereft of identifying information are relegated to analyses that utilise comparative techniques based on details provided by previous studies conducted with a narrow scope of investigation, which, in turn, perpetuates the cycle of studies that favour specific aspects of information centred upon a scholar's subjective outlook.

To this end, the study posits that the relegation of amulets to the realm of magic is deficient. Instead, the study will engage with theory to highlight other aspects of the amulet (e.g., its material and materiality) in addition to previously studied attributes and look to present the amulet as a unified object, an active participant in society, in order to underscore its autonomous and relational potential, its purpose, and use.

The thesis is thus an interdisciplinary endeavour. With an understanding of the biases within current scholarship as well as the lack of a holistic outlook regarding the purpose, independent and relational potential, and use of amulets, this study focuses on the Kelsey Pendant and aims to insert itself into the discourse where studies of social, textual, and visual attributes coupled with studies of material and materiality meet, but fail to connect.

As noted above, scholarship about amulets is generally nestled within the entangled conceptions of magic, associations of belief in magic, and its practices. Though this investigation considers the issues surrounding the term 'magic,' it is outwith the boundaries of the project to suggest a new or working definition of the term especially since there has not

been a scholarly consensus regarding a definition to date.[11] Furthermore, the thesis will refrain from engaging in the discourse pertaining to the categorisations of magic and religion, inasmuch as material religion does not focus upon a distinction between religion and magic but instead considers ideas surrounding these concepts to be formed through inter/intra-actions between material objects (inclusive of the human body).[12] However, the study does recognise the extant corpus of research around the topic.[13] Aside from its use when referencing the general area of scholarship or works that specifically utilise the term 'magic', this object-based thesis will retain the use of terms such as 'amulet' when referring to an object understood to be imbued with 'magical potential'. In discussions that reference attributes of an object, acts, or practices, the study will utilise the term '(super)natural'.

Informed by sources that discuss late antique politics, socio-cultural and religious climates, archaeology, visual and material cultures (religious and secular), history of magic, and literature and lore, the study will analyse the Kelsey Pendant incorporating a societal outlook utilising a variety of investigative lenses (art historical, archaeological, anthropological, and philological) realised through the theoretical frameworks of materiality, sensory archaeology, and 'weak' comparisons.[14] Weak comparisons are predicated upon a close comparison of a fewer number of items that equitably consider both similarities and differences of objects as well as their social, religious, historical, and political contexts.[15] More specifically, the study will discuss the amulet in terms of its material attributes, the

[11] See for example Janowitz, 2001, 97-100; Bremmer and Veenstra, 2002, 268-269; Kieckhefer, 2019, 17, 20; Fanger, 2019, 27.

[12] Buggeln, 2022, 541; Tamimi-Arab, et al., 2024, 1; Maldonado-Estrada, 2024, 102.

[13] See for example: Tambiah, 1990; Faraone and Obbink, 1991; Malinoski, 1992; Meyer and Smith, 1999; Thomas, 2003; Trachtenberg, 2004; Bohak, 2008; Frazer, 2009.

[14] The advantages of weak comparisons is discussed at length in Lincoln, 2018.

[15] Lincoln, 2018, 27.

senses, as well as certain aspects of materiality (e.g., agency, memory, and performance)—all of which will highlight the pendant's individuated potential as well the bearer's probable relational experience with the object. Furthermore, throughout the thesis, the study will incorporate examples of other amulets, architectural aspects, textual sources, and various portable objects to contextualise the Kelsey Pendant within the late antique network of material culture within which it was created, lived, participated, and was utilised.

1.4 Theories and Methods

When considering the theoretical framework for which to build an analysis of the Kelsey Pendant, it is imperative that the thesis retains the essence of the late antique and early Byzantine worldview with regards to the material culture with which human and other non-human actors participated. This is especially poignant insofar as the thesis is centred upon the pendant and its role within a late antique geographic place and chronological space in time where it is thought to have been created. The study does not suggest that the Kelsey Pendant is unable to be analysed from a twenty-first century perspective, but it does posit that the outcomes of analysis may vary widely due to transitions in worldview and other cultural factors over time. Thus, the theoretical framework for the thesis, being grounded in contemporary thought, must continuously strive to communicate with the contemporary reader without displacing the pendant from Late Antiquity.

The analysis acknowledges that each engraved mark of the pendant is intentional, and thus, the examination will serve as a foundation upon which the pendant can be visualised as the thesis disentangles (albeit artificially) the pendant's attributes. The thesis considers two individual pendant-based ontologies. The first ontology is the Kelsey Pendant as an autonomous actor or object and the second ontology is the pendant in relation to the bearer

(as an object). Even though the two actors (each with their own individual qualities) are able to relate to one another, the study argues that their agency or being is independent of the other. In other words, the pendant and the bearer have the potential to act or develop entirely on their own within the context of their existence as objects. The study does not posit that the pendant and the bearer are identical objects, instead, the study endeavours to treat each object on equal footing throughout the analysis whilst remaining cognisant of their differences. Furthermore, any relational scenario between the two actors will not necessarily mimic processes or outcomes that each individual object experiences or creates. Any relation will form new scenarios based upon what each actor brings to the interaction.

Within this section of the study, the theoretical frameworks for the Kelsey Pendant and the relation between the pendant and the bearer will be presented separately. This is not to say that the frameworks will not overlap throughout the analysis, instead it is meant to provide a clear portrayal of how each process of becoming is understood. The thesis will simultaneously explore the potential relations within the pendant itself as well as the relations that occur between the pendant and the bearer. It is important to note that formal and ekphrastic analyses will be intertwined throughout this investigation as a means to provide a multi-dimensional interpretation of the amulet.[16]

[16] The ekphrastic analyses within the thesis will not only be based upon a visual description of the pendant's attributes, but, also, it will be utilised as a rhetorical tool which uses language as a means to elicit an active imaginary scene within the audience's mind whereby the reader is a participant within an unfolding scene, Webb, 2009, 3, 19-20. See also Heffernan, (1993, 3) who defines ekphrasis as '...the verbal representation of visual representation,'; Mitchell, 1994, 151-182; Webb, 2003; Kennedy, 2003; With regard to formal analysis, Munsterberg (2009, 13,20) states: '...an explanation of visual structure, of the ways in which certain visual elements have been arranged and function within a composition….subject is not considered and neither is historical or cultural context. The purest formal analysis is limited to what the viewer sees….it explains how the eye is led through a work, this kind of description provides a solid foundation for other types of analysis.... All formal analysis identifies specific visual elements and discusses how they work together. If the goal of a writer is to explain how parts combine to create a whole, and what effect that whole has on the viewer, then this type of analysis is essential. It also can be used to define visual characteristics shared by a number of objects,'; Munsterberg (2009,8) clarifies that the goal of an ekphrastic analysis is to make the reader imagine what is being described as if the object were 'physically present,'; Similarly, Elsner (2010, 12) "ekphrasis" can be understood as an interpretive description.

1.4.1 The Ontology of the Kelsey Pendant

The study endeavours to draw and create a theoretical underpinning from its understanding of the pendant rather than placing (perhaps at times forcibly) the pendant within extant frameworks. The thesis aligns itself with varying aspects of certain theories, and, in some instances, the thesis may only consider one or two ideas whilst rejecting the bulk of particular theoretical claims. In order to retain clarity, it can be understood that the project envisions a theoretical umbrella under which several theoretical concepts and approaches exist. In this case, the umbrella (foundation of theory) is comprised of New Materialism.[17]

New Materialism is a relational ontology. From New Materialism, in this thesis, it is understood that the pendant and bearer are both actors that are to be treated utilising some of the concepts around a flat ontology, which endeavours to treat humans and objects equitably without reduction by claiming the objects are identical.[18] Flat ontology within the thesis does not signify, however, that object relations (both human and non-human) are "flat" insofar that they are not, at once, both active and receptive.[19] New Materialism consists of several theoretical approaches which are, at times, recategorised to form disparate branches of new materialisms, which, when overly deconstructed, refute or challenge the other.[20] However, New Materialism considers various factors in determining how objects "work," inclusive of the objects's properties, meaning, and capacities.[21] Even though New Materialism has been criticised for downplaying concepts such as those surrounding power, gender, identity, and

[17] For more detailed discussions of New Materialism(s) see for example, Bennett, 2010; Coole and Frost, 2010; Dolphijn and van der Tuin, 2012; Cipolla and Harris, 2017; Gamble, et al., 2019.

[18] Cipolla and Harris, 2017, 147; Harman, 2018, 55.

[19] Gamble, et al., 2019, 125.

[20] On the separations of New Materialisms see for example, Gamble, et al., 2019.

[21] Most pertinent is Cipolla and Harris, 2017, 146; See also Coole and Frost, 2010, 1-39.

equality, there is no criteria within the theoretical framework that requires these concepts to be ignored or subordinated.[22] Thus, in utilising the overall framework that New Materialism offers, the project consciously incorporates concepts of identity, power, memory, history, and equality in its investigation of the objects (human and non-human) within the study.

New Materialism turns away from a dualistic subject-object relationship and realigns itself with an emphasis on process (becoming)—taking into consideration time, the way in which certain elements come together, break apart, and are self-sustaining.[23] New Materialism, from the perspective of this thesis, allows one to consider relations between human actors and non-human actors, relations between non-human actors, as well as the relations that non-human actors have within themselves. Returning to how the study endeavours to treat the relations within the Kelsey Pendant (the pendant's becoming) and its relations with the bearer (a becoming involving both actors), it is clear that New Materialism provides a solid foundation from which to work.

Through this investigation, the study looks to acknowledge and underscore the pertinence of the late antique worldview with regards to material and materiality, and it should be noted that the thesis understands that various manifestations of material were an integral part of Late Antiquity. Furthermore, it may be argued that material and materiality were not mere products of the social, but rather, they were firmly rooted and active participants within their social sphere and equally existed with all other aspects of the socio-cultural realm (or realms) in which they manifested and were created. In this light, the Kelsey

[22] Cipolla and Harris, 2017, 148, 201.

[23] Cipolla and Harris, 2017, 200.

Pendant and its attributes will be analysed utilising an egalitarian perspective being clear that the investigation must not subordinate one attribute or one actor above another.

This investigation of the Kelsey Pendant is founded upon the premise that the pendant is a dynamic, multivalent embodiment of material and materiality. Even though the pendant is more permanent in form—a bronze, inscribed, round medallion—it is continuously becoming, that is, it is intrinsically acting, working, creating, forming, and being. The Kelsey Pendant is its elements insofar as the pendant, an object in its entirety, cannot be individuated from its inscribed attributes or its bronze material. The pendant is an active ontological actor with the propensity and agency (as a continuous act) to either unveil or veil aspects of its being, and thus, the pendent can never be fully accessed by other human or non-human actors. Instead, the pendant acts and divulges what is necessary based upon the situation in which it finds itself—within its own ontologically defined context. More specifically, in conjunction to being created of bronze, the pendant is an assemblage of individual inscribed elements, each with their own history, socio-cultural understanding, and function outside the context of the pendant, and when these elements are joined, they gather and create, in form (both extrinsically and intrinsically) the Kelsey Pendant. Importantly, when the elements are joined, the history, socio-cultural understandings, and function(s) embodied within the bronze and each inscribed element does not preclude the pendant from becoming anew.

For the purposes of this study, the pendant's components can be considered to be a microcosm of the late antique world in which the amulet was created, and this miniaturised universe inevitably influenced and created part of the components's histories.[24] For example,

[24] The term 'part' is utilised because the elements upon the pendant existed before and well after Late Antiquity and this chronological existence also influenced and continues to influence the elements's histories as well as their contemporary being as they continuously become.

in considering the obverse side of the pendant, aside from the pendant's bronze material composition, the pendant's inscribed aspects are also telling of its potential and essence. The elements included here are a rider upon a horse who holds a spear with a cross upon its apex, an angel, a demon, a partial inscription of Psalm 90 of the Septuagint, the phrase 'One God who conquers evil,' and an eight-pointed star, all of which are described in more detail in Chapter Two. For now, it may be understood that each of these elements embody certain histories and inherent potencies which they bring to the pendant through their presence and participation in the continuous dynamism of the object. Generally speaking, the unidentified rider may contribute warriorlike qualities while the steed upon which he sits brings forth the history and status of equestrians. The angel may represent the celestial realm in addition to encompassing mythologies and religious lore, and the demon may contribute a tangible aura of mystique or danger. Meanwhile, the textual aspects incorporate biblical references as well as oral traditions, and the star (like the angel) may also be a marker of the celestial realm or harken to symbols that are perhaps either decorative or indecipherable loci of power.

The crux of the Kelsey Pendant's ontology is encapsulated in the following concept—though the pendant's elements are conjoined, one must remain cognisant that each of these attributes are independent entities able to retain their own autonomy as well as gather with each other to become anew. Irrespective of their specific past(s) or present contextualisations, when these aspects are joined their histories and potencies combine, change, and at times redefine themselves within the context of the object itself. Furthermore, even though the bronze material provides a solidified form in which these elements become, the bronze too participates in the process of becoming since the metal material also retains histories and potencies and cannot be separated from what the Kelsey Pendant is. Thus, the thesis posits that the pendant is self-reflective, self-sustaining, self-focusing, self-actualising, and self-

fulfilling where its elements are consistently complicating, acting (or working) with, against, or for each other; and through these acts, the pendant is in a constant state of becoming as there is not a predetermined manner in which these elements inter/intra-act. In this sense, the rider upon the horse who briskly gallops in the direction of the angel may, in one instance, be in the process of crossing realms, or, in another instance, intending to smite the demon beneath him. The fact that the pendant does not (in any form) openly reveal a completed act, coupled with the number of potentially inter/intra-acting elements, creates possibilities for multiple and simultaneous scenarios.

Any understanding of how the pendant functioned at a specific point in time within Late Antiquity can only be based upon postulations extracted from hypothetical scenarios, which will be presented throughout the thesis as a means to expound upon the theoretical premise and purpose of the study. Through these forthcoming scenarios, one must remain cognisant that the thesis understands that the pendant's continuous interior actions (the relations between the elements of the pendant in conjunction with the bronze material) are independent of outside relations (human interactions, imbued agency, other object interactions, and other constructs such as categorisations).

1.4.1.1 Theoretical Concepts Surrounding the Ontology of the Kelsey Pendant

Theoretical concepts that fall within the new materialist foundation and help to further contextualise the pendant include Object-Oriented Ontology, Agential Realism, and Gathering.

The study's understanding of the Kelsey Pendant as its autonomous elements is reminiscent of two concepts derived from Object-Oriented Ontology. First, the thesis agrees

that objects pre-exist an event.[25] An event can be described as a real object which may be comprised of a number of ingredients, but the number of ingredients brought together does not reduce the 'strong independence' of each ingredient.[26] The relevance of this concept is of importance as the Kelsey Pendant, in this sense, may be described as an 'event'—an object of many substantially independent attributes.

Second, objects can '...exist independently of human awareness,' and are 'mutually autonomous' insofar as relations are case specific and should not be assumed.[27] Objects cannot be purely defined based on their relations.[28] This statement is held at the core of the study's understanding of the Kelsey Pendant in that the pendant's becoming does not entail or necessitate human input or knowledge, and though the individual elements interact and are considered to be relational, the thesis argues that these attributes may or may not relate or interact at one point or another. At any given moment, some elements may interact while others are still, but not static, as the process of becoming is continuous. Moments of stasis do not reduce the potency or significance of the element, but rather underscore the ability of these elements to veil or unveil their potential. Hence, objects are able to not only undergo the process of becoming independent of other objects (human or non-human), but they also have the propensity to engage at a reserved capacity where they may either portray all or some of their potential at any time.[29] The thesis does not claim that objects cannot make

[25] Harman, 2018, 52.

[26] Harman, 2018, 52-53.

[27] Harman, 2018, 10-12.

[28] Harman (2018, 10-12) in this particular context Harman mentions the external world, which is inclusive of objects.

[29] Harman, 2016b, 7.

'*direct*' contact with each other and need a mediator for any contact to occur.[30] The study posits that a mediator reduces the pendant to a subject-object relationship and since the elements are an 'event' where one object (the Kelsey Pendant) is many objects, the individual elements mediate themselves through presence and continuous participation within one entity.

Outwith the above-mentioned points, the Kelsey Pendant's ontology within the thesis does not further prescribe to Object-Oriented Ontology since the theory as a whole is non-relational, non-material, and creates a duality between real and sensual objects.[31] For this study, Object-Oriented Ontology is applicable in as much as the pendant's elements pre-exist their form as the Kelsey Pendant.[32] Moreover, the pendant exists insofar it undergoes the continual process of becoming apart from (and without) human input and awareness, and the elements have the propensity to reserve or display their energies. Even though the study's adherence to concept of "existing because of action" breaks from the premise of Object-Oriented Ontology, which observes the notion that "objects act because they exist," the theory that the pendent is continuously and independently existing/becoming (as conceived within the thesis) is pivotal.[33]

In conjunction with the adopted theories of Object-Oriented Ontology, ideas that form the basis of Agential Realism also align with the Kelsey Pendant's ontology. Here, the conceptualisation behind the pendant's continuous state of becoming which can be

[30] Harman, 2018, 12.

[31] Harman, 2018, 9.

[32] It should be noted that other theories within New Materiality may understand that elements pre-exist new forms. However, Harman (2016a) makes a specific point to counter Barad with regard to this concept.

[33] Harman, 2018, 260.

understood to encapsulate the pendant's agency engendered through performative dynamism is central to how the pendant can be understood to act, inter/intra-act, and exist. Agential Realism posits that matter is not a property of something nor is it fixed, but rather matter generates, produces, and differentiates.[34] This idea maps onto the Kelsey Pendant inasmuch as the amulet is an amalgamation of potential in constant flux.

Matter has the propensity to pre-exist any relational scenario in which it chooses to participate. This is not to say that when matter entangles it remains individuated to the point where discourse is superficial, but rather the crux of the study's perspective is that matter is a performative, agential dynamic process of becoming, a doing (in accordance with Agential Realism) which has the ability to intimately connect, materialise, and form anew whilst retaining its individual potential, memories, and histories.[35] Per Agential Realism, intra-activity is the dynamic processes of 'mattering' which in itself is performative, and, moreover, 'this dynamism is agency.'[36] Thus, the dynamism or agency of an object is central to Agential Realism and within this focal area is the concept that matter is a doing that is not comprised of independently existing entities, but rather is an ongoing connection, entanglement, commitment, materialisation, or becoming.[37]

Contrary to the thesis's position is the fact that Agential Realism considers ontological units to be phenomena rather than independent entities with inherent properties

[34] Barad, 2007, 137.

[35] Bryant, 2016. Bryant's suggestion about the plasticity of things is reminiscent of the thesis's outlook on this particular point.

[36] Most pertinent is Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, 69; See also Barad, 2007, 140-141.

[37] Barad, 2007, 183-184; Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, 69.

and boundaries.[38] Phenomena are 'entanglements of subject and object' relations that do not pre-exist each other but come into existence through intra-activity.[39] Though Agential Realism is relational, where all intra-actions are entangled and connected in their process of becoming, like Object-Oriented Ontology, the thesis considers part of Agential Realism's relational approach to be reductive insofar as the theory posits that everything is entangled from its conception since nothing pre-exists the other.[40] Based upon Agential Realism, it may be interpreted that things relate, connect, or become without memory, histories, individual potential, and when pushed further, things may be considered to be bereft of identity outwith the context of a particular intra-action at any given time—an identity which is inherently fleeting as relations are continuously becoming and individualism does not exist.

However, according to this thesis, matter pre-exists and becomes; it interacts and intra-acts. Within a relational discourse, interaction considers the pre-existence of matter while intra-action considers the continuous state of becoming that matter undergoes in any materialisation or connection. Furthermore, in the case of the Kelsey Pendant, it is argued that both interaction and intra-action can occur simultaneously within the context of a discourse, thus, a designation of "inter/intra-action" is fitting apropos to this analysis.

The manner in which the study considers how matter inter/intra-acts may be gleaned from the concept of "gathering," which engages with the aspects of Object-Oriented Ontology and Agential Realism.[41] The term 'agencement,' engages with the differences

[38] Barad, 2007, 139.

[39] Barad, 2007, 140-141; Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, 52.

[40] Harman, 2016a.

[41] It should be noted that Ingold does not name this theory within his lecture. The term 'gathering' has been adopted by the study for ease of reference.

between an assemblage and a gathering, which can be described as two sides of the same coin since one aspect cannot exist without the other.[42] An assemblage consists of grouping diverse elements together whereas a gathering is the process of connecting, joining, or the becoming of the elements of an assemblage from within.[43] Moreover, when elements of an assemblage are externally brought together, they have the propensity to interact through their association while retaining their individuality. In other words, each element can exist and participate in its past and its present insofar as it is not intrinsically broken off from its origin or removed from past experiences. Furthermore, each element is elastic and conjoins with the other aspects of its present context. Agencement is comprised of two sides (an outer side and an inner side) that have the capacity to affect one another. The outer side reveals in that it portrays what is apparent and the inner side conceals as it is where forces and energies reside and where things and properties produce and are actively brought forth.

Within the context of a gathering, things come into being, last for some time, and then pass away.[44] In gathering, no two operations are similar or sequential; instead, operations (whilst retaining their own story) converge and diverge creating an effect where one is unable to delineate where an operation begins or ends.[45] Within the context of the Kelsey Pendant, the transitional essence of being can be understood as the changing of direction from one active scenario to another, pausing an action to begin or continue another, and the anticipation of correspondence, which cannot be predetermined or assumed but can be expected since the process of becoming does not cease. Gathering is an interior

[42] Most pertinent is Ingold, 2020. For a succinct discussion of 'agencement,' see also Phillips, 2006.

[43] Ingold, 2020.

[44] Ingold, 2020.

[45] On this aspect as well most pertinent is Ingold, 2020. See also Ingold, 2018, 168-169.

correspondence that understands matter as a multiplicity since it is made of many fragments; and the relations between these fragments or elements are complicate (folded together) and are what hold things together.[46] However, gathering is not a summation, rather (as in Agential Realism's concept of becoming), it is a complicate process of formation where things convolute along their lines of movement and are in continuous flux realised by way of an inner turbulence.[47]

When matter participates in a relational scenario elements are not adjoined, but rather, they are conjoined where they move in concert with one another, answer to each other, take into themselves the things (inclusive of their stories) that they are corresponding to; and this can extend indefinitely both back and forth in time.[48] With regard to the Kelsey Pendant, its time of creation, and the late antique framework of belief within which it was created, one can further posit that matter has the potential to not only move back and forth through time, but can also move between the celestial and earthly realms.

1.4.1.2 Kelsey Pendant's Ontological Theories in Action

When the adopted concepts within Object-Oriented Ontology, Agential Realism, and Gathering are brought together they explain how the Kelsey Pendant is understood to exist and inter/intra-act as an object that is continuously becoming. The pendant is comprised of an assemblage of diverse elements which embody their individual histories, memories, and experiences. The elements, as individual entities, are not static. They are in a constant state of becoming since, for the purposes of this study, complete stasis (not momentary stillness)

[46] Ingold, 2020. See also Barad (2011, 149) for the concept of 'agential cuts,'.

[47] Ingold, 2020. See also Ingold, 2018, 163, 166 in the concept of 'interstitial differentiation,'.

[48] Ingold, 2020.

implies death. Thus, one can imagine these elements moving from within (becoming within themselves) and at any given moment in time, when choosing to enter a specific relational scenario, they create, conjoin, and further become with the other elements of the assemblage whilst retaining the ability to reveal or conceal aspects of their individual potential.

Let us return to the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant as an example. Here, the rider and the horse, as portrayed as an individual element, is constantly becoming. The rider's contribution to the assemblage is based not only upon what he is doing (agency), but also what he is (historical make up), which are one and cannot be separated from the other. He embodies his history as a warrior and an equestrian and the memory of what a rider entails from the context of his position in the late antique consciousness. The rider seated atop of the galloping horse is in the process of an action or actions. The rider moves with the horse, maintaining his balance, his grip upon his lance, his focus upon either the demon or the angel standing before him at any given moment. The horse, in the same instance, works with, and under the guidance of, the rider as it leaps over the demon towards the angel. With that said, however, since the concept of gathering that the study has adopted suggests that an interior becoming is concealed, one is not able to decipher which act the rider is intent upon completing or at which moment he shifts his focus from one aspect of his being to another.

When the rider is considered with another element within this assemblage such as the phrase 'One God who conquers evil,' the rider interacts with the phrase as well as all aspects of what the phrase is and what the phrase is doing. This is not to say that there is a chaotic collision of histories, memories, and individual experiences, but rather, each element puts forth aspects of its essence in this new intra-action, which, for the Kelsey Pendant, is a relational process of becoming that is predicated upon what is needed or deemed necessary at

a particular point in time. The elements on the pendant are understood to work with, for, and against each other and what each element divulges is based upon how they are relating to others.

On one hand, the one God phrase in its relational becoming with the rider may contribute to the idea of the rider as either a deity (the one God), may portray the deity's support of the rider, or may further contextualise one of the rider's purposes (conquer evil). On the other hand, the phrase may provide an additional layer of potential that carries or fortifies the rider giving him the ability to completely vanquish the demon or successfully travel from one realm to another. Though the viewer is unable to determine the extent of becoming that is occurring from within since the bronze pendant only outwardly reveals moments frozen within an illustrative form, the ontology of the pendant, and likely its perceived efficacy, is defined by its interior (gatherings) and exterior (assemblage) processes, its inter/intra-actions, the potential of its individual elements (both veiled and unveiled), and the new potential(s) created from the relational scenarios in which these elements participate. These processes, though not pre-defined or pre-determined, exist in physical form as the Kelsey Pendant and provide a dimensional lens through which other objects like the pendant, created within the socio-cultural contexts of Late Antiquity, can be holistically understood.

1.4.2 Ontology of Relation(s) between Bearer and Kelsey Pendant

The second pendant-based ontology that this thesis considers are the relations and experiences between the bearer and the pendant. The study argues that the pendant must have the ability to become on its own in order to, first, fulfill its individual purpose(s) that it deems necessary within itself, and second, fulfill its purpose from the perspective of the bearer. The relational inter/intra-action between the pendant and the bearer is, in essence, an inter/intra-

action between two assemblages. It is understood that the bearer's potential exists both autonomously and through relations with other objects (human and non-human). Through detailed analyses of the pendant's elements within the milieu of the late antique world in which the amulet was produced, the study will consider how the bearer, directly or indirectly, may have created, interacted with, and come upon these (or variations of these) elements within their 'everyday' and how experiences with said elements may have influenced the bearer's encounter with the Kelsey Pendant. Thus, the bearer's history with, perceived efficacy, memory, and assumed understanding of the elements upon the pendant will be examined in conjunction with an account of their sensorial experience in relation to the pendant.

There are three performative factors that take part in the relational scenario between the bearer and the pendant: first, the pendant (object) as an autonomous assemblage; second, the bearer (as object) and their experiences with the pendant's elements outside of the context of the pendant; third, the sensorial experience of the bearer in possession of the pendant. These factors (both individually and in conjunction with one another) create inter/intra-action(s) that produce a metaphorical window into the late antique worldview of amulets, material, and materiality and their position within society. With this in mind, it is pertinent to underscore that even though the study considers objects (human and non-human) to inter/intra-act in an autonomous manner, an investigation of any societal worldview must also be inclusive of an egalitarian examination of the relations between humans and material culture.

1.4.2.1 Theoretical Concept Surrounding the Relations between Bearer and Pendant

The thesis has adopted concepts of Sensorial Archaeology and Bundling (which can also be considered to fall under the thesis's main theoretical umbrella of New Materialism) as theoretical frameworks for the relational scenario between the bearer and the pendant. Since the second ontology of the thesis is centred upon social relation(s), detailed aspects of the social must be incorporated into the analysis. These aspects are inclusive of religion, economics, politics, literature and lore, landscape (e.g., buildings, monuments, domiciles, and funerary contexts), the senses, as well as concepts of efficacy, power, and value. They will be incorporated throughout the thesis and will be gleaned from available evidence from the late antique world within which the pendant was created.

A bundle can be defined as an assemblage of objects, where each object has a perceived value, power, and meaning associated with it. Bundling is a relational theory, it is dependent upon process, performance, motion, histories, senses, memory, and biographies. Bundling may be utilised as a means to explain history inasmuch as '...things-in-motion intersect (as bundles) to define agency.'[49] Bundling is 'omnipresent' and every action, motion, or experience is a process of becoming a bundle, which in itself is consistently in motion.[50] Within the context of Bundling, agency is understood as the continuous process of becoming as in Agential Realism. Bundles are not static, but instead are animate.[51]

Bundling regards materiality ('...the physical dimension of practice, performance, or experience...') of objects to have two qualities—their biographies and their sensuous nature,

[49] Pauketat, 2013b, 36.

[50] Pauketat, 2013b, 39; Pauketat, 2013a, 41.

[51] Pauketat, 2013a, 56.

both of which link objects with people and places.[52] Furthermore, bundling translates relationships inasmuch as '...all practices, places, and cultural objects not only cite precedents, they relate to others in such a way as to redefine themselves and their associations to fit the local web of experience.'[53] Per the concept of Bundling, agents exist only through their relationships or 'their associations in the making.'[54] As relationships change or transform, bundles change, which speaks to their continuous process of becoming.[55]

Bundling is not anthropocentric where it emphasises human agency over or upon objects, instead, it allows for an egalitarian purview without losing focus on society. The thesis's choice of Bundling to frame the bearer and pendent relationship is the theory's receptivity to the concepts of lifeforce, multiple realms, memory, transformation, and relational experiences with the (super)natural.[56] The thesis posits that the inter/intra-action(s) between the bearer and pendant are inclusive of these concepts and that they permeate the consciousness of, and are at times physically expressed within, late antique society.

As an object, the Kelsey Pendant, when carried or worn, would have been difficult to forget or ignore due to its size and relative presence. The pendant's physical qualities coupled with the bearer's senses inform the multiple ways in which the bearer may experience the pendant, and these qualities are paramount in considering how the bearer and the pendant

[52] Pauketat, 2013b, 37-38.

[53] Pauketat, 2013a, 39.

[54] Pauketat, 2013b, 51.

[55] Pauketat, 2013b, 52.

[56] Pauketat, 2013a, 33.

inter/intra-act. With this in mind, sensory archaeology may prove beneficial in suggesting how the Kelsey Pendant may relate with the bearer.

An outlook that aims to incorporate all the senses (remaining cognisant not to subordinate one sense to another) to contextualise the relational inter/intra-actions between the pendant and bearer is especially pertinent insofar as the project endeavours to provide a glimpse into the late antique "everyday" by way of examining how an amulet (as a part of Byzantine material culture) participates in society. The senses help to create memory and are a means by which to ignite established memories. One experiences, participates in (and with), assimilates into, and absorbs the environment and the material world through the senses.

The thesis's perspective on Sensory Archaeology is best described within the methodology of common-sensory archaeology, which endeavours to explain how objects may have been experienced.[57] Common-sensory archaeology involves: establishing a historical encounter by means of "seeing" the object (either actively or imaginatively) whilst consistently being cognisant of all the senses, understanding what is known about the "'common-sense'" of ancient users by way of literary evidence concerning their sensory valuations, having knowledge of the user's inhabited environment, and having knowledge of the culture's sensory affordances within their material culture.[58]

With regards to the thesis's investigation of the interaction between the bearer and the Kelsey Pendant, the pendant (as object) will be actively "seen"—incorporating all the senses where possible in its physical examination of the pendant—which, for the purposes of this

[57] Most pertinent is Hunter-Crawley, 2013, 72-73. See also Pentcheva, 2010.

[58] Hunter-Crawley, 2013, 72.

study, allows for a less ambiguous discussion of the potential relational experiences between pendant and bearer notwithstanding the fact that the presented scenarios can only be hypothetical in nature.[59] Thus, in its reconstruction of relational experience, the study will rely on concrete data provided from the pendant's examination. It will then intertwine this information with available late antique evidence concerning its material culture (e.g., architectural spaces, literature, lore, the senses, material, and materiality). The thesis's application of the common-sensory method to its analysis allows for objects (inclusive of their uses and significance) to be contextualised within their society more accurately.[60]

An example of the above suggestion can be found in the interaction between a human and an icon, which illustrates how the senses have the propensity to provide insight into the relational experience. The relation between the human and icon can be considered fundamentally performative insofar as it is a physical experience within an activated space.[61] The icon's material composition inter/intra-acts with the bearer's senses. Its material composition (gold, enamel, glass, and gemstones) enables the icon to consistently transform, and thus, enact its presence as the '…light-emitting, glimmering, and shimmering surfaces imbue this icon with life.'[62] The icon embodies 'shifting sensual impressions,' and the changing appearances on the surface of the icon are performative and the diversity of textures appeal to touch.[63]

[59] The examination is of an object within a museum collection and some methods of examination specifically involving the Kelsey Pendant, such as taste, are not possible.

[60] Hunter-Crawley, 2013, 72.

[61] Most pertinent is Pentcheva, 2006, 640; See also Peers, 2004, 2, 133-134.

[62] Pentcheva, 2006b, 644.

[63] Pentcheva, 2006b, 644.

When material and the senses are in the process of becoming, as in the case of the autonomous pendant, there may be various scenarios occurring simultaneously. The relational experience between the senses and an object such as an icon has the propensity to trigger memories of performative actions such as prayer.[64] The image of the icon creates a multisensory experience whereby the viewer is transported to the ritual act of listening to, and participating in, prayer where the words to the prayer are chanted or sung.[65] It may further be conceived that in an inter/intra-action with an icon, materials such as the glistening gemstones, glass, and gold leaf upon the object may not readily translate to the ritual act of prayer, but instead may transport the viewer to a highly decorated architectural space where gold tesserae and other components of mosaics or other decorations flicker and glimmer in the light. In such a situation, one may postulate that the varied illustrative programmes (whether religious or secular in content) of the decorations relate to the viewer, and, depending upon the location of the space, memories of certain elemental experiences may arise. For example, the bearer may recollect the feel and smell of the air that filled a liturgical space which may have felt chilled, crisp, or muggy against their skin and smelled fresh, fragrant, musty, or even stale. It is not possible to definitively attribute one experience or memory over another, but it is pertinent to recognise the multivalency of the sensory experience such that multiple scenarios are considered and understood to possibly occur in the same instance.

1.4.2.2 Ontology of Relations between Bearer and Pendant in Action

It is important to underscore that the ontology of the pendant is necessary to facilitate the ontology of relations between the pendant and the bearer. The thesis argues that the pendant

[64] Pentcheva, 2006b, 648.

[65] Pentcheva, 2006b, 648.

bereft of its potential to autonomously, agentially become is in perpetual stasis and is therefore unable to actively relate with a bearer. Thus, both ontologies of the thesis coexist, but also cannot be separated from each other due to the societal focus of the study.

As previously mentioned, the rider upon the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is bundled into the assemblage with its own histories, lore, memories, and experiences. These aspects of the rider are a part of the pendant and participate in the pendant's individual agential process of becoming. When the bearer enters into a relational scenario with the pendant, they come to the inter/intra-action with their own understandings, experiences, memories, and beliefs which may be sparked by some or all of the elements of the pendant. In encountering the rider upon the pendant, and based upon material evidence from Late Antiquity, the bearer may imagine a victorious emperor smiting his enemy and protecting his empire or even a saint or ancient king on horseback. In a scenario between the bearer and the pendant, the bearer ignites aspects of the rider on the pendant, and based upon the bearer's beliefs and expectations, it may be suggested that the inter/intra-action between the two actors draws upon the rider's various histories and potential (apart from the bearer) as well as the bearer's memories and understandings.

Thus, in the bearer's consciousness, the rider acts to fulfill its purpose based upon their expectations, while at the same time, in the pendant's agential becoming, the rider acts to fulfill its purpose based upon need within the amulet itself. The rider, for the bearer, may be a protector—an agent of the deity sent to vanquish the ills within the bearer's life situation. The rider, for the pendant, may be a warrior—a trained cavalryman participating in a war against malefic entities supported by agents of the celestial and earthly realms. When brought together, the thesis argues that the rider engages with both identities in any given

instance even though both processes of becoming may not be apparent to the bearer. In conjunction with possible conceptual inter/intra-actions, the bearer also experiences the pendant through their senses, which provides an additional layer of communication.

The heft of the pendant, the physical qualities of the metal such as its colour, temperature, surface texture, and taste all coupled with the sight of its illustrative programme allows for an array of inter/intra-actions between the bearer and the pendant. For example, the inscription of the Psalms may trigger a memory of hearing the sung liturgy, the image of Christ in majesty may remind the bearer of an illustrated manuscript or a decorated apse glittering in gold, while the placement of bronze against the skin may not only signify certain transferable qualities (healing or otherwise) associated with the admixture of tin, copper, and perhaps other metals, but also may be associated with a specific environment such as a chilly architectural space brought forth through the bronze material's emanation of a cooling sensation. The sensations that the bearer experiences coupled with memories, histories, environmental factors (lighting as well as space and place) and biographies of both the pendant and the bearer are an inter/intra-action that is continuously becoming.

1.4.3 One Case Study and Comparison

Throughout the thesis, comparative material will be introduced to contextualise, but not categorise, the pendant within a network of known examples of late antique material culture. Even though the inclusion of comparanda buttresses the thesis's endeavour to provide a worldview of the late antique society of the Kelsey Pendant through the lens of material culture, within this thesis, it is understood that utilising comparison as a primary method of investigation has the propensity to produce a general study that does not generate the productive results needed to fully contextualise the thesis's object of analysis. This is

especially pertinent since the project focuses upon how the Kelsey Pendant is in discourse with its social-cultural, political, economic, and religious climates—where the amulet is a component of material culture, not merely a product, but an active participant within its late antique world.

The Kelsey Pendant includes several elements that can be found on a number of objects dated before, within, and after the chronological dating of the amulet, however, the similarities are outweighed by the disparities between the objects. This is not to say that the parallels between objects eclipse their differences; instead, it suggests that comparisons that solely or primarily focus upon the variations of physical or visual attributes obfuscate the subtle aspects that every object embodies and has the propensity to communicate. From the perspective of this study, even if objects are mass-produced in a manner where they are alike, there is a likelihood that they vary in what they communicate—based upon the outlook of the bearer and how they were utilised.[66] Without a find context, it is more difficult, perhaps impossible, to ascertain what these variances may be, but with an example like the Kelsey Pendant, which was arguably produced as an individual object (even though there are other highly similar examples), a holistic investigation may yield viable suggestions. Unlike the majority of known examples of late antique amulets, the Kelsey Pendant is highly detailed and projects a complex multivalency which enables an in-depth study that may speak to the socio-cultural, political, economic, and religious climate in which the amulet was created.

It is important to note that even though the Kelsey Pendant is heavily detailed and has an uncommon layout in comparison to other (published) early Byzantine amulets from Anatolia

[66] Arezes, 2017, 153-154.

and the Southern Levant, it is not a unique object, and the project will comparatively examine and discuss one amulet that is akin to the pendant, the Holy Rider Amulet.[67] The Holy Rider Amulet is held within the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and is an example of a detailed amulet which includes many of the attributes of the Kelsey Pendant (See Figures 4-6).[68] The Holy Rider Amulet was gifted to Dumbarton Oaks by Mr. and Mrs. Bliss in August 1950. According to the Dumbarton Oaks records, the Holy Rider Amulet can be dated between the sixth to seventh centuries CE.[69]

It is not known if the amulets were created in the same place, but the Holy Rider Amulet's existence does speak to a perception that the assemblage of certain elements as a singular object was efficacious in one way or another. The comparison of the Kelsey Pendant with the Holy Rider Amulet is meant to underscore the fact that the Kelsey Pendant is not unique, which likely had a direct impact on how it was understood to participate within its socio-cultural arena. Though there are nuanced differences, the visual and textual similarities of the Holy Rider Amulet and the Kelsey Pendant underscore the concept that these two objects may be aligned (either closely or loosely) in both form and intended function. When

[67] Recently, I discovered another amulet that resembles the Kelsey Pendant and the Holy Rider Amulet. It was sold to a private collector via an online dealer. This discovery suggests that there may have been many amulets like the Kelsey Pendant and the Holy Rider Amulet in circulation, but they are either in private collections, have yet to be unearthed, or have been destroyed. I have included the online image in the Illustrations (**Figure 3**). The description accompanying the item on the website (read as follows: 'Eastern Mediterranean V-VI Cent. A.D. (55mm, 11.4gm.). Museum quality. Extremely rare and important. *Ex. Tom Cederlind (with original handwritten tag).* Top has an aureole of Christ flanked by two lions. Inscription various magical signs also found in gnostic manuscripts. Major inscription. Below lion and scorpion. Holy rider god spearing a dragon-serpent. Angel to right' (https://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/sergey_nechayev_ancient_coins/200/product/ancientc500adgnostic_amuletchristtwo_lionsscorpion_extom_cederlind_unique/418452/Default.aspx). The specific item is no longer accessible since it is now in an unknown private collection.

[68] https://www.doaks.org/resources/bliss-tyler-correspondence/art/bz/BZ.1950.15.jpg/view. The Holy Rider Amulet has not been as widely published as the Kelsey Pendant.

[69] Kirin, Nelson, and Carder 2005, 99. Opposed to the Dumbarton Oaks online records, Ross (1962, 53) dates the Holy Rider Amulet ('Bronze Amulet) between the fourth and fifth CE.

both sides of the Holy Rider Amulet are considered, one can see that the illustrations of the Holy Rider Amulet and the Kelsey Pendant are rendered using a different hand, thus it may be suggested that more than one person created the amulets.[70] Furthermore, it is clear that the features on the Holy Rider Amulet are stylistically more delicate that those of the Kelsey Pendant. For example, in looking at the illustration of the angel, markings that comprise the nose and mouth of the angel of the Holy Rider Amulet are distinctively smaller (formed by the subtle movements of an etched line) and the angel's hair is depicted to visually infer elegantly styled tresses that are composed of wavy lines which fall above their shoulder. In contrast to the Holy Rider Amulet, the facial attributes of the angel of the Kelsey Pendant are larger and prominently shaped. The angel's nose of the Kelsey Pendant is represented by a slightly elongated, deeply etched line that protrudes forward to form a slanted line that begins from the angel's hairline (which is visually more disheveled than the angel's hair of the Holy Rider Amulet).

Though the Holy Rider Amulet and the Kelsey Pendant are slightly different, through a comparative outlook, they underscore a trend that called for this particular type of amulet to be created. Hence, the details of the amulets definitively link them to one another and to the society in which they were created and participated. This association lies in their existence as objects that are created from a bronze material, as objects that share iconographic and textual details, as objects that may share a provenance, and as objects that are continuously becoming in their agential materiality as well as through their inter/intra-actions with other objects (inclusive of humans).

[70] This suggestion is based on observations during my examination of both amulets in person.

There is not a fail-proof way for comparison to be successful, but the 'particular' should not be subordinate to the 'general,' similarities should not privilege differences, and favoured examples should not be presented as the standard for future comparisons.[71] The scholar must pay attention to all the aspects of what is being compared instead of focusing on what they consider interesting whilst overlooking what they deem to be less important.[72] With these stipulations in mind, the thesis will utilise the method of 'weak comparisons,' which are inquiries that are modest in scope, but intense in their scrutiny.[73] Within a weak comparison, a small number of examples are examined or discussed, and each example is set in its full and proper context using an intensive lens to examine each object (e.g., potential origin, environment within which the object becomes, social contexts, and consideration of meaning).[74] A good comparative study is attentive to social, political, and historical contexts and it provides equal attention to all aspects and pathways of investigation.[75] However, large amount of comparanda within a study can run the risk of superficiality as scholars tend to expound upon aspects that are outwith of their expertise in an attempt to present a more complete study.[76] Thus, the thesis endeavours to remain cognisant of the pitfalls associated with broad comparisons as well as those which exclude a detailed examination of differences and similarities.

[71] Lincoln, 2018, 11.

[72] Lincoln, 2018, 11.

[73] Lincoln, 2018, 11.

[74] Lincoln, 2018,11.

[75] Lincoln, 2018, 27.

[76] Lincoln, 2018, 26-27.

1.5 Literature Review

The thesis is buttressed by a substantial amount of foundational scholarship which helps to place it firmly within the intersections of an interdisciplinary endeavour. The following literature review will first provide a succinct overview of literature about ancient magic which offers analyses of magical texts, amulets (text-based and other media), as well as discussions regarding the categorisations of magic and religion. Second, the review will examine the extant publications that are about, or inclusive of, the Kelsey Pendant. This overview will interpret the current discourse concerning the pendant whilst contextualising these studies with the aims and objectives of the thesis's investigation. Third, a discussion that highlights the most influential scholarship about amulets studies for this thesis will be provided. Fourth, the literature review will examine scholarship focused upon object agency (inclusive of material and materiality) and interaction that are impactful to the study's theoretical and methodological underpinnings of New Materialism. The discussion will explain how the thesis's examination diverges from the extant body of research as a means to suggest new pathways of research. It will highlight how the gaps in extant analyses underscore the necessity for an innovative means of investigation while remaining cognisant that the body of research in the academic arenas of archaeology, magic, religious studies, philology, classical studies, art history, and art making practices, provides a constructive point of departure.

1.5.1 Ancient Magic

Ancient magic is enveloped in a wide arena of research. A small sampling of notable publications that offer a foundational understanding of the extant corpus of scholarship from

which the more specific area of amulet studies emerged will be provided.[77] *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* by Georg Luck is an array of translations of ancient texts from the eighth century BCE to the fourth century CE.[78] Luck categorises these texts as magical, miraculous, demonological, divinatory, astrological, and alchemical; then, for each category, his text-based project provides a detailed introduction replete with literary examples, background on the topic, and definitions, which are followed by translations and commentaries.

John G. Gager's monograph *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* is a body of work dedicated to the translation of *defixiones* primarily composed of lead or lead alloys.[79] Gager provides what can be considered a well-rounded outlook on the objects he translates as he makes a point to explain who made the *defixiones*, why they were made, how they were made, what was inscribed upon them, what they were made of, how they were sealed, and how they were disposed of (buried) to ensure their efficaciousness.[80]

Christopher Faraone's and Dirk Obbink's edited volume, *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic & Religion*, is comprised of essays that focus upon details of a specific area of ritual activity.[81] Here, the modern conception and forced differentiation between magic and religion is under analysis whereby the contributors to the volume were asked to think about 'whether the traditional dichotomy between magic and religion helped in any way to conceptualize the

[77] See also fn. 15, pp.20 and fn. 99, pp 54.

[78] Luck, 1987.

[79] Gager, 1992.

[80] Gager, 1992, 4-5.

[81] Faraone and Obbink, 1991, vi.

objective features of the evidence examined.'[82] The chapters in the volume address various types of divination, incantations, binding spells, curses, prayers, sacred plants, and the Greek Magical Papyri. The contributors to *Magika Hiera* placed themselves within a discourse that confronts the tension between magic and religion created by previous scholarship.[83] Even though the outcomes the authors presented regarding the question of magic and religion were somewhat different, it may be suggested that interventions such as these contributions helped to create an opening with respect to our current understanding of how defining magic against, or in relation to, science and religion is unproductive. This is particularly significant since the process of defining magic in relation to religion is rooted in modern conventions of categorisation, and the two terms are not easily divisible.

A later example of scholarship that notes the categorisations of magic and religion, albeit from an entirely different perspective, is David E. Aune's chapter, 'Magic in Early Christianity' in *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity*.[84] 'Magic in Early Christianity' is a broad overview of the topic of magic in scholarship. Of note is Aune's understanding that magic and religion are intertwined and they cannot be considered discreet categories.[85] However, throughout the chapter, Aune considers magic to be a 'constant and subordinate feature of all religions,' and he understands magic to be as '…universal a feature of religion as deviant behavior is of human societies.' [86] Aune highlights the discourse between magic and religion, but reinforces the pejorative conceptions of term by perpetuating

[82] Faraone and Obbink, 1991, vii.

[83] See for example, Frazer, 2009; Tambiah, 1990.

[84] Aune, 2006.

[85] Aune, 2006, 377.

[86] Aune, 2006, 377; 420. See four-part explanation of magic regarding religion, 377.

the categorisation of magic as an aberration of religion.[87] Even though Aune participates in the discourse regarding the categorisations between magic and religion, it may be suggested that his perspective of this scholarly conversation diverges from the purposes of the contributors of *Magika Hiera*, and thus, may be considered to be an example that highlights the multiple ways in which one topic within the arena of magical studies may be examined, further complicating the area of study.

1.5.2 Publications Inclusive of the Kelsey Pendant

Though the Kelsey Pendant has been analysed through multiple lenses, most of the scholarship that includes the pendant falls within the overarching, and overlapping, umbrellas of magic and religion. Published discussions of the Kelsey Pendant present a dichotomous scenario: on one hand, in recent scholarship, the Kelsey Pendant has primarily been presented as an intricate example of an early Byzantine amulet with a nod towards particular aspects of the object without a detailed discussion of its attributes.[88] Even though in-depth scholarly engagement with the pendant is lacking, these recent publications do convey the continuation of standardised iconography or text across mediums, which speaks to the importance and perhaps perceived efficacy of the components of the Kelsey Pendant and its society. For example, in Faith Pennick Morgan's monograph *Dress and Personal Appearance in Late Antiquity: The Clothing of the Middle and Lower Classes*, the Kelsey Pendant is presented as an example of an amulet that contains *charaktêres*.[89] Morgan provides an image of the reverse side of the amulet with a caption that states 'Kelsey Museum of Archaeology inv. no. 2.6199, reverse side of a bronze "holy rider" amulet, showing Christ enthroned, and including

[87] Aune, 2006, 376.

[88] See for example Nees, 1987, 209–10; Garipzanov, et al., 2017; Garipzanov, 2018.

[89] Morgan, 2018, 59-61.

magical "charaktêres."'[90] In this instance, the Kelsey Pendant acts as supporting material for Morgan's discussion of *charaktêres* on various media including textiles, magical recipes, and amulets.[91] However, in Morgan's monograph, as in other publications, the pendant is treated with an outlook towards one or (in some instances) two aspects of the amulet, thus, presenting a deconstructed purview with a lack of regard to the amulet as a whole.

On the other hand, some older analyses do provide succinct, detailed examinations by way of visual descriptions and translations of the pendant's various elements on the obverse and reverse sides.[92] For example, Bonner's 'Two Studies in Syncretistic Amulets' is an early publication that includes a comprehensive analysis of the Kelsey Pendant which he refers to as 'a Byzantine Amulet-Medal.'[93] In his analysis, Bonner explains that the amulet was likely engraved, describes its iconographic attributes, translates the Greek text that encircles both sides of the amulet, and discusses the origin and perceived efficacy of the texts (especially Psalm 90 of the Septuagint).[94] Bonner compares the rider on the Byzantine Amulet-Medal to other iconographic portrayals of riders on metal amulets, representations of cavalry men, as well as to literary or mythological heroes such as Bellerophon, the Thracian rider-hero, or

[90] Morgan, 2018, 61.

[91] Most pertinent is Morgan, 2018, 59; See also, Maguire, 2017, who on pp. 236-237 uses the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant as a visual example when discussing ring signs, 236-237; See also Garipzanov (2018, 45-47) uses the obverse and reverse sides of the Kelsey Pendant as a visual example of an amulet with charaktêres; however, he also incorporates a some more detail in his discussion of the pendant′s attributes.

[92] Bonner 1942; See also Ross and Dumbarton Oaks, 1962, no. 60, 53-54; Maguire, et al.,1989, 215 (also mentions the amulet similar to the Kelsey Pendant held in the Dumbarton Oaks collection); Tuerk, 2002.

[93] Bonner, 1942; For another detailed description of the Kelsey Pendant, see also, Maguire, et al., 1989, 214-215.

[94] Bonner (1942, 468) states that the Psalm on the Kelsey Pendant is Psalm 91 of the Septuagint, however, the text is Psalm 90 of the Septuagint. It is Psalm 91 in the Hebrew Masoretic Text (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, 5th edition, ed. by K. Elliger and R. Willhelm, 1997, hereafter referred to as HMT) as well as in English translations.

Dexileos.[95] At the time of the article's publication, Bonner noted that the Byzantine Amulet-Medal was the most interesting and elaborate example of amulets in its class.[96] In his article, Bonner uses description, philology, mythology, biblical references, and Preisendanz's translation of the Greek Magical for contextualisation. Although Bonner admits that dating objects like the Byzantine Amulet-Medal is difficult, he supposes that the Amulet-Medal is likely from the fifth to seventh centuries CE and originates from Syria or Palestine.[97]

A more contemporary example of an analysis of the Kelsey Pendant is Tuerk's 2002-dissertation 'How to do Things with Words and Images in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.' Tuerk utilises the Kelsey Pendant as one of four case studies in her analysis of how word and image on objects (inclusive of amulets) psychologically, physically, and spiritually interact with people.[98] Tuerk describes and touches upon the elements of the pendant and discusses interaction; however, Tuerk does not fully critique the text and imagery upon the amulet. Instead, as a baseline upon which to build her investigation, her discussion, like many other studies about amulets, widely accepts previous suggestions provided by scholarship that utilised antiquated methods of analysis. In short, though Tuerk's study underscores the Kelsey Pendant's performativity and relational qualities, it nonetheless ignores the pendant's existence as a complete and complex entity that embodies an autonomous dynamism outwith, and irrespective of, its interactions with other human and non-human objects.

[95] Bonner, 1942, 468. Some of the riders on amulets are here named while others are not.

[96] Bonner, 1942, 467.

[97] Bonner, 1942, 467, 471.

[98] Tuerk, 2002, 3.

1.5.3 Amulet Studies

Scholarship on amulets analyses these objects from various perspectives but has also failed to contextualise them, and their like, as active, continuously becoming, participants of their society. The current state of research categorises objects (e.g., they are part of the realm of magic *or* that of religion) and focuses upon interpreting the imagery or translating the text of an object while rarely addressing the discourse between both, which due to the multi-faceted nature of the late antique everyday, limits experience and potential function.[99]

Within the field of amulet studies, most works focus on gems or other stones. Publications such as Nagy's 'Magical Gems and Classical Archaeology', which discusses ways in which scholarship can analyse magical gems since they generally lack chronology and context, prove helpful in approaching an object bereft of a definitive find context like the Kelsey Pendant [100] Nagy points towards two methodologies to examine gem amulets that the thesis also utilises. The first methodology involves an examination of the gem's structure, and the second, involves an examination of the gem's iconographic syntax. The first entails the process of looking closely at the object, considering its attributes, identifying the techniques used to create these elements, and taking note of aspects that may have been included versus left out in comparison to other amulets with the same or similar iconography.[101] The second offers possibilities for dating magical gems as it also involves investigating the stylistic relationship between gems.[102] Nagy suggests that gems with similar

[99] See for example: Thorndike, 1923, (8 volumes); Budge, 1930; Bonner, 1951; Bonner, 1954; Barb, 1964; Naveh and Shaked, 1985, focus on amulets created within geographic area of thesis—Syria, Palestine, or Anatolia; Luck, 1987; Tambiah, 1990; Malinowski, 1992; Kotansky, 1994; Luck, 2000; Dickie, 2001; Frazer, 2009.

[100] Nagy, 2011, 75.

[101] Nagy, 2011, 78.

[102] Nagy, 2011, 79.

stylistic cross-relations or compositions can be placed within the same chronological moment.[103] Even though Nagy's publication focuses on gems, the thesis looks to further contextualise and identify the Kelsey Pendant's potential provenance based on its material composition. Relevant here is foremost Spier's 'Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition,' which notes that the surplus of amulets created within Syria-Palestine (Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan) is best attested in bronze examples.[104]

It may be suggested that the seminal work within amulet studies is Campbell Bonner's monograph, *Studies in Magical Amulets: Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian.*[105] It has been frequently cited and is an influential and foundational text that focuses upon the attributes of amulets as portable objects imbued with apotropaic efficacy. The aim of *Studies in Magical Amulets* was to catalog, albeit not exhaustively, one of the largest collections of Graeco-Egyptian amulets (of which the Kelsey Pendant is a part) within Bonner's private collection and the University of Michigan's collections in Ann Arbor.[106] The objects within the compendium have been dated between the second to the sixth centuries CE with some later Byzantine examples as well.[107] Bonner's text can be understood as a descriptive work that is comprised of a philological investigation intertwined with literary interpretation, presented with an inclination towards comparison and religious classification. Bonner provides details of where and from whom amulets in the study were acquired, even though the exact

[103] Nagy, 2011, 79.

[104] Spier, 1993; see also Spier, 2007, 113.

[105] Bonner, 1950; See also Delatte and Derchain 1964.

[106] Bonner, 1950, vii-viii.

[107] Bonner, 1950, viii.

provenance of most of these objects is unknown.[108] He categorises amulets by what he deems to be their religious or cultural affiliation (e.g., Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, Christian, gnostic, or pagan), overarching purpose, or suggested provenance.[109] He also points out instances of syncretism, and emphasises the predominance of Egyptian influence upon the visual culture of amulets.[110] Bonner notes the effect of the Greek Magical Papyri as well as that of other magical handbooks upon magical gems.[111] He approaches the discussion of amulets from various perspectives, but his strength lies in philological analyses supported by literary references to the Bible, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, writings of the Church Fathers (e.g., Gregory of Nazianzus), and Pliny.[112] Bonner's comparative, descriptive, and philologically based

[108] Bonner, 1950, 251.

[109] Bonner, 1950, viii, 1.

[110] Most pertinent is Bonner, 1950, 8. Regarding a contemporary outlook on syncretism, see Frankfurter, 2018. Frankfurter offers an alternative viewpoint in how Christianity became the dominant religion in late antique Egypt between the fourth and seventh centuries CE (xiv). He describes Christianity as a process rather than an a 'historical achievement or monolithic cultural institution' (6). Frankfurter's approach is socio-centric with a goal to model the process of Christianisation through incorporating religious and ritual traditions, material, textual, and documentary information produced by the discrete social worlds he analyses (xv). Incorporating the concepts of syncretism and bricolage, Frankfurter endeavours to explain how Christianity was constructed through time. Frankfurter describes syncretism as constant process of negotiation and an unfixed '…. assemblage of symbols and discourse' (6, 16-17). For Frankfurter the process of expressing Christianity (syncretism) involved maintaining traditional components of religious forms and social interaction by way of a consistent combination and recombination (bricolage) of symbols (15). For the purposes of Frankfurter's study, the term bricolage is used to 'depict syncretism as a creative process' (15). Bricolage is the process of 'interpreting, editing, and enacting a religious system in a local milieu' (19). Frankfurter clarifies that Christianisation and syncretism occurred in different (yet linked) social worlds, and the intertwining of these worlds made Christianity into a 'meaningful and authoritative framework for religious practice' (7). Frankfurter's presentation of syncretism and bricolage can also be applied to material studies. Even though Bonner's reference to syncretism in *Studies in Magical Amulets* likely stemmed from a perspective that any combination of elements originated from exclusive religious systems, Frankfurter's definitions can provide another way syncretism may be understood with reference to objects such as amulets that are comprised of references to multiple religions or cultures (16).

[111] Bonner, 1950, 8; Translations of the Greek Magical Papyri are often used within current scholarship. The translations of the PGM provided much of the materials from which scholars were able to undertake their own analyses of "magical" texts and objects. Preisendanz and Henrichs, 1973, (2vols), German translation that ignores the Demotic; Betz, 1986, the texts of the Greek magical papyri date from second century BCE to the fifth century CE and they contain magical spells, formulae, hymns, and rituals (xli); Daniel and Maltomini, 1990 (v.1), 1992 (v.2).

[112] See for example: Psalm 91 (HMT); Homer, *Iliad*, 14.214-218. (transl. A.T. Murray, 1925, 82-83) which mentions Aphrodite's embroidered strap love amulet given to Hera as a means to enchant Zues; Homer, *Odyssey*, 19.456-457. (transl. A.T. Murray, 1919, 268-269) which mentions the healing of Odysseus's wound with a charm; Nazianzus, Saint Gregory. 'Oratio XL.- In Sanctum Baptisma' *PG*-36, (ed. Migne, 1858, 381 A) here Nazianzus states (in summary) that amulets and incantations are not needed as they are a means by which

methods of analysis thus created the general standard for studies focused upon magic and amulets.

A further study pertinent to this thesis due to its focus on amulets created during the fourth to seventh centuries CE within Syria, Palestine, or Anatolia is Joseph Naveh's and Shaul Shaked's, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity*.[113] This as well is a philological study that provides translations of amulets and magic bowls, but Naveh and Shaked moreover present some history and cultural influences of the objects of study prior to translation and commentary. When known, the authors provide find contexts for both the amulets and the bowls. Of particular note for this project with regard to the rider of the Kelsey Pendant is Amulet 15, which includes the lore surrounding the Holy Rider as St. Sissinios.[114]

1.5.4 Object Agency and Interaction

The theoretical premise of the thesis in enmeshed in object agency and interaction. Bruno Latour in *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* argues that things and humans are non-hierarchical participants in courses of action.[115] Furthermore, objects and humans are generatively interconnected (consistently evolving) and all actions associated with both participants are by choice and should not be limited by the constructs of the social world.[116] Latour calls for interactions not to be focused on human-to-human or

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malefic forces enter the mind attempt to take what is due to God; Pliny, the Elder. *Natural History*, 37.124 (transl. D. E. Eichholz, 1962, 264-266) which discusses the apotropaic and medicinal qualities of amethyst; Bonner, 1950, 3-4.

[113] Naveh and Shaked, 1985, 13.

[114] Naveh and Shaked, 1985, 104-122.

[115] Latour, 2005, 70-71.

[116] Latour, 2005, 10-11.

object-to-object interactions without consideration of human-to-object interactions, which should be bereft of an imposition of either a symmetrical or an asymmetrical relationship between the two actors.[117] Though Latour establishes a foundational argument for the equitable treatment of human and object actors, he focuses upon regaining an inter-objective outlook within social relations and does not offer a detailed explanation of how this outlook may come to fruition within an experiential interaction.

More pertinent to this study is Alfred Gell's monograph *Art and Agency. Art and Agency* is a foundational example of an engagement of anthropological theory with art. Gell suggests that art objects are connected to their social processes and, thus, should be interpreted on the basis of their cultural system (inclusive of social contexts, circulation, distribution, and reception) rather than a specific historical period.[118] Gell puts forth that art should not be read like a text, but rather, like its human counterpart, is a social agent and mediates within a social process.[119] Though Gell's arguments are aligned with the thesis inasmuch as the Kelsey Pendant is considered to be a social agent whose interpretation should include its cultural systems, the thesis diverges from Gell's approach insofar that Gell posits that an object's agency is dependent on context, whereby objects are not 'self-sufficient' and are 'secondary' agents to humans. In contrast, the thesis firmly argues that the Kelsey Pendant is an autonomous amulet that experientially inter/intra-acts within itself and other object on its own volition.[120]

[117] Latour, 2005, 74-78.

[118] Gell, 1998, 2-3.

[119] Gell, 1998, 6-7.

[120] Gell, 1998, 17-22.

Glenn Peers's art exhibition and accompanying publication, *Byzantine Things in the World*, is an interesting example of what may be considered to be such an exercise in experimental communication.[121] Peers highlights how Byzantine art has the capability to interact with art across time. His goal is to demonstrate that Byzantine and non-Byzantine worlds were porous and open to dynamic relations among all things in the human made and natural world.[122] He states that the '…project aims to make a case for a divergent understanding of how Byzantine things acted in the world, and its central design principle draws on past precedents that used analogy among otherwise unrelated cultures to form new meanings and experiences.'[123] Although one must always remain cognisant of the potential dangers associated with the application of concepts and ideals from vastly different time periods, the concept of analogy behind Peers's goal is particularly poignant with regard to this study. Amulet studies have traditionally acknowledged the fluidity between cultures in the eastern Mediterranean in early Byzantium but have nevertheless consistently examined socio-cultural traditions (inclusive of text and imagery) and phenomena within religious or cultural boundaries. Moreover, when comparisons within amulet studies are conducted, the extraordinary or curious aspects of the objects are highlighted to the detriment of the other "mundane" elements which are overlooked or brushed over.[124] Along a similar vein as Peers, this study looks to the dynamic and communicative relationships between the various elements of the Kelsey Pendant to provide new information about purpose, use, and experience.

[121] Peers, et al., 2013.

[122] Peers, 2013, 52.

[123] Peers, 2013, 54.

[124] Here I refer to Lincoln's 2018 argument regarding the benefits of 'weak' versus 'strong' comparisons.

Closer to the concept of how things act in the world is Silke Trzcionka's monograph, *Magic and the Supernatural in Fourth-Century Syria*, which endeavours to understand supernatural beliefs through social contexts in the fourth-century CE.[125] The study is neither anthropological nor sociological, but interdisciplinary, using tools from the social sciences to provide the necessary insight into late antique society.[126] Trzcionka's monograph recognises the need for a socio-cultural outlook in supernatural studies, which this study will also undertake. This monograph is a definitive example of how the consideration of societal contexts has the propensity to provide a more in-depth understanding of why and how people turned to supernatural techniques. Although Trzcionka's approach is innovative with regard to the previous scholarship about magic, a discourse between object, individual, and societal contexts is lacking.

Bissera Pencheva's work on icons can be considered to bridge some of the gaps in Tricionka's approach through its focus on the Byzantine icon and how it interacts with society (politics), the viewer, as well as their senses.[127] In '[t]he Performative Icon' and *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* Pentcheva describes interactions with icons as fundamentally performative insofar as they are a physical experience within an activated space.[128] Her suggestions that the icon embodies 'shifting sensual impressions' that have the

[125] Trzcionka, 2007, 20.

[126] Trzcionka, 2007, 20-23.

[127] Pentcheva, 2006b; Pentcheva, 2006a.

[128] Most pertinent is Pentcheva, 2006a, 640; See also Peers's (2004, 2) discussion is based on frames, experience, and liminal space. Byzantine frames should be considered sites of access and desire instead of points of separation. Regarding the interaction between the icon the viewer, Peers (2004, 133-134) says that 'The frame is a kind of threshold where the divine and human meet…. images through their edges, margins, borders—however that liminal space is described—framed the bodies of their viewers. That is to say, the liminal zone was a permeable space through in, and by which Christian and God sought contact.' Furthermore, the frame or marginal area enhanced the presence (through the shape, material composition, and content of the icon) that the Byzantines expected in their icons—margins or liminal space are a point of contact.

propensity to trigger memories of performative actions such as prayer, and that the changing appearances on the icon's surface along with the diversity of textures appeal to the sense of touch, are all pertinent to the outlook of the thesis's understanding of how objects inter/intra-act.[129] Thus, the thesis posits that through the elements of Kelsey Pendant, as Pentcheva argues about the image of the icon, the bearer is transported to a multisensory experience of the ritual act of listening to, and participating in, prayer where words are chanted or sung.[130]

An object's representation of its socio-political climate is also relevant to its participation in society. On this topic, the thesis makes use of studies dealing with imperial representations and their links with contemporary society. For example, Pentcheva posits that the procession of the icon (as an act) was as a catalyst within the political realm of legitimising rule (hereditary power) and divine protection; and, she suggests that the icon's procession supported the imperial agenda and its visual vocabulary represented rulership as well as imperial and divine power.[131] Ashley Jones discusses the use of the imperial coinage as talismanic jewellery in 'Icons of Power: The Late Antique Imperial Portrait as Image and Amulet'.[132] She argues that the imperial portrait on coins (perhaps, as the thesis suggests, like the image of the rider on the Kelsey Pendant) was considered to be an immanent image or an icon that allowed the bearer direct access to the power of the emperor, and thus served as a protective talisman.[133]

[129] Pentcheva, 2006a, 644, 648.

[130] Pentcheva, 2006a, 648.

[131] Pentcheva, (2006b, 190) claims that the imperial associations of Tyche and Victoria were transferred to Marian imagery, 190; See also Garipzanov, et al., 2017, 12, Garipzanov, 2018, 13. Garipzanov's ideas map onto Pentcheva's argument about the multivalent significance of the Marian Icon.

[132] Jones, A., 2016, 129

[133] Jones, A., 2016, 129.

In conjunction with potential associated with object representation, an object's material and materiality also speak to its capacity as an individual entity. As studies concerning material culture evolved, scholars were confronting the query of whether or not materiality (as a concept) embodied social contexts, agency, as well as material, or if the "material turn" was too heavily reliant upon theory relating to object agency and social contexts with little regard to material composition. Tim Ingold in conversation with Christopher Tilley, and Carl Knappett, is a pertinent example of how scholars navigated the issues surrounding material and materiality.[134]

In 'Materials against Materiality,' Ingold argues that scholarship should reevaluate its focus upon materiality and instead look towards the properties of materials.[135] For Ingold an important component of material studies lies in observations that consider (as well as engage in) processes of making objects.[136] In a rebuttal to Ingold's endeavour to return to the material, Tilley, in 'Materiality in Materials,' argues that material culture aims to understand human significance of objects and addresses the social lives of objects in relation to the social lives of people.[137] Tilley further argues that without social context, an object interpreted through the lens of its material properties is overly technical, and while Ingold's material focused perspective is an '…essential element of a much broader conception of materiality…,' it decontextualises the object from social and historical contexts, and thus, does not provide a holistic overview regarding the artefact.[138] Knappett's 'Materials with

[134] Ingold, 2007a; Ingold, 2007b; Tilley, 2007; Knappett, 2007.

[135] Ingold, 2007a, 9.

[136] Ingold, 2007b, 35-36.

[137] Tilley, 2007, 17.

[138] Tilley, 2007, 18-20.

Materiality,' however, takes a centrist approach to Ingold's and Tilley's arguments. Knappett states that materiality can be a useful way of understanding the intersection of the material and the social without one perspective taking over the other.[139] From the perspective of this thesis, it is imperative that the material (composition and the processes of making) as well as the materiality (agency, the social, and performance) of the Kelsey Pendant are considered.

With the concept of material as an indispensable point of inquiry and returning to Jones's above mentioned article regarding imperial coinage, it is pertinent that Jones argues that the value of numismatic jewellery was not based upon the recognisability of a specific emperor, but rather the image's potency was embodied in the portrayal of the emperor (a generic imperial image that had the potential to be redefined) coupled with the material composition of the coin.[140] Jones puts forth that the power of the coin amulet did not reside in magical names or invocations as in the Graeco-Roman amulet, rather Jones suggests that the imperial portrait on the coin acted in the stead of these names or invocations without any diminishing value associated with its apotropaic capacity.[141] With regard to the material value of coins, evidence from Pliny establishes that gold was beneficial for the wounded and for children as it served as an amulet against sorcery.[142] Moreover, Pliny stated that gold was also a beneficial cure for a myriad of ailments inclusive of hemorrhoids, putrid ulcers, and face lichens, all of which likely bolstered the perceived efficacy of gold coin-set jewellery.[143] Like Pentcheva's analysis of the Byzantine Icon, Jones's placement of emphasis upon the

[139] Knappett, 2007, 20.

[140] Jones, A., 2016, 133.

[141] Jones, A., 2016, 134.

[142] Pliny, the Elder, *Natural History*, 33.25 (transl. H. Rackham, 1952, 64-67); Jones, A., 2016, 133-134.

[143] Pliny, the Elder, *Natural History*, 33.25 (transl. H. Rackham, 1952, 64-67); Jones, A., 2016, 133-134.

power of material and the sensory experience, and her simplified definition of an amulet—an icon inscribed on specifically beneficial material that is worn on the body—iterates the importance of the interaction between material and the body within the area of amulet studies and provides one avenue (of many) of investigation for this analysis of the Kelsey Pendant as a case study.[144]

From this presentation of the most pertinent research, one may glean that the thesis makes use of various publications on late antique society, and in doing so moves far beyond the traditional remits of amulet studies.

[144] Jones, A., 2016, 137.

Chapter Two. The Kelsey Pendant: An Introduction

Since the thesis utilises the Kelsey Pendant as a case study, a detailed account of the pendant's attributes will be provided as a means to encapsulate the amulet as a continuously becoming material object reflective of its agential materiality (Video and Figures 1 and 2). Here, the examination of the pendant is two-fold. First, the study will provide a succinct synopsis of the method by which the amulet was produced. Second, the thesis will present the Kelsey Pendent by way of formal and ekphrastic analyses—inclusive of a succinct overview of the pendant (including its known history).[145] The discussion within this chapter is based on what the viewer or bearer sees. The process of investigation within this chapter will entail both micro and macro analyses whilst keeping the central query of the chapter, 'What do we see?', in the forefront of the examination.

The ekphrastic and formal analyses will not include suggestions regarding the categorisations associated with the elements of the pendant such as whether or not a component is definitively Christian or non-Christian, rather, the goal is to objectively describe the Kelsey Pendant whilst maintaining a focus upon placing the visual and textual aspects of the amulet in narrative form. This method of analysis will, in part, deconstruct the continuously becoming discourse between the elements of the pendant as well as provide insight to the attributes that the pendant may choose to veil or unveil at any given moment as a participant in its society, which is inclusive of an intrinsic, autonomous inter/intra-action,

[145] Bonner's 1942 analysis of the Kelsey Pendant is the closest example of a formal analysis of the pendant, but his engagement with the pendant provides a general, yet significant, overview of its attributes instead of an in-depth analysis which will be provided here.

an extrinsic, object-based (pendant and human) inter/intra-action, or both inter/intra-active experiences simultaneously.

There are few details about how the pendant came to the Kelsey Museum, but according to the museum, the pendant was acquired in Syria and is part of the Ayvaz collection, which is a collection of various amulets and charms from Syria and Phoenicia categorised as Jewish, pagan, or Christian and are provisionally dated to be no later than the eighth century CE.[146] As mentioned in Chapter One, the Kelsey Pendant is a pierced (perhaps with an awl-like tool prior to completely hardening), circular (albeit imperfect) bronze amulet that is 54 mm in diameter. The amulet is substantial; it weighs 17.384 grams but is quite thin (approximately 1 mm); however, its thickness is sufficient enough to display the illustrative content of each side without visual interruption from one side to the other. Upon looking at the pierced hole relative to the illustrative programmes of the obverse and reverse sides of the amulet, one notices that hole is centralised above the image of Christ in Majesty of the reverse side. This centrality is in contrast to the placement of the hole with respect to the central image on the obverse side of the pendant where the hole seems slightly skewed to the right above the angel's raised wing. If the hole were centralised with respect to the obverse side of the amulet, it would have been placed above the rider's head. The difference between the placement of the hole with regards to the imagery on both sides of the amulet causes a slight conundrum insofar as it may suggest that the bronze amulet was pierced prior to the creator's undertaking of the obverse side's illustrative programme. In this instance, the creator visually aligned the imagery of the reverse side with the pierced hole, whereas on the obverse side,

[146] See Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, "Amulet; Bronze; Copper," University of Michigan Library Digital Collections, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/k/kelsey/x-0000.02.6119/0000_02_6119p01.tif.; See Mouterde, 1942, 103-128; Nowakowski, 2016, indicates that some amulets may indeed be later than 700 CE. The Kelsey Pendant is no. 55, and its provenance is labeled as 'Ḥamāh,' Cult of Saints, E01758, http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E01758.

the creator had to accommodate the extant hole for the intended biblical text of the outermost border. The central image of the obverse side was then likely composed with less attention to the hole's location. Even though these are interesting concepts and are important to note, unfortunately, the thesis is unable to offer a definitive conclusion regarding these considerations.

Overall, the Kelsey Pendant is well preserved, even if there are some areas of superficial corrosion. Affected areas on the obverse side of the amulet include: the area above the left side of the rider's halo, the face of the rider within the halo (the corrosion bleeds outside of the halo's boundaries into the space beneath the angel's wing), a section below one of the angel's hands, and along the edge of the left side of the pendant near the rider's pennant. On the reverse side, corrosion is present in the areas within the outermost border of encircled text as well as various small areas within the space of the central image (especially the left side). The colour of the Kelsey Pendant is not entirely uniform; the patina of the bronze is overarchingly dark perhaps due to the type of material utilised or its age, but the areas that are corroded are lighter since the top layer of bronze has flaked away.

2.1 Method of Creation

Though the potential meaning and material composition of amulets have been examined, strangely enough the means by which letters and figures on amulets have been produced has not been discussed in academic literature.[147] Moreover, establishing the method of production is important because it allows one to infer how many objects similar to the Kelsey Pendant may have been created at any given point. For these purposes, in 2019, I interviewed two

[147] Pentcheva, 2010, 32.

professional metalsmiths with expertise in foundry techniques, jewellery, and small metal object casting—Professor James Obermeier at Northern Illinois University and Tamsie Ringler, an independent sculptor and foundry artist.[148] Each artist closely examined images and the video of the Kelsey Pendant. They were also shown images of the Holy Rider Amulet for comparative purposes, but the Kelsey Pendant was the primary focus of the interviews (Figures 4-6). Both Prof. Obermeier and Ms. Ringler suggested that a soft wax—perhaps beeswax as it was easily sourced in Late Antiquity—was used to create a model for the Kelsey Pendant and that the pendant was most likely created via a lost wax casting method.[149]

Professor Obermeier and Ms. Ringler suggest that once the wax was fashioned into a circular shape, sized, and properly smoothed out on both sides, the creator would then engrave each side of the wax model of the pendant. The images and textual components were likely created with various tools. From the extant marks on the Kelsey pendant, there are indications of the use of instruments with pointed ends, instruments with v-shaped edges, as well as blunt instruments to create the wider, shallow indentations.[150] Per Ms. Ringler, the

[148] It should be noted that both interviewees were clear in stating that their suggestions were based on their experiences and knowledge acquired about casting processes. Their suggestions are helpful but should not be considered definitive as they contain some level of speculation. These interviews were performed because they allowed specific questions about the Kelsey Pendant to be addressed. Furthermore, the meeting with Prof. Obermeier involved the creation of an experimental wax model upon which marks were made (utilising different tools) to ascertain how different lines may have been created on the Kelsey Pendant. Prof. Obermeier has small metal object and jewellery making expertise, and thus was able to speak to the techniques that were likely used to create a small, thin object the like the Kelsey Pendant. Ms. Ringler has extensive foundry experience and was able to comment upon aspects such as the melting point of bronze and possible contaminants that may have been in the molten bronze which likely created areas of corrosion on the amulet. Furthermore, the study chose to interview two experts to ensure that the suggestions put forth had a strong foundation upon which to build and support arguments that will be presented throughout the thesis. Both Prof. Obermeier and Ms. Ringler were interviewed separately and offered their own opinions based on their analyses of the images and video of the Kelsey Pendant. The results from either interview were not shared with the other artist.

[149] See Weinryb, 2016, 44-53 for a discussion of the lost wax technique.

[150] The markings are reminiscent of the marks that would be made utilising today's printmaking or woodcarving tools.

deeply etched marks on the Kelsey Pedant would be difficult to accomplish if the amulet were hand engraved on cold metal, thus the creation of a wax model is a more plausible scenario.

Additionally, aspects of the engraving marks on the Kelsey Pendant support the concept that a wax model was used. For example, the cross form that begins the inscription on the outermost boundary of the reverse side of the pendant is slightly raised on the left, indicating that the mark was created on a soft, pliable surface like wax (Figure 7). Furthermore, some areas of the pictorial and textual programme of the amulet retain the shape of the instrument used for their rendering, which again strongly indicates the employment of a soft material (Figure 8). In this example, the garments of the rider and the angel were likely created with a v-shaped instrument that made spaced, deeper marks that are raised on each side; whereas the horses legs were likely made with a blunt instrument, which created shallow indentations indicative of a form but with less detail. Additionally, the circular shapes upon the end points of the symbols within the middle register of the reverse side of the amulet have striations, and it may be suggested that these marks are the result of the creator's attempt to draw the circles using one continuous stroke (Figure 9). When the instrument is pressed into the wax and guided to make the shape of the circle, the instrument slightly skips as it pushes against the material.[151] The wax material is also able to accommodate both deeply etched and shallow markings on each side without visually (or physically) interrupting the illustrative programme on the opposite side.[152] Moreover, the

[151] Even though the manner in which these marks came into being is unable to be proved, this suggestion has been offered because during the interview with Prof. Obermeier, circular marks similar to those on the Kelsey Pendant were made upon a wax model. The marks on the experimental model were striated like the marks on the Kelsey Pendant.

[152] The experimental wax model was ~1mm thick. Various markings were made on each side of the model and within the experiment, the markings did not show through from one side to the other.

utilisation of pliable material such as a wax model would allow the creator to correct any erroneous marks with ease.

The study suggests that the lost wax process utilised for the Kelsey Pendant was meant to create one amulet at a time using individual, one-time use, molds. This suggestion is due to the various details that the Holy Rider's and Kelsey Pendant's illustrative and textual programmes do not share. These observations suggest that in addition to employing the requisite components to make the amulets, each creator applied a certain level of artistic license, which would have been more difficult to achieve with a casting process that allowed multiple copies of the same object from the same mold. Once the mold was broken and the medallion removed, the metal would be soft enough to create a pierced hole. With regard to the number of amulets similar to the Kelsey Pendant that could have been produced, the study posits that objects like the Kelsey Pendant were not bespoke objects (e.g., a handmade piece of jewellery) though they may have been created in batches; however, at the same time, this type of object was likely not mass-produced.

2.2 Obverse

The following observations detail the obverse and reverse sides of Kelsey Pendant beginning from its outermost rim working towards its centre.

The obverse of the Kelsey Pendant is comprised of an illustrative scene encircled by engraved lines and Greek text, which together act as a visual border (Figure 1). The image is primarily comprised of an angel facing a mounted rider in the act of smiting what may be understood to be a female demon.

2.2.1 Border

The outermost boundary of the pendant is denoted by two lines (interspaced by text) that are physically interrupted by a series of small punch dots (hereafter *punch dot lines*). The punch dots provide a visual sense of ornamentality and seem intentionally created to coalesce with the lines as a means to portray continuity, but yet, offer a sense of permeability (Figure 1). The text between the *punch dot lines* is visually and physically interrupted by a pierced hole, marking the place where a string or a chain could be threaded for the pendant to be worn or carried (Figure 10). Immediately to the right of the hole is an inscribed cross symbol that precedes the beginning of the Greek text (Figure 1).[153]

The text is inscribed in Greek uncial script and reads in a clockwise manner as follows:

ΟΚΑΤΟΙΚΟΝΕΝΒΟΗΘΙΑΤΟΥΥΨΙCΤΟΥΕΝCΚΕΠΗΤΟΥΘΥΤΟΥΟΥΡΑΝΟΥΑΥΛΙCΘΙCΕΤΑΙΕΡΙΤΟΚΩ[154]

Once the text is placed in a lowercase script the line reads:

οκατοικονενβοηθιατουυψιστουενσκεπητουθυτουουρανουαυλισθισεταιεριτοκω.

And when the line of text is placed in prose form, it reads:

‘‘Ο κατοικ{ο}<ῶ>ν ἐν βοηθ<ε>ίᾳ τοῦ ὑψίστου ἐν σκέπῃ τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ αὐλισθ{ι}<ή>σεται. ἐρ<ε>ῖ τ{ο}<ῷ> κ(υρί)ῳ.’[155]

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[153] The translations of the Greek texts upon the amulet are my own unless otherwise noted.

[154] Most pertinent is see Cavallo, 2011, 128-134 for a brief overview of script hands in Late Antiquity. See also Cavallo and Maehler, 1987.

[155] The philological transcription of the text is from the Campbell Bonner Database, ‘Talismans - Magical Pendant: Holy Rider, Angel (A) Jesus Christ, Inscription, Characteres and Lion (B)’, http://www2.szepmuveszeti.hu/talismans/cbd/1497. The study also utilises the philological description system of The Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (2010-), developed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, editor-in-chief: Á. M. Nagy. The legend is as follows: Sigla—[ ] a lacuna or gap in the original text, restored by the editor; <> editorial restoration or correction; { } editorial deletion; {{ }} ancient deletion; . . missing letters (extent known, one dot for each letter); - - - missing letters (extent unknown); ( ) abbreviation expanded by the editor; α?] uncertain reading; | line break; || line break after every fifth line, http://www2.szepmuveszeti.hu/talismans/glossary/2061. *One correction was made in the philological transcription from the Bonner Database—αὐλισθήσεται was changed to αὐλισθ{ι}<ή>σεται. This is to

The inscription is the first verse and part of the second verse of the ninetieth Psalm of the Septuagint:[156] "He who dwells with the help of the Most High will abide in the shelter of God of heaven. He will say to the Lord...."[157] The text ends to the left of the pierced hole, but unlike the beginning of the inscription, the ending is not marked by a cross symbol. The potential reasons for the omission of the cross symbol will be discussed later in the thesis; however, at this point, the study suggests that it was likely a purposeful act. In considering the visual composition of Greek text that encircles (in conjunction with the *punch dot lines*, borders) the central image of the amulet, it should be noted that the text itself is physically bordered (above and below) by the two punch-dot lines. In relation to the entire obverse side of the pendant, it may be understood that the textual inscription in conjunction with these lines act as one boundary that encompasses the entire central image both physically and metaphorically.

2.2.2 Overview of Central Image

The central image portrays an active scene, evoking a sense of tension with which the pendant and the bearer must engage. The rider, seated atop a horse is in the act of leaping over the demon in the direction of the inviting angel. Even though the physical space of the amulet constrains the scene, one can imagine the dynamism necessary to embody the intention of the image.

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accommodate the correct spelling of the term in Psalms 90 of the Septuagint while remaining cognisant of the additional iota that follows the theta within the inscription upon the Kelsey Pendant.

[156] Bonner, 1942, 468 mistakenly states that this verse is the ninety first Psalm in the Septuagint. However, it is the ninetieth Psalm of the Septuagint, which notes its origin from Psalm 91 of the HMT, see Rahlfs-Hanhart, 2006, 100.

[157] Most pertinent is Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ. See also Lust, et al., 2003.

The horse's stride visually forms an arc above the rider's intended target, which is further emphasised by the sharp arrowed tip of the rider's spear that points directly toward (and even slightly touches) the demon, signaling its impending death. The angel stands upon a rectangular form (denoting a ladder) facing the rider, which alludes to their presence within the terrestrial and celestial realms in the same instance. The angel's arms are held up with their hands outstretched towards the rider and his horse, indicating an invitation. At the same time, however, the angel's staff or rod (held in their left hand) gestures towards the demon, underscoring their cognisance of the beast's presence.[158]

The demon has yet to be pierced and is still standing. The demon stands on all fours, and upon closer inspection of the illustrative details, one finds that the demon is surrounded by undulating snakes or worms from below, and small markings that resemble insects from above—all of which indicate an infested, vile presence (See Figure 1). The demon faces outward, looking into the bearer's space as if to challenge not only the unfolding illustrated scenario in which they directly participate, but also the bearer who, through their gaze as a viewer, occupies a liminal space between acting as a passive participant within the image and their own reality. Thus, it may be suggested that with regard to the image, the viewer or bearer is left to negotiate whether the illustration of the rider's attack is indicative of either an act about to happen, or an insurmountable act that will inevitably be left unfinished. The particular detail of the potential demise of the demon must be understood as intentional since attention to ornament and many other details within the illustration are meticulously rendered.

[158] The study posits that the angel holds a staff or rod due to the fact that the line extends above its wing, but the study does take into consideration that the "rod" only goes as far as what can be considered the length of the angel's finger. It should be noted that what the study considers to be a rod may indeed be a finger, but its extension to the lined border, the physical depth of the engraving, and the differentiating depiction of the angel's other arm is highly supportive of the thesis's conclusion.

2.2.2.1 The Rider and Horse

Several aspects of the pictorial representation of the rider on horseback serve as examples of the creator's attention to detail. Not every aspect of the image is particularly ornamented, however, it is clear that the creator applied detail as they deemed appropriate. The nimbate rider is seated atop their steed in mid-stride (Figure 1). The nimbus in conjunction with the rider's head are disproportionately large in comparison to the rest of his body. The rider's head and face are heavily corroded, but there are some details which demarcate a diadem—curved lines that depict the top of the rider's crown with a string of dotted lines along the top of the rider's forehead indicating where the diadem sits upon his head. Other aspects within the area of the nimbus (including the rider's face) cannot be easily identified due to corrosion; however, several marks that resemble large dots (indentations) may indicate other details or facial features. It is difficult to definitively determine if the rider is looking forward, facing the viewer, or is looking down towards the demon. However, due to how the rider's head is slightly slanting downward in comparison to the rest of his body, which sits upright, it may be suggested that the rider is looking in the direction of the creature he intends to slay.

The rider wears an ornamented garment. His upper garment is comprised of horizontal stripes, and his trousers are comprised of vertical stripes interrupted by a prominent horizontal line in the middle. These markings may be indicative of either an intricate textile pattern or the ornament of his armour; and the horizontal line in the middle of the rider's lower leg perhaps represents the top rim of a boot. The rider also wears a mantle (held by a small disk-like clasp) depicted to appear as though it is flowing in the wind behind him. The rider holds a long, narrow spear that is ornamented with a cross and flowing pennant upon its apex. Seemingly, due space constraints, a portion of the cross's tip was engraved within the *punch-dot lines* and is situated directly below the line of text (Figure 11).

The Holy Rider Amulet also depicts the spear's cross, however, the top of the cross is directly below (but slightly touching) the lower *punch dot line* (Figure 12). The tip of the Kelsey Pendant's cross is visually curved; however, the thesis posits that the curvature is meant to mimic the left and right cross points which also have a slightly curved shape (Figure 11). A shallow, wide indentation represents the rider's raised arm and deeply grooved lines represent the fingers on his hand holding the spear. The spear comes down behind the rider's leg and has a needle-like pointed arrow on its end that seems to touch, but does not lance, the demon. It may be suggested that the contrast in detail between the rider's arm and his fingers is likely meant to underscore the fact that he holds and controls the weapon that is meant to destroy the creature.

In looking at the image of the rider upon the horse, the illustration of the rider is larger than the horse, which further underscores the importance of the rider's role in the scene. However, the depiction of the horse is detailed and may be understood to complement the rider in ornament and purpose.

As previously mentioned, the horse is depicted in mid-stride leaping over the creature. Its legs are narrow with minor details indicating its hooves. Like the rider, the horse has been fitted with ornamental accoutrements or decorated armour, noting a well-manicured animal as well as a status that is in line with the rider. The horse is in profile view and its head and face carry the most detail (Figure 13). The horse is bridled, and its face is clear and carefully outlined with indications of an eye, a snout, and an agape mouth. The horse is wearing an ornamental headdress that begins on top of its head and is marked by a vertical wavy line that likely represents a feather. The headdress extends along the line that outlines the horse's neck with small marks that resemble smaller feathers. Three of these smaller marks extend

downward to form longer vertical markings—two of which end in circular indentations representing what may be decorative pom-poms. There are two studded belt-like straps that extend along the horse's torso from the base of its neck across its body, which culminate in a loop atop of its buttocks at the base of its tail. The tail, like the rider's mantle, flows in the wind, and is defined by two flowing *punch dot lines* similar to the lines that form the outermost border. The other aspects of the horse's body are bereft of ornamental designs but have been carefully composed in order to convey a complete illustration of the horse's form in profile view.

In considering the visual composition of the rider, the direction of his gaze, his horse, and the demon, one must note three prominent aspects. First, one may posit that the visual cues that continuously underscore the demon's presence in relation to the rider further reinforces their tenuous relationship. For example, if one's eye were to follow the marks outlining the rider's lower leg—beginning at his bent knee, moving down his leg (which appears to be parallel with the horse's hind legs), and ending at the toe of his foot—one is able to notice the subtle cue of the rider's foot pointing towards the demon (Figure 1). This gesture serves as a reminder of the overarching purpose of the scene, which is the rider's endeavour to smite the demon. Second, several key details about the aspect of rider and horse within the central image signal military prowess. As the bearer contemplates the illustrative scene, the concept of war against the creature is likely clear. The rider's garments or armour coupled with the horse's ornamental trappings denote an elevated stature historically equated with equestrians or cavalrymen.[159] Third, the illustration is rich with details that emphasise the high level of activity within the scene. The representation of the rider mounted upon the

[159] See for example, Devijver, 1996.

horse underscore motion. The rider's mantle (military chlamys) and the pennant upon the spear both billow in the wind created by the horse's long strides.[160] Based on its depiction in mid-stride, the horse is already understood to be in movement. However, it is the horse's tail that steadily flows behind the steed as it leaps over the demon coupled with its agape mouth (likely referencing heavy breathing) that hints at the physical exertion the horse puts forth. When these aspects of movement are combined, they tell a tale of an active endeavour to conquer a foe before it escapes or causes harm.

2.2.2.2 The Angel

With reference to scale, the representation of the angel is, from a visual perspective, the second most prominent feature of the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant. In profile view, the angel is shown facing the rider with arms held outward in an inviting gesture. The illustration of the angel includes details of hair, an eye, nose, and a mouth. The angel is nimbate and wears a garment decorated with vertical stripes. Further details of the garment (a fitted textile—that narrows, slightly flares, narrows again, then finally flares out at the bottom) indicate that it is a gown with folds and general dimensionality. The angel has two feathered wings—one wing stands upright with its feathered tips directly facing the rider and horse, and the other wing is folded behind the angel's back. Behind the raised wing and above the angel's nimbus is an eight-pointed star. The angel stands on two feet (one in front of the other at the eye level of the demon) upon a ladder illustratively demarcated with vertical lines.[161]

In interpreting the angel's role within the illustrative programme of the obverse side of the amulet, one cannot overlook the visual cues that denote an inter/intra-action between

[160] Donceel-Voûte, 2018, 26.

[161] Maguire, 1989, 215.

the angel and the mounted rider. Aesthetically, they both don a nimbus and share similar ornamental motifs upon their garments, which may be suggested to not only link the angel and the rider visually, but in purpose and function as well. As previously stated, the stripes upon the rider's garments may be reminiscent of a textile design or decorated armour, both of which reference a person of a certain stature inclusive of a warrior.[162] Since the angel's garment shares a similar striped motif to those of the rider, one may posit that the angel may be of a certain stature or that they represent a warrior as well.

The angel's presence fulfills two roles. First, the angel draws attention to the rider. The angel not only faces and looks directly towards the rider, but the feathers upon their raised wing also point in his direction. These details serve as signposts which direct the viewer to the mounted rider and the act within which he is engaged. The angel's second role may be understood to embody a dual purpose. In this instance, the angel serves as one who invites and as one who warns of a malicious presence. As previously noted, through the manner in which their arms as well as their body are positioned, the angel offers an invitation to the rider whilst simultaneously directing the viewer to the demon. The fashion in which the angel is illustrated not only provides directional instructions, leading the viewer's eye to areas in which they should directly engage with the illustration, but it also signifies the angel's cognisance of the rider's purpose as well as the looming danger. It is suggested that their invitation to the rider is a gesture of approval, which also infers the angel's role as a messenger of the deity and an acting bastion of support for the rider. Here, the rider is made aware that he is not alone in his endeavour to smite the contemptible creature even though he

[162] See for example, Mackay-Smith et al., 1984.

must commit the act on his own within the terrestrial realm, which further underscores the importance of the rider's purpose as a conqueror.

Based on the ladder upon which the angel stands, one may posit that the angel is not of the earthly realm; however, there are no other visual indications which imply that the rider is from anywhere other than the terrestrial realm. It may be argued that the nimbus may serve as an artistic cue of the rider's propensity to occupy multiple realms like the angel. However, it may also be argued that the nimbus has a multivalent purpose. On one hand, the nimbus may signify an inspired person such as an earthly king who has direct communication with a deity from another realm whilst remaining within his own realm.[163] On the other hand, the nimbus may create a form of tension between the rider and the realms (the earthly realm and the celestial realm). This tension is possibly best described as a push and pull scenario that plays upon the rider's potential liminality. The nimbus may act as a symbol of the rider's ability to reside within the angel's realm; however, based upon his regalia and his ultimate purpose, it is understood that his relegation to the earthly realm as a warrior is clear.

2.2.2.3 The Demon

The demon appears to be female due to the long hair and three hanging teats in the area of her underbelly. Her hair is stylised across her forehead and her long locks spread over part of her backside and hang down past her shoulders. The demon's head and forelegs are depicted frontally. The details of her face include two eyes and a slightly bulbous, vertical line demarcating a nose. In opposition to her head and forelegs, the demon's body, hindlegs, and long thin tail are depicted in profile view underscoring her elongated beastly demeanor. Her

[163] Canepa, 2009, 100-109.

legs are short, and her paws are comprised of long pointed claws. Contrasting the stasis of her forelegs, the demon's hind legs indicate potential movement as they appear to be in mid-stride. The demon is illustrated to engage directly with the bearer.

Overall, the depiction of the demon is awkward, her body is illustrated in an unnatural stance, which is perhaps a visual allusion to her nature. Directly below the demon are three squiggly lines that likely represent snakes or worms. These lines seem to intentionally occupy her space as they are placed in the areas between her two front legs, beneath her underbelly, and underneath her two hind legs. From above she is surrounded by four small depictions that are reminiscent of flying insects—bereft of wings, but with marks that resemble legs. Even though these forms do not have wings, their placement above the creature is indicative of hovering. These insects, like the snakes or worms, have been strategically placed around the demon—one above her head, one above the centre of her body, one above her hind quarters, and another above her tail. The only other illustrative aspect that is directly within the demon's "personal" sphere is the point of the rider's spear, which, as previously noted, seems to be touching (perhaps slightly piercing) the top of her right shoulder, but the demon does not yet seem to be affected by the spear or the rider's presence.

2.2.2.4 Text within the Central Image

The final aspect of the central image is the text. On the left side of the pendant beginning below the rider's banner and ending beneath the horse's hind legs are six lines of uppercase Greek text in an uncial script. The first three lines are located beneath the rider's pennant and above the horse's tail. The fourth and fifth lines are located beneath the horse's tail and above its hind legs. The sixth line is located beneath the horse's hind legs and behind the rider's foot. The inscriptions from top to bottom are as follows: line one—ЄIC; line two—ΘCON;

line three—ΙΚ; line four—ΟΝΤλ; line five—Κ; line six—λΚλ. They create the following text:

ЄΙCΘCONΙΚΟΝΤλΚλΚλ

Or, using a lowercase script:

εισθσονικονταακακα.

When the words are separated, the line can be understood as:
‘εἷς θ(εὸ)ς ὁ νικ{ο}<ω̃>ν τὰ κακά,’[164] which then translates to— “One God who conquers evil.”[165]

This line of text as well as its placement within the central area of the obverse side of the pendant aligns with the entire active scene of conquest, and thus, can be considered to support the purpose of the illustrated details within the image—to subdue the malefic intentions of the demon.

2.3 Reverse

The reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is visually reminiscent of its obverse insofar as the central pictorial programme is encircled by engraved lines and Greek text, forming a border between the edges of the object and its centre (Figure 2). In contrast to the obverse side, however, the reverse side contains three illustrated scenes instead of one. The scenes are each

[164] CBd-1497. The Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (2010-); See note 129 for philological description system.

[165] Most pertinent is Liddell and Scott, 1996; See also Bonner, 1942, 468 who offers the following translation “‘There is one God who conquers the evil things,”’ and Bonner further claims that this saying is found on many late Syrian amulets; Emde Boas, et.al, 2019.

separated from one another by a horizontal line (which spans the diameter of the amulet) of either text or a mix of text and symbols. It may be understood that the separation of scenes is not only a visual exercise, but also an indication that these scenes have the propensity to act as individual entities within an inter/intra-active experience.

2.3.1 Overview of Central Image

The central image is comprised of three prominent, spatially equal, registers that are separated by inscriptions of text or symbols which are smaller in scale. The top register is an illustration of the throne scene which is composed of Christ in Majesty encompassed in a mandorla flanked by the Evangelists in their symbolic forms. On Christ's left are representations of an ox below and angel above, and on their right are representations of a lion below and eagle above. Beneath the composition of Christ in Majesty is a line of small text. The middle register is comprised of a line of six *charaktêres* symbols with small circles upon their endpoints. Beneath the middle register is a line comprised of nine small symbols. Some of these symbols are similar to the larger *charaktêres* in the middle register, some resemble certain letters of the alphabet (e.g., the Greek Π or the Hebrew ח), and others are not readily recognisable. The bottom register is composed of a lion leaping over a snake in the direction of a scorpion.

2.3.2 Borders

There are several elements that act as borders upon the reverse side of the amulet. The outermost border encircles the entire central image; the mid-tier border separates the top pictorial register from the middle register of symbols; and the base-tier border separates the middle register from the bottom pictorial register.

The outermost border of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is similar to the obverse of the pendant in that it occupies the circular rim of the amulet and there are two *punch dot lines* mediated by a line of Greek text. The text is also visually and physically interrupted by a pierced hole. In comparison to the piercing on the obverse side, the rim of the hole on the reverse side slightly juts out, which suggests that the amulet was bored from the obverse side.

In line with the obverse side, the text of the outermost border begins to the right of the pierced hole and reads in a clockwise manner with a cross symbol marking the beginning of the text, but not the end. The text reads as follows:

ϲϕϼϡΓΙϹΘΥΖΟΝΤΟϹΦΥΛΑΞΟΝΑΠΟΠΑΝΤΟϹΚΑΚΟΥΤΟΝΦΟΡΟΥΝΤΑΤΟΦΥΛΑΚΤΗΡΙΟΝΤΟΥ

which reads in lowercase form as—

σφραγισθυζοντοσφυλαξοναποπαντοσκακουτονφορουντατοφυλακτηριοντου.

When the letters are separated to form individual words, the text reads as follows:

‘σφραγὶς θ(εο)ῦ ζ{ο}<ῶ>ντος. Φύλαξον ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ τὸν φοροῦντα τὸ φυλακτήριον τοῦ<το>.’[166]

And in translation, the sentence it states,

“Seal of the living God, guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil.”[167]

[166] CBd-1497. The Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (2010-); See note 129 for philological description. I suggest that there is a comma between ‘God’ and ‘Guard’ instead of a full stop.

[167] Most pertinent is Liddell and Scott, 1996; See also Bonner, 1942, 470 offers the following translation “‘Seal of the living God, protect from all evil him who wears this phylactery (amulet),”’; Emde Boas, et al., 2019.

This line of text is not a biblical verse like the outermost border of the obverse side of the pendant, but it discloses the amulet's purpose and also serves as a request to the deity or the seal.

2.3.2.1 Mid-tier Border

The Greek uncial text in the mid-tier border is comprised of five words from Isaiah 6:3 of the Septuagint, part of the Trisagion, and reads from left to right.[168]

ΛΓΙΟCΛΓΙΟCΛΓΙΟCΚCCΛΒΛѠΘ

In its lowercase form it reads—

αγιοσαγιοσαγιοσκσσαβαωθ,

and in prose it reads—

'ἅγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κ(ύριο)ς Σαβαώθ.'[169]

This translates to:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts."[170]

The final border of the reverse side separates the middle (six *charaktêres*) and the bottom (lion leaping over a snake towards a scorpion) registers. The line is comprised of nine characters and is a mixture of text and symbols that cannot be readily identified or translated.

[168] Most pertinent is Rahlfs, 2006, ΗΣΑΙΑΣ 6:3, vol II., 573. See also Levy and McKinnon, 2001, the Trisagion is a chant sung as part of the Eastern Christian liturgy.

[169] CBd-1497. The Campbell Bonner Magical Gems Database (2010-).

[170] See Liddell and Scott, 1996; Brown, et al., 1996, 838 clarify that (צבא), Σαβαώθ is originally the plural form of a word in Hebrew.

The line begins with five signs that are reminiscent of letters from various languages—ϭϬϪϩϬ. The next four symbols are similar to the *charaktêr* symbols within the middle register, but the points do not all culminate in small circles. Unlike the mid-tier border, this line is not straight, instead, it visually meanders around the imagery of the bottom register. For example, the seventh symbol sits atop the lion's head and the eighth and ninth symbols are separated by the scorpion's tail. This visual anomaly may suggest that this entire line (or at least the last four signs) may have been inserted after the images of the lion, snake, and scorpion were rendered. Furthermore, one may posit that the components of this line not only act as a border, but (like the symbols of the middle register) may also act as an unintelligible or mysterious additions to the amulet's illustrative programme as a means to present a supplementary level of mystique, protection, or secrecy.[171]

2.3.3 Top Register A: The Throne Scene

As previously noted, the first pictorial register of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is a rendering of the throne scene which is comprised of Christ in Majesty seated within a mandorla, flanked by the four Evangelists in their symbolic forms. The image of the enthroned Christ is small in scale. Christ is seated frontally, is depicted with details that reference a nimbus, and has small circular indentations (two eyes, a nose, and a mouth) for facial features. Within the area of the nimbus is the upper portion of a cross symbol highlighted by small vertically etched lines meant to indicate a background (Figure 7). Christ's face is slightly turned to the right but retains an overall frontal perspective. The depiction of the face is amorphous and does not have any sharply rendered lines to outline its shape, instead the face is delineated by small, heightened areas on the left and the right sides

[171] Faraone, 2018, 179-182 discusses the significance of inscribed symbols, letters, and truncated words and names upon amulets.

and the dotted facial features lie within the small indentation in the centre of the raised areas. It may be argued that the visual contrasts between the raised areas, the indentations, the flat areas, and the etched lines of Christ's nimbus were intended to create a sense of dimensionality and further separate the face (in the foreground) from the cross symbol (in the background).

Situated below Christ's head are two square panels, the left panel contains three vertical lines, and the right panel is marked with an X (perhaps the Greek chi). The thesis posits that the left panel is a representation of the upper portion of Christ's garment since it is similar to the bottom portion of the rendered figure; and the right panel is a depiction of a closed book reminiscent of other illustrations of Christ in Majesty with a closed book in hand (Figures 14-17). On the top left corner of the striped left panel there is also a vertical (slightly leaning to the left) indentation, which may be a marking indicative of Christ performing the benediction, which may also be gleaned from Figures 18-21 that depict Christ in Majesty in the same pose. Since, for the most part, the interior portion of the mandorla is not corroded and there are not any other extraneous markings in the area, one may understand that the indentation was created intentionally. However, its vague detailing makes it impossible to definitively identify.

It is pertinent to note that the textile pattern of the Christ's garment is reminiscent of the garments worn by the rider, but more so, the angel on the obverse side of the amulet, which visually and metaphorically links these figures as well as the obverse and reverse sides of the amulet. Other than the striped patterned garment, there are markings that may indicate the throne in which Christ is seated. At the bottom of Christ's garment is a profile representation of a foot that rests upon the bottom of the mandorla. The foot is not

particularly detailed, but the form has been emphasised by a deep line marking the bottom rim of the garment. Furthermore, the Christ's legs seem to be crossed, and the right leg looks as if it is turned in a manner to accommodate the foot's profile position. Visually, the heel portion if the foot has a bulbous shape that narrows as the foot lengthens towards the front or toe area.

2.3.4 Top Register B: Four Evangelists in Symbolic Form Flanking the Mandorla

The four Evangelists in their symbolic forms flank the enthroned Christ and look as though they emanate from the mandorla (Figure 2). With consideration to scale, each figure is approximately equal in size to, and does not visually overwhelm, the centralised illustration of Christ. On the left side of the mandorla is a depiction of an angel hovering over an ox. Beginning the analysis with the angel, one can see that the angel is depicted in profile view, is nimbate, and their body is situated in a diagonal fashion. There are few defining details associated with the angel other than their wing that frames the left side of the mandorla. These details include—the decorative aspect of their garment, small markings that infer hair, and a disproportionately long outstretched arm. There are small indentations that are indicative of facial features (three markings that perhaps signal two eyes and a mouth). The position of these markings infer that the angel's head is turned to look back towards Christ. The arm has demarcations of a garment sleeve (four short lines on the upper arm), stretches in the direction of the outer band, and ends in a circular shape. Due to the circle's size in relation to the thinly drawn arm, it does not resemble a hand. Instead, it looks as if the angel is holding an object which cannot be readily identified. The illustrative portion of their garment has a striped design like that of Christ as well as both the angel and rider on the obverse side of the amulet.

Below the angel is a figure of an ox, which is mainly corroded. Nonetheless, one is still able to ascertain that the ox is in profile view and its body is comprised of two different types of markings—deep etchings and more broad, undefined indentations. The ox seems to be stretching towards the outer band of the pendant, and it does not look to be standing as its body is low and long. One is able to see the more deeply engraved portions of the ox's body including the features of its head (one eye, two horns, markings indicative of a mane, a small snout, and a mouth), its long, thin front leg, and the remains of what may have been its tail. The ox's leg is drawn at a ninety-degree angle (short edge as the upper leg and long edge as lower leg) and it seems to be pushing or stretching towards two parallel, vertical, squiggly lines directly in front of (and touching) its leg, which are visually suggestive of a flame.

On the right side of the mandorla is a depiction of an eagle above a lion. The eagle is located opposite the angel, is in profile view, and (like the angel) is situated diagonally. Much like the angel and the ox, the eagle is rendered with sparse details but is characterised with sufficient visual information to elicit an identification. There are details indicating an eye, a smooth beak, the upper portion of its body, and an extended arm that reaches towards the outer band of the amulet. Interestingly, the eagle's body and the feathered portion of its head have a striped motif (similar to the garment of the angel and the other previously mentioned characters on the obverse side of the amulet) to represent its feathers. The eagle's legs are not conventionally rendered, but instead, the eagle is portrayed with a long, thin, outstretched arm (like the angel and ox) that extends from its shoulder and ends in two flame-like parallel, vertical, squiggly lines similar to those seen within the pictorial space of the ox. The eagle's wing frames the upper right side of the mandorla. At this point, it may be suggested that the two wings (that of the eagle and that of the angel) serve a particular purpose by framing each side of the mandorla. In this sense, the position of the wings underscores the presence and

status of Christ in Majesty as they refocus the viewer's eyes to the central aspect within this scene.

The final figure that flanks the mandorla is a lion. The lion is drawn in profile view in the same manner as the ox with a mix of deeply engraved lines and broad indentations. The lion is detailed with a long, substantial mane (on top of its head and along its neck), an ear, one eye, a widely agape mouth, a snout, an elongated and thin front leg, as well as a hint of its tail. The lion's unmistakably open mouth infers its ferocity as the viewer may imagine the lion roaring as it moves toward the edge of the amulet. Like the ox, the lion does not appear to be standing, and its unpronounced lower body stretches towards the right outer band. As it has been noted with the ox and the eagle, the lion's leg is outstretched and also ends in two flame-like parallel, vertical, squiggly lines. Additionally, with regard to the above-mentioned purpose of the angel's and the eagle's wings acting as a framing mechanism for the mandorla, it may be suggested that the amorphous bodies of the ox and lion that flank the bottom portion of the mandorla also act as a base upon which the mandorla sits, further emphasising the centrality of Christ in Majesty.

When considered as a whole, the scene of the upper register offers the viewer a scene that is neither entirely static nor full of action. Instead, the scene highlights the centralised Christ whilst underscoring the flanking Evangelists's integral connection to the throne scene, their relationship with each other (through visual cues such as the striped patterns), as well as their relationship with the rider and angel on the obverse side of the amulet. Thus, this scene may be understood to be an attribute of the Kelsey Pendant that links the two faces of the amulet, highlighting the potential of inter/intra-actions between elements of the amulet as well as the amulet's propensity to act as a unified object.

2.3.5 Middle Register: Charaktêres

The middle register is comprised of six prominent *charaktêres*, which all have small circles or rings upon their ends. Reading from left to right, the first *charaktêr* is reminiscent of an eight-pointed star much like to the star above the angel's nimbus on the obverse side. The second *charaktêr* is comprised of what may be considered zig-zag lines or two slightly distorted lowercase zeds (Greek zeta)—one placed on top of the other.[172] The third through fifth *charaktêres* are reminiscent of letters of the alphabet—the uppercase T (Greek tau), the uppercase K (Greek kappa), and a rounded uppercase E (or a lowercase Greek epsilon), respectively. Even though, these charaktêres cannot be definitively categorised as letters of the Greek alphabet, a notation of the visual similarities is important. With regards to the sixth *charaktêr*, one may posit that it can be likened to a fancifully drawn cross symbol. It does not specifically look like a letter, instead, it looks like a long, slightly curved line that begins and ends in a circle. This long line is then intersected by a shorter horizontal line, which is not adorned with small circles upon its ends.

2.3.6 Bottom Register: The Lion, Snake, and Scorpion

The bottom register of the reverse side entails a scene composed of a lion leaping over a snake in the direction of a scorpion. The lion is in profile view and is depicted much in the same way as the lion within the top register, however, there are some differences. The lion has pronounced markings indicating a long mane, two front legs, two hind legs, paws, a long tail that curves downwards at its end, an eye, a snout, and an agape mouth. The *charaktêr* directly above the lion's head (part of the base-tier border) looks as if it is a separate entity from the lion; however, it squarely sits upon the lion's head. The lion's body is narrow and is defined by broad, general markings with a darker shaded area indicating its back. Its tail is

[172] Faraone, 2018, 8 for association of *charaktêres* with Greek letters. See also Gordon, 2011.

demarcated by one long, deeply etched line and its forelegs and hind legs are composed of darker, broad indentations that have slight details noting hints of fur. The lion's paws and sharp claws are primarily rendered with three or four deep, short etched marks. The lion's narrowly drawn snout and thinly rendered bottom jaw highlight how widely its mouth is open. Overall, the variations in how the lion is represented (shaded areas, thinly drawn lines coupled with broader indentations) allow for a more (albeit incomplete) three-dimensional illustration. This dimensionality is irrespective of the lion's rendering in a profile view and the heaviness of the lines that frame, yet flatten, parts of its body.

The snake is portrayed as a menacing creature. It lies beneath the lion and occupies the entire length of the lion's stride. Its body is rendered with broad undulating lines (that perhaps signal a slithering movement) and is decorated with dots inferring a skin pattern. The snake's head is elaborately rendered with three marks atop of its head that are indicative of spikes or large, elongated, semi-detached scales. There are marks for an eye and a pronounced, deep short stroke that represents the bottom portion of its open mouth. The snake's head is in profile view and is located beneath the lion's front legs. Its head is facing (and slightly touching) the lion's legs. The snake seems to be cut, which is indicated by three slash marks (two short lines that converge into one longer line) in the centre of its body. However, from the image, it is difficult to ascertain if the snake is dead or merely hurt.

The scorpion is located on the right side of the bottom register in front of the lion. It is illustrated facing down towards the foot of the amulet and is rendered with two eyes, six legs, two front pincers, a three-dot pattern upon its back (a visual link to the snake), and a long, slightly bulbous, meandering tail that ends in a small pincer (the end is open and forms a

small ‘v’ shape, which is visually akin to scorpion’s front right pincer). It may be suggested that the shape of scorpion’s tail signals the tail’s curvature or an upright position.

In considering the bottom register in its entirety, one finds that this is an active scenario reminiscent of the dynamism of illustrative programme on the obverse side of the amulet. Here, the lion is the prominent feature of the register. Its strength is amplified by its dominant stature in comparison to the other characters within the scene coupled with the exaggerated representation of its open mouth signifying a sense of ferocity. Like the scene on the obverse side of the Kelsey Pedant, the viewer’s gaze enters the scenario in the midst of its unfolding—at a time when it seems that the lion has recently dealt a crippling (or deadly) blow to the serpent beneath its stride and is heading directly towards its next target. As the lion leaps, the viewer can imagine its thunderous roar as it approaches the scorpion. In this scene, the viewer is able to disassociate the lion from snake and the scorpion as both the snake and scorpion share (and are visually connected by) a dotted pattern upon their bodies.

2.3.7 Overview of Reverse Side

The reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is similar to and, at first glance, has components which are visually independent of the obverse side. Like the obverse side, the outermost border on the reverse side encircles the central scene, creating a visual space with which the viewer is drawn to engage. Within this central space, there are three prominent registers (highlighted by two horizontal borders) that each convey their own particular message. However, upon closer inspection, one finds that the details within the registers of the reverse side also provide subtle inferences of an illustrative (and inter/intra-active, agential) interconnectivity with the obverse side of the amulet.

On the reverse side, the top register engenders a push and pull effect, initially drawing the viewer to the rendering of Christ in Majesty whilst allowing their gaze to extend out to the four Evangelists in symbolic form that flank the mandorla. Then, Christ's rendered details work to return the viewer's gaze back to the centre. Even though the figures are not portrayed in an active scene, the attention to, and placement of, certain details subtly maneuver the viewer's eye from one point to another. Once the top register has been visually absorbed, the viewer's eye moves down where they encounter the first horizontal border (comprised of text) that conveys a message and provides the viewer with a visual resting place before they are immersed in the pictorial representations of the middle register.

The elements of the middle register, the prominently drawn *charaktêres*, may engender an understanding that what is being presented is not meant to be readily deciphered, but rather, part of the function of these *charaktêres* is to continuously become within themselves as well as in conjunction with the top and bottom registers while remaining veiled in mystery.

As the viewer encounters the second horizontal border, it may be suggested that this border acts as a transitory space between the centre and the bottom registers. As previously stated, the viewer is presented with a line composed of a myriad of signs, some of which are similar to the *charaktêr* symbols within the middle register. Here, the aura of mysteriousness continues, but one may argue that in addition to this horizontal line's role as a border and conveyor of a particular message, the smaller scale of the signs may have a diminutive affect upon the enigmatic mood of the *charaktêres* within the middle register, thus, transitioning the viewer and preparing them to engage with the final scene encompassed within the bottom register of the reverse side.

Finally, the viewer arrives at the bottom register of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant, which may serve a dual purpose. The illustrative programme invites the viewer to engage with the dynamic scenario enacted by the lion, the serpent, and the scorpion. While at the same time, the bottom register also reminds the viewer of the tension felt within the scene of the mounted rider, the angel, and the demon (on the obverse side of the amulet) where the viewer was left to teeter between victory and uncertainty.

Chapter Three. Obverse of the Kelsey Pendant

This chapter will focus on the programme of the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant further developing the discussion from Chapter Two while placing the Kelsey Pendant within the larger discourse of the society and material culture within which the pendant was created and participated. The discussion will again begin with the outermost border (comprised of the cross symbol, Psalm inscription, and *punch-dot lines*) and will then move to the central illustrative programme (inclusive of the rider, angel, star, demon and 'One God' inscription). The discussion will include an analysis of how some of these attributes of the pendant may inter/intra-act. It should be noted that the above-mentioned aspects of the obverse side of the pendant are heavily researched, popular elements within the antique to late antique visual and material cultures; and in order to retain a focused discussion, their historical origins, lore, or multiple associations will not be discussed at length. Instead, their functional role as participants of their contemporaneous society and being of the pendant's assemblage will be examined.

3.1 Outermost Border

3.1.1 The Cross

Within the context of the illustrative programme of the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant there are two cross symbols. An in-depth discussion of the cross symbol pertaining to both sides of the pendant will be provided in Chapter Four of the thesis as both textual and pictorial references to the cross and its function are of the reverse side of the amulet's programme. However, pertinent to this section of the thesis is the cross symbol of the Kelsey Pendant that is positioned immediately before the textual inscription of Psalm 90 LXX.

By the fourth century, the placement of a cross before a body of text was overarchingly a Christian scribal practice.[173] However, this practice was not solely utilised for larger bodies of texts, but also on smaller objects such as amulets (See for example Figures 22-24).[174] It may be argued that this strategic placement of the cross symbol signified that the symbol acted as both a marker signposting the beginning of a text as well as a sign representing religious adherence rather than being an activated symbol; however, the thesis suggests that the cross's placement before a text (especially with regard to the Kelsey Pendant) does not relegate it to the category of a marker or bind its existence to a religious sign, nor does it preclude the cross from being referenced or called upon within the text it precedes whereby the cross is revealed as an active protagonist with the potential to inter/intra-act as deemed necessary.

In Late Antiquity, the cross was a versatile symbol. It was perceived to be a form of decoration and devotion with prophylactic or apotropaic efficacy; furthermore, the cross's specific function or significance was not static since its interpretation was left to the subjectivity of the viewer as well as the everchanging notions of the times.[175] Christians, as a devotional gesture, made the sign of the cross as early as the second century.[176] Moreover, it has been suggested that the cross was likely considered to be a powerful emblem of the deity's omnipotence and their intention to destroy evil.[177] Based upon an individual's

[173] Dijkstra and de Bruyn, 2011, 171; de Bruyn, 2017, 63.

[174] de Bruyn, 2017, 64.

[175] Finegan, 1993, 339-389; Jacobs, 2017, 180-181.

[176] See for example, second century author, Tertullian. *Apologetic and Practical Treatises*. III (Transl. by C. Dodgson, 1842, 164-165) who provides examples of when (in everyday situations) Christians made the sign of the cross; Hurtado, 2017, 34.

[177] See Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians.* Homily XIII on Philippians (transl. Cotton, et al., 1879, 148). Chrysostom describes the cross as an armour of salvation, a powerful weapon to oppose evil,

interpretation, the cross provided protection from evil spirits, repelled danger and disease, reminded believers of their baptismal oaths, and assured a safe path from this world to the next upon death.[178] Even though the cross symbol had various associations, which were, at times, independent of each other, with regard to its function on an amulet, the thesis argues that the crosses of the Kelsey Pendant are multivalent and multifunctional—inter/intra-acting as symbols of protection in some instances and as spiritually inspired remedies in others; and the cross's specific role was based upon the pendant's or the bearer's subjective need at any given point in time.[179]

3.1.2 Psalm 90 LXX[180]

Psalm 90 speaks. Through this Psalm, one can imagine the voice of the believer, the narrator, and the voice of the deity emanating from the object.[181] The text is written utilising the first, the second, and the third-person voice.[182] Thus, the Psalm is a conversation where each

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and the safety of life; Chrysostom, John. *Catecheses ad illuminandos. Baptismal Instructions.* (ed. by Johannes Quasten and Burghardt S.J., Walter J. transl. by Paul W. Harkins, 1963, 168). Chrysostom associates the strength of the cross to a 'wonderful amulet and mighty incantation' and further instructs that the name of Christ be called upon so that illnesses and attacks from Satan will capitulate; See Jensen, 2017, 27 regarding the deity's intention to destroy evil; See also de Bruyn, 2017, 64.

[178] Regarding baptismal oaths, see Chrysostom, John. *Catecheses ad illuminandos. Baptismal Instructions.* (ed. by Johannes Quasten and Burghardt S.J., Walter J. transl. by Paul W. Harkins, 1963, 51-53). Chrysostom explains the cross's pivotal role in anointing and baptising a catechumen; Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel According to St. John and His First Epistle,* Homily CXVIII (transl. Browne, 1848, 1039). Augustine discusses the significance of the cross in baptism; Jensen, 2017, 27; See the more elaborate discussion of the cross in Chapter Four.

[179] Jacobs, 2017, 176 makes the point that cross signs were how Christians expressed to themselves that they lived within an environment under the deity's authority, '.... where they would be safe from harm'. This statement maps onto the notion that the inscriptions of the cross upon the Kelsey Pendant underscored the fact it was an amulet intended to protect the bearer from harm.

[180] See Vreugdenhil, 2020 for a detailed analysis and discussion of Psalm 90 LXX (Psalm 91 HMT).

[181] Tuerk, 2002, 129 for the Psalms as a three-way exchange; Sanzo, 2012, 43-44 for the different voices within the Psalm.

[182] Tuerk, 2002, 129; Sanzo, 2012, 43-44.

participant has a part in relaying the message of the text (the 'thematic whole') from a different perspective ('discrete units').[183] The text of Psalm 90 in English translation reads:

> [1] A laudation. Of an Ode. Pertaining to Dauid. [(1)] He who lives by the help of the Most High, in a shelter of the God of the sky he will lodge. [2] He will say to the Lord, "My supporter you are and my refuge; my God, I will hope in him," [3] because it is he who will rescue me from a trap of hunters and from a troublesome word; [4] with the broad of his back he will shade you, and under his wings you will find hope; with a shield his truth will surround you. [5] You will not be afraid of nocturnal fright, of an arrow that flies by day, [6] of a deed that travels in darkness, of mishap and noonday demon. [7] At your side a thousand will fall, and ten thousand at your right, but it will not come near you. [8] Only with your eyes will you perceive, and the requital of sinners you will see. [9] Because you, O Lord, are my hope, the Most High you made your refuge. [10] No evil shall come before you, and no scourge shall come near your covert, [11] because he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; [12] upon hands they will bear you up so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. [13] On asp and cobra you will tread, and you will trample lion and dragon under foot. [14] Because in me he hoped, I will also rescue him; I will protect him, because he knew my name. [15] He will call to me, and I will listen to him; I am with him in trouble; I will deliver and glorify him. [16] With length of days I will satisfy him and show him my deliverance.[184]

Even though the primary voice is that of the narrator, the exchange between the actors is powerful. If one were to consider the Psalm to be spoken, the person listening to the interchange between the participants would not only experience the different voices emanating from the text, but also would glean from the text that the Psalm requires participation from the various parties involved. The narrator communicates how, and from what, the believer will be protected (verses: one, four-eight, ten-thirteen). The believer acknowledges the deity's protection and expresses their trust in, and promises their fidelity to, the deity (verses: two-three, nine). The Psalm ends with the deity announcing their promises to the believer (verses: fourteen-sixteen). Thus, it may be argued that in order to effectuate the purpose of the Psalm, the believer, the deity, and the narrator must fulfill

[183] Even though Sanzo originally puts forth the idea that the Psalm can be divided into discrete units, the study has adopted an alternative perspective from Sanzo as to how these units may be defined. For an alternative outlook on the text of the Psalm as well as the 'discrete units' within the Psalm, see Sanzo, 2012, 42-47.

[184] Transl. Pietersma and Wright, 2007, The English translation has been provided for discussion purposes. The text upon the amulet is in Greek.

certain requisites—the believer must express belief in the deity, the deity must promise to protect the believer, whilst the narrator must continuously underscore the situation at hand by reminding the believer of the dangers they only can avoid with the protection of the deity. If one were to follow the pattern within the interchange, it may be suggested that the back and forth between the believer and the narrator is clear, but the conversational aspect of the Psalm effectively ends with the voice of the deity, who seals the premise of the Psalm by promising divine protection.

The Psalms were well known to the people of Late Antiquity, but also were understood to serve a variety of purposes outside of liturgy. Early authors such as Athanasius wrote about the benefits of the Psalter for everyday circumstances. In his letter to Marcellinus, Athanasius expounds upon how various chapters of the Psalms teach certain virtues, and even though Athanasius emphasises that one should read the entire Psalter, he specifies the usefulness of particular Psalms. For example, Athanasius states that Psalm 38 should be recited to protect oneself against a foe, while Psalm 90, the psalm most relevant here, should be read to express praise and fearlessness.[185] In later handbooks, Psalms were even "prescribed" for various purposes such as making friends, legal issues, controlling pests, and medical ailments.[186]

With regard to their versatility, the Psalms were inscribed on amulets (as will be discussed in the following section) as well as a number of luxury and everyday objects, such as a third-century bronze statuette of Dionysus with an added eighth- or ninth-century inscription preceded by a small cross from Psalm 28:3 of the Septuagint (Figures 25-26).

[185] St. Athanasius, *Life of St. Anthony and Letter to Marcellinus* (transl. Gregg 1980, 117, 120).

[186] Zellmann-Rohrer, 2019, 113-120.

Psalms were also included within areas of architectural structures.[187] For example, Psalm 86:2 is inscribed within the mosaic pavement at the foot of the chancel steps in the sixth-century Church of the Bishop Sergius in Umm-al-Rasas, Jordan (Figure 27); and a painted inscription on plaster (likely added in the sixth century) of verses four to seven of Psalm 90 was discovered on the wall of the southern pastophorion of a Byzantine church in Jabal Haroun near Petra, Jordan.[188] The addition of the Psalm to these objects and structures likely reflects a belief in the potency of the verses of the Psalter, which when inscribed upon an object, imbued the item or space with the power associated with the particular Psalm.

Though the entirety of the Psalm is generally not inscribed upon objects or spaces, it has been suggested that Psalm 90 may be considered to be '....a thematic whole as well as divided into discrete units,' and with this in mind, the study argues that the Psalm inscription upon the Kelsey Pedant is dynamic and multivalent.[189] The verses of Psalm 90 LXX of the Kelsey Pedant (οκατοικονενβοηθιατουυψιστουενσκεπητουθυτουουρανουαυλισθισεταιεριτοκω) are inscribed in a circular fashion forming an aspect of the outermost boundary of the amulet.[190] After orthographic corrections, these verses, in translation, read 'He who dwells with the help of the Most High will abide in the shelter of God of heaven. He will say to the Lord....'[191] Verses from Psalm 90 (more commonly verses one and two) were frequently inscribed upon

[187] di Segni, 2017, 63-88; Leatherbury, 2020, 262-270.

[188] Leatherbury, 2020, 269; Fiema, 2003, 66.

[189] Sanzo, 2012, 44; Tuerk, 2002, 128 suggests that the partial inscription of Psalm 91 (HMT) on the Kelsey Pendant is representative of the entire Psalm.

[190] See Chapter Two, 58-59.

[191] Lust, et al., 2003; All translations are mine unless otherwise noted. See Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, vol. II, 100-101.

amulets or other portable objects with perceived apotropaic efficacy.[192] Psalm 90 was considered a prayer that was particularly potent against maleficence. For example, in 'The Long Rules' 37, Basil stated, 'And so that we might be saved from invasion and the noonday Devil, at this time, also, the ninetieth Psalm will be recited.'[193] Basil further explains that the ninetieth Psalm should also be recited at nightfall so that a person's rest is 'sinless' and their dreams are untroubled.[194] Though the specificities regarding the "noonday Devil" will not be considered in this thesis, Basil's choice, and use, of terms that in translation equate to "saved," "invasion," "sinless," and "Devil" do provide some insight for the popularity of Psalm 90 upon amulets that contain representations of the evil eye or the mounted rider smiting a demon, as well as its probable use as a protective element of the Kelsey Pendant.[195]

Psalm 90 was a popular, powerful, protective biblical text utilised for supernatural purposes and can be found within the illustrative programmes of amulets inclusive of the rider vanquishing a demon or amulets containing representations of the evil eye (Figures 28-31, Figures 33-35, and Figure 57).[196] Consider for example two renderings upon a bronze amuletic armband comprised of four decorated roundels (Figures 31-32).[197] One roundel

[192] See Vikan, 1991, 33-51; Kraus, 2011, 137-147.

[193] Basil 'The Long Rules.' In *Saint Basil: Ascetical Works. The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*. 37 (transl. by Sister M. Monica Wagner, 1962, 310); Most pertinent is McKinnon, 1989, section 137, 67. See also Taft, 1986, 84-86.

[194] Basil 'The Long Rules.' In *Saint Basil: Ascetical Works. The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*. 37 (transl. by Sister M. Monica Wagner, 1962, 310).

[195] Regarding "noonday Devil", see for example van der Toorn, et al., 1999, 572-573; Crislip, 2005, 143-169; Bhayro and Rider, 2017, 90-91.

[196] Most pertinent is Vreugdenhil, 2020, 5; See also Kraus, 2011, 142 who posits that armband with Psalm 90 inscriptions and imagery of the rider and/or evil eye were worn as protective amulets.

[197] Though the armband is inclusive of two other illustrated discs, which are pivotal to an investigation aimed at analysing the purpose and function of the entire object, however, due to the iconography of the Kelsey Pendant, the rider image in relation to the inscription of the Psalm upon this armband is pertinent to this thesis.

contains a partial, yet deconstructed, inscription of the first verse of Psalm 90 and another roundel depicts a mounted rider conquering an assumed malefic being illustrated as an amorphous form lying on its back beneath the horse's stride.

It is important to note that the prostrate figure's malefic nature is inferred by its position relative to the rider. The rider is a nimbate figure understood to be lunging his spear towards the form lying beneath their horse. Based on the position of each actor within the small space, one is able to detect the presence of a hierarchical structure where the rider employs a position of dominance over the supine figure. The illustration of the rider visually communicates the intention behind the text of the Psalm that promises protection from a myriad of evils. Thus, when both the Psalm 90 inscription and the image of the rider are intertwined, they allow the bearer to imagine an active realisation of the promise of the Psalm. Based upon the small sampling of evidence offered in this discussion, it may be interpreted that the inclusion of Psalm 90 upon amulets was to ensure apotropaic efficacy, realised by way of divine agency, against whatever may have been feared.[198]

3.1.3 Psalm 90, Punch-Dot Lines, the Cross, and the Kelsey Pendant

When considering the partial Psalm of the Kelsey Pendant, the study posits that the discourse of the entirety of Psalm 90 is embodied within the space of the object.[199] The inscription of the Psalm encircles the central scene of the obverse side of the amulet creating part of the outermost border. In the Psalm's physical space, it may be understood that the Psalm not only protects through the content and purpose of its text, but also through its textual physicality

[198] See also Sanzo, 2012, 43; Vreugdenhil, 2020, Psalm 91 (HMT) sung to ward off demons, 10-11.

[199] Most pertinent is Sanzo, 2012, 44; Tuerk, 2002, 128 as well suggests that the partial inscription of Psalm 91 (HMT) on the Kelsey Pendant is representative of the entire Psalm.

that acts as a visual and metaphorical containment system. The Psalm inscription, and the cross symbol that precedes it, are also bordered from above and below by *punch-dot lines*, which forcefully relegate these elements of the Kelsey Pendant to a particular narrow space upon the amulet (Figure 1). The *punch-dot lines* of the pendant are understood to fulfill the dualistic role of a decorative aspect which has been defined as an 'ornamental device,' a mechanism which '...achieves an effect in its own right,' and embodies an aesthetic aspect that is 'allied to their function as agents.'[200] Thus, for the purposes of this study, *punch-dot lines* are visual enhancements which also serve as a containment system.

Firstly, the *punch-dot lines* of the Kelsey Pendant may be considered to be ornamental in function where they provide a decorative flare and underscore the presence of the cross symbol and the Psalm verses whilst creating a definitive outermost border of the amulet that remains within the physical edges of Kelsey Pendant. The *punch-dot lines* also communicate the beginning and end of the illustrative programme of the Kelsey Pendant and lessen the visual impact of the amulet's uneven border—a consequence of the lost wax casting method—whilst underscoring the presence of the Psalm and cross as well as physically and visually separating the symbol and text from the elements of the central scene. It is apparent that these lines align with the other attributes of the pendant insofar as each element was carefully rendered to achieve a visually stimulating amulet. Comparatively speaking, a focus on the aesthetic appeal of an amulet was not necessarily a requisite practice, which may be gleaned from other less intricately rendered examples with similar iconography or intended function, material, and approximate chronology as the Kelsey Pendant (Figures 33-34). These examples of bronze amulets are not only smaller and have less text and illustrative detail than

[200] Maguire, 2017, 223-224.

the Kelsey Pendant, their engraved texts and images are also rendered in a more loose (albeit neat) manner. From these initial details, it may be gleaned that these amulets may have been cheaper than the Kelsey Pendant making them more accessible to a wider audience, however, their lack of ornamentation in comparison to the pendant did not mean that they were considered to be less powerful or efficacious.

Secondly, the lines can also be understood to serve as another containment system which acts as an additional barrier of protection that works in conjunction with the Psalm and the cross. It has been suggested that ornament has agency insofar as it has the capability to engage with 'the invisible world of supernatural beings....'[201] Regarding the *punch-dot lines* of the Kelsey Pendant, it is arguable that the concept of supernatural engagement refers to the lines's potential to maintain both the pendant's and bearer's awareness of the demon's presence within the central illustration. With this in mind, it may be interpreted that the lines act a repository system where, within the text's allotted space, the potency of the Psalm and the cross are concentrated; and since the design of the *punch-dot lines* seems permeable—potentially allowing the Psalm to move from one area of the amulet to another (although not in its full form)—the propensity of an inter/intra-action of the Psalm and the cross symbol with other elements of the central scene is particularly tangible.

Although these suggestions regarding the potential function of the *punch-dot lines* are individually viable, the study argues that the *punch-dot lines*, in fact, serve both purposes. Thus, if one were to acknowledge that the *punch dot lines* are both ornamental and protective coupled with the hypothesis that '[d]ecoration frequently shaded over into protective

[201] Swift, 2009, 20-21, 179-185, and 189-190; Maguire, 2017, 223.

charms,'[202] and '[i]ts function merges with that of amulets,....to turn away one of the many malevolent influences which are still so widely dreaded...,'[203] then it can be understood that *punch-dot lines*, in the case of the Kelsey Pendant, act in conjunction with or against the Psalm and cross symbol; which in themselves inter/intra-act with, and act upon, the elements of the central image whilst retaining their strength within the border area. With this in mind, it may be interpreted that the functional attributes of the *punch-dot lines* (in addition to the Psalm and cross of the outermost border) are a means by which to inhibit or counteract the malicious effects of the creature as well as prevent any malefic aspect from escaping the area in which the demon is relegated. Here, the circular shape of the amulet, and thus, the shape of the outermost inscription is important insofar as it may be understood that the circle lends to the distribution of the text throughout amulet, allowing the Psalm and cross to act and react as they deem fit.

Hence, within the context of the amulet, the Psalm and cross coupled with *the punch-dot lines* confine the illustrated, active scene unfolding within its boundaries. It should be noted that, according to this study, the Psalm and cross are active agents that remain cognisant of the imminent danger posed by the demon of the amulet since the demon has yet to be killed and still stands defiantly confronting the viewer as well as the scene within which it exists.[204] Due to the cross's and Psalm's awareness of this danger, they are not static—they remain vigilant insofar as they are actively working to fulfill the overarching premise of divine protection. Furthermore, the circular shape of the amulet also engenders a repetitive cyclicality that marks a continuation of Psalm 90 from the first to the sixteenth verse and then

[202] Gombrich, 1979, 258-259.

[203] Gombrich, 1979, 258-259.

[204] Tuerk, 2002, discusses of the concept of words acting as agents.

back again.[205] In this sense, it may be argued that this cyclicality generates a scenario whereby the Psalm's and the cross's dynamism are unveiled, and in some senses unleashed (albeit in a controlled manner), where the Psalm's entire contents and the cross's being remain enlivened, buttressing their potential to fulfill their role of continuously becoming within the gathering of the amulet.

It also may be argued that the admixture of elements with which the Psalm is gathered speaks to the manner in which the Psalm is intended to act (though protective in every sense) as being of the Kelsey Pendant. With the communicative potential embodied within the amulet coupled with the protective function of the Psalm, one or more aspects of the Psalm may be called upon at any given moment depending upon need as well as the element with which the Psalm is engaged. Considering, for example, verse eleven of Psalm 90 which is comprised of the narrator's announcement that the deity will command his angels—it may be interpreted that in an inter/intra-action, the angel of the biblical text may call upon the angel of the amulet's central scene whereby the rendered angel's function, at this point in time and in this particular inter-intra-action, is based upon the deity's specific command. In another instance, as the elements of the pendant continuously become, the noonday demon of verse six may engage with the demon of the amulet embodying and visually buttressing the concept of materialised fear from which the narrator declares that the believer will be protected.

From these examples one may glean that the parts of the Psalm may act as 'discrete units' while remaining within the parameters of its 'thematic whole.' In short, based upon need, the Psalm is able to conceptually deconstruct itself, where its smaller aspects are able to

[205] Pentcheva, 2010, 170-174.

act individually whilst representing the entire Psalm; however, these aspects of the Psalm never fully disengage with the whole.

3.2 The Central Scene

3.2.1 The Rider and the Angel

Illustrations of riders and angels (together or independently) are often found within wider late antique material culture (e.g., architecture, public art, devotional art, and coins). The specific depiction of a rider smiting a demon, however, is more common to amulets or other apotropaically charged materials. There are also examples of amulets where, like in the illustrative programme of the Kelsey Pendant and the Holy Rider Amulet, the rider is presented with an angel. With regard to the rider and angel of the Kelsey Pendant, equestrian warriors and angels are an integral part of an extant discourse within the context of the late antique everyday where the existence of the liminality between the celestial and terrestrial coupled with conquests, battles, and power imbued with the glory of royalty and the divine realm were present and, at times, paramount.[206] The following discussion is purposed to contextualise these elements of the pendant. As the discussion turns to these elements and their inter/intra-actions as being of the Kelsey Pendant, more nuanced interpretations of the rider and the angel shall be put forth.

From a visual perspective, the most prominent image of the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is that of the rider in the process of smiting the demon situated beneath his galloping steed (Figure 1). The rider is anonymous, dons clothing akin to that of a cavalryman, is carrying a spear with a cross and pennant upon its apex, wears a diadem, is

[206] Most pertinent is Boustan and Reed, 2004, 2-4; See also Walter, 2003, 13-15; Ahuvia, 2021, 9.

nimbed, and is seated upon a horse fitted with ornaments that perhaps signal the equestrian's status or military position.[207]

The equestrian solider, king, emperor, and later holy man or saint was a popular late antique amuletic motif, which has been extensively studied and published within scholarship.[208] However, the rider's iconography is far older. Horsemanship was known in the Near East as early as the second millennium, and the pride, power, intelligence, and speed of equestrians (as well as the horse itself) were considered to be prophetical as well as manifestations of the divine.[209] Historically, the horseman represented the privileged class who could afford and maintain horses, and they were, in turn, artistically represented as either a military or an athletic figure.[210] As time passed, the horseman assimilated into different personae based upon established lore and societal needs; the rider encapsulated a privileged equestrian, a military figure, a hero, an intermediary between different realms (celestial, terrestrial, and the underworld), a holy man or saint, and an emperor or a king—inclusive of his divine and royal glory.[211] Furthermore, it is arguable that the image of the rider had the propensity to encapsulate all of these attributes at once, and the study posits that this suggestion is likely the case with regard to the Kelsey Pendant.

[207] See Bonner, 1942, regarding cavalryman reference, 468. See also Steinberg, 2020, 88.

[208] Vikan, 1984, 79.

[209] See for example, Suetonius. *Suétone. Vies des douze Césars*. Caius Julius Cesar, 61. (ed. and transl. by H. Ailloud, 1931, 53). Suetonis describes the extraordinary horse that acted as a prophetic messenger announcing the future emperor based upon the person (in this case Caesar) that was able to tame it; See discussion of Rider on White Horse in Revelation 19:11-16 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 780-781) that, through the equestrian's description (e.g., named 'The Word of God' and 'King of kings and Lord of lords') can be understood as a manifestation of the divine; Moreau, 2016, 3,7; Hanfmann, 1961, 250.

[210] Neils, 1981, 337.

[211] Most pertinent is Boteva, 2000, 115. See also Hanfmann, 1961, 250; Grotowski, 2011, 74-85.

The reputation of the rider was proliferated through its globally ubiquitous presence within the visual and material cultures of Antiquity, Late Antiquity, and later. Equestrian monuments were found in the civic and funerary spheres as a means to celebrate victory, power, wealth, and conquest in life and in death. Monuments (like the tomb relief of the Sasanian King, Ardaxshir I, at Naqsh-e Rostam or the relief detail of the moment before the suicide of the conquered Dacian commander, Decebalus, on the Column of Trajan) often depict the victor in the midst of battle or triumphantly seated atop of a horse while their conquests are portrayed trampled or cowering beneath the horse's hooves (Figures 38-39).[212] At times, monuments, or their parts, were repurposed by succeeding emperors or were competitively emulated.[213] This was perhaps a means to justify and bolster the ideology behind, and power of, the current ruler of the time as well as to historically link the emperor with (whilst visually revitalising the vestiges of) the "good emperors" of the past within the social memory of those who experienced the monuments.[214] One famous example is the Great Trajanic Frieze which was reused on the Arch of Constantine, a monument that as a composite whole associated Constantine with several "successful" Roman emperors of the past (Figure 40).[215] In the "everyday" public sphere these monuments (usually imperial) overarchingly, in a visual manner, demonstrated the equestrian heroically poised atop of his horse—consciously alluding to their divinely endowed power and victory (See for example Figures 41-43).

[212] Most pertinent is Canepa, 2018, 259-261; Ramage and Ramage, 2015, 219-220.

[213] Boeck, 2021, 58, 98.

[214] Jones, 2000, 70; Peirce, 1989.

[215] Ramage and Ramage, 2015, 221-223; Jones, 2000.

Portable objects, wall reliefs, and funerary stele or sarcophagi, in addition to depicting the heroic equestrian, also illustrated the equestrian hunting, in battle, or subduing the "the malefic other" (See for example Figures 44-48). Like the larger monuments, these objects with equestrian renderings were not specific to the late antique Near East or Eastern Mediterranean, but were created on a larger, cross-cultural scale, which signifies that there was a globalised (though nuanced) understanding of the equestrian's prowess, symbol, and status.[216]

Like an equestrian monument, the rider on an amulet is meant to act, react, and participate with or against its surrounds. Based on an abundance of varied examples, the depiction of the rider upon amulets can be considered an emblem of victory and power as may be comparatively gleaned from the intentions behind the creation and subsequent display of equestrian monuments briefly described above.[217] Additionally, the image of the rider on an amulet inhabits a specific space that elicits a particular role which must be fulfilled based on the image's conjoined state. As an equestrian monument inter/intra-acts within the assemblage of a city (built throughout a span of time), the image of the rider upon an amulet also inter/intra-acts with the conjoined elements within the landscape of the object. Since the attributes of the amulet are assembled by intention at the time of creation (a certain point in time—though, like a city, continuously becoming), the rider's interplay is intrinsically specific to each aspect of the gathering.

Although the rider of the Kelsey Pendant is unnamed, it may be interpreted that the rider of the pendant was associated with (and understood to visually and metaphorically

[216] Boeck, 2021, 4-7 discusses the 'horseman's global reach.'

[217] Vikan, 1984, 79-80.

embody) royal and divine glory.[218] This suggestion is based upon several factors: the various depictions of Christianised symbols upon the amulet that are directly associated with the rider's illustrated form (most notably the cruciform atop of his lance); the pendant's participation in a milieu where general references to a lance bearing equestrian figure (inclusive of an emperor) in the process of conquering a "demon" or the "other" was considered to be a powerfully protective or victorious representation; the equestrian's later association with holy men or saints; and the extant tradition of the rider's association with Solomon (and in some instances a Thracian rider or Alexander) on other metal amulets (Figures 49-50).[219] Figures 49-50 are copper alloy and bronze examples both identify the rider of the amulet as Solomon, and the depictions of the rider have similar attributes to the rider of the Kelsey Pendant such as the rider's gallop in midstride, the clothing of the rider, the lance, and the ornamentation of the steed.

Though it is difficult to pinpoint where the iconography of Solomon spearing a demon originated, based upon the development of the image of the rider within material culture, one is able to offer a more concrete postulation that the image of Solomon as conqueror on horseback influenced later iconography of warrior saints and emperors.[220] There are several examples of hematite Solomon amulets thought to be no earlier than the third century which

[218] A detailed outlook on the identity of the holy rider, its iconographical development, as well as the variety of creatures (including their mythologies) that the rider illustratively slays, warrants further study. Jones, 2000, 69 who suggests that nimbus is a pagan precursor to the Christian halo. With regard to the nimbus and glory: see Shenkar (2014,192) specifies that historically, the nimbus has been associated with royal glory and divinity. The first representation of the plain nimbus appeared on representations of deities on Kanishka's (Kushan dynasty) coins (127-150 CE). See also Donceel-Voûte, 2018, 21 footnote 7 for a succinct discussion of the halo.

[219] The term 'Christianised' is utilised to underscore the fact that the cruciform and nimbus were assimilated into Christianity and, though it is likely, they do not definitively denote a Christian affiliation. See Greenfield, 1988, 273-274; Spier, 1993, 37 also notes that the rider has also been associated with St. Sisinnios. Maguire, 1995, 57, 65. For further reading on the association of the holy rider with Solomon see Dimitrova, 2002, 209-229; Walter, 2003, 36 footnote 123 for citation of association with Thracian rider.

[220] Walter, 2003, 36 suggests that the iconography of warrior saints (e.g., St. George) spearing a dragon or other creature originated from the imagery of Solomon spearing Obyzouth.

are generally bereft of a find context.[221] Examples of these hematite Solomon amulets portray a depiction of Solomon spearing a demon (which scholars have identified as Lilith) on one side, and are often inscribed with text such as 'Seal of God' (or may also include symbols such *charaktêres* alongside the text) on the other side (Figures 51-52). However, a bronze rider saint amulet (a derivation of the hematite Solomon amulets) discovered in a tomb at an excavation site in Beisan (Beth Shean), stratigraphically dated to before 325 CE, provides a more reliable chronological anchor for later bronze amulets like the Kelsey Pendant (Figures 53-54).[222] The Beisan amulet depicts an unnamed rider saint spearing a prostrate demon with the 'One God who conquers evil' inscription on the obverse and animals attacking the evil eye on the reverse.[223] Thus, the defined and potential identity of a rider changed with time, and other identifications beyond Solomon became possible. Factors that influenced the various changes in the rider's named identity may be attributed to power—the recognisability of the image, political authority, as well as the socio-religious dominance of Christianity over other religions.[224]

The lore surrounding Solomon proliferated late antique magical thought. There are several examples of amulets upon which a rider is depicted (Figure 49-50 and Figures 55-56). Some of these name Solomon, illustrate Solomon accompanied by an angel, or have been associated with Solomon via iconographic similarities—e.g., an anonymous rider amulet when compared with a clearly identifiable Solomonic amulet.[225] An image's perceived

[221] Walter, 1991, 36.

[222] Bonner, 1950, 221; Walter, 1991, 36; Walter, 2003, 36; Fleck, n.d., 7-8, states that the amulet was discovered in Tomb 30, which may have been in use during the fourth century CE. The Beisan (Beth Shean) amulet is now held within the University of Pennsylvania Museum's collections (object #: 29-108-254).

[223] Fleck, n.d., 7-8.

[224] Walter, 2003, 36-38.

[225] Vikan, 1984, 79-80; Walter, 1991, 37 mentions that the angel is named Arraf or Arlaf; Pitarakis, 2015, 241.

potential when correlated with Solomon was based upon Solomon's reputation as the most powerful King of Israel, and (according to Christian and Jewish lore culled from the Testament of Solomon) the conception that Solomon had exceptional wisdom and the ability to control and vanquish evil demons.[226]

With Solomon's sustained reputation in mind, it may be interpreted that the general identification or association of an amulet's unnamed rider as Solomon visually and symbolically elicited victory and control over malefic forces. On one hand, an anonymous rider may implicitly imply an understanding that the rider was in fact Solomon which meant that an explicit identification was no longer necessary; or the sole illustration of a rider spearing a demon was in itself powerful enough such that a direct association with Solomon was not needed. On the other hand, the rider spearing a malefic figure's association with prominent Christian figures should also be taken into consideration since the image was eventually accepted as an official form of ecclesiastical art, and, thus, was in step with the popular religion of the geographical sphere of amulets like the Kelsey Pendant.[227] The image of the Christian warrior saint, much like that of Solomon, very closely resembled the military figures and heroes within imperial imagery. The differentiating elements added to the image were the Christian symbols, which transformed the equestrian from a powerful secular rider to a holy man or saint (understood as a martyred military figure, killed for his adherence to his Christian beliefs) and later came to be known as the "holy rider".[228]

[226] Duling, 1983, 1: 935-987; Vikan, 1984,79-80 also notes that the Testament of Solomon was likely the most popular treatise on magic in early Byzantium and was a source of the belief that Solomon had power over evil forces, 79-80; Walter, 2003, 35; See also Spier, 1993, 34; Boustan and Beshay, 2015, 107.

[227] Walter, 1991, 41.

[228] Walter, 1991, 23.

In addition to, as well as alongside, the divinely inspired tradition to protect and subdue evil attributed to Solomon and Christian saints, the emperor as well assumed the identity as one imbued with royal and divine glory to victoriously conquer and protect. The emperor acted as an active intermediary between the deity and the earthly realm. This type of association of emperor or king with the divine is ancient and was understood across geographic boundaries. An example within material culture is encompassed in the sixth century *Emperor Triumphant* leaf of the Barberini Diptych Ivory (Figure 45), which also translates to the purpose of the image of a rider upon an amulet.[229] Visually, the *Emperor Triumphant* leaf can be separated into three distinct, individually framed, sections underscoring a hierarchy of power. Considering the leaf from top to bottom, the first section is comprised of the bust of Christ flanked by two angels. The second section is the largest illustrative scene in which the emperor is the central figure. Finally, the third section, beneath the emperor, is a composition depicting the emperor's conquered foes.

The emperor on this ivory leaf is on horseback, dressed as a military hero, subduing his barbarian foes with the blessing of Christ.[230] The emperor's portrayal as a military rider in conjunction with Christian imagery lies within the tradition of a king or emperor as divinely inspired. In this relief sculpture, it may be understood that the emperor is associated with divine favor and military power. Even though the emperor is neither a nimbed rider, nor does his spear have a cross upon its apex, other illustrations that reference Christianity are plainly apparent such as Christ (holding a sceptre with a cross upon its apex) administering a blessing directly above the emperor. It may be suggested that this blessing is an act of divine favor allowing the emperor to act as a military hero and protector of the bountiful earthly

[229] Maguire, 2011, 135.

[230] Musée du Louvre, 1992, 63-64 for the suggestions that the emperor in the Barbarini Ivory is Justinian I.

realm (rendered as a female personification of Earth—her fruits stacked upon her lap—looking up towards the emperor whilst holding his right foot) from the barbarians illustrated below the hooves of the regally depicted horse.[231]

The emperor is illustrated as a powerful man, sure of his post as a conqueror and a protector as he directs his spear towards the subdued enemies below. It has been argued that in Late Antiquity imperial images were thought to be animated with the emperor's essence and for this reason coinage and medallions with the emperor's portrait were used as amulets.[232] Hence, the emperor's image had the propensity to embody his power as well as his role as protector, conqueror, and subduer of the demonised foe.[233] Moreover, representations of the emperor did not have to be realistic to be revered; a general imperial image of the emperor was valued because it was his personae and his power that was most important.[234] With this in mind, one can posit that, like the amuletic image of the military hero saint or holy rider (who had the ability to protect the bearer from harm due to his divine favor), an imperial image had the same capabilities since the emperor was understood to be divinely inspired and portrayed himself as a powerful protector against his people's (and ideologically the deity's) enemies. An imperial image, like the image of a saint, can be understood to contain the same apotropaic performative qualities.

Though the rider of the Kelsey Pendant is not explicitly identified as Solomon, a saint, or an emperor, there is no doubt that iconographic similarities of the rider between

[231] Musée du Louvre, 1992, 63-64; Maguire, 2011, 135.

[232] Jones, A., 2016.

[233] Jones, A., 2016, 130.

[234] Jones, A., 2016, 133.

imperial, funerary, and amuletic imagery is striking. Thus, the thesis posits that the anonymous nimbate rider of the Kelsey Pendant is not necessarily Solomon, a Christian military hero saint, nor the protagonist of an imperial image. Instead, the rider of the pendant embodies all of these personae at once, and, based on the pendant's or bearer's needs or outlook, one persona may be unveiled at a given moment rather than another. In short, it may be argued that an image of the rider was considered efficacious insofar as its presence encompassed the holy men of the Church who were healers and exorcists, the military hero who protected his charge from harm, as well as the royal and divinely imbued glory of kings, ancient heroes, and emperors who conquered the places where the "other" or "demons" dwelled and protected the populous from the unknown, illness, and other supernatural forces.[235]

Furthermore, the centrality of the rider of the amulet translates to a purposeful pictorial representation of a hierarchical scenario that underscores the rider's primary role which may be considered terrestrially bound insofar as they are understood to act as a protector within the earthly realm (the locus of need) against malefic forces. Hence, it may be suggested that, per the intended model of the efficacy of the amulet, the rider's position as being of the illustrated programme of the pendant nods to the vital nature of the rider's continuous enactment of conquest in order to fulfill their role as protector, which also speaks to the demon's smaller stature in comparison to both the angel and the rider and further underscores their ultimate powerlessness against the divinely imbued rider.

[235] Isiah 34:14 (HMT, 726) states that Lilith along with Goat-demons, wildcats, and hyenas will live in Edom after it is turned into desert wasteland; Frey-Anthes, 2008, 38; Fröhlich, 2010, 107 mentions that according to the Qumran texts demons lived in the outskirts, in dark putrid places, and in desert regions.

One may thus argue that the rider of the Kelsey Pendant carries with it a lore that is rooted in ancient non-Christian beliefs intermingled with Christian iconographical notes. The rider's portrayal in the active role of spearing the demon is a powerful rendition of the ultimate fight; its being of the amulet is a visual marker of the presence of various personae providing continuous protection from, and expulsion of, evil—all intertwined in one image which is in a constant state of becoming as it inter/intra-acts with the other aspects of the amulet.

The unnamed angel of the Kelsey Pendant can be understood to function in various ways. Their inter/intra-active roles may be gleaned from the manner in which they are illustrated within the assemblage of the pendant intertwined with the literature and lore surrounding their potential and divine position as well as how angels are represented within the wider context of the material culture of Late Antiquity.

The illustrated angel of the pendant is nimbed, faces and has their arms outstretched towards the rider, and is standing upon a ladder with one wing folded behind their back and one expanded wing (feathers pointed towards the rider) that reaches slightly above the rider's nimbus (Figure 1). The presence of the demon is strongly underscored through aspects of the angel's rendered form and position in two ways. First, their bodily form ends with their feet in front of, and pointed towards, the demon. Second, in one hand, the angel holds a sceptre with one end extending slightly above the apex of their folded wing and other end gesturing towards the demon below the rider's horse. Within late antique visual and material culture, angels are often depicted holding a staff or sceptre (See for example Figures 58-59). Some scholars have suggested that the sceptre carries magical associations (likely gleaned from parallelisms made from recognisable magical staves such as the staff of Moses within biblical

text) while others have posited imperial and guard-like implications with this iconography; however, there is no consensus with regard to the significance of the angel and the sceptre.[236]

Additionally, the angel's location with respect to the rider signals what can be interpreted as a conscious intention to portray multiple locales or dimensions within the overall illustrative programme specific to the Kelsey Pendant and is perhaps further underscored by the angel's stance upon a ladder.[237] From this detail, it may be understood that the angel is not within the terrestrial realm, but rather, the angel stands at the border between the celestial and earthly realms, occupying the liminal bridge that connects the two realities. The presence of multiple dimensions within one space was often depicted within late antique mosaic decorative programmes (See Figures 60-61). For example, Figure 60 depicts the annunciation where angels are illustrated walking upon the terrestrial realm while another enters from above flying over the others as it points towards, and occupies the same space as, the approaching dove (a representation of the Holy Spirit) from the celestial realm. Figure 61 is illustration of the sacrifice of Isaac, which depicts two angels holding an encircled cross directly above the drawn border of the scene. The angels's placement above the border as well as their rendering holding the cross is indicative of their being within the celestial realm of the deity. Moreover, the concept of a celestial and terrestrial realm within the Kelsey Pendant is also supported by the rendering of an eight-pointed star, likely a shorthand representation of the heavens, situated between the angel's head and their wing facing the rider.[238] The rendering of stars to represent the heavens, like the aforementioned

[236] For reference to imperial associations see De Waele, 1927, 75; Lidova, 2020, 146; See Bohak, 2008, 32 for reference to Moses's staff as a magical object within biblical narrative sequences. See Williams, 2021, for reference to visual association of staff or sceptre as means to invoke certain powers (e.g., deities).

[237] The angel of the Holy Rider Amulet does not stand upon a ladder.

[238] Lidova, 2020, 137.

mosaic representations of two realms within one pictorial plane, was also utilised within other aspects of late antique material culture (See Figures 45, 62-63). In the Barberini Diptych (Figure 45) a star situated within the realm of Christ flanked by two angels is depicted above the emperor; and in the Dome of Galla Placida (Figure 62), stars that surround the centred cross and the Evangelists in their symbolic form (an alternative visualisation of Christ in Majesty) envelope the space from above. The obverse side of the Amulet with Saints and Angels in Combat (Figure 63), however, represents the heavens in a different manner as the star is illustrated directly behind the rider, further indicating the liminality of the celestial realm and underscoring its potential to be situated alongside as well as above its subjects.

As may be gleaned from the visual examples referenced above, in Late Antiquity, angels were represented as human, male, winged figures dressed in *palliums*.[239] The iconography of angels was derived from winged victories (Nike or their personifications); however, Nike was represented as female and wore a *peplos*.[240] This mode of representation of angels was utilised across the visual and material cultures of Late Antiquity, and was translated into other amulets besides the Kelsey Pendant as well (Figures 49-50, 64). The continuum of iconographic features speaks to the concept that amulets as objects, though at times controversial, participated in the wider arena of late antique visual and material culture.

Returning to the angel of the Kelsey Pendant, it may be gleaned from the above discussion that the angel's raised wing can be interpreted to act in two ways: first, it further

[239] Martin, 2001, 11; Peers, 2001, 23, 26 discusses that in Christian art, the image of angels with wings was standard practice by the end of the fourth century; Viladesau, 2010, 1201.

[240] Peers, 2001, 25-26.

highlights the rider who gallops in their direction; and second, it acts as a pictorial (yet superficial) border between the two realms.[241] Additionally, utilising the Holy Rider Amulet as another example, the placement of the cross symbol between the rider's head and the angel's wing may, in part, suggest divine promise or glory that connects the two entities (Figure 4). Succinctly put, in the space of the amulet, the angel stands to remind the viewer of the presence of the divine, the imbued glory of the rider, and, ultimately, the presence of the unseen yet fathomable deity. Thus, the study posits that the presence of two realms within the context of the amulet is indicative that the inter/intra-actions of the elements of the pendant are not relegated to one realm or another, rather, it allows for some elements to cross boundaries as permitted by the inclination and authority of each attribute coupled with the process of the inter/intra-actions themselves.

There are several traditions by which to approach the study of angels (e.g., Christian, Jewish, polytheistic, Gnostic, and Zoroastrianism); and the extant scholarship which addresses the origins, religiously based arguments, and potential roles of angels within various antique to late antique traditions proves adept and fruitful.[242] Many amulets invoking angels are primarily text and sign based and often do not have accompanying pictorial illustrations; however, there are amulets which are inclusive of angel imagery and text in discourse with one another.[243] See for example Figures 49-50, which address the presence and potential of the angel Araaf coupled with a rendering of their form. That said, studies do not purposefully address, in detail, the potential functional role of the image of an angel within the wider context of an amulet under examination (inclusive of the image's potential

[241] At times wings were also used to express a protective being in antiquity (Vreugdenhil, 2020, 366).

[242] See for example Elior, 1993; Arbel, 2003; Bar-Ilan, 2004; Cline, 2011a-b, Muehlberger, 2013, Ahuvia, 2021.

[243] See Faraone, 2012, for various examples of text and sign-based amulets invoking angels.

inter/intra-actions with other elements upon the object of investigation) outside of superficial analyses which acknowledge the presence, and, at times, actions of a rendered angel.[244] It is pertinent to briefly consider how angels generally were perceived and understood to function within the antique to late antique milieu, as well as within the context of textual and representational amulets, as a means to suggest how the image of an angel may have been interpreted as being of amulets such as the Kelsey Pendant.

The term "angel" overarchingly refers to a messenger.[245] In the late antique consciousness an intimate relationship between the earthly and celestial realms existed and angels were understood to be intermediaries between these realms.[246] The concept of the presence of angels within the earthly realm was supported within, and propagated by, the writings of several early authors which underscored that the company and participation of angels, as well as the bridging of the cosmos with the terrestrial, in the context of liturgical rituals should be firmly imbedded and activated within the imagination of the practising believer.[247] Angel exaltation within divine worship was culled from biblical texts such as Isaiah and was supported by, expounded upon, and interpreted (for example) within the

[244] Ronis, 2015, 107-109; See Ahuvia, 2021, for an example of an in-depth study of angels in Antiquity to Late Antiquity that does not address the role (and its wider context) of the image of angels on amulets.

[245] See for example, Speyer, 2006, 35-36; Meier, 2010, 1168; Cline, 2011, 2-4.

[246] Boustan and Reed, 2004, 3; Hutter, 2006, 22; Cline, 2011, 4-11; Ahuvia, 2021, 2-9.

[247] See for example, Cyril, Saint. *St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments.* 'Mystagogical Catechesis' 5.6. (ed. F.L. Cross, 1951, 73-74), where Cyril states that humans and angels participate in liturgy together when they join in singing the Trisagion of Isaiah, Theodore of Mopsuestia. *Catechetical Homilies* (ed. Alphonse Mingana, 1933, 79, 84, 101) where Theodore states that priests performs things on earth that are done in heaven and priests also have the likeness of heavenly things, that those who worship should imagine the presence of angels's service through the actions of deacons, and that singing the 'Divine song' is done together with the 'invisible hosts', John Chrysostom, St. *On the Priesthood* 6.4 (ed. Anne-Marie Malingrey, 1980, 316), Chrysostom discusses the presence of angels around the terrestrial altar space during the priest's performance of the Eucharistic rite; Most pertinent is Muehlberger, 2013, 178-180; Rebiger, 2006, 635.

writings of early Church Fathers and Rabbinic literature.[248] The words of the Trisagion which angels spoke or sung in praise of the deity became an aspect of liturgical practice enacted by clergy and participants within the context of the church or synagogue. Within these spaces, the understood presence and participation of angels in conjunction with the sung performance of humans conjoined the terrestrial and celestial realms through sound.[249]

In conjunction with the angels' participation in worship, it has been suggested that from the first centuries onwards, angels were petitioned in prayer to act on the behalf of the supplicant as their requests came before the deity.[250] Examples of petitions can be seen within the surviving visual and material culture of private and public devotion such as amulets, magical handbooks (e.g., *Sefer Ha-Razim*), the liturgical poetry of writers such as Yannai, an exterior wall of the Miletus Theater, and magic bowls.[251] Since angels were called upon in prayer and requests were made for their intervention, the concept of angels as (lesser) deities or intermediaries was not clear cut.[252] The liminal position of angels sparked debates surrounding their potential and, thus, prevention of their worship.[253] Furthermore, due to the power associated with position of angels, questions regarding their spoken language (enacted through the angel's speech or song) and its origins ignited debates associated with cultural

[248] See for example, Leo I, Papst., *Sancti Leonis Magni Romani Pontificis Opera omnia*. *Sermo XXI* (transl. Migne and Cacciari, 1846, 192), Leo I discusses the greatness of angel exaltation of the divine; Bereshit Rabbah. 'Bereshit Rabbah 78:1,' (Sefaria, 2025), discusses the deity's creation of angels to sing (in exaltation) before Him.

[249] Most pertinent is Ahuvia, 2021, 119-120; Muehlberger, 2013, 187-188.

[250] Bar-Ilan, 2004, 79-80.

[251] See Morgan, 1983; Rabinovitz, 1985, for a detailed examination of Yannai's poetry; Cline, 2011; Ronis, 2015, 95; Horsely and Luxford, 2016; Ahuvia, 2021; Zellmann-Rohrer; 2021.

[252] Bar-Ilan, 2004, 91.

[253] See for example, Rizos, 2016, Canons of the Council of Laodicea (4th CE), 35, titled 'ΛΕ. Περὶ τοῦ μὴ λατρεύειν ἀγγέλοις' (Canon 35: It is not allowed to worship angels) which states that invoking angels and holding assemblies is forbidden and considered a form of idolatry; Cline, 2011, 7, 137-165 for discussion of prohibition of angel worship within Christian context; Ahuvia, 2021, 78-100; Veenstra, 2006, 121.

ownership entwined in identity and power.[254] Though it was understood that angels spoke an esoteric language that was beyond human comprehension, there was also an alignment of angelic language with Hebrew as a means to privilege the Rabbinic '*literati'* and rebuff Aramaic and, at times, Greek.[255]

It is pertinent to consider the potential behind the term "*literati*" especially with regard to those invested in analysing the role and function of angels within late antique society and objects with (super)natural potency. *Literati* encompasses learned people (e.g., Rabbis, Church Fathers, Gnostics, and other initiates of esoterism) who have attained a certain level of knowledge and have an interest in, and grasp of, literature. In addition to a degree of command or intelligence, the term also may be suggestive of the power associated with knowledge as it may be interpreted (especially with regard to the late antique world view) that those who are imbued with levels of knowing are able to decipher nuanced entanglements of wisdom that may be veiled to the understandings of others. With this in mind, one must remain cognisant that aspects of society, including certain facets of religious thought and practise, were concealed from the general populus and only accessible to a select few like the *literati*.

An example can be found within late antique Hekhalot (celestial ascents and angels) and Merkavah (throne and chariot vision) mysticism, which are limited to initiates and have rituals that are separate from daily religious lives.[256] These traditions are interrelated genres

[254] Ahuvia, 2021, 78-100; Veenstra, 2006, 121.

[255] Poirier, 2010, literati, 263; Rebiger, 2006, 632; see also the discussion of *charaktêres* in Chapter Four.

[256] Wright, 1923, 402-430; Elior, 1986, 97-98. The Hekhalot and Merkavah traditions are multivalent and complex. Though the thesis's discussion will not touch upon the scope, depth, or intricacies associated with the tradition and its literature, this succinct notation does speak to an aspect of the Kelsey Pendant's potential, and thus, its power within an inter/intra-action.

of literature that reside under the umbrella of Jewish mysticism. In the Hekhalot and Merkavah traditions, the angel's functional role as an intermediary is further complicated.[257] Furthermore, the throne scene in Ezekiel is a key component to how angels were perceived; for example, in the Merkavah tradition, Ezekiel's vision of the throne-chariot scene (chapters I and X) was one of the sacred Mysteries of Merkavah since the text embodied the secrets of angels and the deity's throne.[258] The angels of Ezekiel are diverse and central to the conceptual space between reality and the mystical; and though there is a continuity between the celestial and terrestrial realms, these non-corporeal beings occupy a space where celestial time is abstract and separated from terrestrial chronology.[259] Angels are not only liminal beings that have the capacity to exist in both the celestial and terrestrial realms; within Hekhalot and Merkabah literature, angels embody the beauty of the celestial realm and act as vessels which hold secrets of the heavens, the holy names, esoteric knowledge associated the deity (inclusive of the deity's name which encapsulates their essence, creative power, and knowledge of their image), and are imitated within liturgy through hymns and prayers.[260]

Hence, the thesis argues that the mention of Hekhalot and Merkavah traditions is particularly poignant for the thesis due to their influences from angelology and Ezekiel's throne-chariot vision, both of which have related imagery (Christ in Majesty and angel), lore, and history actively becoming within the gathering of the Kelsey Pendant.[261] That said, the

[257] For an overview of Hekhalot and Merkavah literature and traditions, see for example Elior, 1986; Elior, 1993; Arbel, 2003.

[258] Wright, 1923, 403-405.

[259] Elior, 1993, 5, 8, 12. With regard to non-corporeality, the forms of angels changed within the antique to late antique imaginations and thus angels cannot be readily defined as inhabiting one form or another (Ahuvia, 2021, 8-9). In Rabbinic literature, angels consisted of fire or a mix of fire and water (Rebiger, 2006, 631).

[260] Elior, 1993, 8-9, 11-12.

[261] Elior, 1993, 6-7.

thesis remains cognisant that there were likely less people within the general population who had access to hidden knowledge than those who did not; and with this in mind, the focus on these traditions will remain succinct if not only to highlight a possible type of connection between the pendant, these traditions, and a potential bearer.

It is important to note that though certain levels of knowledge were selectively available, objects had the propensity to experientially inter/intra-act with all other objects (including humans). Thus, when objects such as amulets are examined, one must keep in mind that these objects hold various facets of information (both hidden and revealed) that may be interpreted and experienced differently based upon one's level of knowledge, history, identity, memory, and previous experiences. With regard to angels, the image of Christ in Majesty, and a person's level of knowledge, it may be suggested that some who may have inter/intra-acted with the Kelsey Pendant were familiar with Hekhalot and Merkavah literature.[262] That said, one must consider that an inter/intra-action between the Kelsey Pendant and a person with esoteric knowledge would have been distinctly different from the amulet's inter/intra-action with a person from the general population.

When considering the general tenets of the Hekhalot and Merkavah traditions in conjunction with the illustrative programme of amulets like the Kelsey Pendant, one is able to further interpret that the elements of these pendants have the potential to contain veiled or privileged information within their gathering that is solely decipherable (if allowed by the pendant) by those with the aptitude to do so. For example, with regard to the angels's privy to secrets associated with the deity, the incorporation of *charaktêres* within the assemblage of

[262] Elior, 1986; Arbel, 2003, 8.

the pendant may also reference aspects of the Hekhalot and Merkavah traditions especially with regard to the concept that *charaktêres* are an angelic language.[263] Furthermore, it may have been understood by some who were versed in one or both of these traditions, and had undergone an experience with the amulet, that the angel of the Kelsey Pendant was indeed a representation of one of the hosts belonging to the army (Sabaoth) that the deity commanded within the Trisagion of Isaiah albeit in human form.[264] Thus, the angel may have functioned as a protector within the earthly realm, and, whilst in the celestial realm, sang in continuous exaltation for the deity.

Within the extant body of scholarship concerning angels upon amulets, on one hand, there are textual amulets which are inclusive of invocations to angels, contain requests for interventions on the petitioner's behalf, or simply incorporate names of angels that are thought to be powerful enough to act and accomplish (or at least help to realise) the intentions of the amulet.[265] These amulets which are often inscribed on *lamellae*, papyri, and gemstones are meant to fulfill a myriad of purposes.[266] Formulaically speaking, they often contain a one or more of the following elements: biblical references, commands for a malefic force to flee, names of petitioners, names and petitions to angels, or direct petitions to a deity.[267] However, there are examples (though less published) of textual amulets which are primarily focused on a petition to a particular angel to guard or save the bearer.[268]

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[263] *Charaktêres* as an angelic language will be discussed in Chapter Four.

[264] Angels in light of the Trisagion will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Four.

[265] See Kotansky, 1994, 155-166 for an example of bronze *lamella* amulet primarily comprised of a list of angelic names; See also Bohak and Faraone, 2018.

[266] Kotansky, 1994, xv.

[267] See for example, Morgan, 1983; Daniel and Maltomini, 1990 and 1992; Kotansky, 1994.

[268] See Zellmann-Rohrer, 2021, for an example of an amulet (gold leaf *lamella*) that directly petitions an angel.

On the other hand, and more pertinent to this thesis, are examples of amulets that contain an inscription referencing the angel as well as an image of an angel. These objects, at times, present a dialogue between text and image where the inscription is comprised of an imperative statement that acts as a both a command and a warning to a malefic force which is then buttressed by the image of the angel depicted in the act of carrying out the contents of the text (See Figures 49-50). From these examples, one may interpret that the image of the angel is a visual embodiment of the text and serves to illustrate that which the text states or commands. On each amulet, an angel is actively spearing a bound figure and the inscription encircling the illustrative programme commands the 'detested one' to flee and further informs them that the angel Araaf will cast them out.[269] These amulets offer at link between text and image, where, in these instances, the angel's inter/intra-actions seem to be, at least in part, relegated (though not entirely bound) to the object's textual directives.

It should be noted that the illustrative programme of the reverse side of the Solomon amulet within the Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France collections (Figure 50) is also inclusive of a bound 'detested one' and two angels, though not rendered in the act of spearing the bound subject, do flank and stand above the malefic figure which indicates their power over the menacing female foe.[270] Moreover, the inscription encircling the reverse side of this Solomon amulet is not inclusive of the command and warning found on the obverse inscription. Instead, the inscription is reminiscent of the inscription of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant requesting that the seal of the living God protect the bearer. Thus, the images of the angels, like the angel of the Kelsey Pendant, of the reverse side of this amulet are

[269] Pitarakis, et al., 2015, 246-249. Here the rider is also identified as Solomon.

[270] Pitarakis, et al., 2015, 246-247. The demon or 'detested one' is both rendered, and described, as a female.

bereft of a specified objective leaving the potential of their inter/intra-actions within the context of this particular gathering to interpretation.

When considering the angel of the Kelsey Pendant it is important to remember that the various ascriptions to angels became an integral part of their socio-cultural perception. These ascriptions coupled with angels's recognised potential efficacy as intermediaries, warriors against malefic forces, and guards likely reside in the illustrated angel of the pendant as a continuously becoming conjoined element of the amulet's gathering. Thus, it may be suggested that the unnamed angel of the pendant embodies the attributes of the named angels of other amulets and magical handbooks as well as the illustrated angels of mosaics within architectural spaces. With that said, it may be further interpreted that the angel of the pendant functions in the same or similar manner in which these other angels were understood to function.

The response to the query of what the angel of the Kelsey Pendant embodies is complex and layered. The angel possesses a multifaceted nature enveloped in their being of the pendant, which is entrenched in their histories, lore, and current (and even future) autonomous inter/intra-actions as well as their inter/intra-actions with or against the other elements of the pendant's gathering.

3.2.2 One God Who Conquers Evil

The other inscription on the obverse side of the amulet is 'one God who conquers evil' (εισθσονικοντακακα). This is a common phrase that was inscribed upon amulets (especially those depicting the evil eye or the rider) in Late Antiquity (See for example Figures 35-37

and Figure 65).[271] These amulets (titled 'rider amulet' or 'amulet with rider') all portray a rider smiting a prostrate female demon situated beneath a 'one God who conquers evil' inscription on the obverse side of the amulet. Figures 35 and 37 are examples of the reverse side of rider amulets where an evil eye is portrayed in the midst of being attacked by animals. Though the specific phrase 'one God who conquers evil' is strongly associated with amulets (in particular Solomon amulets), "one God" inscribed independently as well as various iterations of sayings inclusive of "one God" were also utilised within the non-amuletic visual and material culture of late antique Syria and Palestine in Christian and non-Christian contexts.[272] Examples of spaces incorporating inscriptions with εἷς θεὸς include churches and synagogues, marble columns within the public sphere, private households, and tombs.[273] Thus, like the other elements of the Kelsey Pendant, the "one God" phrase was not relegated to the material culture of amulets, but rather, it too was an integrated aspect of the late antique socio-cultural sphere of the pendant making it a recognised component of the "everyday" in which the amulet lived and participated.

Returning to the sphere of amulets, the thesis posits that the ubiquity of 'one God who conquers evil' on amulets should not take away from the intention of the text or the reason it may have been conjoined within the gathering of the Kelsey Pendant. From the phrase, one may deduce that it is a statement that does not align with one particular religious tradition over another, but rather it is a reference to the power associated with a particular deity based upon the bearer's traditions of belief as well as within the pendant's being as an

[271] Bonner, 1950, 174-175.

[272] di Segni, 1994, 94-95; See Elliott, 2017, 35-36 for mention of the "one God" phrase and Solomon amulets against evil eye.

[273] di Segni, 1994 for a survey of examples in late antique Syria and Palestine.

autonomously becoming object.[274] The manner in which the thesis will analyse the inscription, 'one God who conquers evil,' is to consider its placement within the illustrative programme of the Kelsey Pendant as well as consider its intended purpose in light of the Psalm and other aspects of the pendant.

The manner in which the text is rendered behind the mounted rider may be due to space constraints as it may have been inscribed after the pictorial programme was complete. However, the placement of the text within this particular space may also have been intentional. The words are disconnected insofar as they begin on one line but end on another, and some words are separated by either the tail or the hind legs of the horse. The text is inscribed as if the lines were meant to be read both horizontally (a literal understanding) and vertically (a visual understanding). From a visual perspective, the words "one God" are closest to the back of the rider and the term for evil rests behind and directly beneath the horse's hind legs, which is closest in proximity to the demon. From this observation, 'one God who conquers evil' is not separate from the active image of the rider and his galloping steed, but instead is intertwined with (and thus a metaphysically integral aspect of) the pictorial illustration.

Even with the disconnected aspects of the text, the visual space is balanced where the words retain their presence as a textual component whilst appearing to move with the rider and the horse inasmuch as the words fill in the negative space behind the mounted rider enough to seem like an incorporated aspect of the pictorial illustration. Although the study argues that the rider cannot be readily identified, but suggests at least a partial association

[274] Bonner, 1950, 174-175; van den Hoek et al., 1994, 47.

with Solomon (since the image of the Kelsey Pendant follows the iconographic precedence of the representation of Solomon on late antique amulets), when one considers the lore and Hellenistic traditions surrounding the deification of dead kings intertwined with the power over demons Solomon possessed, it may be understood that the "God" to which this phrase refers is acting through the rider.[275] With this in mind, it may be suggested that the 'one God who conquers evil' inscription of the pendant not only acts as a reminder of the power associated with, and flowing through, the mounted rider, but also that neither the amulet nor the bearer should lose focus upon this "God" since this (religiously undefined) deity is the One who grants power and the One who can definitively conquer evil.

In relation to the Psalm verses of the Kelsey Pendant, the inscription 'one God who conquers evil' may act as a specific reference to the "Most High" or "God of heaven" aspects of the Psalm, or, as previously noted, the entire Psalm.[276] In recalling the discussion regarding the intralineal discourse within Psalm 90 where the examination found the utilisation of three voices within the biblical chapter—the first, second, and third person—and in analysing the phrase 'one God who conquers evil,' which is in third person, at this juncture, it is relevant to focus on the verses within the Psalm that are in the third person (where the deity is the subject). In this sense, the Psalm (as individual discrete units) has the propensity to further elucidate the function and significance of the "one God" phrase.

Of the sixteen verses in Psalm 90, three verses (three, four, and eleven) are in the third person. Furthermore, within each of these verses, the deity is the subject and specifically

[275] Torijano, 2002, 13 for reference to Christian addition of halo to Solomonic amulets. Ibid, 132 discusses how power over demons is transferred to Solomon from name of God. Ibid, 42 for the Hellenistic tradition to deify dead kings.

[276] Tuerk, 2002, 128.

protects the believer from harm. Verse three states, 'Because he will protect me from the trap of hunters and from dreadful pestilence.' (ὅτι αὐτὸς ῥύσεταί με ἐκ παγίδος θηρευτῶν καὶ ἀπὸ λόγου ταραχώδους.).[277] Verse four follows by stating, 'In the broad of his back he will overshadow you for protection, and under his wings you will [find] hope; like a weapon his truth will surround you.' (ἐν τοῖς μεταφρένοις αὐτοῦ ἐπισκιάσει σοι, καὶ ὑπὸ τὰς πτέρυγας αὐτοῦ ἐλπιεῖς· ὅπλῳ κυκλώσει σε ἡ ἀλήθεια αὐτοῦ.).[278] And verse eleven reads, 'Because he will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully in all your ways;' (ὅτι τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ ἐντελεῖται περὶ σοῦ τοῦ διαφυλάξαι σε ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς σου·).[279]

In these verses, the narrator utilises wording that explains what the deity will protect the believer from, words that engender an understanding of the deity's physicality ("broad of his back" and "wings"), and words that express the breadth of the deity's sovereignty ("command his angels"). Buttressed by their faith in the Psalm, and from sections of the text (such as verse four) that describe parts of the deity's form, the believer is able to move from an abstracted visualisation of the deity to a place where they are able to imagine the deity in a tangible manner. Thus, verse four provides a mental image of the deity. It may be suggested that this mental image, to some degree, works in conjunction with the phrase 'one God who conquers evil' allowing the believer to imaginatively *see* the deity (or divinely imbued being) who conquers evil, which in turn, may also reference the image of the rider of the amulet. In addition, in verses three and eleven of Psalm 90, the believer is reminded of what they will be protected from followed by the means by which the deity will continuously ensure (commanding his angels) their protection. Hence, it may be understood that verses three,

[277] See Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, vol. II, 100-101; Lust, et al., 2003; 'Logeion'. https://logeion.uchicago.edu

[278] See Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, vol. II, 100-101; Lust, et al., 2003; 'Logeion'. https://logeion.uchicago.edu

[279] See Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, vol. II, 100-101; Lust, et al., 2003; 'Logeion'. https://logeion.uchicago.edu

four, and eleven speak directly to the premise and intended function of the amulet through their reference to the deity's physicality and forthcoming, yet continuous, actions. In addition, the other verses of Psalm 90, where the deity is not the main subject (in first, second, or third person), either specify things the believer will not fear (e.g., δαιμονίου μεσημβρινοῦ—demon of noon), provide specific examples of what the believer will be shielded from (e.g., κακά καὶ μάστιξ—evil and plague), or outline the deity's promise to the believer.[280]

3.2.3 The Demon

Demons, or their conceptualisations, were ever-present within the late antique lived memory and consciousness. The demon's perceived potential inspired a myriad of means by which people sought to protect themselves against their menacing reach. Underscored by the conjoining of the Psalm, "one God" phrase, rider, and angel within its gathering of the obverse side, the Kelsey Pendant may be interpreted as an example of at least one of these protective mechanisms.

The demon of the Kelsey Pendant is visually prominent though it is situated beneath the horse's stride (Figure 1).[281] Its strong presence is accentuated by its unnerving gaze into the viewer's space, instigating a tense interchange realised through eye-contact. The creature is awkwardly posed with their head turned towards the viewer's space while their body (seemingly more confined within the scene) is rendered in profile in accordance with the other actors of the pendant's obverse illustrative programme. As noted in Chapter Two, the

[280] See Rahlfs, 2006, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, vol. II, 100-101, verse 6 and verse 10 respectively.

[281] For the purposes of this study, a demon is a supernatural entity that is invisible or materially present that causes chaos, illness, menace, or evil; See also Vreugdenhil, 2020, 19.

demon's forward-facing head is comprised of a rounded face, eyes, and markings depicting a bulbous nose. Their hair, though slightly disheveled, is cut across their forehead and hangs long along the sides of their face and against their back. Their body, in midstride, is reminiscent of a female lioness with hanging teats.[282] The demon's position signals their potential to move between, and reside within, the realm of the viewer and the pendant's gathering. This liminal quality creates a tension between the two dimensions where the demon's presence, thus threat, is likely more tactile to viewer or bearer. In one moment, the demon may face and seem to challenge the viewer whilst retaining their presence within the unfolding activated central scene, but, in another moment, they may materialise in the bearer's realm causing chaos to multifariously manifest.

Like the rider and angel, the demon of the Kelsey Pendant is unnamed. The anonymity of the demon allows for a general interpretation of what they specifically represent whilst underscoring the presence of maleficence. Furthermore, the demon's being of the gathering of the pendant provides insight into the theme of war and conquest central to the pictorial programme of the obverse side of the amulet as well as a visual representation (though symbolic) of the fear or anxiety in need of conquest within the realm of the bearer.[283]

In late antique visual and material culture, images of demons in conjunction with riders are uncommon outwith the context of amulets (including jewellery). Riders of amulets as well as those within the wider late antique visual and material culture were similarly purposed to fight battles under the light of divine blessing, however, as may be gleaned from the above examples, non-amuletic rider scenes (generally speaking) depict conquest, power,

[282] See Vreugdenhil, 2020, 313 with regard to demons being given leonine features because man feared lions.

[283] Donceel-Voûte, 2018, 17, 41-42.

and victory over foes who are the demonised "other" and embody demonic qualities (e.g., dangerous or religiously deviant), but are not demons in themselves. The demons on amulets, however, cross-culturally transitioned from antique lore, literature, and material culture enveloped in fear, were understood to cause illnesses, were unbiased in their choice of victims, and were identified or associated with extant entities of the demonic realm.[284]

The thesis posits that demon of the Kelsey Pendant is female. An example of a conquered female demon within late antique material culture can be seen in a sixth-century fresco wall painting of St. Sisinnios on horseback in the Bawit Monastery, Egypt where the hero saint is in the process of smiting a named demon (Figure 66).[285] The representation of the rider's evil conquest (as demon) in the Bawit painting is rendered specifically as a female individual and is in line with the general antique to late antique iconography of the rider-demon conquest trope, which especially flourished on amulets (See for example Figures 33-34, 49-50). The potential identity (thus perceived existence) of this demon crossed cultural, chronological, and geographical boundaries.[286] They are known by many names such as Alabasandria, Gello, Gylou, Lilith, Lamaštu, Morra, Aiiehiiā, Anabardalaia, Apeltou, Abyzou, etcetera; and they embody chaotic roles associated with undesired termination of pregnancies, killing mother and child, maiming, sexual deviancy, and sickness.[287]

When comparing the Kelsey Pendant to other amulets, it is clear though that the demon of the Kelsey Pendant is quite different from the standardised representation of malice

[284] For example, see Schwartz, 2008.

[285] Rodríguez Pienado, 2010, 54-56; Donceel-Voûte, 2018, 27-29, 41.

[286] Schwartz, 2008.

[287] Donceel-Voûte, 2018, 41-42; Schwartz, 2008, 96-97.

on amulets. Oftentimes, demons on rider amulets are female and are rendered as cowering, prostrate, overtaken, or vanquished figures lying on their backs (Figure 36 and Figures 49-50). For example, the female demon of the 'Amulet with Rider' bronze pendant in the Princeton Art Museum is nude and lying on their back. The demon's torso (in three-quarter view) has markings that indicate breasts, underscoring a female, human form (Figure 36). Additionally, the copper alloy Solomon amulet held within the Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France collections depicts a long-haired, female form bound by the neck and lying on their back. The upper torso of the demon is also in three-quarter view so that the viewer is able to ascertain that the demon has breasts, accentuating their female nature (Figure 49).

Thus, the demon's form may, at times, be bound or amorphously rendered such that one is able to ascertain that they are female (based upon line markings depicting hair) but they are bereft of other determinate details. The demon of the Kelsey Pendant, instead, is clearly depicted. Its markings are purposeful and display an intent to portray a dominant, though negative, presence. Certain aspects of their form are highlighted by the utilisation of a combination of broad form lines and indentations in contrast to smaller, deeper marks. Here, the face, eyes, nose, teats, claws, tail, and hair are brought to the forefront, while exterior bodily details (fur, scales, or other forms of skin texture) and musculature are nebulously rendered. Furthermore, the creature is in movement—boldly walking within the unfolding scene of the pendant's assemblage whilst threatening to cross into the bearer's world. In contrast to the demons of the other rider amulets, the creature of the pendant is alive and seems to challenge the notion of its impending demise—the battle taking place upon the earthly realm (sanctioned by the celestial dimension) has yet to fulfill its purpose; and it may be understood that upon the Kelsey Pendant, it has yet to begin.

For the purposes of the study and a streamlined discussion, the following analysis utilises the well-known name "Lilith" (but does not attribute the name to the demon of the pendant) to represent a genre of female creatures with similar propensities and potential to commit evil deeds. The malefic creature's multiple roles (as mentioned above) remain at the forefront of the study's conceptualisation of the demon as being of the Kelsey Pendant and how they may inter/intra-act. Moreover, it is pertinent to note that the various attributions to these demons was redefined and recoded from time period to time period. Thus, the following description is not all encompassing, but rather should be understood as a sampling of the demon's perceived potential to cause malice.

In addition to the pictorial representations of female demons, Lilith (and demons of the like), were also described in various, culturally diverse, textual sources such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Testament of Solomon, the Avesta, the Bible, and Rabbinic literature.[288] Based upon descriptive information culled from various sources, over time, some ways in which Lilith has been depicted include the demon suckling dogs and pigs, holding snakes, as having a female human body, having wings, and having a lion's head.[289] For example, Figure 67 is a stone amulet with a rendering of Lamaštu with a lion's head, human torso, human legs (to the knee), and the feet of a chicken (from the knees down). She holds a snake in each hand, stands on the back of a kneeling ass, and is suckling a wild pig and a jackal. Furthermore, Lilith has been described as a physically seductive demon obsessed with copulation, their teats are filled with poison, they either cannot bear children or can only give birth to demons, cause sickness, and they kill their own offspring as well as the children of

[288] Most pertinent is Kosior, 2018, 113-114; Duling, 1983, 964-965, 973-974; Schwartz, 2008; In Mesopotamian incantation texts *lilû* was a male version of Lilith (Fröhlich, 2010, 126).

[289] See for example, Babylonian Talmud, Niddah. 'Niddah 24b:10' (Sefaria, 2025) which discusses the impurity of a woman who bears a demon fetus with wings and a human face; Fröhlich, 2010, 102-103.

human women by sucking the child's blood and eating their flesh.[290] Some of these attributions may be gleaned from Figure 68, which is an incantation bowl that depicts a line drawing of Lilith with long hair, exaggerated breasts, open legs, and chains to imprison her.

In conceptualising the demon of the Kelsey Pendant in conjunction with the descriptions of Lilith (the genre of demon often identified on other rider amulets), it may be understood that the demon of the pendant is a creature of chaos whose putrid nature, based upon initial visual analysis of the amulet, may be further discerned from the presence of worms or snakes beneath their form coupled with markings which perhaps denote flies hovering above their body (Figure 1). With Lilith's propensity to strike children, women, and men—all by different means, they can be interpreted as the ultimate embodiment of danger insofar as no one is safe from their maliciousness.

Though the demon of the pendant is unnamed, from its materialised presence, one is able to glean that the demon of the pendant may represent, based on the bearer's beliefs, an array of potential dangers involved with temptation or bodily harm. With regard to the pendant as an autonomous object, however, it may be suggested that the general threat of malicious intent is sufficient enough to wage war against the demon's presence. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the Psalm and demon as being within the gathering of the pendant cannot be overlooked. Psalm 90 LXX specifically references a 'noonday demon'; however, there is some speculation that the 'nocturnal fright' of Psalm 90 LXX also refers to a demon (albeit a

[290] Schwartz, 2008, 96-99; See also, Duling, 1983, 964-965, 973-974. Onoskelis (a fair complexed demon with a female body and legs of a mule) admits in her conversation with Solomon that she strangles men and 'perverts them from their true natures.' The female demon, Obyzouth, in her conversation with Solomon, admits that her work is strangling and '…killing newborn babies, injuring eyes, condemning mouths, destroying minds, and making bodies feel pain.'(974); Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat, 'Shabbat 151b:10 (Sefaria 2025) explains the sleeping alone in a home is dangerous as Lilith will sexually seize this person; Fröhlich, 2010, 102-103; Kosior, 2018, 121.

different beast) and this creature may be Lilith insofar as Lilith was understood to attack at night.[291] Thus, with the anonymity of the creature and the inscription of the Psalm of the amulet in mind, it may be interpreted that the demon of the pendant may be a catch-all representation of evil given form in the Psalm—the ultimate significance of which is left to the bearer (based on their need at any given time) to define. This interpretation coupled with the various above-mentioned, gender encompassing, malefic roles (e.g., sexual deviancy and sickness) associated with demons aligns with this thesis's position that the Kelsey Pendant was not intended to be specifically worn by a male or female; rather the pendant was meant to protect any bearer from their personal conceptions of danger. In this sense, the study posits that the pendant's inter/intra-active role within itself as well as within its experience with the bearer is highly influenced by the conception of the demon that the bearer brings to the interaction.

3.3 An Activated Interchange on the Obverse

The following discourse endeavours to exemplify how some of the elements of the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant may inter/intra-act at any given time. The exposition will only focus on two elements (Psalm and the "one God" phrase) as a means to underscore the hypothesis that not all elements of the pendant may inter/intra-act at the same time, instead, some aspects may choose to retain a stillness whilst being activated and in the process of continuously becoming. Though the discussion will provide a specific scenario, it is important to remember that any inter/intra-action within the state of continuous becoming of the amulet (as autonomous object) as well as between the amulet and another object (bearer) cannot be definitively foretold or prescribed.

[291] Most pertinent is Kosior, 2018, 113; Schwartz, 2008, 98-99; See also 'Lilith' in Index in Vreugdenhil, 2020, 470.

Psalm 90 and ‘one God who conquers evil’ are in discourse with one another. This observation may be considered in two ways: first, how, by way of their referential ties, the inscriptions inter/intra-act with one another, second, the manner in which the inscriptions inter/intra-act with the entire pictorial programme (and vice-versa). It has already been discussed how the Psalm 90 and the ‘one God who conquers evil’ inscriptions are linked by the third person voice. Here, the study will endeavour to further examine how this link actively works.

Since the inscription of the Psalm encircles the entire illustrative programme of the obverse side of the amulet, it may be understood to activate (and be activated by) every aspect of the central image. Thus, ‘one God who conquers evil’ also activates and is activated by the Psalm. In considering the discourse within Psalm 90, it may be suggested that ‘one God who conquers evil’ acts as a respite from (whilst consistently underscoring) the conversation with the Psalm. In this sense, as the eye of the bearer moves from one section of the amulet to another, the message remains constant while the visual or textual mode of communication changes. As previously noted, Psalm 90 speaks and the combination of voices that change from second to third to first person does not end—a cyclicality which is further engendered by the amulet’s circular shape. Even though the Kelsey Pendant only contains a partial inscription of the Psalm, it may be argued that since there is not a marked end to the Psalm of the amulet, the inscription embodies, in a cyclically repetitive manner, the entirety of Psalm 90. It may therefore also be suggested that the viewer in interacting with the amulet may continuously shift focus from one aspect of the amulet to the other since the discourse within Psalm 90, without respite, may prove overwhelming in a moment when other factors are also acting upon the viewer. From a textual perspective, it is here that the phrase ‘one God who conquers evil’ comes into play.

One may infer that the viewer's focus will constantly shift based on the number of elements of the amulet; however, these shifts also may be anticipated with regard to the potency of each element. Thus, on one hand, the "one God" phrase acts a directional mechanism redirecting the viewer to the Psalm. On the other hand, the "one God" phrase acts as a reference to the mounted rider of which it is a part. When the phrase redirects the viewer, it transports them to verses three, four, and eleven of the Psalm which speak of the deity's physicality and the ways in which the deity will protect them. In this sense, it may be argued that the inscription of Psalm 90, when coupled with the image of the rider culminates into a scenario where both aspects translate to a visually tactile form of protection against maleficence, which is underscored by 'One God who conquers evil' that reminds the viewer of the Psalm that encircles it whilst underscoring the concept that only one God has the power to defeat their fears realised through the image of the mounted rider actively smiting a demon. Textually speaking, at the point in which the viewer returns to the partial inscription of the Psalm, and in reading and recalling the remainder of the Psalm's verses from memory, they are directed again to the phrase within the central image. The discourse between the textual inscriptions manifests into a back-and-forth interchange that takes into account the cyclicality of the Psalm and the succinct "one God" statement of the central image—both of which embody an immeasurable potency that is based on the bearer's beliefs, the inter/intra-active potential of the autonomous amulet within itself (and with the bearer), as well as the intention placed upon the amulet during its creation.

3.4 Pitfalls of Comparison: An Example

Taking into account the above discussion and the study's endeavour (at least peripherally) to provide a pathway of investigation for amulets bereft of archaeological find context within museum collections, it is pertinent to consider that an analysis of the Kelsey Pendant may

differ when compared to an analysis of another amulet with similar attributes. For example, the Magical Pendant (GA 2010.1) held within collections of the Bible und Orient Museum has an illustrative programme which is also comprised of the rider coupled with an inscription of Psalm 90 (and other similar elements), may have a different investigative outcome from that of the Kelsey Pendant (Figure 30). On the Magical Pendant, the rider that is in the act of smiting a prostrate demon (surrounded by an inscription of the phrase 'one God who conquers evil') is rendered on one side of the pendant while a partial, deconstructed inscription of the first verse of Psalm 90 is rendered on the other. Like the Kelsey Pendant, the rider is unnamed, the amulet contains the "one God" inscription as well as a partial textual rendering of Psalm 90. The Magical Pendant is composed of copper and, per the available records, is chronologically dated between the fourth and sixth centuries, which aligns with the chronological parameters attributed to the Kelsey Pendant. Although, artistically, the two pendants are disparately rendered, the pendants's attributes are nonetheless similar.

In light of the Psalm of the Kelsey Pendant which encircles the central image of the amulet, succinctly speaking, the study has argued that the Psalm coupled with the *punch-dot lines* constrain the demon by way of their role as bordering mechanisms. With regards to the Psalm upon the Magical Pendant, where the Psalm is inscribed on the reverse side of the amulet, one is able to argue that the Psalm acts as a form of protection against the demon; but one is not able to argue for a visually aligned physical containment of the demon due to the text's placement on the other side of the amulet. In this case, even though (due to their textual and pictorial attributes) both the Kelsey Pendant and the Magical Pendant may be understood to be apotropaically efficacious and able to contain malefic forces, the nuanced potential functions of the Psalm inscription within the context of either amulet will not only depend

upon the content of the biblical text, but also upon the text's placement with regards to the other elements with which it will inter/intra-act. In short, one must remain cognisant of, and avoid, generalisations when amulets are comprised of similar pictorial and textual programmes and recognise that each object (inclusive of all its attributes) must be considered on an individual basis even though they may belong to wider networks of texts, images, objects, and society.

Chapter Four. Reverse of the Kelsey Pendant

The reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is visually divided and is primarily comprised of textual inscriptions—'Seal of the living God, guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil' (outermost border), 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of hosts' (mid-tier border), large *charaktêres* (middle register), and smaller *charaktêres* interspersed with other indecipherable symbols (base-tier border). Between the textual engravings are two visually prominent images: Christ in Majesty (top register) and a composite image of a roaring lion, serpent, and scorpion (bottom register). As posited with regard to the obverse side of the amulet, the elements of this side of the pendant inter/intra-act with each other, the pendant's bearer, as well as with the obverse side of the amulet, continuously becoming—working for, against, and with each other for the intention and purpose of the whole.

Following the applied methodology for the obverse side of the amulet, the examination will perform in-depth textual and visual analyses that employ and intertwine extrinsic (societal factors, influences, and translations) and intrinsic (inter/intra-action within the amulet) levels of investigation, which will begin with the outermost border and then work downward from the top register and ending with the bottom register.

4.1 Outermost Border

4.1.1 Seal of the Living God, Guard the Person Bearing this Amulet from all Evil

The outermost border inscription on the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is proceeded by a cross symbol, encircles the reverse face of the amulet, and reads, 'Seal of the living God,

guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil.'[292] One objective of the inscription is to identify the amulet as an object that should be carried or worn. The "bearer" (or wearer) aspect of the inscription is somewhat formulaic as it has been identified on many other portable objects produced over a long span of time.[293] This particular aspect of the inscription was often combined with other texts in order to name the bearer of the object, form statements such as the one of the Kelsey Pendant, wish the bearer good fortune, etcetera.[294] In considering the utilisation, and juxtaposition, of certain words within the inscription such as "guard," "amulet," "person bearing," "seal," and "evil," it may be suggested that the entire inscription of the outermost border of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant acts both as a referential and an identifying mechanism. However, for purposes of clarity within the forthcoming detailed analysis, the inscription will be deconstructed and then brought together for a holistic overview.

4.1.1.1 Seal of the Living God, ...

The first part of the inscription, "seal of the living God," arguably plays a pivotal role in identifying the purpose (at least in part) of the Kelsey Pendant, and thus may be understood to be a self-referential and signaling mechanism that points towards a specific aspect of the amulet.[295] First, the query as to what the seal of the living God is within the context of the Kelsey Pendant must be addressed. This question is pertinent because a plausible suggestion regarding the identification of the seal may unveil a more nuanced level of understanding behind the intention of the amulet couched within the entire border inscription. Following the

[292] See Liddell and Scott 1996; Emde Boas, et al., 2019.

[293] See van den Hoek, et al., 1994, 43-44.

[294] See van den Hoek, et al., 1994, 43.

[295] Tuerk, 2002, suggests that the KP is self-referential.

precedent set by the partial inscription of the Psalm of the obverse side, it may be suggested that this phrase both directly and indirectly references aspects of the Bible. More specifically, the phrase indirectly references Ezekiel 9:4-6 and directly references Revelation 7:2-3 and 9:3-4. Like the partial Psalm inscription on the obverse side of the Kelsey Pendant which is understood to represent the entirety of Psalm 90, it may be suggested that this inscription (in either an indirect or direct capacity) represents the entire chapter (or narrative sequence—inclusive of more than one chapter) from which the verses are derived.

Within the narrative sequence of Ezekiel 9:4-6, one encounters the judgement of Jerusalem. An abridgement of these verses state, [4] 'And he said to him, "Pass through the middle of Ierousalem, and give the mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and have been afflicted over all the lawless acts that happen in their midst." …. [6] "...but you shall not approach anyone upon whom is the mark, and begin from my holy places." ….[296] In Ezekiel 9:4-6, the mark (when placed upon the foreheads of persons afflicted by lawlessness) acts as a protective mechanism against death and the destruction of Jerusalem as commanded by the deity. However, within these verses, the identification of the mark is left to question.

Revelation 7:2-3 specifically reference the seal of the living God. These verses state: 'I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads."'[297] Revelation 9:3-4 read, 'Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given authority like the authority of

[296] Ezekiel 9:4-6 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 952-953).

[297] Most pertinent is Revelation 7:2-3 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 750). Coogan, et al., 2010, 750.

scorpions of the earth. They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.'[298] Based upon the verses in Revelation chapters seven and nine, the importance of the seal upon the forehead is revealed as a necessary mechanism for (and the only means by which) those who serve God will be shielded from harm.

4.1.1.2 From "Mark" to "Seal"

In *Adversus Marcionem*, the second-century Christian author Tertullian associated the "mark" within Ezekiel 9:4 with the Hebrew *taw* (ת) and the *tau* of the Greeks—both of which (in written form) potentially resembled the cross symbol.[299] It has been suggested that the Greek *tau* was inevitably associated with Christ by way of the Greek letter *chi* (x) inasmuch as when the *tau* was inscribed on its side it resembled the *chi* (and thus the *taw*), which is the first letter of Christ's name in Greek (χριστός).[300]

Christian theologians such as Cyprian underscored the prophetic significance of the cross via an association of the "mark" in Ezekiel 9:4 with the mark (in blood) that the Jews placed upon their doorways during Passover.[301] Augustine further placed emphasis upon the blood used to mark the doorways during Passover with Christ, defining Christ as the sacrificial lamb who was signified through the cross symbol placed upon the foreheads of

[298] Most pertinent is Revelation 9:3-4 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 753-754). Coogan, et al., 2010, 754.

[299] See Tertullian *Adv Marcion* 3:22 http://www.tertullian.org; Jensen, 2017, 34-36. The Hebrew transliteration for the letter ת is generally spelled *taw* or *tav*. See also, Hurtado, 2017, 34-35 especially footnote #27 where Hurtado postulates the origin of Tertullian's ideas regarding the *taw*, which does not align with my suggestion, but is certainly viable. See also Longenecker, 2015, 55-59; 66.

[300] Diringer, 1950, 78-79; Finegan, 1993, 346.

[301] Cyprian, Saint. *The Treatises of S. Caecilius Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, and Martyr*. 2.22. (Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, 1839, 57-58); Jensen, 2017, 36.

Christians during the ritual of baptism.[302] Following the discussion of the cross-symbol's imagery and potential significance in Chapter Three, the study will provide a succinct inquiry into the cross symbol with regards to its association with the term "seal".[303] This is necessary insofar as it may further contextualise the phrase "seal of the living God" as well as provide a preliminary explanation regarding how the terms "mark" and "seal" are aligned and perhaps interchangeable.

It should be noted that seals were enveloped in multiple social factors. Seals (as objects) as well as the act of sealing were embedded within ancient as well as late antique material culture. For example, they were utilised to distinguish geographic origin and one person's or a family's identity from another within the public and private spheres, were utilised in commerce and in bureaucracy to determine social and economic class structures, and were utilised as visual markers of political legitimacy.[304] Moreover, the concept of identity and active identification played part in the use of the abstractly conceived seal (in instances where the seal in question was not physically visible) in religious practices to further amalgamate and discern members of religious factions.[305]

[302] Augustine, of Hippo. *Liber de catechizandis rudibus.* 20:15-25 (ed. William Yorke Fausset, 1915, 59); Jensen, 2017, 36.

[303] See Chapter Three, 82-84.

[304] See for example Choksy, 1988; Friedenberg, 1994; Ferda, 2012.

[305] Most pertinent is Ferda, 2012; Friedenberg, 1994. An example of abstractly conceived seal is the mark of the cross made by gesture or with ephemeral materials (like water) where there is no lasting visual or residual evidence of the mark.

Chrysostom identified the cross with baptism and underscored its role as a weapon against the devil.[306] Even though Chrysostom aligns baptism with a seal, he makes clear that it is through the cross that the seal is obtained. Thus, the cross may be interpreted as a sealing mechanism. Augustine underscores the significance of the cross in the ritual of baptism and cites several stipulations with regard to the symbol and an efficacious baptism. He writes that unless the sign of the cross is made upon the brow of the baptised, is made upon the water within which one is baptised, and is made upon the oil that anoints the baptised, the ritual has not been properly performed.[307] With regard to identity and identification, when people made the sign of the cross (or were marked by the cross) on their foreheads they were identifiable as initiates of the Christian community.[308]

Another instance recalling the power associated with the cross can be found in the Testament of Solomon (17:1-5). In this anecdote, Solomon confronts a demon, '...a lecherous spirit of a giant man....,' and within his conversation with the demon, Solomon asks the spirit how he is defeated.[309] The demon replies, '"He who is about to return (as) Savior thwarts me. If his mark is written on (one's) forehead it thwarts me, and because I am afraid of it, I quickly turn and flee from him. This is the sign of the cross."'[310] Based upon the above examples, the Testament, and the verses from Ezekiel and Revelation, at this point, it may be

[306] Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*. Homily XIII on Philippians (transl. Cotton, et al., 1879, 148).

[307] Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel According to St. John and His First Epistle,* Homily CXVIII (transl. Browne, 1848, 1039).

[308] See for example Tertullian. *Apologetic and Practical Treatises*. III (Transl. by C. Dodgson, 1842, 164-165) who provides examples of when (in everyday situations) Christians made the sign of the cross; Jensen, 2017, 27.

[309] Duling, 1983, 977. See also Longenecker, 2015, 69.

[310] Duling, 1983, 977.

gleaned that the seal, mark, and the cross are intricately intertwined insofar as the seal is the mark meant to be placed upon the brow of the believer, the seal is the ritual of baptism obtained through the cross, demons fear the cross, the cross is a mark of identification, and the cross is a protective symbol.

It has been suggested that some iconographic programmes (e.g., Moses striking a rock in the catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus) are indirect references to sacraments like baptism or the eucharist (Figure 69).[311] Imagery from scriptural narratives have been discovered within spaces such as catacombs and baptistries.[312] For example, the third century catacomb of Dino Compagni in Rome features and illustration of Moses parting the Red Sea and the decorative programme in the contemporary baptistry at Dura Europos in Syria features Christ healing a paralytic (See Figures 70-71).[313] These images coupled with references from liturgy and homilies had the propensity to act as a visual shorthand and would have made it easy for Christians to link visual imagery with rite.[314] Considering this potential association between image and rite, the thesis posits that, like the illustrated scriptural narratives, the cross image also indirectly represents the rite of baptism, and, when encountered, has the capacity to guide the viewer towards the interconnection between symbol and ritual practice based upon the literature and oral lore surrounding the cross's power.

[311] Jensen, 2011, 33; Jensen, 2024.

[312] Jensen, 2011, 182-183, Jensen 2024, 105-108.

[313] Jenson, 2011,

[314] Jensen, 2011, 34-36.

4.1.1.3 The Cross and "Seal of the Living God" of the Kelsey Pendant

Returning to the "seal of the living God" phrase of the Kelsey Pendant (σφραγισθυζοντοσ→σφραγὶς θ(εο)ῦ ζ{ο}<ῶ>ντος), grammatically speaking, the Greek states that the seal belongs to the living God; however, it may be argued that the seal is not specified. In this case, one understands to whom the seal belongs, the living God, but one does not necessarily know what the seal actually is.

The association of the "seal" upon an object or amulet may vary based upon the time when the object was created. With regard to amulets specifically, the chronological attribution of an amulet, in part, influences its design and the use of certain apotropaic imagery or text within its illustrative programme. In an effort to underscore the concept of possible variations of the seal's significance, the Solomonic hematite amulets will be used as an example. These fourth century amulets, made of hematite or bloodstone, are inscribed with the phrase "seal of God" (Figures 51-52). The amulets identify the rider as Solomon who is rendered in the act of conquering a prostrate demon. With an understanding that the lore surrounding Solomon as a controller of demons was likely well known during the fourth or fifth century from the Testament of Solomon, it can be understood that the term "seal" on these examples may reference Solomon's seal within the Testament which granted the king power over demons.[315] In this case, the tangible identification of the rider as Solomon upon the amulet would directly associate the inscribed word "seal" with Solomon's seal given to him by the deity.

[315] See McCown, 1922; Duling, 1983; Longenecker, 2015, 65-66.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the rider of the Kelsey Pendant can be understood as a later development of the rider on the Solomon amulets.[316] Even though the rider of the Kelsey Pendant is unnamed and cannot be readily identified as Solomon, it is still possible to associate the term "seal" of the Kelsey Pendant with the seal of Solomon. It should also be noted that in much of the examples where the rider has been identified as Solomon, the inscribed text upon the amulet reads "seal of God" instead of "seal of the living God," as seen on the Kelsey Pendant. Even though both phrases are biblical references that appear in Revelation and both phrases are often inscribed upon amulets, one must still consider that the identification of the seal may vary based upon the chronological attribution of the object as well as established iconographical associations.

Some scholars suggest that people of antiquity were aware of the biblical associations (especially Ezekiel 9:4-6 and Revelation 7:2-3 and 9:4) with the cross symbol and would have equated the "seal" (σφραγῖδα) with the cross.[317] However, the term "σφραγῖδα" also means "signet ring".[318] Based upon this meaning, the well-known mythology of Solomon, as well as the biblical associations of the "seal" in Revelation and Ezekiel with the cross, the late antique populace may have associated the seal of Solomon with a cross-inscribed signet ring.[319] The Testament of Solomon states that Solomon received a signet ring with a seal engraved in a precious stone, but the Testament is not definitively clear about the identification of the inscription upon the stone.[320] Thus, even though the cross has been

[316] See Chapter Three, 97-100.

[317] Most pertinent is Longenecker, 2015, 66 footnote #8, 66; Trnka-Amrhein, 2020, 101-102 states that some scholars suggest that the seal is the name of God (*τετραγράμματον)* or that the seal is the *οὐροβόρος* design.

[318] Logeion. https://logeion.uchicago.edu/morpho/σφραγῖδα

[319] Longenecker, 2015, 65-66.

[320] Duling (1983, 962) translated as follows: '...a ring which had a seal engraved on precious stone,'; It should be noted that the Babylonian Talmud, Gittin. 'Gittin 68b:15' (Sefaria, 2025), contains a narrative sequence

identified as the seal within the context of the previously discussed biblical scriptures, one cannot ascertain if Solomon's seal (as an inscribed signet ring) incorporates the cross symbol.[321] However, the possibility of an association between a signet ring as a seal and Solomon stems from the clear identification of the Old Testament king upon the Solomonic hematite amulets, which cannot be said for the rider of the Kelsey Pendant.

It has been suggested that "seal of the living God" is self-referential and that the Kelsey Pendant (as an object) is the seal of the living God insofar as the phrase is referring to the entire amulet within which it is a part.[322] However, unlike the Solomon amulets, the cross symbol is a visually identifiable aspect of the illustrative programme of the Kelsey Pendant. Thus, in contrast to previous hypotheses, this study suggests that the seal to which the phrase refers is the cross symbol specifically and not the pendant in its entirety.[323] The thesis further posits that the "seal" of the phrase may reference the cross that precedes the entire inscription, 'Seal of the living God, guard the person bearing the amulet from all evil,' any other cross symbol upon the amulet, or perhaps a culmination of all of the cross symbols of the amulet.[324]

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between Solomon and Ashmedai (king of the demons). Ashmedai asks Solomon for his ring with '…God's name engraved on it…", which offers an explicit identification of the seal; however, the thesis does not interpret this narrative sequence as concrete evidence of the seal definitively being the deity's name since this reference is only found in later rabbinic texts (e.g., the Babylonian Talmud and the Palestinian midrashim); see also Boustan and Beshay, 2015, 109-110.

[321] Boustan and Beshay, 2015, 115-121 note that the Solomon's ability to seal demons was in some instances associated with the sealing power of baptism and his signet ring became associated and venerated with the cross.

[322] Tuerk, 2002, 130

[323] Though the thesis aligns with the interpretation that the cross is the seal, it remains cognisant that there is not a definitive consensus within scholarship regarding the identification of the seal.

[324] Jacobs, 2017, 204-207.

The inscription 'Seal of the living God, guard the person bearing the amulet from all evil,' unlike the Psalm 90 inscription, is not a direct quotation from the Bible, but as previously mentioned, it may be considered to be an indirect reference to the Bible as well as other texts such the Testament of Solomon. With regard to the Bible, however, it may be suggested that the "Seal of the Living God..." inscription of the reverse side follows the precedent set by the obverse Psalm 90 inscription. In considering this suggestion, it can be understood that the outermost border of the obverse and reverse sides of the Kelsey Pendant are comprised of the power and active potential associated with biblical scripture as well as the cross.

4.1.1.4 .... Guard the Person Bearing this Amulet from all Evil

The second clause of the inscription, "... guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil," which (like the phrase "seal of the living God") also acts as a referential and identifying mechanism insofar as it characterises the object as a form of protection and refers back to the seal and its outwardly defined role to actively guard.

The grammatical form of "guard" is a direct request to the seal (cross) to protect or shield in a continuous manner. [325] This aspect of the inscription also delineates that the object is for a person. Grammatically, the terms "person" and "bearing" are encapsulated in one Greek word (φοροῦντα) preceded by the article (τὸν). Beginning with the present participle form of φοροῦντα, the reader is able to infer that the pendant should be worn continuously. φοροῦντα is preceded by the masculine article τὸν, which may initially indicate that the bearer of the amulet was intended to be male.[326] However, philological research suggests that

[325]Logeion. https://logeion.uchicago.edu/morpho/φυλαξον

[326] van den Hoek, et al., 1994, 44, 52. Throughout the article it is suggested that the bearer's gender may be gleaned from the Greek grammar (the article) within the inscriptions.

the use of the Attic Greek article was subjective insofar as it represented the writer's or speaker's point of view; which signifies that the utilisation of specific 'articular structures' was based upon perspective (inclusive of bias and normative customs) and may not have reflected reality.[327] Even though the creator of the amulet utilised the masculine form for the term bearer, there is no distinct indication (e.g., a name) identifying the bearer. Thus, the possibility that the bearer of the Kelsey Pendant may have been female should definitely not be excluded. Finally, "this amulet" (τὸ φυλακτήριον τοῦ<το>) identifies the Kelsey Pendant as an amulet. Of this phrase, the term "this" further contextualises the entirety of "... guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil," insofar as the term makes clear that the person to be guarded is the one carrying the Kelsey Pendant.

4.1.1.5 Seal of the living God, Guard the Person Bearing this Amulet from all Evil

Returning to the entire text that encircles the reverse side of the amulet, the Kelsey Pendant in its self-identification as an amulet is only a minor aspect of the entire message of the outermost inscription. 'Seal of the living God, guard the person bearing this amulet from all evil' is a complex inscription which the study posits identifies the "seal of the living God" as the cross symbol(s) of the amulet, requests that the cross continuously guard the bearer from all evil, and specifies that such an action should be performed for the bearer who consistently carries or wears this amulet. In so many words, regarding the pendant's inter/intra-action with the bearer, it may be suggested that the Kelsey Pendant echoes the deity's command to solely protect those bearing the seal (within the aforementioned biblical excerpts) on their forehead as the amulet calls for the seal to only protect its bearer.

[327] Peters, 2014, 186.

4.1.2 Punch-Dot Line Ornamentation

Like the outermost inscription on the obverse side of the amulet, the reverse inscription is also bordered from above and below by the *punch-dot line* ornamentation. However, unlike its function on the obverse side, it may be argued that the function of the *punch-dot lines* on the reverse side do not act as a containment system. Instead, the lines act as a means to underscore the inscription's message insofar as it clearly identifies the Kelsey Pendant as an amulet and further reveals the amulet's intention and purpose.

The *punch-dot lines* on the reverse side, like those on the obverse, seem permeable. Thus, the potential for the power of the inscription within its borders to move from one aspect of the amulet to another cannot be discounted. However, considering the central illustrative programme of this side of the amulet, which is rendered in three registers that are separated by horizontal borders, the thesis argues that the *punch-dot lines* need not actively contain the inscription since, as it will be argued later in this chapter, the borders and registers within the central illustration act as systems of power and containment within themselves. Rather, based on the content of the text, the lines act to bolster the purpose and intention of the Kelsey Pendant by underscoring the inscription's presence. This is not to say that the inscription coupled with the overall central image do not reference and inter/intra-act with each other, but rather (as will be discussed later in the thesis) it suggests that the central image primarily dictates (via its physically hierarchical structure) an aspect of the relationship between the elements upon the reverse side of pendant. This statement does not indicate that each element is treated in a non-egalitarian manner, in fact, the elements of the Kelsey Pendent are autonomous active agents. However, the physical location of the elements relative to each other may influence certain inter/intra-actions.

4.2 Central Tiers and Registers

4.2.1 Christ in Majesty

The representation of Christ in Majesty, an image of the deity seated in a mandorla surrounded by the four Evangelists in their symbolic forms, comprises the top register of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant. The image of Christ in Majesty is a multivalent illustration comprised of various histories and narratives. It is relevant to bring these contiguous aspects to the forefront in order to underscore the non-linearity of the image, and, when considered as being of the Kelsey Pendant, how the image further emulates the inherent diversity (religious and otherwise) of the society in which it was created and participated.

The illustration of Christ in Majesty was not commonly rendered upon sixth or seventh-century late antique, wearable material culture. A few examples exist such as the Amuletic Armband within University of Missouri's Art and Archaeology Museum and the Walter Art Museum's Marriage ring with Christ in Majesty (Figures 14-15).[328] These pieces of jewellery both illustrate Christ in Majesty seated within a mandorla surrounded by the four Evangelists in angelic form. However, the specific portrayal of Christ in Majesty with the hybrid Evangelists of the Kelsey Pendant upon wearable objects is unique (to this writer).[329] With this in mind, the study will focus upon other images within early Byzantine society in order to contextualise the amulet's depiction. Spatially, and perhaps due to its placement at the top of the visual programme, the image of Christ in Majesty exerts a level of dominance even though it is approximately the same physical size as the middle and bottom registers.[330]

[328] Vikan, 2010, 66-67.

[329] This includes the Holy Rider Amulet in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and other amulets that closely resemble the Kelsey Pendant.

[330] See for example Smith, 2015, with regard to size and the bodies of God.

When examining the Kelsey Pendant, outwith the details of the engravings within the bronze material, the monochromatic nature of the object is important to note. Even though the corroded areas offer pockets of colour variations—intertwining lighter hues of bronze slightly tinged with red from the material's oxidation—the overall colour composition of the pendant is a bronze bereft of embellishments. This detail is of particular importance for the following discussion as well as the upcoming analysis of the sensorial experience involving bearer and the image of Christ in Majesty of the pendant.

A consideration of the monochromatic nature of the Kelsey Pendant, in light of what it potentially communicates and how it potentially functions and continuously becomes, is pertinent for two reasons. First, other examples of iconographic images (and textual descriptions) of Christ in Majesty throughout antiquity visually (or imaginatively) burst with colour and either actively, or offer a sense of, glimmer as a means to underscore the deity's radiance, and, at times, their unfathomable physicality, which was perhaps only explicable when likened to the materials of the terrestrial world. On one hand, from a strictly visual perspective, it may be interpreted that artistic representations of Christ in Majesty not only focus upon illustrating the throned deity, but also focus upon representing their power and splendour through visually tantalising material associations. On the other hand, auditorily and visually speaking, the textual renderings of Christ in Majesty offer descriptions which intertwine the soundscape with the visual landscape of the throne scene, perhaps resulting in a fuller experience for one who is reading, orating, or listening to the text. The pendant's monochromatism, as an outward representation, does not inhibit the functional role, or experience, of a physical image or one within the mind's eye since the image likely embodies the visual and textual qualities of its various sources.

Second, though there are several examples of an extant cross-cultural visual vocabulary of an enthroned king or deity, which likely influenced the overall composition of the Christ in Majesty image, the pictorial renderings of this scene also may be considered a visualised form of an historically established literary trope utilised to describe these aforementioned entities and the spaces they occupy. More specifically, the notion of luxuriousness and opulence is at the forefront of throne scene descriptions which are replete with references to valuable and colourful material goods of terrestrial origin. The incorporation of highly prized materials within these accounts is in all likelihood a device utilised to connect with and captivate the audience. Aside from pre-Christian biblical examples such as Exodus 24:10 where the deity of Israel stands upon lapis lazuli brick within the heavenly firmament, there are some extra-biblical accounts of enthronements of deities or kings situated within precious materials.[331] For example, based upon the remaining evidence concerning Achaemenid royalty (kings and satraps)—alongside the descriptions of the king's elaborate, deeply hued, and highly ornamented headdresses and clothing—one finds notations of silver and gold thrones (Xenophon's *Hellenica* fourth-third centuries BCE) as well as thrones inlaid with jewels perched upon golden pillars.[332]

In another example, Venus's palace, as recounted by Claudian (fourth century CE), is a multi-coloured, glittering space that is comprised of valued materials such as gold, emeralds, rock of hyacinth, jasper, agate, and beryl.[333] The goddess herself is described as

[331] Exodus 24:10 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 68); Smith, 2015, 481.

[332] Xenophon, *Hellenika*, 1.5.3 (transl. Marincola, 2010, 23) description of Cyrus the younger's throne; Olmstead, 1948, 282-283; Mowry, 1952, 76-77 for how ornamentation such as jewellery highlighted the splendour of the king and led to their adoration; Curtis et al., 2005, 35 for discussion of archaeological evidence of precious materials found in Achaemenid palaces.

[333] Claudianus, *Claudian I,* Epith. X 86-100 (transl. Platnauer, 1922, 248-249).

golden and the throne upon which she sits glitters.[334] Her surrounds are not only visually mesmerising as they gleam a greenish hue, a reflection of the green grove that encircles the palace, but they also entice the sense of smell as Venus's space is filled with the sweetness of spikenard, cassia, cinnamon flowers, and balm.[335] Through these examples one may begin to surmise that materially aligned linguistic devices utilised within characterisations of a king's or deity's physicality as well as the space they occupied were versatile, purposeful, and engaged with the senses as a means to bring the audience into the deity's or king's space in a recognisable and tangible manner.

The following discussion will consider both the visual and textual references involving the iconography of Christ in Majesty. Firstly, through a close reading and philological interpretation, the study will examine the biblical accounts of the throne scene which incorporate the deity accompanied by the Evangelists in their symbolic forms. Here, the discussion will also consider the linguistic devices utilised to describe the deity or king as well as the space they occupy. Additionally, the study will examine how literary tropes (like those succinctly outlined above and from which these biblical accounts draw) may have influenced the reception of the throne scene. Secondly, the thesis will discuss how this image may have been understood within the late antique context in which it participated, which, in turn, will allow one to hypothesise how, and, perhaps where, the bearer or creator of the Kelsey Pendant as well as various factions of the late antique community may have encountered and experienced the related imagery and texts. Thirdly, it will analyse how one may interpret the image of the Kelsey Pendant.

[334] Claudianus, *Claudian I,* Epith. X 86-100 (transl. Platnauer, 1922, 248-249).

[335] Claudianus, *Claudian I*, Epith. X 86-100 (transl. Platnauer, 1922, 248-249).

4.2.1.1 Christ in Majesty in Biblical Text

It may be argued that the narrative sequences of the throne scene within Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Revelation are cogent examples, encapsulated within the context of the Bible, of the above-mentioned literary trope that utilised precious materials to characterise power and authority both visually and sensually. Moreover, the image of Christ in Majesty (accompanied by the Evangelists in their symbolic forms) as seen within texts, on architecture, and portable objects is widely understood to be a visual translation or creative rendition of verses from these biblical books.[336] Although it is more straightforward to associate the image of Christ in Majesty of the Kelsey Pendant with comparative visual examples that link likeness-to-likeness, it is pertinent to glean an understanding from other related sources which may not only further enliven the image but also provide nuanced perspectives highlighting the potential reason(s) this image was incorporated into the pendant.

Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation all provide a description of the throne scene that are reminiscent of each other. Though it is difficult to provide definitive composition dates of Isaiah and Ezekial, chronological references within each book help to contextualise the texts while offering possible dates of compilation. Thus, since Isaiah generally covers Judean history between the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, it was likely compiled during that time period as well; and one may surmise that Ezekiel was likely compiled in sixth century BCE as it references Babylonian history of that time. The dating of Revelation is more concrete, and scholars believe that it was composed in the late first century CE.[337]

[336] See for example Todorova, 2013, 292.

[337] Koester, 2015, 29.

The descriptions of the throne scene within these texts are imaginatively detailed, colourful, active, and sonorous; and these textually transmitted characteristics are important insofar as they may provide insight into how the Kelsey Pendant may have been sensorially experienced. Moreover, they offer a probable indication—outwith the realm of extant visual artistic renderings—of how the deity, their throne, and heaven may have been imagined and consequently remembered within the late antique consciousness.

John's vision in Revelation 4:1-3 offers a description of the deity upon the throne. 'After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open!....At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated looks like jasper and carnelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald.'[338] The throne and its surrounds are further detailed in Revelation 4:5-6, 'Coming from the throne are flashes of lightening and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in the front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass like crystal...'[339] From these five verses, one may deduce that there are several concepts at play. First, through the utilisation of the phrase "after this," John leads the transition from chapter three into chapter four implicating a narratival continuity. Second, as the door opened to heaven, the state of being "in the spirit" implies a change of surroundings or scene, and, in this case, being in spirit indicates that John was not merely looking into heaven (which may have been the perspective from which Isaiah and Ezekiel experienced their visions) but was in heaven in the presence of the deity.[340] This is further indicated in the second part of 4:1 where the deity with a trumpet-like resounding voice calls

[338] Revelation 4:1-3 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 744). The entirety of Revelation 4:1 has not been directly quoted.

[339] Revelation 4:5-6 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 744).

[340] Koester, 2015, 359.

upon John to '"come up here..."'[341] Third, the deity and the space around the throne are equated with naturally occurring geological formations—colourful gems, semi-precious stones, and crystal. Fourth, the throne and its surrounds (in the same instance) are associated with naturally occurring, climate driven (at times uncontrollable) phenomena—fire, a rainbow, and thunderstorms—which are potentially indicative of violence, anger, danger, peace, warmth, and spiritual embodiment (as described within the verses).

In deconstructing the verses above, one may interpret that John's vision is all at once chaotic, powerful, bright, and foreboding. John concretely situates the vision with a space and conveys, in an abstract yet approachable language, an experience that presents itself as overwhelming. When John's vision is recounted, the reader or listener is prompted to imagine the brilliance, light, and shimmering qualities of the gems coupled with the colour spectrum and translucent qualities of a rainbow, while at the same time mentally visualise the flashes of light and feel the rumblings of the rolling thunder associated with the tumultuousness of storms. These images, though varied, can be considered to elicit a strong response whilst leaving an indelible mark upon one's memory; and it may be suggested that those who read or listen to John's account will attribute the characterisations of his vision to the extant or the continual production of their personal conceptualisations of the deity upon their throne in heaven.

Ezekiel's throne vision, much like that of John's in Revelation, is visually and sonorously robust. The sound is couched within his description of the hybrid creatures and the visual aspect is encapsulated in his vision of the deity upon their throne. Unlike the throne

[341] Revelation 4:1 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 744).

scene in Revelation, Ezekiel details the deity's physical form. Verses 1:26-28 to 2:1 of Ezekiel state:

> Like an appearance of a lapis lazuli stone was the likeness of a throne upon it, and on the likeness of the throne was a likeness just as a form of a human above. And I saw something like the view of electrum from the appearance of the loin and up, and from the appearance of the loin and all the way down, I saw something like an appearance of fire, and its radiance was all around. Like an appearance of a bow whenever it is in the cloud in a day of rain, so was the vision of the radiance all around. This was the appearance of a likeness of the glory of the Lord...[342]

In contrast to John's association of the deity to jasper and carnelian (both valuable and visually lustrous geological products) in Revelation, Ezekiel cautiously attributes a human form to the deity whilst emphasising their otherness by incorporating the attributes of light and fire to their physicality. Though Ezekiel's wording conveys a sense of uncertainty in what he is seeing within his vision, his attribution of a human form to the deity allows a thread of commonality between those of the earthly realm and the deity. Ezekiel is guarded as he states that he saw a likeness of a human form, which translates to a probability rather than certitude. With a common thread between human and divine, the deity is more recognisable or perhaps more conceptually tangible to the listener or reader since the deity can be more readily seen within the listener's or reader's mind's eye. However, within his vision, Ezekiel does not leave the deity to exist as a mere embodiment of a human, rather he ensures the deity's higher state of being by incorporating the all-consuming capacity (a bow in a cloud on a rainy day) of the deity's divine essence with the splendour of gold and silver of an electrum, the brilliance of light, and the power fire.

Like John's vision of the deity upon the throne, it is clear that Ezekiel's experience, though arguably outwith the realm of heaven, was perhaps also overwhelming as gleaned by

[342] Ezekiel 1:26-28, 2:1(Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 949). Ezekiel 10:1(Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 953) also states that the throne sits upon a lapis lazuli stone.

the array of descriptive adjectives (as linguistic devices) the prophets utilised to recount their experiences.[343] Ezekiel's vision likely created an impact on how the throne scene was envisioned by those who encountered it, but, in contrast to John's vision, Ezekiel allowed the reader or listener to connect with the deity through the human form. Though Ezekiel's vision differs from that of John's, the message of the deity's splendour, fire, brilliance, and radiance aligns them and contributes to a base by which individual conceptions of the deity may have been created. Both visions likened the deity to visually colourful and bright substances or natural occurrences. John and Ezekiel linked the celestial realm with the terrestrial by way of valuable materials created within the earth. It may thus be suggested that the materials and phenomena associated with these visions became part of the tacit visual (both physically and mentally manifested) understanding of the deity and their throne.

Isaiah's throne scene vision, though much less descriptive, introduces aspects of the throne that are neither seen in Ezekiel nor in Revelation. The beginning of Isaiah's (6:1) vision of the LXX states, '.... I saw the Lord seated on a throne, lofty and raised up, and the house was full of his glory.'[344] Here, one can not only imagine the physical position of the deity, but also the position of the throne upon which they sit. One may infer that the raised throne is high, perhaps even weightless or light in appearance, and it floats in a space that is filled with, and emanates, the glory of the deity which may be interpreted as their essence or energy as a deified being.[345] Isaiah specifies the space in which the deity was seen as the

[343] Ezekiel chapters one and two (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 948-949). Details of Ezekiel's vision allow the study to suggest that the vision did not occur in heaven with the deity, but rather it seems that Ezekiel was looking upwards towards the heavens.

[344] Most pertinent is Isaiah 6:1 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 830); Isaiah 6:1 (Rahlfs, 2006, vol. II, 573) it should be noted that the term "glory" ('δόξης' in LXX) is not utilised within Isaiah 6:1 of the HMT (כבד). Instead, "glory" within the HMT is part of the Trisagion, Isaiah 6:3.

[345] Childs, 2001, 55 describes the Lord's glory as His outer manifestation.

'house,' but it is unclear whether Isaiah is referring to the Temple, heaven, or elsewhere. Though all the thrones in Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Revelation are supernal, the throne in Isaiah's vision is the only one that is described with a weightless or airy quality.

In succinctly comparing the above verses from Revelation, Ezekiel, and Isaiah, one finds that Isaiah focuses upon the ephemeral qualities of the throned deity; Ezekiel draws attention to the deity's intertwined human and celestial form; and Revelation places a more weighted, activated throned deity within an otherworldly space whilst actively connecting them to the earth by way of utilising terrestrial materials (stones and precious gems) and meteorological phenomena as descriptive mechanisms. Other than these differences, interestingly, each text aligns the throne scene with a sensorial experience in some form or another. When all three texts are considered together, these experiences can be delineated to the arenas of sight and sound which have the propensity to spur memory and elicit certain feelings or emotional reactions.

Like the pre-existing narratives from which the image of Christ in Majesty is comprised and influenced, images of the Evangelists in their symbolic form (an eagle, a bull, a lion, and a man) involve various histories which are not of Christian origin, but rather, were assimilated into Christian visual culture, and, in time, assumed an identity associated with the four Evangelists.[346] In scholarship, hybrid figures have been represented in art and text through time and across many cultures and religions (e.g., Assyrian, Greek, Persian, Mithraic,

[346] Most pertinent is Irenaeus, *Contra Heresies*, 3.11.8 (transl. Unger, 1992) attributes the hybrid forms to the Evangelists; see for example Ameisenowa, 1949, regarding origins associated with hybrid forms; Russell, 1997; Koester, 2015, 352 states that Irenaeus created this interpretation as part of his apologetic concerns about which writings were authoritative within the church.

Jewish, and Egyptian).[347] Furthermore, these creatures carried with them a certain mystique and lore associated with several socio-cultural arenas such as magical power and protection, astrology, religion, the celestial realm, and the four primary elements.[348]

Artistic renderings of Christ in Majesty do not consistently include the hybrid beasts later to be understood as the Evangelists in their symbolic beast form. The Lord's attendants (Evangelists) within the context of the throne scene in Isaiah, Revelation, and Ezekiel are seraphim, but they are further detailed as hybrid creatures in Ezekiel and Revelation. In Ezekiel, the likeness of the four creatures is vividly described. In this aspect of his vision, the creatures are within a radiant, fiery, flashing cloud.[349] Ezekiel 1:5-7 and 1:10-11 state:

> And in the middle was something like a likeness of four living beings, and this was their appearance: a human likeness was upon them, and one has four faces, and one had four wings. And their legs were straight, and their feet were wings, and there were sparks like flashing bronze, and their wings were nimble....And as for the resemblance of their faces: there was a face of a human, and the four had a face of a lion on the right, and the four had a face of a calf on the left, and the four had a face of an eagle. And the four had their wings, stretched out above. Each had two adjoined to each other, and two were covering up over their body.[350]

In Ezekiel 1:13-25 the beings are further recounted, albeit paradoxically, where it may be imagined that these hybrid beasts (with eyes covering their backs) form a wheel within a wheel and are both emitting and being engulfed by fire simultaneously.[351] From an auditory perspective, however, when in movement, the creatures's wings emit the sound of abundant

[347] Ameisenowa, 1949; Irenaeus, *Contra Heresies*, 3.11.8 (transl. Unger, 1992) cites Revelation; Christman, 1995, 14-16 states that Revelation was likely influenced by Ezekiel.

[348] Ameisenowa, 1949; Russell, 1997, 357-358.

[349] Ezekiel 1:4 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 948).

[350] Ezekiel 1:5-7 and 1:10-11 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 948).

[351] Ezekiel 1:13-25 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 948).

water, the antithesis of fire.[352] Within this account, the four beings (described with some detail) can be understood as fantastical—in a fiery state and in constant circular motion, emanating what can likely be understood as a thunderous sound associated with large amounts of moving water. The hybrid creatures exist between imagination and reality where their physical form is almost cognitively impalpable all the while being tethered to the audience's understandings through recognisable identifying mechanisms such as flashing bronze, wings, legs, and the faces of a human, lion, a calf, and an eagle. Thus, it may be suggested that this scene resides in a liminal space between the wonder and power of the celestial and an earthly lived existence.

The throne scene in Revelation is less sensational than that of Ezekiel. Within this text, the seraphim are described more succinctly and in a straightforward manner. Revelation 4:6-8 states:

> '.... Around the throne and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside....'[353]

Like the creatures in Ezekiel, the hybrid creatures's bodies are covered with eyes. However, unlike Ezekiel's account, John's description offers an alternate perspective of space where the audience may deduce that the creatures are physically central to, and surrounding, the throne instead of existing below a firmament upon which the throne is situated. Though this description of the hybrid creatures is not embellished with linguistic devices reminiscent of the visual and auditory senses, it may be suggested that the Evangelists's proximity to the throne within Revelation allows for the throne's descriptions (as discussed above) to apply to

[352] Ezekiel 1:13-25 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 948).

[353] Revelation 4:6-8 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 744-745).

the creatures as well since they can be considered to be a part of the actual throne instead existing within its vicinity.

Despite the fact that Ezekiel and Revelation recount the details of the hybrid creatures differently, their commonalities are unmistakable. Both texts describe four hybrid creatures—with heads of a lion, a man, an ox or a calf, and an eagle—that are central to the deity and the overall throne scene. Though the seraphim in Isaiah are not elaborated upon to the extent that they are in Ezekiel and Revelation, the three texts are intertwined insofar as they all represent a sensorially rich illustration of a deity upon a throne surrounded by these winged creatures. Moreover, when the three throne scenes are considered together, it may be suggested that they offer the audience a solid platform by which to visualise the scene, and at times, hear the sounds associated with its celestial landscape.

Though the Kelsey Pendant is a monochromatic amulet, it may be surmised from this aspect of the analysis that the textual influences upon the image of the throne scene were bursting with colour, light, and sound. The study posits that these attributes of the visions became the base of a multi-level sensory language by which the audience interpreted, experienced, and understood the image of Christ in Majesty.

4.2.1.2 Visualisation of Christ in Majesty

From the discussion above, one may surmise that the biblical texts underscore various levels of potential in the creation of a mental image and narrative. In addition, there are also several visual renderings of the throne scene dating back to Late Antiquity. The pictorial rendering of Christ in Majesty of the Kelsey Pendant is comprised of the deity seated upon a throne within a mandorla. Christ is holding a codex in one hand and perhaps making a sign of benediction

with the other; and the throne (inclusive of the mandorla) is surrounded on all four sides by the Evangelists in their symbolic forms.[354] Though the image is reminiscent of aspects from the descriptions of the throne scene found in Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation, the composition of the illustrative rendering does not fully align with the texts. Aside from the placement of the Evangelists on each corner of the seated deity (which loosely coincides with the description of the hybrid creatures surrounding the throne within Revelation) the throne scene may, at first, be considered a result of creative license. However, it must be noted that, like the previously discussed concept of an ongoing literary trope regarding a king's or a deity's throne or occupied space, imagery was likely assimilated into Christian visual culture by way of historic and socio-religious precedence as well as cross-cultural transmission.[355]

The late antique material evidence of Christ in Majesty with the four Evangelists in their symbolic forms can still be found in some examples of material culture (e.g., folio 13v from the late sixth-century Syrian gospel book, *Rabbula Gospels* (Figure 72); however, this iconography is primarily found in the decorative programmes within the apses of places of worship.[356] Though few are still in existence, pictorial renderings of Christ in Majesty were found throughout the geographic area of the late antique world. One early example, in Rome, of Christ in Majesty is a fifth-century mosaic in Santa Pudenziana Church.[357] In this image, the placement of the gold cross upon a hill frames the gilded, enthroned deity forming an aura of light around the image within the illustrated compositional space (Figures 18-19). Other examples include: the fifth-century mosaic within the apse of the sanctuary of the Church of

[354] See description of image in Chapter Two. The image of the hand not holding the codex is not well defined.

[355] Chang, 2012, 823.

[356] See Spieser, 1998, 63.

[357] Chang, 2012, 821, 841; Todorova, 2016, 216-217.

Hosios David in Thessaloniki, Greece (Figure 73), and a sixth to seventh century fresco within the apse of the Monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit, Egypt (Figure 66).

It may be suggested that a visual encounter of Christ in Majesty in illustrative form can be understood as an extension of the oral and aural insofar as the spaces in which homilies or liturgies were performed—the apses of late antique churches—may have had this image in situ. Thus, the pictorial rendering of Christ in Majesty, like the conversational discourse and various noises of the assembly, was an integral part of the worship experience. The image of Christ in Majesty can be understood connect the apse and the rest of the church space within which non-religious activities were tacitly performed with the celestial space of angels and the deity.[358]

Succinctly speaking, churches were interactive, enlivened spaces for worship and other activities during mass and other times of the day. For example, there were two-way interactions during homilies whereby audiences who listened to homilies had a voice and were known to express themselves orally (contradicting or agreeing with) the orator.[359] Furthermore, parents were encouraged to bring their children to church; and there are accounts of children playing with marbles and reenacting the sacraments that they saw and heard as a form of play during the worship service.[360] Thus, it is conceivable that, during the liturgy in the apse, an oral interaction between orator and audience may have taken place whilst the other areas of the church space were enlivened with various happenings such as children playing and participants talking. Though there may have been several things

[358] Allen, 1998, 222; Pitarkis, 2021, 265.

[359] Allen, 1998, 221.

[360] Pitarkis, 2021, 265.

occurring simultaneously, everything within the space can be understood to be connected to the celestial realm through the presence of Christ in Majesty coupled with liturgical participation and performance. This further underscores the concept of the liminality of these spaces with the understanding that boundaries between the space of worship and its quotidian counterparts were likely intended to be fluid.

Mosaics and paintings of Christ in Majesty did not simply translate the textual throne scene into a visual form, but they interpreted the text. As such, they acted to solidify particular perspectives (e.g., religious, political, and social) with regard to the exact identification of the deity within the biblical text and to demonstrate how they looked in physical form.[361] The visual iconography of the enthroned deity was interpreted as Christ—perhaps nodding towards the Christological debates of the time, which (overarchingly speaking) endeavoured to define the nature of Christ and determine how similar he was to God (the Father).[362] However, in the biblical throne scenes of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation, the deity is not identified as Christ. Since Isaiah and Ezekiel were compiled between the eighth to sixth centuries BCE, one must conclude that the deity is God (the Father). Revelation (which may not be a Christian document) is understood to have been composed within the context of early Christianity; and, in considering the concept that the throne scene

[361] For a discussion regarding the representation of Christ and how they changed over time see Spieser, 1998. For discussion of the representation of Christ in the mandorla see Todorova, 2013, 287. See Koester, 2015, 351-352 for description of throne scene in Revelation.

[362] See for example, Athanasius. *Select Treatises of S. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, in Controversy with the Arians*. 5:6 (transl. by John Henry Newman, 1842, 204). Athanasius argues that Christ is one with God, which is against the Arius, who believed that Christ was created and divine, but subordinate to God; Basil, *De spiritu sancto*. 18:44-45. (Sources chrétiennes online, 2022) who utilises painted imperial portraits as a conceptual tool to explain the divinity of one God and the relationship between Christ and the Father; For in-depth discussion of Christological debates see Orlov, 2019; Giulea, 2024.

in Isaiah (and Ezekiel) influenced the scene of Revelation, it can be posited that the deity of the throne scene is God.[363]

With the identification of the deity in illustrative form through textual interpretation in mind, and as discussed in the previous chapter, the significance behind the iconographic representations of a deity, a warrior, or a deified ruler in the late antique visual and material culture is complex.[364] The study suggests that this complexity also translates into the representations of Christ and their transformations over time. The image of Christ (in its various iterations) was steeped in—the Christological debates of the Church Fathers and church historians, political motivations, the artists's intentions to represent a recognisable sovereign being, the transmission, recoding, as well as the assimilation of non-Christian gods and other iconographic components into a more "Christianised" visual vocabulary.[365]

In Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation, the deity and their space relay a sense of activated vastness—offering moments of quietude, quaking tumultuousness, brilliant light, the heat of fire, and the refreshing coolness of water in the same instance and place. However, none of the descriptions within Ezekiel, Isaiah, or Revelation reference a mandorla, or a similar shape

[363] See Schimanowski, 2004, 70; See Marshall, 2004, 124-125 regarding the argument that Revelation is a Jewish text rather than a Christian text.

[364] See discussion in Chapter Three about the potential identities of the holy rider.

[365] Regarding Christological debates, some early Church Fathers were against pictorial representations of Christ, see for example, Epiphanius of Salamis's Letter to Emperor Theodosius in Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze Zur Kirchengeschichte*, 1928, 356-362, which associates images of Christ and saints to idolatrous and urges against the creation of such images and Clement, of Alexandria. *The Writings of Clement of Alexandria*, 7.5. (ed. by Roberts and Donaldson, 1867, 424-426), who states that works of art are inert and are not sacred and divine. Other writers, church historians, and theologians, for example Eusebius of Caesarea, in Eusebius. *Eusebius. The Ecclesiastical History*. 7.18. (trans Kirsopp and Oulton, 1926, 174-176), who acknowledges the possession (and reverence) of representations of Christ within the Christian community, but in this instance, does not condemn them. See Basil, *De spiritu sancto*. 18:44-45. (Sources chrétiennes online, 2022) who utilises painted imperial portraits as a conceptual tool to explain the divinity of one God and the relationship between Christ and the Father. See also Spieser, 1998, 63-67; Levine, 2012; Marsengill, 2020.

thereof, that houses the deity. The utilisation of the mandorla, however, to portray a deity, a divinely imbued person, or a ruler is not foreign to the antique and late antique visual cultural vocabulary. Some representations of Christ include the mandorla within their illustrative programme. A famous example is the mosaic of the Transfiguration of Christ located in St. Catherine's monastery in the Sinai Desert (Figure 74).[366] The mandorla has been used in artistic representations within the Indian Subcontinent, and it has been interpreted that the Christian mandorla originated from the Buddhist art of India and Central Asia.[367] Representations of a nimbed Buddha within a mandorla appeared on the coinage of King Kanishka of the Kushan Empire as early as the second century (Figure 75).[368] It has also been suggested that the Buddhist (and eventually the Christian) utilisation of the mandorla was heavily influence by Zoroastrian and Greco-Roman examples.[369] In the Buddhist tradition, the mandorla was utilised to represent a space that encompassed the deity's glory.[370] Across several cultures, the mandorla acted as a receptacle for light, which, in turn, translated to glory and enlightenment.[371] This association of the mandorla assimilated into the repertoire of the Christian visual vocabulary as a means to denote the glory (the Septuagint's 'δόξα' and Hebrew Masoretic Text's 'כבוד') of the biblical deity.[372] Though one cannot definitively ascertain its intended significance, if the mandorla is to be considered as an embodiment of

[366] Chang, 2012, 821, 841; Todorova, 2016, 216-217.

[367] Chumak, 2020, 18; Chang, 2012, 819.

[368] Chang, 2012, 819.

[369] Todorova, 2016, 207-208, 213.

[370] Chang, 2012, 824.

[371] Chang, 2012, 841; see also Todorova, 2016.

[372] Most pertinent is Todorova, 2013, 288-289, though it should be noted that the thesis does not agree with Tordorova's suggestions regarding the differences in significance of the mandorla based on its oval or more rounded shape; Todorova, 2016, 201, 206-207; Todorova, 2011, 47.

the deity's glory, then it may further be conceived to be an activated sacred space within the context of the image of Christ in Majesty.[373]

The concept of the deity's glory embodied within the mandorla is well translated within visual examples. The space within the mandorla in the representations of Christ in Majesty are often rendered utilising bright colours, rainbows, or rays of light. This stylistic device not only opens the space within which the deity is placed, but also actively interconnects the occupied mandorla with its surrounds, which is particularly apparent with regard to the rays of light or rainbows which sometimes transgress the physical boundaries of the mandorla's form.[374] In these instances, the illustration continuously links itself to, and visually translates, the prophet's visions in an effort to provide a physical form to the sometimes-inconceivable conceptions of the deity and their glory. It is certain that much of the imagery within churches was colourful, adding radiance and vitality to the space.[375] However, the study posits that the utilisation of colour within the illustrative contexts of Christ in Majesty further demonstrates a cognisant choice to portray the materials within the textual renditions of the throne scene. The colours, rainbows, and rays of brilliant light may be interpreted as references to the valuable geological materials (gems, metals, and stones) as well as the natural terrestrially based phenomena that comprise the textual descriptions of the visions (See Figures 73 and 74). In considering the monochromatic image of the Kelsey Pendant, it may be suggested that a repeated interaction with the colourful visual or textual

[373] Todorova, 2013, 288; Todorova, 2016, 199.

[374] Todorova, 2016, 200 has suggested that the mandorla creates a border between the divine sacred and material world. I disagree.

[375] James, 2003, 224-225.

imagery of the throne scene in other spaces translates into the pendant, thus creating a visually similar rendition of Christ in Majesty within the bearer's mind's eye.

4.2.1.3 Christ in Majesty of the Kelsey Pendant

The image of Christ in Majesty existed, participated, and likely was continuously redefined, refined, and recoded in late antique society. Though it may be interpreted from the discussion above that the image of Christ in Majesty is an amalgamation of geographically varied, pre-Christian and non-Christian iconography that lived within a Christian context in the late antique Southern Levant and Anatolia, one should not underestimate the propensity for these iconographic components to retain some aspects of their pre-Christian or non-Christian identities and functions within the socio-cultural arena in which the image participated.

The thesis posits that the inter/intra-activity of Christ in Majesty of the Kelsey Pendant incorporates three perspectives. First, the image must be considered to be an activated (and continuously becoming) creation derived from the above discussed histories, influences, and identities. Second, the image's contiguous relationship with its surrounding elements (insofar as they can be understood to directly reference each other) signals a participation in a wider, yet integrated, narrative. Third, the image has the propensity, and readily acts upon this inclination, to align itself with its more material oriented, colourful, and sonorous (visually and textually disseminated) counterparts within various contexts (e.g., architecture and texts) of late antique society.

From the outlook of the pendant as an autonomous object, one may surmise that the image of Christ in Majesty acted and was embedded in the inter/intra-active process of the pendant. In this sense, the concept of revisiting its immediate surrounds is paramount though

it does not limit the image's outreach throughout the pendant itself or its ultimate outreach to the bearer. It does, however, enable the study to establish the argument that the individual elements of the pendant had the proclivity, in some instances, to directly reference and buttress each other; and, thus, were able to highlight certain nuances within the entire illustrative programme of the pendant and offer the possibility of multiple perspectives and understandings.

From a perfunctory visual reading of the pendant, it is pertinent to reiterate that the visual dominance of the Christ in Majesty image of the reverse side of the pendant is august; and, as previously mentioned, this may be due to the placement of the image at the top of the visual programme or the complexity of the rendering itself as it is comprised of various components.

An initial downward interpretation might be performed where the border (inclusive of *punch-dot lines*), the image, and then the Trisagion are considered from top to bottom. Here, the textual arch formed by the outermost border surrounding the image of the throne scene, the central image of Christ in Majesty, and the bottom border formed by the Trisagion can be said to create an example of a firmament that encapsulates the entire scene (See Figure 2). This primary way of looking visually connects the components of the pendant and also allows the viewer to tacitly follow the illustrative programme's sectioned mode of depiction. However, one must remain cognisant that the visual compartmentalisation of the pictorial programme is swiftly deconstructed when the elements are more closely analysed; and one finds that all the elements of the pendant are, at times, linked through their participation and discourse, which further supports the concept of a multi-faceted process of inter/intra-action within the pendant itself. For example, when considering the illustrative programme of the

pendant, the image of Christ in Majesty can be suggested to reference the text within the outermost border (which begins above the image), the Trisagion (which is situated directly below the image), the rendering of the lion, snake, and scorpion that forms the bottom register of the reverse side, the angel of the obverse side, as well as the one God inscription whilst also serving to underscore the cosmic and earthly powers embodied within the pendant which are necessary to fulfill the overall intention of the object.

One must also consider that the cruciform symbol, as a seal utilised within the context of Christo-centric rituals was intrinsically interlaced with the concept of Christ, and thus, can be considered to be intertwined with the image of Christ in Majesty of the pendant. That said, the cross symbol of the outermost border—the seal of the living God—may be a visual short-hand for the figure of Christ in Majesty. In an instance where the cross may be referential or act as a signifier of Christ in Majesty, the cross can be said to absorb and reflect the potential of the deity or Christ insofar as it too embodies the colourful, sonorous, and materially rich associations attributed to the images (mental or physical) of Christ in Majesty. Thus, the cross can be understood to be enveloped in, and embedded within, all of the power as depicted through the material, splendour, chaos, brilliance, tumult, and glory of the throned deity in Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Revelation. Of importance is the concept that both the cross symbol and the image of Christ in Majesty are not only in an inter/intra-active state of becoming and discourse with one another, but they are also able to stand in each other's stead. This concept creates possible scenarios focused upon the consolidation, transfer, or sharing of each element's potential, that, when needed, supports the overall intention of the Kelsey Pendant.

4.2.2 The Trisagion: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Hosts[376]

The image of Christ in Majesty is situated directly above the Trisagion described in Chapter Two. The Trisagion visually creates a foundation upon which the throne scene is set; and thus forms a base for the throned deity and the hybrid beasts. It also repetitively enforces the nature of the deity (holy) as well as their role as the Lord of hosts, a commander of the celestial and terrestrial armies.[377]

The Trisagion is a component (with content and chronological variations) of Jewish and Christian liturgy.[378] Just like some of the other textual examples upon the obverse and reverse sides of the pendant which directly or indirectly reference the Bible. This inscription is a partial, yet direct, quotation of Isaiah 6:3 and a more loosely rendered version of Revelation 4:8. Isaiah 6:3 states 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord Sabaoth; the whole earth is full of his glory,' whereas Revelation 4:8 states 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.'[379] Within their biblical context, the above quotations are described as ceaseless speech acts where, in the case of Isaiah, the seraphim cry out to one another, and, in the case of Revelation, the four creatures (symbols of the Evangelists) sing aloud.

Within the late antique Christian liturgical service, the Trisagion was sung by clergy and congregation during the "Little Entrance."[380] In domed churches, under Justinian's rule,

[376] See Henry, 2020, 174-228 who provides a discussion of material, liturgical performance, and apotropaic aspects of the Trisagion with regards to angels in Late Antiquity.

[377] Williams, 1937, 50-56.

[378] Mowry, 1952; McKinnon, 1989, 16-17; Williamson, 2008, 15-20.

[379] Isaiah 6:3 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 830; Revelation 4:8 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 745).

[380] Brightman, 1896; Day, 1999, 251; Williamson, 2008; Taft, 2005b.

the Trisagion was performed beneath the central dome.[381] In more ordinary churches, it may have been performed in the centre of the basilical church space. It should be noted that when the biblical text and liturgical performance are considered in conjunction with one another, the human enactment of the ceaseless speech acts of the seraphim or the singing of the four creatures is pivotal.[382] According to the *Mystagogical Catechesis* v*,* lectures attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, those who chant Isaiah 6:3, sung by the Seraphim, participate '...in the hymnody of the super terrestrial hosts.'[383] This statement directly infers a performative oral and aural interaction between humans and the seraphim. In this light, it may be posited that through liturgical song, space is activated and becomes liminal whereby the earthly and celestial realms are able to connect and interact.[384] As discussed in Chapter Three, the concept of movement between the earthly and celestial realms was not foreign to the late antique imagination, and this movement occurred in particular scenarios inclusive of the space within a performative liturgical context.[385] Thus, the collapsing of realms is encapsulated in the moment when participants activate a space through chant, bridge the two realms, and interact with the celestial realm.[386]

Outside of a biblical, oral, or aural context, the Trisagion was often inscribed upon doorway lintels, apses of churches, gates, arches, and other spaces such as gravestones.[387]

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[381] Teteriatnikov, 2017, 295.

[382] See Pentcheva, 2014 and 2017a; For an example of how a sung performance may have sounded in an imperial liturgical space, see *The Voice of Hagia Sophia*.

[383] McKinnon, 1989, 76 (section 157); see also Leatherbury, 2020, 225.

[384] See Schimanowski, 2004, 71, 81-82 who discusses the creation of a bridge between the realms with regard to Revelation 4:8.

[385] See Chapter Three, 112-114; Boustan, 2004, 2-4.

[386] Peers, 2012b, 448.

[387] A reference to Isaiah 6:4 where the lintel of the deity's house raises when seraphim cry out the Trisagion; See for example: Prentice, 1902, 81; Day, 1999, 249-250; Leatherbury, 2020, 224.

Functionally, these spaces are transitional as they serve as an aesthetic or physical border from one place to another. The Trisagion, if understood as a performative bridge within liturgy, functions as a point of transition from one realm to another. It may be suggested that the Trisagion's inscription within the above-mentioned spaces creates a transitional point on a different level. Thus, it may be argued that a space such as an apse inscribed with the Trisagion not only serves as a bridge between realms but also elicits inter/intra-action (like the performance of liturgy) with the broader illustrative programme of which it is a part along with the participants in the church space. Moreover, this inter/intra-action also harkens back to the speech acts of the seraphim of Isaiah and the four creatures of Revelation.[388]

Interestingly, inscriptions of the Trisagion also were thought to serve an apotropaic function. In addition to connecting with the celestial realm in reverence of the deity, John of Damascus in the eighth century CE claimed that chanting the Trisagion was a form of protection against demons.[389] Inscriptions of the Trisagion upon doorway lintels are particularly cogent to this statement. In this sense, the inscription (located at the point of transition) acts as a bridge, a point of connection between the earthly and supernal, and has the potential to call upon the powers of the celestial realm to protect those who cross the doorway or avert those who would potentially cross with malicious intent. The perceived efficacy of the "holy, holy, holy" aspect of the Trisagion (or another rendition of the text) spanned over a long period of time as it was inscribed upon amulets in later centuries as well.[390] For example, the Trisagion is inscribed along the outer band of both the tenth-

[388] See for example Day, 1999, 251; Peers, 2012b, 434, 450,452; Sitz, 2017, 7.

[389] John of Damascus, *Writings* (transl. Chase, 1958, 289).

[390] Most pertinent is Spier, 1993, 30; Maltomini, 1982, 158, for a succinct list of publications that discuss Trisagion on amulets. The figures provided are tenth-twelfth century examples. Though there are several published examples from the sixth and seventh centuries (and earlier), the images are not accessible. However, pertinent to the thesis is that the later examples do underscore a continuous perceived efficacy and thus prevalence of the Trisagion upon amulets; Vikan, 1984, 78; Cline, 2019, 357-358.

eleventh century CE bronze amulet in the State Hermitage Museum in Russia and the Louvre's twelfth century CE cloisonné metal amulet 'Médaillon: tête de Gorgone et inscription prophylactique'. The illustrative programme of these amulets involves the Trisagion encircling a central scene depicting a small, disembodied gorgon head with multiple larger snake heads that seemingly emanate from the centralised human face (Figures 76 and 77).[391]

In the case of the Kelsey Pendant's reference to the Trisagion of Isaiah 6:3 specifically, it is important to remain cognisant that the partial inscription of the amulet likely references the entire narrative sequence within Isaiah 6. With this in mind and with regard to the deity's glory, for example, it is arguable that the image of Christ in Majesty of the pendant refers to '...I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and raised up, and the house was full of his glory,' of Isaiah 6:1 as well as the phrase "the whole earth is full of his glory" of Isaiah 6:3.[392] It can be understood that the Trisagion (as a part of the biblical text describing the throne scene) connects the amulet with the colourful image of the deity, their throne, and the glory radiating from the space of the mandorla; and physically speaking, the Trisagion of the Kelsey Pendant was intended to embody and emanate this connection through the direct placement of the image of Christ in Majesty above it.

When considering the entire mid-tier border inscription upon the Kelsey Pendant, "holy, holy, holy" can be understood to be terms of exaltation directed towards the deity.[393]

[391] Faraone, 2018, 40-41, Gorgon heads were understood to be apotropaic and were utilised for protection. They were depicted on objects and structures such as public buildings, terracotta vessels, and metal jewellery.

[392] Isaiah 6:1 and 6:3 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 830)

[393] See Werner, 1966, 32.

The more specific doctrinal positions expressed through the Trisagion have been discussed in scholarship; however, this complex discussion is something to which the pendant itself cannot contribute.[394]

The "Lord of Hosts" portion of the inscription has the propensity to reference a divine being, a worldly being, or both. Sabaoth (hosts) is a plural term borrowed from Hebrew, which also means armies. It has been argued that the deity in Isaiah 6:3 is portrayed as King, who in antiquity commanded the armies.[395] Furthermore, the portrayal of the deity as commander and King became politicised insofar as the earthly ruler often assumed, or was bestowed with, a divinely appointed identity.[396] The term "Sabaoth" thus may refer to both celestial hosts (angels) and earthly armies, which bolsters the concept that the Kelsey Pendant continuously alludes to, and participates in, a battle or war against heavenly and earthly malefic entities. Since this study argues that all of the pendant's elements are in discourse with one another, the dual significance of Sabaoth is pertinent because the study considers that the Trisagion inscription participates in the entire illustrative programme of the obverse and reverse sides of the pendant—with specific emphasis on the rider and the angel.

When the quotations from Isaiah and Revelation and the inscription of the pendant are considered in conjunction with one another, one may interpret that the Trisagion of the pendant also represents an intended repetitive verbalisation. This suggestion is put forth in light of the Psalm inscription upon the Kelsey Pendant, which like the Trisagion, was read or sung aloud within a liturgical context. As discussed in Chapter Three, the circular inscription

[394] See for example Walker, 1959; Bucar, 2014; Tannous, 2018.

[395] Williamson, 2008, 26-30.

[396] Williamson, 2008, 30.

of the Psalm creates a concept of an unending "recitation" insofar as the Psalm of the pendant is a partial inscription bereft of a notation indicating an endpoint that engages with memory and thus enacts an ongoing cyclical interaction.[397] In this instance, the Trisagion, as described as part of a ceaseless utterance, functions like a circular inscription (alluding to a cyclical interaction) even though its position is physically linear.

In sum, the Trisagion's placement within the visual programme of the Kelsey Pendant may suggest a three-fold function. First, the Trisagion acts as a visual and physical border that separates two pictorial scenes. Here, visually, the line expresses a sense of stasis, a firm border (akin to its position within an architectural space) that prompts the viewer to move from one pictorial tier to the other while underscoring the differences between the content of each tier. Second, the Trisagion acts as a dynamic oral and aural component that contradicts its linear composition. The second aspect pushes the boundaries of shape insofar as the text of the Trisagion fills a linear space that extends from one end of the amulet to the other—where the theta of σαβαωθ touches the *punch-dot* lines of the outer border—but, functionally, the line acts as a bridge. In this sense, from an immediate visual standpoint, the line of text, firstly, connects the contents of the two pictorial tiers it separates whereby allowing, perhaps encouraging, the image of Christ in the mandorla and the *charaktêres* to inter/intra-act; and, secondly, conceptually speaking, the Trisagion (as a bridge) in an inter/intra-action with the *charaktêres* (as a language of angels) connects the earthly and celestial realms, acting as a sonorously robust apotropaic point of liminality.[398] Third, the Trisagion acts as the foundation of the firmament upon which the throned deity is situated.

[397] See Milwright, 2016, 173-197 for discussion about encircling inscriptions.

[398] See discussion of *charaktêres* as an angelic language, 169-170.

Additionally, as in a liturgical context, the inscribed Trisagion bridges the celestial with the terrestrial in its inter/intra-actions with the other attributes of the reverse and obverse sides of amulet as well as in its inter/intra-actions with the bearer. When one considers the oral and aural value associated with the Trisagion, the line transforms from its static form to a moving shape enlivened by its inter/intra-action with the other orally and aurally disseminated texts upon the amulet, its inter/intra-action with the images, its autonomously charged inter/intra-actions, and its inter/intra-actions with the bearer encapsulated by the senses, conceptual time, and memory.

4.2.3 Charaktêres

A *charaktêr* or ring sign, by the fourth century, is visually defined as a symbol with small circles upon its endpoints.[399] The middle register of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is comprised of six *charaktêres* and the base-tier border has four *charaktêres* which are smaller in size (Figure 2).

The potential typological significance of *charaktêres*, their linguistic origin, visual characteristics, astrological associations, and meaning have been extensively commented upon within scholarship.[400] The thesis will only look to how *charaktêres* were utilised within specific examples of the visual and material culture of Late Antiquity in an effort to ascertain their (likely varied) potential within particular contexts, and thus, provide an overview of their probable capacities as being of the Kelsey Pendant. The possibility that, due to the difficulty in deciphering *charaktêres*, their inclusion upon the amulet was meant to invoke a

[399] Gordon, 2014, 270.

[400] See for example: Frankfurter, 1994; Gordon, 2011, 2014; Mastrocinque, 2012; Faraone, 2018; Dzwiza, 2015, who includes an extensive bibliography on the subject; Maguire, 2017.

sense of mystique, represent an incomprehensible living language, or apply a universal layer of protection to the overall programme of the amulet should be noted.[401] However, the study endeavours to objectively analyse the potential significance of the *charaktêres* of the amulet within their context focusing on the *charaktêres's* role(s), individually and collectively, as a constituent of the amulet's assemblage.

In light of *charaktêres* within late antique material culture, it is pertinent to consider how they were religiously and socio-culturally liminal and thus helped to create an intricate network of functionally apotropaic spaces and objects where they as integral components of literature, worn objects, and architecture inter/intra-acted with each other, their consumers, as well as within themselves. *Charaktêres* can be found on papyri, in magical handbooks, architectural structures, textiles, as well as gem and metal amulets. Within these contexts, it is understood that these symbols potentially embodied a functionally multivalent, yet overarchingly protective, role that was visually expressed with various ideations at play—e.g., indecipherable text, an angelic alphabet or language, animate representations of divine entities.[402] Even though *charaktêres* were utilised in various contexts in Antiquity, Late Antiquity, and beyond, the study posits that definitive meaning of each *charaktêr* of the Kelsey Pendant is lost with the pendant's creator or perhaps even with the person/s who carried the amulet.[403] This, of course, does not imply that the *charaktêres* were stripped of their histories or that they did not continuously participate in the creation of their own

[401] See Cox-Miller, 1986.

[402] Dzwiza, 2015, 49; Gordon, 2011b 22-23; Bohak, 2011, 38-39; Collins, 2008, 73-78; Gosden, 2020, 260, (*charaktêres* used in curses), 275; Mastrocinque, 2012, 537; Cline, 2011a; Cline 2011b.

[403] Dzwiza, 2015, 48-49; See also Gosden, 2020, 260-261, 274-275 for use of *charaktêres* in various traditions.

biographies outside of their intended significance at the time in which they were conjoined into the assemblage of the Kelsey Pendant.

4.2.3.1 Portable Charaktêres

Within the Gnostic *Books of Jeu*, an array of *charaktêres* inclusive of the eight-rayed ring sign (or a variation of this sign) and other abstract symbols bereft of ringed endings, yet similar in form to *charaktêres,* are presented as seals to be utilised for various purposes.[404] For example, in Chapters 47 and 52 of the *Second Book of Jeu*, the eight-rayed sign is illustrated as the seal utilised by Jesus in the ritual of baptising his disciples, and, in another scenario, this symbol is used as a seal of protection in the disciples's journey to become 'Sons of the Light.'[405] Through texts such as the *Books of Jeu,* one not only becomes aware of the versatility of *charaktêres* but one is also reminded of the concept of a sign or symbol as a seal, which relates to the study's previous discussion with regard to the suggested function of the cross symbol of the Kelsey Pendant.

Additionally, several of the *charaktêres* of the pendant appear in magical handbooks such as the *Greek Magical Papyri* (approximately second century BCE to fifth century CE) and the *Sefer Ha-Razim* (between third to fourth centuries CE) where they are incorporated within various types of spells. Some examples within the *Greek Magical Papyri* call for *charaktêres* to be inscribed upon laurel leaves as part of an Apollonian invocation, upon a silver leaf as a protective charm, upon a clean piece of papyrus for a scorpion sting, and upon a tin, silver, or gold leaf as part of a phylactery against daimons and other malefic forces or

[404] *Second Book of Jeu*, ed. and transl. Schmidt, 1978.

[405] *Second Book of Jeu*, ed. and transl. Schmidt, 1978, Chapter 47, 112-113 and Chapter 52, 126-128.

intentions.[406] Even though the majority of recipes include *charaktêres* for purposes of protection, it should be noted that in the *Greek Magical Papyri* one also finds recipes that call for these symbols in love spells, restraining and binding spells, as well as spells to inflict illness.[407] The *Sefer Ha-Razim* does not offer as many examples of recipes inclusive of *charaktêres*; interestingly however, when these symbols are called for within the context of a spell, there is an association with angelic names. In the *Sefer Ha-Razim*, the practitioner is instructed to inscribe *charaktêres* along with names of angels upon (for example) silver lamellae to heal a half withered man who suffered a stroke and upon copper lamellae to acquire love of a woman.[408] Even with this small sampling of spells which include the use of *charaktêres* within the context of magical handbooks, one is able to aptly deduce that these symbols were associated with a variety of ritualistic scenarios.[409] To be clear, *charaktêres* were not included in many of the recipes within the magical handbooks, but their presence did evoke a sense of potency irrespective of the intention behind their rendering.[410]

Charaktêres are also found upon other media such as amulets, mostly gems but also on metal (inclusive of lamellae) and textiles (See for example Figure 49).[411] The pictorial and textual similarities of *charaktêres* have led to the suggestion that late antique (sixth-

[406] Betz, 1986, 10 (*PGM* I 262-347), 88 (*PGM* IV. 2622-2707—lines 2705-2707), 120-121 (*PGM* VII 193-196), 134 (*PGM* VII 579-590).

[407] Betz, 1986, 130 (*PGM* VII 462-466), 142-143, (*PGM* VII. 925-39), 321(*PGM* CXXIV. 1-43).

[408] Morgan, 1983, 51-52, 45-46.

[409] See also Garipzanov, 2018, 35-41.

[410] Gordon, 2011b, 20-25.

[411] For textiles see Morgan, 2018, 59-60, Figures 18-25; Maguire, 1990, 215-224, Textiles are known to be comprised of decorative embellishments (such as knotted designs, religious designs, and text) that not only corresponded to other aspects of late antique life such as mosaic floor patterns, exterior architectural decorations, amulets, and jewellery, but also served as an apotropaic shield for the persons who wore them; Maguire, 2017, 223-254.

century) practitioners likely had access to magical handbooks.[412] However, it must be underscored that the choice of *charaktêres*, the order in which *charaktêres* were inscribed, or the manner in which they were designed (on any type of media) was not consistent.[413]

4.2.3.2 Animate Charaktêres

Charaktêres were considered animate where they were understood to embody the essence of a deity or another otherworldly being.[414] In some instances, (e.g., within the context of recipes) animate *charaktêres* were directly addressed in a request or command to fulfill the intention of the creator or bearer.[415] This section of the study will consider how animated *charaktêres* potentially functioned within their respective contexts. Here, one must remain cognisant that the role of non-animated *charaktêres* as symbols of protection (or otherwise) is not inherently passive or static, and thus, an "animated" *charaktêr* does not speak to the symbol's function, but rather it speaks to the symbol's embodied nature. For example, a fifth or sixth-century curse tablet from Apamea, Syria directly addresses the *charaktêres* and requests that they tie, bind the feet, hands, and sinews of members of a competing athletic team.[416] Of importance here is that the curse begins with a call to these *charaktêres* and refers to them as 'Most holy Lords, *Kharaktēres*,' which, in this case, categorises the symbols as deified or otherworldly beings with the autonomous ability to fulfill the creator's wishes.[417]

[412] Spier, 2014, 43-66.

[413] See Gordon, 2011b; Gordon, 2014.

[414] Collins, 2008, 78; Mastrocinque, 2012, 537.

[415] See for example, Betz, 1986, 129 (PGM VII 417-22) a binding spell that calls upon *charaktêres* to restrain and directly addresses the symbols as 'mighty gods'; Daniel and Maltomini, 1990, 21, a 4th or 5th century spell with illustrated *charaktêres* calls upon the 'Holy signs' to 'heal Tiron, whom Palladia bore, from all shivering…..'; Faraone, 2012, 21, 57-58.

[416] *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. 34:1437 (1923-); Collins, 2008, 76-77.

[417] *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. 34:1437 (1923-); Collins, 2008, 77. See also Faraone, 2012, 21, 57-58 who provides examples of amulets where *charaktêres* (inclusive of the eight-rayed ring sign as inscribed on the Kelsey Pendant) are animated and called upon to perform certain duties.

In this curse, the creator relays an understanding that the *charaktêres* are (along with their intentions) the protagonists of the curse that control its outcome. The *charaktêres* are beings within themselves that, through their inscription upon the tablet along with the creator's intention, are called to reside within the context of the object to fulfill its purpose autonomously.

Charaktêres were also invoked with the names of angels or archangels.[418] The interconnection is likely based upon late antique beliefs regarding the power of archangels to provide protection against diseases or armed enemies; and, it may be argued that this association also remarks upon late antique beliefs about the potential of *charaktêres* even when they are not accompanied by direct references to angels.[419] Additionally, *charaktêres* are, at times, understood to be a representation of an angelic alphabet, which, when pushed further, can be considered a language as well.[420] If one were to consider *charaktêres* to be associated with angels and to, in fact, be an angelic language, then one must consider that *charaktêres* also embody sound—sounds orally created by angelic voices yet are unutterable by humans and are aurally unrecognisable to, or unable to register within, the human auditory frequencies.[421]

It is arguable that "animate" *charaktêres* are multivalent and it may be suggested that *charaktêres* are animate beings and a celestial language encapsulated in abstracted symbols

[418] Mastrocinque, 2012, 537.

[419] Cline, 2011b, 56-57, 75.

[420] Bohak, 2011, 38-39 states that *charaktêres* were understood as an angelic alphabet by the Middle Ages; Gosden, 2020, 260-261 does not expound upon the ancient writers to which he refers but references the alphabet of the angel Metatron in figure 7.5.

[421] Most pertinent is Mastrocinque, 2012, 544; Gordon, 2011b, 26-27; See also Cox-Miller, 1986.

that carry the presence of celestially inspired life breath.[422] This is not to say that every inscribed *charaktêr* is animate—the study argues that such a delineation is contextually dependent.

4.2.3.3 Charaktêres in Architectural Settings

In addition to the utilisation of *charaktêres* within the contexts of textiles, amulets, handbooks, *charaktêres* were at times employed within various aspects of architectural structures, in areas such as interior floor mosaics, late antique altars, and (uniquely) the exterior wall of a theatre building.[423] Floor mosaics were a mode of decoration within religious and secular spaces in the early Byzantine period.[424] Few wall mosaics are known within important pilgrimage sites or congregational places of worship and monasteries, respectively.[425] Most of the employed decorative motifs within the church, chapel, or other religious spaces were from a secular source, which highlights the utilisation of a common visual vocabulary for decorative designs across various media and spaces.[426] Examples of floor mosaics with *charaktêres* in a religious space include the sixth century mosaic in the north aisle of the church of Beit Méry in Lebanon, the late antique mosaic at Beth Hashitta in Israel, and the sixth-or seventh-century mosaic at Khirbet Yattir in Israel.[427] An example of a

[422] See Pentcheva, 2017b, 62-64 who refers to the *Eikōn's* embodiment of the Holy Spirit, but the thesis suggests that if pushed further, the concept of vitality of the *Eikōn* as animated through divine breath can be applied to *charaktêres* as utterances of celestial beings.

[423] Cline, 2011b, discusses the *charaktêres* on the exterior theatre wall of Miletus; See Pfaff, 2018, 395, 398 for an example of *charaktêres* (specifically the eight-rayed ring sign #28) on late antique altars in Asklepieion at Epidauros.

[424] Talgam, 2014, 177, 181.

[425] Talgam, 2014, 177-179.

[426] Talgam, 2014, 181; Teteriatnikov, 2017, 199.

[427] Maguire, 1998, 265; Talgam, 2014, 249-251; See Donceel-Voute,1988, 337-344 for a detailed discussion of Beit Méry's mosaics. As of the date of this thesis, there are not any high-resolution images of these floor mosaics, however, low-resolution images can be found in these publications.

floor mosaic with *charaktêres* within a secular space is a palatial building in Apamea, Syria that is tentatively dated to the fifth-century (Figure 78).[428]

Of the *charaktêr* symbols, the eight-pointed star (or eight-rayed sign) is predominantly incorporated within early Byzantine (super)natural material culture. This sign was considered a familiar decorative motif in Late Antiquity and there are many examples of this symbol upon Coptic textiles as well as in mosaic decorations.[429] From an historical perspective, it has been suggested that the eight-rayed sign (without rings) or 'double cross' symbol—which pre-dates Christianity and was utilised within various cultures as a signifier of divinity and the heavens—was also an alternate form of the Christian cruciform or chi-rho.[430]

Within the Beit Méry, Beth Hashitta, and Khirbet Yattir floors, in addition to the eight-rayed ring sign, there are other symbols such as Solomon's knot, a star (comprised of a circle with triangular projections along its circumference and a dot in the very centre of the symbol), swastikas, and concentric circles.[431] The *charaktêres* or similar symbols within these mosaics have been categorised utilising terms such as "magical", "apotropaic", "exotic", and "semi-magical" to delineate their (super)natural significance in Late Antiquity, which likely stems from their use within handbooks, on amulets and mirrors, and other objects.[432] The study posits that these symbols within the context of the church space

[428] Balty, et al., 1969, plate XIX.

[429] Teteriatnikov, 2017, 197.

[430] Pitt-Rivers, 1966, 28-30; See also Lewis, 2009 for discussion of possible origins of chi-rho.

[431] Maguire, 1998, 266-268; Maguire, 2017, 236-237; Garipzanov, 2018, 45; Khirbet Zmal in Jordan is another late antique structure that incorporates these symbols within its floor mosaic programme. The study is cognisant that the provided examples are not comprehensive.

[432] Maguire, 1998, 267-268; Teteriatnikov, 2017, 197-199; Talgam, 2014, 252.

embodied a multifunctional purpose—ornament and apotropaic efficacy realised in both non-Christian and Christocentric iconography. The occurrence of *charaktêres* in floor mosaics underlines the versatility of these symbols. In addition, it complicates the intermeshed nature of late antique material culture where various objects and spaces are conceptually interlinked by text, image, or symbol.

4.2.3.4 Charaktêres of the Kelsey Pendant

Although the *charaktêres* of the Kelsey Pendant's assemblage have been utilised in various other contexts in conjunction with different *charaktêres,* the sequence of *charaktêres* of the pendant was inscribed intentionally. In examples from literature and amulets, it is rare to find an inscription with the same sequence of *charaktêres*. However, both the Kelsey Pendant and the Holy Rider Amulet embody this anomaly. The slight difference is that the Holy Rider Amulet is missing the last *charaktêr* on the middle register, which is likely due to a lack of space. The significance of this particular sequence is unable to be deciphered, but it is pertinent to note its existence in both amulets insofar as it may support the concept of a network of (super)natural material that was copied not just between amulets but from one media to another.[433]

Based upon the discussion concerning the versatile applications of *charaktêres* as well as the overall programme of the Kelsey Pendant, the study posits that the *charaktêres* of the amulet embody a multi-faceted functionality. First, the *charaktêres* work individually, together, and in conjunction with other attributes of the pendant's gathering to act as elements of protection. Second, the *charaktêres*, like the other elements of the pendant, are animated

[433] Spier, 2014, suggested that sixth-century amulets were created from magical handbooks. This is also reminiscent of Teteriatnikov's, 2017, suggestions of a common visual vocabulary.

and can be called upon to protect the bearer as well as work with other aspects of the pendant to fulfill the amulet's intention. However, when the *charaktêres* are not actively inter/intra-acting, they are still in the process of becoming in a state of rest. Third, *charaktêres* are not merely illustrated symbols of the pendant, but rather they may be embodiments of animate beings (e.g., angels). Fourth, *charaktêres* are a language of the celestial realm—a language that inter/intra-acts with the other aspects of the Kelsey Pendant, contributes to the composite oral and aural soundscape of the amulet, and links the pendant with other forms of late antique material culture such as architectural spaces, other amulets, or literature. If *charaktêres* embody an "animated" essence, this quality is not completely separate from how the *charaktêr* is understood when it is bereft of this vibrant sense of being. *Charaktêres* encompass both non-animated and animated facets. Their differences reside in what or whom the *charaktêres* are understood to represent within an experiential inter/intra-action with another object as well as how the *charaktêres* choose to inter/intra-act within the gathering of the pendant. Finally, it may be suggested that the visual dominance of the *charaktêres* in relation to other aspects of the reverse side of the pendant underscore their importance and versatility. The *charaktêres* share the "visual stage" with the imagery and other textual components of the Kelsey Pendant, but their central position anchors the overall visual programme whilst balancing the images of first and bottom registers.

4.2.4 Other Indecipherable Symbols on the Base-Tier Border

Beneath the middle register of *charaktêres* is a line comprised of *charaktêres* and other indecipherable symbols which are all smaller in scale than the *charaktêres* of the middle register. This base-tier border is comprised of ten symbols—the first five and the very last symbol are not ring signs whereas the remaining four symbols are *charaktêres* (Figure 2). It may be suggested that the *charaktêres* of the base-tier border functioned in the same manner

as those in the middle register. Though a working hypothesis with regard to the significance of the non-*charaktêr* symbols is unable to be ascertained, visually speaking, these symbols are alphabetic in shape and may reference one or more written languages (e.g., the Hebrew ה).

4.2.5 Lion, Snake, and Scorpion

The bottom register of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant is comprised of an image of three animals: a roaring lion, in mid-stride, leaping over a lacerated (or perhaps completely severed) snake, and, in front of the lion, a scorpion facing the area encompassing the lion's front paws and the snake's head. This image, like the other registers of the Kelsey Pendant, is a composite illustration that inter/intra-acts as an entity comprised of individualised aspects with the propensity to act as a whole or in its respective parts.

4.2.5.1 Lion, Scorpion, and Snake in Visual and Material Culture

The perceptions regarding lions, snakes, scorpions within Antiquity, Late Antiquity, and later times were ambiguous.[434] Within the visual and material cultures, the lion, scorpion, and snake assumed both perilous and apotropaic identities based on the situation at hand.[435] References to these animals are found with various texts of ancient authors such as Aristotle and Pliny, are used in similes, are found in recipes of magical handbooks, and are encountered in the Bible.[436] They are also found within visual media such as magic bowls,

[434] See Vreugdenhil, 2020, 316-320, 330.

[435] Pitarakis, ed, 2015, 56-63.

[436] For a few examples see Aristotle. *History of Animals*. 1. 15-20 (trans. A. L. Peck, 1965, 18-19), who describes lions as 'noble and brave and high-bred' and also describes serpents as 'mean and scheming'; Pliny, the Elder. *Natural History*. 30:100-101. (transl.W.H.S. Jones, 1963, 342-343) describes how the Magi utilised parts of scorpions in amulets. See Betz, 1986 for magical recipes that include the snake, scorpion, or lion.

various facets of the public arena, illustrations within magical handbooks, and amulets. For the purposes of this thesis, and due to the chronological dating and content of the Kelsey Pendant as well as its identification as an amulet, occurrences within biblical literature (specifically the Septuagint) and amulets will be primarily utilised as supporting documentation though the study remains cognisant of other sources.[437]

Firstly, the lion. The lion was powerful; its stature and physique acted as visual markers that upheld the public's notion of the lion as an animal to be feared, but at the same time revered. Late antique material culture (inclusive of funerary contexts) served as a means by which to disseminate the image of the lion as a beast 'par excellence,' the ultimate embodiment of power and ruthlessness.[438] From a two-dimensional perspective, renderings of the lion were utilised within architectural decoration (e.g., reliefs and mosaics), were engraved on various types of jewellery, and textually illustrated in literature.[439] Three-dimensionally, the lion was recreated in the form of portable statuettes as well as free-standing public art.[440] The lion was understood to be a ferocious beast, a hunter, that was also associated with various deities throughout time as well as with the valiance of kings, heroes, and warriors.[441] The lion's size and brute force coupled with how they viciously attacked, conquered, killed, and, at times, consumed their opponents undoubtedly contributed to its perceived ferocity within the late antique public's consciousness.[442]

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[437] The study utilises biblical literature as a historical resource and its use does not imply a particular religious attribution or categorisation of the pendant or the material presented.

[438] Horrell, et al., 2013, 709; Vreugdenhil, 2020, 311-312.

[439] Horrell, et al., 2013, 706-707.

[440] Horrell, et al., 2013, 706-707.

[441] Anderson, 2020, 360, 371.

[442] Horrell, et al., 2013, 709.

Within the Bible, the lion is portrayed either as barbaric, tame, or both. Though not directly referenced within the context of the Kelsey Pendant, chapter six in the book of Daniel provides a poignant example of what may be coined as the lion's bilateral transitory identity. In Daniel 6:22 LXX the lion retains an identity of innate savagery, but due to divine intervention, the lion, in the presence of Daniel, was tame and unable to attack Daniel.[443] In this instance, Daniel was spared the bite of the lion because of his piety.[444] Aside from the intention of the narrative sequence to underscore the advantages of piety, here, it is important to note the lion, as a wild beast, was able to be subdued for those who possess particular characteristics. The lion's ferocious nature, however, was not left to be forgotten. In Daniel 6:24 LXX, the account focuses on the punishment of those who slandered Daniel, and states that the slanderers were 'pulverised' by the lion, likely due to their divisiveness.[445]

In addition to the concept of "justice fulfilled" as illustrated through the lion, one must also consider the purpose behind the sense of ambiguity with regard to the lion. The study posits that the reasons behind such a narratival depiction is two-fold. First, the power of the spiritual adept or the divine against hostile forces (inclusive of the lion) was popular within antique to late antique literature (e.g., halakic and Rabbinic).[446] Thus, the lion as tamed subject played well into an established literary trope. Second, the concept of an inherent character that cannot be changed is underscored. In this sense, the intrinsic nature of the lion to maim, kill, and devour is primary and unmoving without some form of intercession from the divine.

[443] Daniel 6:22 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 1011); Diamond, 2003, 253.

[444] Daniel 6:22 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 1011).

[445] Daniel 6:24 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 1011).

[446] Diamond, 2003, 257.

Secondly, snakes also occupied an ambiguous space within the socio-cultural sphere of Late Antiquity.[447] The snake had the propensity to embody many roles and was associated with, or was the embodiment of, several antique as well as late antique deities from various cultures.[448] For example, in one instance the snake may have been a protector, a deity, or a representation of regeneration.[449] Examples of the snake's association with healing is its portrayal coiled around the staff of the deity, Asklepios; and perhaps a lesser-known example is Glycon, the divine bearded or spiked-head serpent which was sometimes considered a reincarnation of Asklepios.[450] In another instance, however, (supported by documented precautionary measures used to avoid or treat snake bites), the snake may have been conceptualised as a demon, an adversary, or may have been understood as a physical manifestation of chaos, evil, death, and non-existence.[451] In short, the snake as a deified protector and terrestrial destroyer can be considered to be a part of the late antique everyday, which not only underscores its ambiguity and liminality, but also the porous nature of the late antique socio-cultural arena.

Within biblical literature, like the lion, the snake was presented as a foe, a friend, or both. There are several narratival sequences in the Bible that include a snake. However, the following examples in Numbers 21:4-9 and 4 Kings 18:4 of the Septuagint speak to the material of the Kelsey Pendant and well as the potential function of the snake of the amulet. In Numbers 21:4-9, the reader or listener encounters a scenario that was likely familiar—fear

[447] van der Toorn et al., 1999, 744.

[448] See for example, Lurker, 2004.

[449] van der Toorn et al., 1999, 744-745.

[450] See Nock, 1928; Dalziel, 1936; Lurker, 2004, 69.

[451] van der Toorn et al., 1999, 744-745; See Dalrymple, 2007.

of death from snake bites. Within this narrative sequence, followers of the deity become weary and less trusting of the deity's intentions and express their waning sentiments of faith.[452] As a rebuttal, and a form of punishment for their complaints, the deity sends forth deadly snakes to attack the doubting followers, many of which died.[453] After pleading with Moses to pray to the deity and request the removal of the snakes, the deity orders Moses to create a snake and set it upon a sign such that anyone who was bitten from that point forward would be healed if they looked at the snake upon the sign.[454] Moses abided by the instructions of the deity, fashioned a snake of bronze, and the deity's promise was fulfilled.[455] Here it should be noted that, like in the narrative of Daniel with the lion, the concept of the deity's intervention is a key factor.

The significance of 4 Kings 18:4 with regard to the serpent is arguably rooted in 4 Kings's reference to the earlier chronologically dated text of Numbers. Here, one encounters the narrative sequence in which the bronze serpent which Moses created to heal the Israelites is given a prominent role within the description of Hezekiah's destruction of objects and places that did not align with the "sanctioned" religious understandings of the time.[456] This detail is important insofar as the ambiguous nature of the serpent is brought to the forefront. In the narrative sequence in Numbers (though earlier) the snake is a healer and in the later

[452] Numbers 21:4-6 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 128).

[453] Numbers 21:4-6 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 128).

[454] Numbers 21:7-8 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 128).

[455] It should be noted that, and in line with like banning like, in the Jewish tradition, bronze was utilised in rituals to avert the child-killing demon; and, in the Iranian tradition, bronze was associated with a 'lilithine' demon in as much as their claws were made of bronze (Schwartz, 2008, 96-97). See Faraone, 2014, 258 regarding like banning like.

[456] Bohak, 2008, 32; Münnich, 2005, 45; Zellmann-Rohrer, 2021, 107 notes that Moses's creation of a bronze serpent is a 'powerful endorsement of amulets...'.

sequence of 4 Kings, the snake falls out of favor as a healer and embodies the identity of an idol, which, as may be gleaned from the storyline, was a strong affront to the premise of accepted religious practice at the time in which 4 Kings was transcribed.

Finally, the perceptions of scorpions within late antique society were not far afield from perceptions of lions, and snakes. They, too, within various cultures, were associated with deities, were manifestations of demons, and were considered to be perilous whilst serving protective and healing purposes.[457] Scorpions were often illustratively rendered within magical handbooks and magic bowls.[458] In Late Antiquity, the sting of a scorpion and its possible repercussions were feared as evidenced by the surviving examples of protective recipes (that included the use of *charaktêres*) and other mechanisms that were believed to provide efficacious solutions.[459]

Scorpions are mentioned several times within biblical literature; and since aspects of Revelation are of the Kelsey Pendant (e.g., the throne scene in Revelation 4:1-3) the scenario within Revelation 9:3-10 will be discussed as an example. Within this narrative scene, locusts emerged from below and came up upon the earth endowed with the authority and power of scorpions of the earth.[460] Physically speaking, within the narrative, the locusts were winged hybrid creatures with a human face, hair like that of a woman, the teeth of a lion, and the tail of a scorpion equipped with a stinger.[461] The creatures were daunting, their bodies were like

[457] See Lurker, 2004; Frankfurter, 2015b, 14; See also Dalrymple, 2007; Frembgen, 2004, 98, 108.

[458] See Frembgen, 2004; See also Frankfurter, 2015b.

[459] See Bohak, 2009b; Tod, 1939.

[460] Revelation 9:2-3 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 753).

[461] Revelation 9:9 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 754).

horses at the ready for battle with scales like iron that resembled breastplates.[462] In movement, their wings were sonorous—emitting a sound likened to '...the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle.'[463] Though the locusts are servants of the 'angel of the bottomless pit...,' through this textually rendered image, one can imagine these large, monstruous creatures to be kings of menace within the terrestrial realm as they are further described to have donned a gold crown upon their head.[464] The added detail of the hybrid characterisations of these creatures is of interest. On one hand, it can be argued that the physical form of these locusts is merely in step with the descriptions of the Evangelists in symbolic form as described in Revelation 4. On the other hand, however, it is particularly cogent to consider an intention to delineate between the terrestrial and non-terrestrial beasts where both the subservient celestial (seraphim) and subterranean (locusts) winged entities have hybrid fantastical forms and possess the ability to create a soundscape of bedlam in movement.

Returning to the text in Revelation, the locusts were directed by the deity to harm only those bereft of the seal of God upon their foreheads.[465] They were not to kill, but instead they were to torture (with a sting like a scorpion) those without the seal for a finite period of five months, and during this time, the people who were stung would seek death, but death, as a further punishment, would evade their eyes; and their longing to be freed from pain would be incessant.[466] Even though the locusts are detailed as hybrid, one must remain cognisant

[462] Revelation 9:9 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 754).

[463] Revelation 9:7 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 754).

[464] Revelation 9:11(Nestle, et al., 2013, 754).

[465] Revelation 9:4 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 753-754).

[466] Revelation 9:5-6 (Nestle, et al., 2013, 754); Though it is outwith the premise of the thesis to explore the concept of time (in abstraction or linear) with regard to deity's punishment in the Revelation 9:5, it is pertinent to note that this subject is worthy of scholarly attention.

that their scorpion-like qualities are the focal point for this narrative sequence, which underscores the overall conceptions about the potency and danger of the scorpion's sting at the time in which Revelation was transcribed. This characterisation likely retained its significance well into the late antique consciousness since scorpions (along with visual and material culture that referenced their presence) were ubiquitous throughout the geographic area of study in the time when the Kelsey Pendant was created.

4.2.5.2 Lions, Snakes, and Scorpions on Amulets

When considering antique and late antique amulets, the lion, snake, and scorpion are common. One may encounter amulets of various materials such as glass, gems, lamellae, and stones with these animals etched upon them. Though many examples exist where each of the animals are either portrayed alone, with another animal, with a person, deity, or demon, the portrayal of all three animals together is not as plentiful. In instances when they are illustrated upon the same amulet, they are often attacking the evil eye (Figures 35, 37, and 57). It is arguable that the potential function of this image is reliant upon historical lore as well as late antique contemporary understandings of each animal within the socio-cultural arena. Visually speaking, in these examples of all three animals where the snake, lion, and scorpion are facing the evil eye they seem to be ready for attack. Often time, if there is accompanying text, the purpose is more definite. However, with or without textual accompaniment, it may be understood that the potential of each animal (as friend or foe) can be enacted within the context of the amulet where the animals act as a whole as well as individual entities to combat the malefic forces of the evil eye. Here, the physical strength, the fierce roar, and crushing bite of the lion is juxtaposed with the venomous bite of the snake and scorpion's sting. The dangerous aspects of each animal act (together) as a foe to the evil

eye whilst acting in the favor of the bearer through their crippling, maiming, or complete destruction of the evil eye—protecting the bearer from the evil eye's power.

4.2.5.3 The Composite Image of the Kelsey Pendant

The Kelsey Pendant does not include an image of the evil eye. In fact, the image of each animal of the bottom register seems to be facing, and perhaps acting against or for, the other; however, there is not a definitive manner in which to deduce the purpose of each aspect of the composite image.

Visually speaking, the space of the bottom register is compressed providing a narrow space for each illustration to reside. The roaring lion is the largest and most prominent (perhaps dominant) of the three animals. The illustration of a wide opening for the lion's mouth indicates the strength of its roar. In comparing the lion of the bottom register and the hybrid lion of the Christ in Majesty image, one finds that the mouths of both lions have been rendered similarly. The significance behind this observation is two-fold. First, the two lions, though arguably different (one as an Evangelist in symbolic form while the other is a representation of the non-fantastical animal), are visually linked though one cannot disregard that similarities may be due to the artisan's stylistic preference. Second, the fact that they are both illustratively roaring adds to the overall soundscape of the reverse side of the pendant as discussed in light of the sonorousness of the throne scene and its associations with memory and the mind's eye with regard to pictorial illustration outside the context of textual description. This is particularly of interest as the roaring lions enable one to imaginatively, yet tangibly, permeate the middle and bottom tier borders that separate each section of the reverse side in order to create a cohesive whole amalgamated through a cacophony of sound.

Though the scorpion and the snake occupy about the same amount of space, the scorpion (illustrated facing the lion and the snake) is visually more present since it is not beneath the lion. The rendering of the snake creates a sensation of constriction as it is relegated to a visual existence beneath the lion's long stride. Furthermore, the snake is rendered as if it has been lacerated, perhaps by the lion's claws, which may, preliminarily, define (though each aspect of the pendant has the propensity to veil or unveil aspects of its being at any given time) its inter/intra-action within the amulet as a foe.

Since the probable function of this image of the Kelsey Pendant is unable to be deciphered from the image itself, the study turns instead to other aspects of the pendant in an effort to determine if they offer a means by which to contextualise the image. Considering the outermost border, the image of Christ in Majesty, the Trisagion, the *charaktêres*, as well as the indecipherable symbols of the Kelsey Pendant, it can easily be deduced that these aspects, when understood from a holistic perspective, act as a form of protection for the bearer though each element has the propensity to inter/intra-act on their own accord. That being said, the image of the animals could thus be argued to also act as protection for the bearer. This suggestion is further supported by the concept of like banning like, which involves the utilisation of a material (thunderstone) or image of something feared (e.g., a scorpion) to ban the actual phenomenon (thunderstorm) or entity. For example, the illustration of a scorpion on an amulet or magic bowl (buried beneath the threshold of a home) would repel scorpions from stinging or entering a domicile, respectively.[467]

[467] Faraone, 2014, 258.

However, the query arises as to how the illustration of the snake in relation to the lion and scorpion can be negotiated if the snake has in fact been attacked. Moving to the obverse side of the amulet, the Psalm 90 LXX excerpt of the outermost border may perhaps offer an additional perspective from which to analyse the image of the lion, snake, and scorpion. As previously argued, the entirety of Psalm 90 is not inscribed upon the amulet, but since there is not a definitive mark to suggest an endpoint to the inscription, the entirety of Psalm 90 is understood to be of the Kelsey Pendant. With this in mind, the reference to the lion and the snake (though not to the scorpion) in Psalm 90:13 is of particular interest. The verse states, 'on asp and cobra you will tread, and you will trample lion and dragon under foot.'[468]

The narrative sequence within which Psalm 90:13 is a part thus outlines the protections the believer will receive from the deity. The mention of two types of snakes, the asp and the cobra, as well as the lion is significant due to the previously discussed lore, reverence, and fears surrounding both animals. Here, the concept of taming an inherently fierce or venomous animal by way of divine intervention returns. In several narrative sequences of the Bible the reader or listener is faced with the deity's promise to the pious through divine intervention on their behalf, but at same time, the reader is confronted with the deity's potential to unleash their fury upon evil or doubting followers, both of which may translate to the bearer of the amulet. In this sense, it may be argued that the animals of the bottom register, based upon the spiritual position and intention of the bearer, may act to protect the bearer. However, in any instance, these animals may also act to harm the bearer. When the ambiguous nature of the lion, snake, and scorpion are taken into consideration it is worth noting, and may be suggested, that the deity's directive to torture those who doubt, are evil, or disbelieve on one hand and on the other hand, protect those who are pious highlights

[468] Psalm 90:13 (Pietersma and Wright, 2007, 593).

the ambiguousness of the deity. In this sense, the deity's propensity, in some instances, to intervene for the benefit of the faithful and punish the unfaithful may be likened to the lion's, snake's, and scorpion's potential as friend or foe depending on the situation at hand. The study posits that the concept of the shifting disposition of the deity as well as these animals speaks to the inter/intra-active qualities of the Kelsey Pendant at various points in time.

In response to the above query about the lacerated snake, the study posits that its state of being (dead or alive) does not necessarily prevent its functioning on multiple levels. Perhaps the severed snake may represent a conquered, or subdued, form of danger which underscores the sentiment in Psalm 90:13. It may also represent a late antique concept of an embodied image where the snake's image of the Kelsey Pendant was considered to be an embodiment of its very essence (conceptualised as a malefic entity or a healer) and its illustrated debilitation was a form of punishment to render it powerless, which can also be interpreted as a direct affront to the idolised serpent.[469] On one hand, the snake is in a state of statis as can be interpreted by its position within the constricted space beneath the lion's stride; its dangerous nature has been tamed as it is no longer able to slither towards, wrap its body around, or move to strike its prey. On the other hand, however, one must remain cognisant that the snake symbol's significance is not only based upon its venomous nature, but also its role as a healer and protector as seen on other amulets. It is imperative to remain cognisant that the snake's presence speaks to its multivalency and its being of the Kelsey Pendant. The crux of the snake of the Kelsey Pendant is that it must sufficiently represent and

[469] Kristensen, 2009, 224-225, 228, 238. Kristensen focuses on imagery of the human form, but his interpretations can be pushed further to include other living beings (e.g., animals, insects, etc.). Though Kristensen states that the destruction of "pagan" images was a Christian practice due to their association with divine images possessing qualities of the human body, this study posits that this practice may have been utilised by non-Christians as well.

navigate its ambiguity whilst realising its purpose to inter/intra-act as an element of the amulet albeit in a broken form.

4.3 An Inter/Intra-Active Process of Becoming

When considering the entire programme of the reverse side of the Kelsey Pendant, it may be suggested that the elements are all self-referential, commanding, antagonistic, and cooperative. The texts and images call upon, challenge, and work with one another whilst retaining their inherent selves in their continuous process of becoming. From a visual as well as an interactive standpoint, the layout of the reverse side of the pendant reveals a hierarchical structure that upon the first glance is organisationally appealing but is not indicative of how the elements inter/intra-act with the other. The following discussion endeavours to provide a succinct hypothetical window into how the elements of the reverse side of the pendant may inter/intra-act individually, with, and against each other.

In Chapter Three, the *punch-dot lines* were argued to act as a porous containment system for the outermost Psalm inscription of the obverse side of the amulet. On the reverse side, however, since the borders and registers act as visual containment systems on their own accord, the thesis argues that the *punch-dot lines* of this side of the pendant primarily act as visual markers or a system that highlights the outermost Seal of the Living God inscription and the cross symbol while guiding the viewer's eye to (and in some instances keeping the viewer's eye within) the central illustrative programme. The outermost inscription is a multifaceted imperative request. Its self-referentiality engages the seal or cross symbol, defines the pendant's intended function, and identifies the pendant as an amulet. With the inscription's layered functionality in mind, the study argues that the *punch-dot lines* underscore the outermost text's presence whilst retaining their own porousness, allowing

(and arguably even encouraging) the text to inter/intra-act with the rest of the programme on the entire pendant. It is also plausible that each register and border of the pendant refers back to the outermost inscription in their processes of becoming where the outermost inscription consistently provides a directive—highlighting the overarching intention of the seal and, in turn, the amulet.

In looking at the reverse side of the pendant, due to the layout and the perspective of the bearer, they are drawn to engage with the programme in an ordered fashion. Based upon the physical size of the registers, the viewer at first instance likely notices the image of Christ in Majesty followed by the *charaktêres*, the lion, snake, and scorpion, and, ultimately, the smaller inscriptions—the Trisagion and the line of *charaktêres* coupled with indecipherable symbols. Though the often-illustrated image of Christ in Majesty differs from the literary descriptions, it may be suggested that the late antique viewer (through their everyday participation in society) was able to navigate these differences and assimilate text with image where, for example, the hybrid creatures embodied both the seraphim and the Evangelists. In the mind's eye, based upon the memory of the activated literary and colorfully rich visual examples of the throned deity, one can clearly see beyond the monochromatic backdrop of the amulet's bronze material and imagine a throne scene bursting with the colours and splendour of valuable, shimmering materials. The viewer is drawn into a scenario where the vibrant colours of the throne scene are accompanied by the visual and sonorous chaos of the elements that help define the scene—thunder, lightning, rushing water, and fire. The sounds of the elements juxtaposed with the ceaseless melodic, or, based upon the situation at hand, cacophonous sounds created by the hybrid creatures (seraphim in biblical literature) chanting the Trisagion coupled with the utterances of celestial language of the *charaktêres* (potentially spoken by the seraphim as well) can be understood to create an unsettling disjuncture within

the soundscape of the amulet. Though these sounds are inaudible by the bearer, within the context (and due to the compressed space) of the autonomously becoming amulet, the sounds create an amplified and hyperactivated environment upon the pendant.

When the Kelsey Pendant is inter/intra-acting autonomously, one may, for example, imagine a scenario where the throned deity accompanied by the hybrid beasts establish a presence upon the firmament of the Trisagion complete with the chaotic soundscape as described above. On one hand, the pendant within itself is an oral and aural cacophony of celestial sound at a frequency high enough to deter malefic forces. On the other hand, the sounds that surround the throned deity also underscore their intangible vitality, the living essence of their glory encapsulated within the mandorla and underscored by the actively shimmering materials that surround them. Thus, the throned deity of the Kelsey Pendant is the embodiment of the living God referenced in the outermost inscription.

The other elements of the pendant are aware and acting with and reacting to the trembling sound and colourful display hovering above them. The *charaktêres*, comprised of the essence of divine beings as well as a celestial language, buttress or provide alternate forms (in relation to the eight-rayed ring sign) for the seal of the living God—the cross. Since the text that encircles the reverse side of the amulet requests that the seal of the living God protects the bearer, the *charaktêres* are also commanded to shield the bearer of the amulet while contributing to the soundscape of the amulet. The lion, snake, and scorpion provide what can be considered to be an additional layer of protection or even danger. These ambiguous entities, as a composite image of the pendant, can be understood to be on the ready to attack any malefic force that approach the bearer or the amulet. From one perspective, these animals inter/intra-act with the other elements of the pendant by protecting

the amulet from maliciousness, fear, or doubt that may harm or interfere with the essence and potential of the other attributes of the amulet. From another perspective, however, the bearer, partially through the promise of the deity in Psalm 90:13, looks to the throned deity, the elements of the obverse side, as well as the *charaktêres* to subdue these animals and protect them from the dangers they represent.

Hypothetically, from the perspective of the amulet, the outermost inscription can be considered to call upon the throned deity, *charaktêres*, undecipherable signs, as well as the lion, snake, and scorpion to perform their duties to protect insofar as the amulet must protect itself in order to aptly protect the bearer. For example, from a narrowed lens, in an instance where the forces against the amulet are particularly strong, the *charaktêres,* as a language, may be actively uttered, and, at the same time, as veiled mystified symbols, act to protect—where the eight-rayed ring sign acts as an alternate form of the seal. In the presence of a malefic force, one can imagine the strikes of lightening followed by rumbles of thunder, the discombobulating movement of the seraphim creating sounds of violently rushing water, the heat of fire, and the brightness of light coming from the firmament of the amulet. The throned deity's presence, as the embodiment of the living God, fortifies the potential of the conjoined elements whilst providing an additional layer of concentrated vitality.

The cross of the outermost border (as the seal) enacts to protect, and the *charaktêres*, at first silent, are awakened by the attack of the malicious presence and unveil themselves as an acting reinforcement to the cruciform seal of the outermost inscription. The unknown (thus entirely veiled in mystique) essence of undecipherable symbols coupled with the spoken *charaktêres* work against the chanted Trisagion to create a disharmonious environment intended to confuse and overwhelm the malefic forces while the seal acts as a

barrier of protection. In the midst of confusion, the lion, snake, and scorpion act according to their dangerous nature and attack the evil forces (as a whole or individually) with brute strength and venom. From a broader lens, in the presence of an adversarial force, the reverse side of the pendant is loud, ceaselessly moving, and consistently breaking the barriers of its hierarchical organisation as a means to protect itself and ultimately the bearer. Thus, the *charaktêres*, the Trisagion, undecipherable symbols, the throne scene, the lion, snake, and scorpion, and the outermost inscription inter/intra-act with, and against, each other by continuously referencing the other and acting to fulfill the objective of the stated intention of the amulet.

Chapter Five. A Late Antique Societal Experience: The Inter/Intra-action of the Kelsey Pendant and its Bearer

Until now, the study has primarily focused upon the attributes and potential agency of the Kelsey Pendant by way of the thesis's methodological underpinnings housed under the umbrella of New Materialism. These interpretations entangled the material agency of the pendant's elements (in their inter/intra-active state of continuously becoming) with an insight into their histories, surrounding lore, and a myriad of their potential late antique social contexts. Through the socio-cultural climate of the late antique Southern Levant and Anatolia—with specific regard to experience and lived memory in the civic and religious spheres, the following analysis will be approached from the perspective of the human bearer and will interpret how they may have experienced the pendant based upon their direct and indirect participation in the socio-cultural, political, and religious arenas of their late antique society.[470]

The examination will build upon the examples and scenarios set forth in the previous chapters, but for purposes of clarity, the investigation will artificially separate the bearer's continuous lived experience into separate civic and religious spaces even though, in Late Antiquity, boundaries between these spheres were normatively amorphous and aspects of daily life were fluid and commonly intermingled.[471] Previously, each element of the pendant (and their minutia) have been discussed; here, the thesis will focus upon the *charaktêres*, the

[470] The thesis considers direct participation to be a tangible, inter/intra-active experience between the two objects. Indirect participation involves inter/intra-action based on memory, lore, histories, and previous experiences.

[471] See for example, Sessa, 2018, 89, 126.

rider, the angel, Christ in Majesty coupled with the Trisagion, and the demon. Since an in-depth analysis of the textual aspects of the pendant has already been provided, a further examination of the texts will not be conducted outside of a discussion that contextualises them with above mentioned focal points (e.g., Christ in Majesty and the Trisagion within a liturgical context) and the experience of the Kelsey Pendant with the bearer. The decision to discuss these aspects in lieu of others does not indicate a hierarchy of importance with regard to the potential efficacy of one element over another, but rather, through a more succinct analysis, the thesis endeavours to underscore the chapter's primary emphasis— the inter/intra-active experiences of the bearer and the amulet embedded in their lived participation in society. As a means to underscore the concept that all elements of the pendant are continuously inter/intra-acting with one another and with their late antique "everyday" sphere, this analysis (with exception of the *charaktêres*) will also not separate the elements of the amulet.

5.1 Beneath the Veil: *Charaktêres*

In looking at the Kelsey Pendant, there are several aspects of the amulet that immediately stand out. The pendant has heft, it is densely illustrated on both sides, it is cool to the touch, and its smell holds a tinge of acidity complementary to its metallic composition. Its pictorial programme is comprised of various aspects which may have been readily understood or even fully decipherable by one bearer or another. The one exception here are, however, are *charaktêres*. *Charaktêres* are symbols that are generally bound to the secrecy. It may even be suggested that the potential meaning or meanings of the *charaktêres* of the Kelsey Pendant are lost within an arena of limitless subjectivity. The thesis interprets *charaktêres* as ambiguous semiotic signs or symbols that, as has been suggested in literature, refer to

'…another, signified reality…',[472] or as this thesis further posits, refer to multiple 'signified' realities at once—that have the potential to share information and hide information simultaneously. As continuously becoming elements of the pendant, *charaktêres* discern what to veil or unveil at any given moment, thus creating an everchanging shroud of secrecy that resides beneath other aspects of the amulet's gathering. With this reasoning in mind, these symbols will be discussed on a standalone basis even though they are recognised as an integral, participatory attribute of the pendant's assemblage.

As discussed, *charaktêres* were frequently encountered within magical handbooks, amulets, recipes, and secret texts. By some, *charaktêres* were understood to be animate beings, an incomprehensible language of angels, supernatural signs, or gods.[473] The possession of knowledge in Antiquity to Late Antiquity was closely tied to social status and power, which acted as bases for the strategic inclusion or exclusion of persons within religious communities and multicultural societies in general.[474] Though amulets with *charaktêres* would have been available to the wider population, the textual resources incorporating or calling upon *charaktêres* were likely accessible to the literate.[475] The notion of privileged knowledge coupled with hidden potential comes into play with regard to the Kelsey Pendant whereby (and based upon the will of the *charaktêres*), on one hand, it may be suggested that the full aptitude of *charaktêres* resided with those who were educated about the symbols since they were able to "unlock" them. On the other hand, those with limited

[472] van Kooten, 2018, 146; See definition of *charaktêres* in Chapter Four.

[473] Mastrocinque, 2012, 537.

[474] Popović, et al., 2018, 1.

[475] Popović, et al., 2018, 3.

knowledge of the *charaktêres* were not privy to the symbols's full potential, but instead were granted, at the least, a foundational level of power.

With regard to how a bearer may have perceived the efficacy of the symbols, it may be posited that their perceptions would have been multifaceted as well. For instance, for a person with circumstantial knowledge of *charaktêres*, the symbols may have been interpreted as mysterious signs that added a certain level of mystique to the amulet. In this scenario, to the bearer, the pendant may have carried more spiritual value or may have had a higher level of efficacy since the *charaktêres* were intermingled with other powerful illustrations with which they were more familiar such as the rider, Christ in Majesty, and the angel. For someone with some exposure to the signs and a level of literacy, but lacking an in-depth level of esoteric knowledge, the *charaktêres* may have embodied the protective essence of angels coupled with the mystique that surrounds them. And for a literate person with more experience or specific knowledge pertaining to *charaktêres*, the symbols manifest the essence, voices, and potential of angels coupled with a veiled power enveloped in the rendered signs themselves. Here, it is pertinent to recollect that the *charaktêres* of the pendant (within the context of the inter/intra-actions of the amulet) have the potential to embody all of the aforementioned levels of efficacy at once, or if deemed necessary, unveil, or utilise a specific trait based upon the object's needs. The possible fragmented levels of perception reside with the bearer and their experiential inter/intra-action with the amulet.

One reason that *charaktêres* carried a higher level of mystique for the bearer is that they were not ubiquitously displayed in public spaces. As discussed in Chapter Four, there are only a handful of instances known whereby *charaktêres* were utilised both in the religious and civic settings of Late Antiquity. In this light, based upon the extant evidence of

invocations and prayers to angels as well as amulets inscribed with *charaktêres,* one may imagine that on the rare occasion that a person did encounter *charaktêres* in a civic setting they may have related the publicly displayed symbols to the apotropaic potential of an amulet, to the protection and power of the archangels, and the language of angels. There are many possibilities to how *charaktêres* may have been interpreted; and though the study is unable to definitively conclude that the majority of the general population of late antique Anatolia and the Southern Levant had access to magical handbooks or even carried amulets, the prominence of *charaktêres* in the late antique consciousness is supported by the multitude of evidence that suggests a common sense of perceived efficacy surrounding this type of material culture.[476]

One may surmise that the potential of the Kelsey Pendant in an experiential inter/intra-action with its bearer was enveloped in how the bearer understood its components to function. Furthermore, the bearer's experience with *charaktêres,* irrespective of their perception of the symbols, inform their experience with the Kelsey Pendant insofar as *charaktêr* symbols were an integrated symbol within their lived memory. From the visual perspective of the bearer, the *charaktêr* symbols of the pendant and the *charaktêr* symbols they experienced elsewhere are in direct discourse with one another inasmuch as both are engraved or inscribed into a material. Though the *charaktêres* of the amulet in comparison to the *charaktêres* the bearer may have encountered on other amulets, in handbooks, in mosaics and so on, are perhaps not identical, they share visual similarities that strongly link them together. Here, the bearer (either consciously or subconsciously) associates the pendant with their surrounds insofar as the pendant is not foreign in comparison to other forms of material culture that incorporate these symbols. Even though the *charaktêres* carry an air of mystery

[476] Cline, 2011b, 66-74, 76-77.

they are recognisable and because of this they are trusted and perceived to embody a level of potency.

5.2 The Public Eye

Unlike the veiled visibility and general indecipherability of the *charaktêres* within the everyday sphere of late antique society, the following discussion will consider the aspects of the Kelsey Pendant that more openly commanded attention and participation from those with whom they shared a space and an experience. Some of these elements resided in both the civic and religious spaces, and, thus, embodied different forms, which in turn engendered different modes of inter/intra-action. As we will see, a rider encountered in a civic space may have been experienced differently from a rider encountered on a church wall, even if a viewer's conceptualisation of an object in a civic versus a liturgical space may not have been entirely disparate from the other. The viewer's conceptions of elements in these spaces were likely intertwined (actively entangling through their lived memory and other inter/intra-active experiences) thus creating their continuously becoming perceptions of the element's functional efficacy as well as the element's own agential materiality.

Even though, from the perspective of the thesis, the many elements of the Kelsey Pendant hold equal significance, the illustration of the rider is the element of the pendant (and other amulets alike) that most strongly connected amulets, civic, and religious spaces in late antique society. In Late Antiquity, the equestrian as image or monument was ubiquitous. Other aspects of the pendant's assemblage were utilised (or conceptualised in ritual) within

civic spaces or non-religious spaces as well, but for the purposes of organisation and brevity, the rider will be discussed.[477]

The following analysis will begin with an examination of inter/intra-actions of the rider image or monument within a civic space where the equestrian was likely immersed in ideologies of grandeur, divine favour, and absolute power. These ideologies were realised through the image or monument's size, oral and written lore, and conceptualisations around material agency.[478] Thereafter, the analysis will turn to liturgical space. It is pertinent to underline that the rider, as well as all other elements of the Kelsey Pendant in another context may yield similar experiential results insofar as the elements embody their previously discussed histories, but each inter/intra-action with a viewer will undoubtedly be nuanced based upon the space in which it occurs, the embodied histories of the viewer or bearer, and the situation at hand. Thus, there is not a definitive manner in which one may discern the outcome of an inter/intra-action between two objects; however, it may be understood that performative civic and liturgical inter/intra-actions will be informed by an extant foundation of expectations gleaned from the socio-political and religious spheres (respectively) in which these objects reside and participate.

5.2.1 Civic Spaces

Most pertinent to this thesis is the use and reuse in Late Antiquity of equestrian iconography—an entrenched globalised symbol of power—within the context of monumental display.[479] The thesis has already discussed the representation of the rider in Late Antiquity in

[477] See for example Cline, 2011a, 105-136 who discusses the interreligious veneration of *angeloi* at certain sites and through objects that were not originally associated with a specific liturgical space.

[478] Boeck, 2021, 218-230.

[479] Boeck, 2021, 118.

several contexts. Here, the potential inter/intra-action between a colossal equestrian monument within an urban landscape with either a group of viewers or an individual shall be used as an example to contextualise this aspect of the investigation. The colossal equestrian monument of Justinian in the Augoustaion of Constantinople, erected in 542/43 CE will be used as a case study. Justinian's colossal monument was a prominent, visually opulent imperial column that, along with the dome of the Hagia Sophia, towered above the city and redefined the skyline of Constantinople (Figure 41).[480] The monument's column was constructed of solid masonry and was covered in bronze to support the repurposed equestrian bronze statue that was placed upon its apex, making it the highest equestrian monument at the time of its construction (Figures 42-43).[481]

Justinian's monument was installed within the vicinity of other colossal monumental columns such as that of Constantine (approximately 328 CE), Theodosius (393 CE but fell in 480 CE and was replaced by a monument of Anastasius in 506 CE), and Arcadius (421 CE) to take advantage of the best sightlines and place Justinian within a history of imperial tradition.[482] With the symbolised power of the equestrian intertwined with the potential reasons behind the appropriation of a monument (the display of grandiose ideological power, glory, and authority over past legacies) in mind, it may be interpreted that Justinian's column was considered to be a continuation of visual tradition coupled with a new, more symbolically elaborate style of ornamentation as a means to distinguish the triumphant nature of Justinian over his conquests, the urban landscape of the Augoustaion, and his dominance

[480] Boeck, 2021, 38-39.

[481] Boeck, 2021, 54-55.

[482] Yoncaci Arslan, 2018, 7; Boeck, 2021, 56.

over previous rulers.[483] The concept of distinguishing Justinian's triumphancy is further underscored by Justinian's choice of luminous bronze for his colossal monument insofar as the material coupled with the sculptural form of an equestrian was considered to be highly valued and a strong statement of prestige and honour.[484] In addition to ornamentation, choice of material, and symbolic tradition, one must remain cognisant of the monument's materiality—the power the object embodies that is gathered with its other attributes accumulated through continuously becoming histories as well as the monument's past inter/intra-active experiences with other objects (inclusive of humans)—which (based on the participants within an inter/intra-action) may have added layers of potential to the object.

As previously discussed in Chapter Three, the equestrian epitomised histories of heroism, conquest, and divinely imbued glory. It was further posited in Chapter Three that a monument, irrespective of its placement, participates in the space within which it resides and, in the case of a monument within an urban setting, one may interpret that the monument continuously becomes with the city and its inhabitants as they inter/intra-act through time. When pushed further, it may be suggested that the power (or the perceived efficacy) of the equestrian, irrespective of its placement within a civic landscape, religious place, or domestic space, surpassed its material boundaries as an object allowing its metaphysical attributes to proliferate not only through physical group or individualised inter/intra-active experiences, but also through oral lore and lived memory bereft of an actualised experience. Hence, the power associated with the equestrian had the means to permeate present and future histories

[483] Yoncaci Arslan, 2018, 7; Boeck, 2021, xxiv, 58-65; Machado, 2021, 640 states that the display of civic monuments was more controlled than the practises of display in the domestic sphere. Though Machado refers to Rome, the thesis posits that his statement regarding the control and display of civic monuments is also pertinent to late antique Anatolia and the Southern Levant.

[484] Boeck, 2021, 53,59; Machado, 2021, 639.

through time and space in more than one way (tangible and lived memory inter/intra-actions) all the while retaining its core significance without having to be ubiquitously physically present.[485] This concept is the crux of the potential interpretation of the translated significance of equestrian monuments in general, but also the rider of the Kelsey Pendant.

In addition to the visual impact of colossal monuments and the histories and lore they embodied, colossal monuments also demanded reverence in ceremonial or celebratory participation.[486] One can imagine the impact that a colossal column monument may have had upon those who experienced it. Its continuous towering presence would be substantial, but the collective participatory aspect of ritual or ceremonial celebration can be understood to activate a different dimension of inter/intra-action between all participants. The dynamics of collective ritual or celebration encapsulated in the beliefs surrounding the essence (and potential) of a representational monument creates a spark that enlivens the space that the monument envelops.[487]

A civic landscape awash with energy not only bolsters the inter/intra-active process within the monument itself but also leads to a charged experience with the participants—an experience fueled by the emotion of celebration or ritual ceremony.[488] In these moments, it may be understood that there are two inter/intra-actions occurring simultaneously. In the first inter/intra-action, the monument recharges and continuously becomes (autonomously) through the momentum of the crowd that, through memory, re-enlivens the events or the lore

[485] Anderson, 2022, 125; Rubertone, 2008, 13-14.

[486] Yoncaci Arslan, 2018, 7.

[487] Henry, 2020, 273-274; Kalleres, 2015, 31.

[488] Henry, 2020, 271.

surrounding the ideologies that the monument represents. Through these acts, it may be suggested that the monument, as an individual, symbolically reenacts the ritualised or celebrated past events. In the second inter/intra-action the collective not only communicates with each other but also communicates with the monument through multiple sensory experiences. The group creates a charged momentum realised through their physical gathering. In the same instance, through vocal acclamations, it orally communicates with the monument as well as the histories (past and present) that the object both materially embodies and signifies. Thus, this thesis posits that an inter/intra-active experience sparked by the reverence of the participants recharges the essence of conquest, protection, divine glory, and victory of the equestrian statue.

Within an individualised scenario, a monument of a mounted equestrian was visually and conceptually aligned with the rider of the pendant insofar as the themes commonly associated with rider monuments (e.g., victory, glory, and heroism) can be considered to be those of the amulet. Moreover, in the late antique "everyday" sphere, the largeness of the rider monument physically embodied these realities in a tangible manner whereby the bearer, who likely would have experienced the monument in a public space, was able to translate (and transfer to the amulet) their understandings of meaning based on their personal inter/intra-active experiences and memories. Thus, for bearer of the amulet, the rider of the Kelsey Pendant may be recharged by a personal reverence that activates its essence and sparks the reenactment of its histories as the rider continuously becomes autonomously and through its inter/intra-actions with the bearer.

The rider, as a symbol, embodied several histories that existed independently of the other, but, as time passed, these histories were built upon each other and were intermingled

whereby aspects were disregarded whilst others were further assimilated, redefined, and recoded. What became simultaneous realities were based upon the inter/intra-actions of these histories within the context of the rider's being (whether physically as an object or metaphysically realised), which, in turn, directly informed the possible perceptions held by a bearer of the Kelsey Pendant.

In considering a hypothetical experience of the individual bearer with a colossal monument in the public sphere, one may imagine a scenario where a monument's placement within its civic space was directly correlated to its message and perception. In an inter/intra-active situation, depending upon the proximity of the viewer in relation to the monument, the experience between the objects would differ. If the viewer were situated away from the monument, they could perhaps see the monument in its entirety coupled with aspects of the cityscape. Though the nuances in the object's form would be lost with distance, in looking at the monument, it may be suggested that the bearer was inspired to recall learned memories about the events that acted as catalysts for the monument's perceived power. These recollections would include the lore surrounding the glory of deities as well as the divinely imbued victories of kings, emperors, and cavalrymen enveloped in the monument of the rider. For the bearer, the rider may seem weightless from afar, perched atop of its monumental plinth, existing in a liminal space between the terrestrial and celestial realms, which underscores the concept of divine glory associated with the glorified (or deified) essence of the mounted rider statue. It may be further suggested that the overall image of the rider juxtaposed with its environmental space was meant to spark public sentiment of overarching victory. At the point of recalling their memories, it may be suggested that the bearer is reenacting the moments in which they first experienced, imagined, or learned of the situations which surround the creation, establishment, and continuous position of the

monument. Here, the viewer is meant to be reminded (and continuously believe) that their space, like the representation of the rider, is imbued with glory and unmarred by the disgrace of defeat.

However, if the viewer were positioned closer to the monument, perhaps the weightlessness of the rider would shift whereby the equestrian's true heft becomes apparent through the reality of its size. From this perspective, the viewer is unable to see the entirety of the statue but can perhaps see some of its detailed ornamentation. If they were to stand directly beneath the monument, the viewer would have to look up in order to see the statue. The viewer's proximity to the monument may cause an internal tension with which they had to reconcile. One can imagine a scenario where the viewer, in seeing the statue and being closer to the monument, may feel as if they are beneath the force and metaphorical weight of equestrian. The perception of weight coupled with the likeness of a heroic rider (whose identity—whether defined or undefined—is ultimately determined by the viewer's subjectivity) may create either a sense of conquest where the viewer may feel suffocated by the monument, or a sense of security where the viewer conceptualises that the monument provides an overarching umbrella of safety over the area in which it presides.

Though the above hypothetical scenarios are based upon direct inter/intra-active experiences between the viewer and monument, one must remain cognisant that an inter/intra-action between objects can also be indirect where the inter/intra-action does not depend on seeing or touching the monument. The essence of the propaganda surrounding the monument was spread throughout the space and could also be propagated through lived memory. Either experience is based upon the concept that the monument's placement within

the public space underscores its purpose to protect and ensure continuous victory as well as everlasting conquest over potential dangers that enter its sphere.

5.2.2 Liturgical Spaces

Much more than the civic space, one may imagine the liturgical space to be enveloped in solemn homiletic ritual and song. However, the late antique liturgical space was a lively arena where the boundary between civic and religious was blurred. A variety of people including children participated in liturgical services, which not only suggests that the liturgical service was intended to be a part of the "everyday" in late antique society, but also suggests that there was potential for extraneous discourse during the service as well as discordant noises that likely clashed with the orator's message.[489] Churches were not quiet places where participants passively listened to and absorbed the oratory message. Instead, it is conceivable that participation within these spaces (arguably intended to be a quotidian aspect of life), at times, manifested into reactive and passionate exchanges that blurred the arbitrary boundaries between the sacred and the secular. With this environment in mind, one may imagine a space bursting with energy before, during, and perhaps after the ritual of worship. In this sense, it may be suggested that a viewer's inter/intra-active experience with an object in the civic and liturgical space, at least in some part, may have been aligned since the vitality of these spaces was not entirely different.

This thesis is cognisant that certain aspects of the Kelsey Pendant explored in the following section may not have been present within one and the same particular space, and thus, the hypothetical scenarios presented in this analysis may not touch upon the majority of

[489] Caseau, 2005, 1, 4-5; Schwartz, 2017, 360.

inter/intra-active experiences between a bearer and the late antique ritual space. However, research has shown that, in some instances, several and even most elements of the pendant were indeed part of the illustrative programme of one place of worship.[490]

There are examples (though later) of equestrian saints at church entrances, on the walls of the nave, and, in some instances, near the gates entering the sanctuary of a church.[491] There are few surviving late antique examples of rider depictions in church settings, which is the result of the few examples of church wall decorations overall. However, the prevalence of later examples coupled with the popular lore surrounding the equestrian warrior allows one to surmise that rider illustrations within church settings may have been prominent. In Chapter Three, the wall fresco of St. Sisinnios (located on the western wall of the chapel) in the Monastery of St. Apollo in Bawit, Egypt was utilised as an example of an illustration depicting a rider smiting a female demon within a liturgical context (Figure 66).[492] Here, the image of this rider will be considered with regard to how it may have been experienced by a viewer.[493]

[490] See for example, Clédat, 1904, 73-85; See Grotowski, 2011, 84 who mentions illustrations of holy rider in church context.

[491] Snelders and Jeudy, 2006, 107; The physical space of worship (outwith a domestic setting) was reflective of the community's extant socio-cultural hierarchy where a participant's placement within the church was based upon social status (Muehlberger, 2013, 178-179). Hence, some of the portrayals of angels, riders, and saints only may have been accessible to certain people who had the ability to have a direct visual inter/intra-active experience with the illustrations while others, bereft of the opportunity to explicitly inter/intra-act with the depictions, would have been dependent upon visualisations created through other facets of their experiential imagination (e.g., memory from lore or direct experiences from other contexts). In this light, the thesis argues that the presence or placement of images within a ritual space was not entirely important with regard to the entities's (e.g., angel or rider) functionality and perceived efficacy, which is underscored by the fact that, in the late antique imagination, it was understood that the presence of those of the celestial realm were a part of the terrestrial realm's lived reality in moments of activated worship.

[492] Snelders and Jeudy, 2006, 106.

[493] Grotwoski, 2011, 77.

From the remnants of the fresco, one is still able to ascertain that the rider is nimbed and is facing towards the viewer. In considering later examples of what may be suggested to be renderings of rider saints where the artist utilised the same, formulaic, illustrative design, one can surmise that the composition of St. Sissinios was meant to engage viewers in the monastery's chapel space with his gaze (See Figures 79, 88-89). Further comparing the gaze of St. Sissinos to that of the Knight Saint textile design (ninth-tenth centuries CE), the manuscript illumination of St. Theodore (tenth century CE), as well as the wall fresco of St. Theodore in the Covenant of St. Anthony (eleventh century CE), one can see that the later illustrations of the riders depict a hero saint unnaturally seated upon his steed in order for his torso to frontally face his audience. In each illustration, the rider is in the act of smiting his foe situated beneath the horse's stride, but his attention is focused upon the realm of the viewer. Though the bodily composition of St. Sissinios is rendered less awkwardly, from what remains of the fresco, he too is fixated upon the space of his terrestrial audience.

These illustrations therefore depict the rider's lack of attention towards his enemy within the illustrative scene, which may be due to the fact that his foe has been subdued. However, the rider's visual apathy towards his conquest also may be a means by which to underscore the imbued glory bestowed upon hero saints, which can be gleaned by other aspects of the image. For instance, in Figures 88-89, the diadems are being handed down to St. Theodore from the heavens. Based upon the placement of the image of the rider within a liturgical space, one may surmise that the rider does not need to focus upon the figure beneath his horse since his terrestrial enemy is also the enemy of the deity and those who reside in the celestial realm. It may be understood that an image that is integrally a part of the deity's house is worthy of its place inasmuch as the image functionally works for, and is attributed to, the deity and their purpose.

This suggestion is further underscored when one considers other aspects with which the portrayal of the rider in a church intermingles. In parallel with the rider and the angel of the Kelsey Pendant (their position relative to one another and a consideration of their histories and continuous becoming withing the amulet's gathering), the rider within a liturgical space is understood to be supported by the presence of angels. As discussed in Chapter Three, the image of the angel was an aspect of the illustrative repertoire of religious spaces; and in Late Antiquity, angels were understood to cross the boundaries between the celestial and terrestrial planes and effectively act as bridges between the two interconnected realms.[494] The church (or place where rituals were enacted), as an activated inter/intra-active object in itself, was the habitus of this bridge.[495] Furthermore, the connection between the realms was bolstered during the liturgical service's participatory acts of exhalation insofar as, in the Christian imagination, it was inferred that angels observed and participated in these rituals.[496] Thus, one may imagine that, as residents of heaven, angels were given charge to be present, protect, and join in celebration and glorification of the deity within terrestrial spaces.[497]

Another aspect that may be intertwined with the angelic presence in the Christian liturgical space or edifice is the portrayal of Christ in Majesty. The inclusion of Christ in Majesty within the context of a church's illustrative programme not only acts as a representation of the deity's omnipotence, but also visually underscores the link between the celestial and terrestrial whereby the enthroned deity functions as audience to the terrestrial

[494] Muehlberger, 2013, 178-179.

[495] Steenberge, 2018, 168-169.

[496] Muehlberger, 2013, 178-179.

[497] Muehlberger, 2013, 179-180; See also Chapter Three (section 3.2.1).

performance of their veneration. In considering the deity as audience, one may conceive of the imagery of angels as an extension of the image of the enthroned deity. When the quieted, in situ, depictions of the angels and Christ in Majesty are intertwined with ideologies conveyed through textual resources such as Isaiah 6.1-3 and Revelation 4: 6-8 (which describe the throned scene) and are then juxtaposed with the sonorousness of the liturgical Trisagion that the angels and other participants sing together in praise of the deity, it can be understood that these aspects energise and solidify (within the late antique imagination) the conceptual tangibility of the bridge between the celestial and terrestrial.[498]

The inter/intra-action between the viewer, participant, and the bearer of the Kelsey Pendant with the religious space was partially based upon their recitation of the Trisagion (and other aspects of the ritual), imagining the presence of angels, and imagining a connection to the celestial realm where the deity is enthroned and surrounded by angels who, in the same instance, sing their praise in both realms.[499] One may surmise that in this ritual space the sounds coupled with visual stimuli enliven the viewer's imagination whereby they may see, hear, and understand a coalescence of the celestial realm with the terrestrial. In this sense, the viewer is connected to both realms simultaneously. An inter/intra-action may begin with Christ seated in majesty above them. From the viewer's understanding of oral and aural lore, their minds' eye can see the activated throne scene (as described in biblical text) and their aural imagination (entangled in their experiential reality) can hear the sonorousness of the throne caused by the thunderous sounds of the angel's wings, the angel's voices

[498] Muehlberger, 2013, 180.

[499] See for example, Betancourt, 2021, 170 who states that by the tenth century the priest (silently) recited the Prayer of Entrance requesting that the terrestrial and celestial hosts sing together an unite the two realms.

intermingled with their own voice, as well as the voices of the participants that surround them.[500]

The participants of both realms call out to the deity through performative praise—engaging with the concept of the deity's promise. In this collective experience, like the crowd's inter/intra-active experience with the colossal rider monument in the civic space above, the power of the collective creates an enlivened thread that further connects and intertwines the celestial (and thus the deity) to the terrestrial realm whilst animating the deity's image that at same time sparks the lived memory of the participants. This inter/intra-active experience creates a new layer to the participant's lived memory that metaphysically links and reaffirms the potency of the deity's promise and presence. Even if the images of angels and Christ in Majesty are not able to be seen by everyone, in being surrounded by the cacophonous voices of the other participants and the angels, one can imagine an overwhelming feeling created by their energy and their voices that together fill the space with fervent acclamation.

In considering agential realism, the entanglement of space and time, and the understanding that a terrestrial liturgical ceremony activates the presence of angels and the enthroned deity whilst bridging both realms—it may be suggested that these activated realities enliven other aspects of the pictorial and material programme of the liturgical arena inclusive of the rider and their purpose. Thus, if one were to reevaluate the rider's gaze into the realm of the viewer, it may be posited that the rider of the liturgical space, in their continuous becoming, was cognisant of the religious arena within which they resided, inclusive of presence of the celestial deity, their angels, and the participants of the terrestrial

[500] Mathews, 1971, 123-134; See also, Steenberge, 2018, 155.

space. Thus, the rider's being of a church's physical space further connected their essence with the celestial realm in times of practised ritual when the connection was more liminal. In the context of liturgy, active participation, like in the example of the collective experience with the colossal rider monument of Justinian, can be said to energise the rider's agential consciousness. Within this state, the promise of the deity—encompassed within the seal of the living God (the cross utilised within the context of the liturgical ritual as well as the one situated upon the apex of his lance) coupled with homiletic content—is vitalised. The connection to the celestial realm buttressed the rider's power and confidence in the final outcome of the scenario (and his resolution to look away from the illustrative scene within which he continuously becomes and exists as he smites the malefic foe) enabling him to directly confront the viewer with their gaze. Here, within the rider's inter/intra-action with the viewer, the rider's gaze can be understood to challenge the viewer's beliefs regarding (and forcing them to actively connect with) their faith in the deity's promise and continuous presence.

From the entire pictorial scene of riders in a liturgical setting, one may argue that the malefic creature that the rider was meant to destroy was ever-present in the late antique genre of illustrative design depicting the heroic rider (Figures 66 and 89). Though the image associated with the embodiment of evil varied, it can be said that the visual cues signaling the presence of danger were undoubtedly evident for those who experienced and inter/intra-acted with the rider's entire illustrative scene. As discussed in Chapter Three, the identity of the demon cannot be easily identified unless the demon was explicitly named. The portrayal of a malefic creature in a liturgical setting can be said to underscore the late antique conception of the reality of evil within the terrestrial realm even if the creatures were generally illustrated (unlike the Kelsey Pendant) in a post-subdued state. It may be suggested that the detail of the

creature's demise within the aforementioned illustrations visually represents the deity's promise. Here the deity's follow through is obvious and the message relayed is that evil cannot survive within the deity's space.

This concept is further acknowledged via the rider's gaze coupled with convergence of the celestial realm with the terrestrial through conjoined participation in the ritual of liturgy. Thus, the rider's potential challenge to the viewer is not based upon what is shown in the image within which he resides since he has already fulfilled what the deity has charged him to do. Instead, the rider is challenging both the individual viewer's as well as the collective's understanding of what it means to be faithful. It may be interpreted that the rider's challenge to his audience signaled the ideologies behind the efficacy of conquering evil through the exaltation of the deity. The viewer must consciously believe that the deity's promise is not limited to the confines of the religious setting, but rather reaches civic spaces as well other spaces where the malefic creature can manifest under the guise of the Other. These forces can be amorphous (e.g., bad luck), or may be something unknown yet nonetheless feared. As with any of these manifestations, the late antique belief in the presence of imminent danger was tangible and was sought to be allayed with the use of objects such as amulets.[501]

5.3 The Kelsey Pendant and the Bearer

The following discussion will present hypothetical scenarios imagining potential inter/intra-actions of the amulet within itself and with the bearer along with how the Kelsey Pendant may have been worn or carried by the bearer. Though rooted in a hypothetical outlook, the

[501] See Kalleres, 2015, 161.

thesis will present the forthcoming scenarios from a perspective materialised from the notion of familiarity. This approach is based upon the thesis's understanding that familiarity plays a role in one's perceptions of another object's or space's perceived efficacy insofar as ideologies are formed from direct and indirect participatory inter/intra-active experiences.

The thesis posits that the Kelsey Pendant is an animated microcosm of the civic and religious (a miniaturised version of society) encapsulated in the small space of a portable object. Furthermore, the inter/intra-active experience between bearer and pendant is an entanglement of gatherings that embody the components of the late antique "everyday" and the components of the Kelsey Pendant, both of which are unyieldingly one in the same. In this sense, from the perspective of the bearer, it may be interpreted that, with the pendant in their possession, the bearer carries with them the becoming realities of their civic and religious spaces as well as their inter/intra-active experiences with these spaces. The pendant and bearer act upon and influence each other as they continuously become; and the amulet must be in a continuous state of becoming as an autonomous object in order to successfully inter/intra-act with its bearer or other objects. The amulet's ability to adjust and work to fulfill its intended purpose is paramount to its propensity to fulfill the bearer's expectations.

The demon of the amulet can be interpreted to be a representation of a source of trouble or impending harm that those of Late Antiquity would seek to protect themselves against. Since the demon of the amulet stands directly gazing into the realm of the bearer (defiantly announcing its presence and the danger it poses), it may be understood that the imminent threat posed by the demon is ever-present even though the rider is in the process of terminating it. Inasmuch as the illustration indicates a process rather than a completed action, the demon persists. Hence the amulet is perpetually working against the maleficence of the

demon, continuously becoming in order to fulfill the intention behind its assemblage, and continuously becoming to fulfill the intention behind the intricate nuances of its gathering and its subsequent being. With this, the elements of the pendant can be considered to be at the ready whereby they inter/intra-act to conquer the demon—ensuring a cyclicality (albeit somewhat dissimilar at any given moment of time) of action and reactions. The manner in which the amulet autonomously inter/intra-acts is ever changing—consistently ensuring that the demon's potential machinations are held within the confines of the pendant.

5.3.1 The Pendant

Though undetectable to the human eye, the pendant can be understood to be in a constant state of movement where, though physically present within the assemblage, each element within the gathering is either strongly apparent, is faintly present, or is completely hidden at any given moment based upon the amulet's concept of need. Each attribute of the amulet is cognisant; and in the case of their assemblage as being of the Kelsey Pendant, they are aware of the demon's presence. Here the demon embodies various atrocities such as illness, war, conquest, famine, death, and immorality. Though part of an assemblage, the elements gather from within to eliminate the malefic creature. If one were able to hear and see the innerworkings of the pendant, it may be argued that the pendant can be interpreted as being chaotically loud and rumbling with movement where each element pulsates—being either in flux, preparing to move, or coming to a position of stillness (not stasis).

The state of movement of the elements of the pendant cannot be anticipated at any given moment, and this potential of surprise is a necessary part of the pendant's functional role as an amulet with an intention to protect. For example, in one instance, the angels's voices chanting the words of the Trisagion coupled with the thunderous sounds emitted from

their bodies can be understood to act as a background to the active scene of the rider. It may be understood that the sounds encompassed within the image of Christ in Majesty coupled with the text of the Trisagion on the reverse side of the amulet are able to saturate the atmosphere of the obverse side to the point where the "sides" are indecipherable. The jarring sounds, meant to distract the demon, do not interrupt the focus of the rider. The rider, with his spear in hand steadily aiming at the demon (sure his blade will pierce the beast's flesh and ultimately quell its very existence—administering a coup de grâce to the suffering of those who endured the consequences of the demon's pernicious forces), calls forth the forces manifest through his histories as a king, warrior, and hero saint to finish the task at hand. He is divinely inspired, looking towards the angel who ensures the rider of his inspirited position whereby the deity (illustrated in majesty) provides their support whilst fulfilling their promise of protection as inscribed and illustrated in the Psalm of the amulet as well as the seal of the living God (the cross), respectively.

In another instance, perhaps even at the same moment as the rider's inter/intra-action with the angel, the power of celestial beings and angelic language embodied in the mystifying *charaktêres* act to bind the demon of the amulet. These symbols, with their histories as animate beings called upon in spells to bind, give favour, etcetera in magical handbooks and other sources coupled with their being part of the realm of angels—embody supernatural potential, the power of divine beings, and the voice of unceasing song—are also commanded by the deity, and can thus be called upon to protect, maim, destroy, and tame at the deity's will. In this scenario, one can imagine that the *charaktêres* work within the context of the gathering stunning the demon and rendering it immobile. Though the demon is visually rendered as being in motion, the potential held within the gathering of the amulet has the ability to overpower the beast from within, and, it may be suggested, provides the rider with a

greater opportunity to smite the demon if Time that resides between the realms allows. This point is pertinent insofar as one must remain cognisant that the pendant represents (and exists within and, at times, between) two realms that may not neatly overlap chronologically; and even though, within this particular scenario, the threat is firmly rooted in the terrestrial realm, entities from the celestial realm (the deity, their surrounds, angels, and the Evangelists in hybrid form) have been called upon to extinguish the pestilence and other malicious forces of the demon. In this light, it may be suggested that Time within the context of the pendant is abstracted, which further underscores the amulet's potential to continuously become and exist in both realms utilising both celestial and terrestrial forces as a means to fulfill its intended purpose.

5.3.2 The Bearer

Through the above examples, one may glean that the Kelsey Pendant has the propensity to inter/intra-act from multiple perspectives. This ability underscores the pendant's potential to act and react as deemed necessary in order to protect the bearer. It can be understood, that in choosing to carry the amulet, the bearer of the pendant ascribed to the belief that the pendant embodied a certain level of efficacy that would consistently work for their benefit and allay their fears. With this in mind, the bearer conceptually could not approach an inter/intra-active experience with the pendant fostering the perception that the pendant is in a state of stasis. If this were the case, the pendant would not be able fulfill the bearer's expectations. Though the bearer may be unaware, it also must be understood that their inter/intra-actions with the pendant simultaneously become, but do not necessarily correspond, with the pendant's own individual becoming. In this sense, the pendant, in an inter/intra-action with the bearer, is undergoing multiple inter/intra-actions and these experiences have the potential (though not definitively) to intersect with one another at any given time.

Portable objects such as an amulet may come to be in the possession of multiple bearers and each bearer carries with them their own ideologies, memories of lived experiences (encapsulated in perceptions of time and space), notions of lore, as well as individualised realisations of various inter/intra-actions.[502] The pendant also comes to every inter/intra-action with their own histories that continuously become within its own gathering. With this, the thesis remains cognisant that it is not possible to provide a scenario that encapsulates, and is representative of, all the potential differentials of the objects's inter/intra-actions (bearer and pendant) and levels of sentience that they may have within themselves and with each other.

The thesis posits that both objects of an inter/intra-active experience approach the encounter independently. In carrying the Kelsey Pendant, it may be suggested that the bearer comes to their inter/intra-action with the pendant from two interrelated perspectives—their reason for carrying the pendant coupled with their perceptions of the pendant's potential. The pendant—entering the inter/intra-action with the activated elements of its gathering complicating, working with, for, and against each other—opens itself (wholly or in part) to a discourse with the bearer.

The bearer's "everyday" lived space outwith the confines of the church was permeated by demons that lie in wait to infest and corrupt the senses in order to plant their imprint upon the minds of those who are not guarded.[503] Thus, for the bearer, manifestations

[502] Smith, 1992, 25-28 with regard to how human conceptualizations and the human body bring meaning to, and enliven, space and place through experiences and memory.

[503] See Chrysostom, John. *Catecheses ad illuminandos. Baptismal Instructions.* (ed. by Johannes Quasten and Burghardt S.J., Walter J. transl. by Paul W. Harkins, 1963, 31-32, 39-42,92). Chyrsostom provides examples of how and when the devil attempts to ensnare the minds of Christians (e.g., in hippodromes and theatres, outside of Church, and with drugs and alcohol); Chrysostom, John. *Homiliae in Matthaeum. Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew*. 11.9 (ed. by Philip Schaff, 1888, 173-174). Here, Chrysostom describes the corruptive thoughts and feelings the devil causes outside of church (place), its teachings, and prayer; Kalleres, 2015, 56-61. Kalleres

of the demonic were consistently endeavouring to infect their lives. Since the demon of the Kelsey Pendant is unnamed, one may glean that its presence upon the amulet allows for a broader, subjectively determined, designation of what it represents as well as its functionality in the bearer's life experience.

In looking at the Kelsey Pendant, and returning to the rider as an example, per the bearer's perspective, the rider of the pendant is in direct conflict with the creature. Though anonymous, the rider of the pendant is not only illustratively portrayed as a conqueror, but through lore and the bearer's other inter/intra-active experiences with representations of the rider in their "everyday" sphere, the rider can be the embodiment of a military hero, an emperor, a divinely inspired king, a holy man, or an ancient hero. At any given moment, based upon the bearer of the pendant as well as the origin of their concerns or fears, the rider is one or all of these personae. The bearer's conception of the rider was likely based upon the intensity of their lived memory within their civic and religious spaces, buttressed by the fact that the part of the late antique worldview emphasised the idea that the socio-cultural realm was occupied by dangerous or demonic forces.

The aspects of the pendant that reside within the late antique socio-cultural sphere underscore the connection between the amulet and the facets of the society with which it participated. Thus, the rider's rendering within the assemblage of the pendant likely connects the bearer to a memory of an inter/intra-active experience with another rider outwith the context of the pendant such as a monument or wall painting. However, the inter/intra-active experience with the pendant is no doubt amplified on some level since the bearer is able the

is specifically referencing Christians, but this thesis posits that this reference is narrow and does not aptly reflect the composition of the late antique populace.

hold the pendant. Here, it can be said that the perceived outcomes, energy, and future expectations around these objects's past direct and indirect inter/intra-active experiences would translate into the bearer's present inter/intra-action with the rider of the pendant. In this sense, the rider of the pendant (with the power to conquer any foe) embodies the heft of a colossal monument, the activated energy of a collective's inter/intra-action with a monument, as well as the challenging gaze of a wall fresco within a ritual space. The bearer's expectations of the rider within the civic and religious spheres of their lives (fueled by lived memory, lore, and individual experiences) would be placed upon the rider of the pendant; this attribution would signify how the pendant would, in turn, react to the bearer in their inter/intra-active experience as well as the pendant's agential decisions with regard to how other elements of the pendant would, at any given point, involve themselves in the inter/intra-action between the bearer and themselves.

Though it is not possible to ascertain which persona a bearer may have associated with the rider of the amulet, the pertinent foundational trait of each persona is that of protection through faith, conquest, grace, and divine favour. With gift of the deity's favour in mind, for the bearer, the presence of the angel of the pendant (like in a ritual setting) acts as a bridge between the celestial and terrestrial realms. Here, from the perspective of the bearer, in their inter/intra-action with the pendant, the bearer connects with the lived memory of their experiences in a terrestrial liturgical setting where they heard and sang the Trisagion in unison with the other participants of liturgy as well as the angels of the celestial realm in exaltation to the deity. This connection transports and also transfers the sounds of the liturgical space into the space of the amulet whereby the pendant becomes a liturgical soundscape that metaphysically trembled with song in praise of the deity.

5.3.3 Wearing the Pendant

From the pierced hole coupled with the inscription of the reverse side of the pendant (that calls upon the seal of the living God to guard the bearer of the amulet), it may be interpreted that the pendant was intended to be worn or carried. Though there is no evidence that explicitly details how the Kelsey Pendant was borne, there are ample examples from Antiquity and early Late Antiquity from which the thesis is able to posit how the amulet may have been worn—around the neck underneath the bearer's clothing. Archaeological evidence, texts, and artistic renderings (paintings and sculptures) attest that amulets were worn on the different parts of the body (e.g., around the neck, around fingers or legs, and on the torso), affixed to (or placed within) garments or accessories such as pockets, hats, or headbands, as well as above or underneath clothing.[504]

Though amulets were created in various styles, shapes, and sizes, circular amulets have a history in ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean material culture (e.g., repurposed coins and *bullae*).[505] Furthermore, depictions of circular medallions or amulets on cords in Antiquity as well as Late Antiquity (see for example Figures 80-81 and Figure 82) are pertinent to this thesis inasmuch as they speak to the potential of the bearer of the Kelsey Pendant wearing the amulet in some fashion.[506] An example that aligns with the chronology

[504] Pliny, the Elder. *Natural History*, 24-32 (transl. W.H.S. Jones, 1956, 1963) contains several entries that describe objects (e.g., animal, plant, and stone) that can be worn as amulets to cure ailments. For example, 28:121 states that when the hide taken from the left side of a hippopotamus's forehead is attached to a person's groin as an amulet, it quells the libido, 84-87; Cadbury, 2015, 201-202; Faraone, 2018, 29, 38, 44.

[505] Regarding the use of coins as amulets see Chrysostom, John. 'Catecheses II ad illuminandos', *PG* 49 (ed. by J.P. Migne, 1859, 239-240) here Chrysostom admonishes those who use charms or spells and attach the bronze coins of Alexander of Macedonia to their head or feet (worn as amulets) when they should acknowledge how much the cross and Christ's death has accomplished; Faraone, 2018, 40,43; See also Fulghum, 2001.

[506] For a discussion regarding circular amulets see Faraone, 2018, 40,43; See also Fulghum, 2001 for a discussion of coins as amulets. The thesis remains cognisant that the placement of a circular medallion upon a cord does not necessitate its use as an amulet, however, the pictorial renderings of medallions and other circular objects worn on the body is pertinent to this study as they reinforce the thesis's argument that the Kesley Pendant was carried on the bearer's person.

of the pendant is Figure 80, a 6th-7th century wall painting depicting three orans wearing cords with circular medallions around their necks. The medallions are situated above the orans's clothing and the V-shaped opening of their white cloaks against the neutral color of their garments emphasises the presence of the necklaces which are illustrated as black line drawings with suspended gold circular medallions (Figure 81).[507] Based upon the placement of amulets on the body, the difference between an object's use as bodily ornamentation or an amulet may be difficult to determine; however, evidence from burial contexts do offer some clues. For example, pierced coins used as amulets were at times inscribed with petitions while other coins tied upon a cord together with traditional amuletic objects such as amber beads, engraved phalluses, and bronze bells were found in infant burial sites.[508]

Visual evidence that demonstrates the use of amulets on the body includes sculptures and paintings of young boys and infants wearing crossbody amulets for protection as well as portrayals of women wearing amulets on their upper thigh and around their necks (Figures 82-86).[509] Figure 82 is a sculpture of a young boy wearing a string of variously shaped (inclusive of circles) protective amulets above his clothing as well as a thick bracelet upon his wrist that denotes some ornamentation (perhaps beads); and Figure 83 is a fragment of an ancient Greek *lekythos* that includes a nude male infant wearing a similar amuletic cord across his chest as well as a string amulet bracelet around his wrist within the pictorial scene.[510] The amuletic cords and bracelets in both illustrations underscore a tradition of protecting male children from harm (e.g., illness) during infancy; and, as the infants became

[507] The thesis is cognisant that these medallions may or may not have been utilised as amulets. They are discussed to underscore that circular medallions were worn as pendants on necklaces.

[508] Faraone, 2018, 44.

[509] Figure 86 depicts a woman wearing a necklace with a gorgon head medallion, see fn. 391 regarding use of gorgon head as protection.

[510] Faraone, 2018, 28.

young boys, the amulet cords were likely used as a visual cue denoting the child's survival and successful transition into boyhood due to the protection they received.[511] Amulets were also worn on around the upper leg (thigh) as depicted in an illustration of an *hetairai* upon a Greek *lekythos* in Figure 84.[512] In looking at a detail of the image (Figure 85), one can see that the amulet worn by the *hetairai* is reminiscent of the club-shaped ornament upon the amulet cords worn by the young boy and the infant in Figures 82 and 83, which has been suggested to represent the club of Heracles functioning as a weapon against demons or illnesses.[513]

In some instances, the location in which an amulet was placed on the body was dependent upon its intended function. One such example is the remanent of a Hellenistic figurine (Figure 87) that portrays a nude, pregnant female figure with an amulet cord (demarcated by an engraved line) wrapped around her torso situated directly above her enlarged abdomen and beneath her breasts, which speaks to the amulet's purpose to protect women or ease the process of giving birth.[514] Some evidence shows that amulets intended for the same function were placed on different parts of the body depending on the sex of the bearer. For example, a medicinal recipe written in Latin calls for a specific text to be written upon papyrus and attached to the body of the sufferer as a means to stop bleeding.[515] In addition to providing directives on what should be written upon the papyrus, the recipe

[511] Faraone, 2018, 32-35. For a discussion regarding the potential meaning regarding the shapes of the ornaments used within the amulet cords see pgs. 54-77.

[512] Faraone, 2018, 36-38.

[513] Farone, 2018, 61-62.

[514] Lee, 2015, 213.

[515] Önnerfors, 2016, 207, fn.106 reads: '(*Ad profluvium sanguinis scribis in charta et legas de tela) si vir est, in collo, si mulier, in umbilico, sicut terra(mf) non tangat, ita sanguen bibe tantale, tantale bibe sanguen, bibe tantale.'*; Faraone, 2018, 38.

further states that the text should be tied to the neck of a male and placed in the navel of a female.[516] Though most artistic representations of amulets are illustrated on women and children, this example provides insight that both men and women utilised amulets.

The caveat to interpreting visual evidence of how amulets were worn resides in the fact that many amulets perhaps were not openly worn above garments. Some amulets such as the thigh amulet of the above mentioned *hetairai* would have been covered when wearing garments while others may have been tucked away in accessories. Thus, one cannot verifiably measure how people who utilised amulets indeed wore them. However, from the evidence presented in this discussion, it may be suggested that one can reliably interpret that the Kelsey Pendant was worn. Recalling the discussion in Chapter Four regarding the ambiguity of the Attic Greek article coupled with evidence that while men, women, and children utilised amulets, men likely wore amulets hidden from view (partially explaining the lacuna in surviving visual evidence).[517] Since the Kelsey Pendant has been argued to encompass protections from a myriad of afflictions or fears as well as underscore the promise of victory (made by the deity) over malefic forces, the thesis puts forth that a male or female (young adult or older) may have worn the Kelsey Pendant beneath their clothing.[518] Due to the pendant's weight, the pendant was not likely worn by an infant or younger child. It may be suggested that the pendant was worn beneath the bearer's garments due to the extant debates about Christians wearing amulets.[519] However, the thesis more strongly puts forth that the pendant was worn beneath clothing as a means for the amulet to function as an object

[516] Önnerfors, 2016, 207, fn. 106; Faraone, 2018, 38.

[517] See Chapter Four section 4.1.1.4 pp.154-155; Faraone, 2018, 53.

[518] Betz, 1986, *PGM VII* 919-924, 142 is a victory charm that is to be placed in a sandal and *PGM XXXVI* 36-68, 269 is a charm to restrain anger and gain favor that is to be worn under a garment; Faraone, 2018, 53.

[519] See for example Augustine, XX1: 6 (transl. by H. Bettenson, 2003, 366) argument against magic inclusive of use of spells and ceremonies (tokens of demons); See also nn.112, pp. 56 and 505, pp. 240.

of personal devotion—a tactile, olfactory, and visual snapshot of some of the bearer's beliefs culled from experiences and living memory. At first, when placed beneath the clothing, the coolness of the bronze could be felt against the skin acting against the body temperature of the bearer. The pendant's heft would make itself known as the amulet hung from its suspension and gently pulled against the back of the bearer's neck. As moments passed, the bronze would warm against the skin of the bearer, and though the bearer would acclimate to the weight of the pendant such that it may have become hardly noticeable, the metallic pungency of the amulet would increase as it inter/intra-acted with the bearer's physical chemistry. The pendant and the bearer at this point would become entangled as the objects sensorially inter/intra-acted whereby the pendant would also be aware of the bearer—their warmth, their scent, as well as the feel (dryness or moistness) of their skin.

5.3.4 An Inter/Intra-Active Experience between Objects

Within the inter/intra-action of the pendant and the bearer, the objects are not only tactilely intertwined, but are also aurally enmeshed as it may be conceived that the soundscape of the ritual space and its ornamental aspects reside within, and emanate from, each object (pendant and bearer) and is present in the liminal space between the objects as they inter/intra-act with each other. On one hand, it may be conceived that the pendant theoretically absorbs the soundscape of the liturgical space enlivened by the bearer's mind's eye and conjoins it with the sounds that are becoming within itself realised by the *charaktêres* (the language of the angels), the Trisagion, as well as the atmospheric sounds emanating from the throne scene of the pendant. This process of absorption for the pendant amplifies the soundscape of the pendant and further activates the inter/intra-action between the two objects. On the other hand, the bearer absorbs the heightened protective essences created by the pendant's agential inter/intra-actions that are focused upon subduing the malefic presence of the pendant. From

this, it may be understood that in an inter/intra-action between the two objects both objects give to and take from the other but may not necessarily receive the same response from one another at any given moment.

As the bearer accesses their lived experiences in liturgy, in their inter/intra-action with the amulet, the Psalm of the obverse side of the pendant may come to focus. For the bearer (as well as the pendant), the promise of the deity resides within these verses, which, in part, supports the bearer's perceptions of the amulet as well as their perceptions of the deity's promise within a liturgical space outwith the context of the pendant. Though it may be understood that the pendant is also a liturgical space within which the bearer is participating as they inter/intra-act with the amulet, the bearer's inter/intra-active experience with both spaces can be understood to manifest differently. In the liturgical space of the church, the bearer is physically, psychologically, and socially immersed in ritual, whereas with the pendant, the inter/intra-active ritual is intimately private.

However, these experiences have the propensity to overlap at any given moment. For example, in an inter/intra-active experience between the bearer and a liturgical or civic space where the bearer performs the sign of the cross (whilst donning the pendant), the bearer may call upon and activate the cross of the pendant, which as the seal of the living God, works to protect the bearer from harm. Thus, the bearer, through their physical actions, sparks a inter/intra-active reaction that links the reality of the bearer with that of the pendant.[520] The physical action of the bearer can be understood to act with the pendant in its endeavour to protect. The actions of the bearer whilst in possession of the amulet entangle the objects with

[520] See Hamilakis, 2013, 112-116. Hamilakis discusses that senses are also kinaesthetic, synaesthetic, and involve memories and ideas in an equitable manner.

each other since the bearer's and the pendant's "selves" can be understood to extend into and conjoin with each other whereby one cannot be separated from the other.[521] The bearer either actively experiences or draws from memory the immersiveness felt in the "everyday" ritual setting while at the same time connecting with the pendant's own liturgical performance within its gathering. The bearer transfers their experiences to the pendant and in this transference, the pendant assimilates the bearer's experiences into their autonomous processes of becoming, and from these inter/intra-actions, the bearer becomes a temporarily integrated participant in the pendant's liturgical space, which now autonomously acts to eliminate malefic forces whilst inter/intra-actively protecting the bearer.

An inter/intra-active experience in a liturgical or civic space versus the space of the amulet does not indicate a differential in the perceived efficacy of either location. Instead, in an inter/intra-action with the pendant (condensed version of society), the bearer may quickly access several lived memories based upon which aspect of the pendant with which they are inter/intra-acting. Thus, in thinking about the deity's promise, the bearer may refocus upon the rider of the pendant whose presence (as discussed in Chapter Three) is bolstered by the One God phrase. Here, the bearer is once again pulled in the direction of the deity's promise, but in this instance, the bearer is swept up by the dynamism of the One God phrase and is reminded that only the deity has the power to conquer and to grant conquest. The bearer, enveloped in the movement of the pendant, is returned to the rider and the angel. The angel, to the bearer, may now be a manifestation of a messenger under the deity's charge helping to fulfill their promise to subdue the demon (a visual manifestation of the bearer's fears) while the cyclically repetitive Psalm holds the bearer accountable in their processes of faith.

[521] Malafouris, 2008, 1997; Hamilakis, 2013, 116-117; Sanzo, 2024, 80.

The bearer, in their inter/intra-action, has the potential to become part of the illustrative scene of the pendant and, in this, their desire to smite the demon further animates the continuous becoming within in the pendant whilst the bearer is being energised by the pendant's perceived role and its collective power to smite the demon. It may be suggested the vitality within the pendant can be overwhelming for the bearer. The astounding soundscape of the reverse side created by the throne scene of the amulet coupled with the veiled mystique and the voices of angels housed in the *charaktêres* when juxtaposed with the intense movement of the obverse side has the potential to intimidate the bearer. However, the bearer's commitment to eradicate the demon from their lives coupled with their faith in the deity's promise and the direct request to the seal of the living God to protect the bearer maintains the bearer's assurance in the potential efficacy and purpose of their inter/intra-action with the pendant.

5.4 The Inter/Intra-actions of Objects in Late Antique Society: A New Pathway of Research

The crux of an analysis rooted in the material religion of a time period other than the one in which we exist is through the realisation and investigative practise of treating objects as lived participants of the society in question. Objects are not solely reflective of society, rather they actively engage, react, and are a microcosm of their lived society. Moreover, objects directly and indirectly inter/intra-act with other participants. Through a case study of one object, the thesis has provided an example of how material religion enables one to better understand how those in the past reconciled with and parsed meanings from their lived experiences. The thesis also has shown that objects have the propensity to represent various facets of life, and like the society in which they were created, are multifaceted in themselves. As a means to obtain a stronger foothold in our understandings of how material culture inter/intra-acted in the past, the current standard of research should incorporate studies that endeavour to provide

holistic purviews. There are many objects that can benefit from the methodological approach utilised by this thesis. In order to exemplify future research potential, the study will succinctly present two late antique examples focused on the material religion of pilgrimage—an ampulla and a shrine-shaped reliquary—as a means to underscore the queries and perspectives that should be addressed within a socially anchored holistic analysis of objects.

Pilgrimage is not a category in itself, but instead, it is an account of a religious experience that occurred in the past, serves to explain or frame the past, or serves to shape the future.[522] It has been suggested that pilgrimage is the construction of the relation between a person and a place through mobility.[523] Mobility may be the act of travel or the mental process of travel (where the act is either imagined or vicariously completed).[524] Both processes of mobility have a narrative quality that give meaning to the journey, to the person making the journey, and the place to which the journey is made.[525] Narrative (written, inscribed, or oral) is the subjective counterpoint to travel and is the key component in determining whether a person's journey to a place may be understood as pilgrimage.[526] Pilgrimage-writing as well as reading pilgrimage accounts can be understood to serve as off-site rituals that establish the 'sanctity of the holy site,' which may speak to the concepts of the formation of memory, identity, and the importance of site-specific materials and souvenirs.[527]

[522] Most pertinent is Elsner, 2017, 270; Vikan, 2010.

[523] Elsner, 2017, 269.

[524] Elsner, 2017, 269.

[525] Elsner, 2017, 269.

[526] Elsner, 2017, 269.

[527] Elsner, 2000, 181.

Arguably, pilgrimage was intertwined with the religion of relics which involved holy places, holy people, and theological ideologies.[528] The religion of relics was centred upon the concept that certain objects contained and conveyed spiritual power.[529] And the material culture of pilgrimage (inclusive of eulogia) represented the act of pilgrimage, the beliefs surrounding and potential attributed to relics, the spaces associated with the journey, as well as the potential associated with specific sites or people. For pilgrims, matter became holy thorough contact or proximity to other holy matter (whole or in part), thus the material culture of pilgrimage embodied holiness, and the act of pilgrimage was an endeavour to obtain, and be blessed with, this potential.[530] Thus, with the understanding that pilgrimage objects may have been regarded to be as powerful as the revered person or place associated with the object, an analysis of the material religion of pilgrimage should include potential inquiries that not only address the histories, writings, and lore surrounding the sites or persons associated with these sacred spaces, but also the potential experiential inter/intra-actions between the object and a bearer (inclusive of sensory archaeology), one who does not carry but encounters the object, as well as how the object would continuously become as an autonomous entity.[531]

For example, based upon the thesis's conventions of research, an analysis of a sixth to seventh-century lead pilgrimage ampullae, 'Pilgrim's Ampulla with (Symbolic) Crucifixion and Marys at the Tomb' would include a translation of text, an analysis of imagery (inclusive of their histories, lore, textual references, and socio-cultural associations in lived context), an

[528] Krueger, 2010, 5.

[529] Krueger, 2010, 5.

[530] Krueger, 2010, 5.

[531] Bollók, 2018, 765.

investigation of the autonomous inter/intra-active agential materiality of the object, and the potential inter/intra-active experiences between the ampulla and its bearer (Figure 90). An analysis of this object would consider the ampulla as a token of pilgrimage that was intended to transport the bearer to the pilgrimage site or associate them with a specific holy man or saint, both of which were imbued with a potential (e.g., good health and protection) that was of interest to, or thought to be necessary for, the bearer.[532] That said, the analysis must also consider how the ampulla was understood to be efficacious, how the ampulla autonomously maintained its potency in order to meet its own needs as well as the needs and expectations of its bearers, and how those in Late Antiquity associated the imagery and text of the object with their everyday lives.

Objects of pilgrimage are understood to be specific to particular places or shrines, therefore, it can be understood that some aspects of their illustrative programme may not integrate into the everyday sphere of the bearer. For example, the depiction of the crucified thieves flanking a cross on the obverses side of the Pilgrim's Ampulla may be specific to Golgotha.[533] However, the depiction of the bust of a bearded Christ, flanked by a star and the moon, may not only be associated with the crucifixion scene at Golgotha as well as the text of the reverse side of the ampulla that states '"The Lord is Risen,"' but this type of rendered Christ likely existed in the bearer's various lived social contexts (e.g., within the illustrative programmes of monasteries, coinage, and catacombs, Figures 16-17 and Figure 91) and thus, actively linked these spaces with the site at Golgotha.[534] In this sense, within the context of autonomous and experiential inter/intra-actions, the imagery and text of the ampulla can be

[532] Vikan, 1995, 384-385; Thunø, 2018, 162.

[533] Ross, 1962, 71.

[534] Ross, 1962, 71.

considered to collapse space and alter time whereby the object is, in the same instance, continuously becoming based upon past histories of the *locus sanctus*, the current perceived potential of the site, as well as the potential of these images within the bearer's contemporary societal contexts. An analysis of this particular object would call for an understanding of various aspects, for example, funerary customs and contexts, pilgrimage to catacombs, and iconography of coinage.[535]

Pilgrimage objects embodied sacred powers meant to protect and heal their bearers.[536] It has been suggested that, in some instances, pilgrimage eulogia intermixed imagery of the primary *locus sanctus* with unrelated imagery of other holy sites that were familiar and considered efficacious to the then consumers of these objects.[537] Furthermore, the imagery of pilgrimage ampullae was also found on some amulets, which likely enhanced the images's protective qualities on both types of objects.[538] For the ampulla, which was understood to contain oil from the *locus sanctus*, the potential of the oil, the assemblage of imagery associated with the *locus sanctus*, and the imagery of other sites complicated the autonomous inter/intra-actions of the ampulla inasmuch as the all the elements's multivalent attributes are conjoined and work with, for, and against each other within its gathering.

In tandem with the ampulla as an autonomous object, the ampulla's perceived efficaciousness, is also based on the bearer's multivalent attributes such as exposure to the images through travel and lived experiences, their exposure to histories and lore, and their

[535] During the sixth and seventh centuries catacombs became decorated places of veneration (Bisconti, 2019, 218). See also Osborne, 1985, 198.

[536] Vikan, 1995, 384-385.

[537] Vikan, 1995, 379-380.

[538] Vikan, 1995, 379-380.

levels of knowledge surrounding its textual associations.[539] For example, it can be said that not all pilgrims may have been able to decipher (due to language barriers or illiteracy) the text upon an object, however, the imagery of the object may have been sufficient enough to retain the animation of the bearer's memory and their desire to associate themselves with a holy place.[540] One must remain cognisant, however, that the lack of personal exposure to an image does not completely influence its overall recognisability and thus its potential to function according to the bearer's needs, since, enveloped within the identity of an image (irrespective of its rendered precision) are oral histories, direct and indirect memories, as well as the embodied actions of pilgrims who reenacted the biblical stories at the holy sites to receive the site's blessings.[541]

An analysis of a fifth-to sixth-century limestone reliquary in the form of a shrine or tomb would follow similar lines of inquiry as the ampulla, but also examine the object's architectural shape and size (portability) as well as consider queries such as what architectural entity (if any) influenced the creation of the reliquary, why and how the object was deemed efficacious, the possible significance of the limestone material, funerary practises, and the object's materiality (Figures 92-93).[542] Furthermore, an analysis should include an inquiry based upon what the reliquary represents (e.g., Christ's tomb), the type of relic that would be housed in this container, the level of potency the object (the conjoined relic and reliquary) would be perceived to embody (e.g., if the reliquary were indeed a

[539] Influence of *locus sancta* images spread throughout different regions of the Christianised world (Weitzman, 1974, 48).

[540] Klein, 2010, 57.

[541] Vikan, 1995, 385-386.

[542] https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/41864. The reliquary may represent the tomb of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. See Ćurčić and Hadjitryphonos, 2010, 248; Lazaridou, 2011,131; Princeton University Art Museum, 2004, 138.

representation of Christ's tomb, would the object embody or be equated to the potential of Christ?), and, if the relic was a body part, the (then contemporary) concepts and attitudes towards the fragmentation of bodies.[543]

Relics were crucial part in the creation of a sacred space.[544] This shrine-shaped reliquary has a round, hollowed centre with a columnar exterior design meant to house a relic or substance.[545] Each side of the object is comprised of different ornamental motifs and the top of the reliquary has a raised outer edge which signifies that it, at one point, had a lid to secure its contents.[546] It has been suggested that aesthetic representations of Byzantine architecture were primarily of spiritual value, denying the relevance of scale.[547] Thus, irrespective of its size, one may concur that the reliquary's power relied heavily on the potential of its contents coupled with its association with a particular space or ritual.

A reliquary's form, imagery, and text played a part in how a relic was understood.[548] The engraved aspects of the reliquary such as its crosses, vegetal motifs, column and façade designs provide clues for how one can compare the reliquary to other aspects of material religion and their societies. In considering this reliquary, it may be posited that, unlike the ampulla, this object was not likely carried by a bearer on a continuous basis, which influences (but does not preclude) an inter/intra-action between objects (a person and the reliquary).

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[543] Krueger, 2010, 7-8; Angenendt, 2010, 22-23.

[544] Robinson, 2010, 115.

[545] Ćurčić, 2010, 248.

[546] Ćurčić, 2010, 248; Lazaridou, 2011, 131 further contextualises the reliquary. An analysis should also provide a detailed suggestion regarding the probable shape of the missing lid.

[547] Ćurčić, 2010, 13-14.

[548] Boomer, 2021, 146.

Since the reliquary has a compartment for a relic or substance, one may infer that the reliquary came into contact with people, however, an analysis of the object would require the researcher to posit where and how often a person would encounter the reliquary and how inter/intra-actions between objects would occur.

With the thesis's case study in mind, the concept that amulets, ampullae, and other pilgrimage objects shared illustrative qualities infers that they referenced a common idiom of imagery and text reflective of the society in which they actively participated. Per the thesis's analysis, amulets have been shown to be liminal objects that represented and participated in the naturally intertwined civic and religious arenas of late antique societies at large. It may be suggested that this suggestion applies to numerous objects such as the aforementioned pilgrimage objects. Moreover, the theoretical underpinnings and queries surrounding the analysis of the Kelsey Pendant can produce a fruitful examination of various objects, which releases these objects from categorisations and engages them in holistic investigations. Thus, the new pathway of investigation that the thesis has put forth has the propensity to further unveil relationships between objects, spaces, and people that have yet to be analysed.

Chapter Six. Conclusion

The Kelsey Pendant is an amulet housed within the collections of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. It is an object bereft of a definitive find context, and due to this lacuna, it has been subject to superficial analyses focused on its outward textual or illustrative aspects. Scholarship has relegated amulets like the Kelsey Pendant to the realm of magic. Classical studies, history, textual, philological and religious studies, as well as material agency have all engaged with ancient magic and religion in various and productive ways but have also left the amulets of research in a state of categorised stasis. The thesis has endeavoured to create a pathway that removes amulets from their categorisations and reintroduce them into their original realm of lived society and active participation where they belong. Through focusing on one case study coupled with the theoretical underpinnings of the thesis, the study analysed the Kelsey Pendant as a participant in its late antique society and provided multiple insights into how the amulet may have been experienced by those who inter/intra-acted with it. In doing so, this thesis has also discussed the workings of late antique society in a number of settings, civic and liturgical. This is not to say that all studies must be focused on one object, but as the thesis has argued, weaker comparisons comprised of a small number of objects prove beneficial and necessary inasmuch these objects can be fruitfully analysed from multiple perspectives and provide a deeper level of contextualisation of the object's role as a participant in its society.

Through the concepts surrounding New Materialism, the thesis has examined the Kelsey Pendant and its bearer equitably whilst retaining their individualism. By way of its focus on two individual ontologies, the thesis has argued that both objects (bearer and amulet) are continuously becoming both outside and within relational experiences with other

objects. Matter is a performative, agential dynamic process of becoming, and has the ability to intimately connect, materialise, and form anew whilst retaining its individual potential, memories, and histories. Furthermore, one must remain cognisant that amulets are not only what they outwardly represent, but rather, they are layered, multifaceted participants in an everchanging society, and with this, an examination must be inclusive of how they functioned in society. Though the functionality of the amulet is dependent on the ideologies behind what an object represents, how an amulet functioned is couched in its contemporary autonomous and experiential inter/intra-actions; and this is how the thesis has presented the Kelsey Pendant. The amulet is comprised of its conjoined elements and histories which are in themselves comprised of their own individual elements and histories. Thus, the amulet is (as are other objects) multivalent and complex. The attributes of the pendant influence its potential while allowing the object, within its gathering, to create new histories as it continues to become and participate in society.

The thesis has considered the Kelsey Pendant's gathered attributes and has parsed these elements as a means to analyse the pendant's potential agency through the various lenses from which others may have approached it. In the discussion of each attribute, the amulet remained central to the investigation in order to remain cognisant of the continuous inter/intra-actions within the object's gathering that at any moment may have altered, enhanced, quieted, or eschewed one another. Hence, the potential of each attribute within the assemblage of the pendant is not clear cut, but rather is complicated by other elements, the object's environment, as well as its inter/intra-actions with other objects.

Amulets are continuously working within themselves to maintain their intended function, their role in society, and their (perceived) efficaciousness within an experiential

exchange. For an object, complete stasis is akin to death, thus the amulet must maintain its vitality to fulfill its own intentions as well as its purpose in the everyday realm of life. With that said, the thesis posits that amulets (objects) are not dependent upon or await human interactions, but rather, like a human, amulets are in a constant state of autonomous becoming and awareness. When another object inter/intra-acts with the pendant, it brings their own histories, agency, and memories to the experience. These factors directly influence the inter/intra-action between the two objects.

For example, in an inter/intra-active experience with a human, the pendant becomes intimately conversant with the bearer inasmuch as the bearer shares their lived memories with the pendant through their expressed (conscious or subconscious) intention for the pendant. Here, the pendant is left to respond (determining what to veil or unveil) to the bearer whilst continuing to address (as a self-actualising and self-fulfilling object) the unfolding inter/inter-actions within itself. Furthermore, a bearer's capacity to sensorially experience the pendant connects their experiences in their everyday lives with the pendant via the interlacing of the visual aspects of the pendant's assemblage with the bearer's perceptions and experiences within society. For instance, the look of the metallic bronze has the potential to reconnect the bearer to the liturgical space where the glimmer of the golden tesserae of the wall mosaics represents the glory and promise of the deity. From this visual cue, the bearer's memories of the smells, senses of heat or cold, and auditory experiences within a liturgical space may become enlivened and return the bearer to moments of ritualised worship coupled with the conception of salvation and protection through the seal of God present in this space and deeply etched into the surface of the amulet. The bearer's senses and associated memories buttress their perceptions of the pendant's potential and further enliven the elements of the

pendant through the expressed vitalities that entangle both objects with each other within an inter/intra-active experience.

The analysis of the Kelsey Pendant began with an examination of an assemblage—the joined elements of the text and imagery of the amulet. These elements provided the pathway by which the study was able to further delve into the histories that are conjoined within the pendant's gathering. Though the analysis considered the amulet's potential provenance, the lack of a definitive find context did not hinder the investigation. Rather, the thesis has provided a pathway of research for objects within museum collections bereft of detailed archaeological data. Through the visual and textual direction provided by the amulet, the thesis has been able to investigate its elements through the holistically wider, yet complex, lens of society. The Kelsey Pedant proves not to be a product of its society, but rather, it is a participant in the form of a miniaturised shorthand of the perception, patronage, display, and performance of power (monuments, texts, people, and various spaces) within the everyday sphere of Late Antiquity. As a participant, it inter/intra-acts with other objects while refining and creating afresh its own lived memory and experiences from its intrinsic inter/intra-actions. Thus, by way of an in-depth analysis of its complete pictorial and textual programme, the thesis concludes that the Kelsey Pendant, is not only an active participant in its society, but is also an animate microcosm—an encapsulation and embodiment of society that is a visually tactile reenactment of, and takes part in, society's triumphs, its defeats, its, faith, its fears, as well as the everyday energies of its domestic, civic, and religious spaces.

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Videos

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The Voice of Hagia Sophia, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PYaWTcNN8tg.

Illustrations



Kelsey Pendant Video (video by author). YouTube link to the Kelsey Pendant Video: https://youtu.be/SgciM9DLhAU



Figure 1. Kelsey Pendant obverse (photo by author). Diameter-54mm, thickness-1mm, weight-17.384g.



Figure 2. Kelsey Pendant reverse (photo by author). Measurements same as Figure 1.



Figure 3. Ancient-Byzantine Bronze Gnostic Amulet with Image of Christ, obverse and reverse, fifth-sixth century CE. Diameter 55mm, weight 11.4gm. Since object was privately sold, link is no longer valid. Image from: https://www.vcoins.com/en/stores/sergey_nechayev_ancient_coins/200/product/ancientc500adgnostic_amuletchristtwo_lionsscorpion_extom_cederlind_unique/418452/Default.aspx [accessed 05/10/2019])



Figure 4. Holy Rider Amulet, Obverse, Early Byzantine, bronze, sixth century CE (or slightly later) Syria. Dumbarton Oaks Museum, Washington, D.C., BZ.1950.15 (© Dumbarton Oaks Museum). Left to right-53.09 mm, top to bottom-55.09mm, thickness-.8mm, weight-11.8g

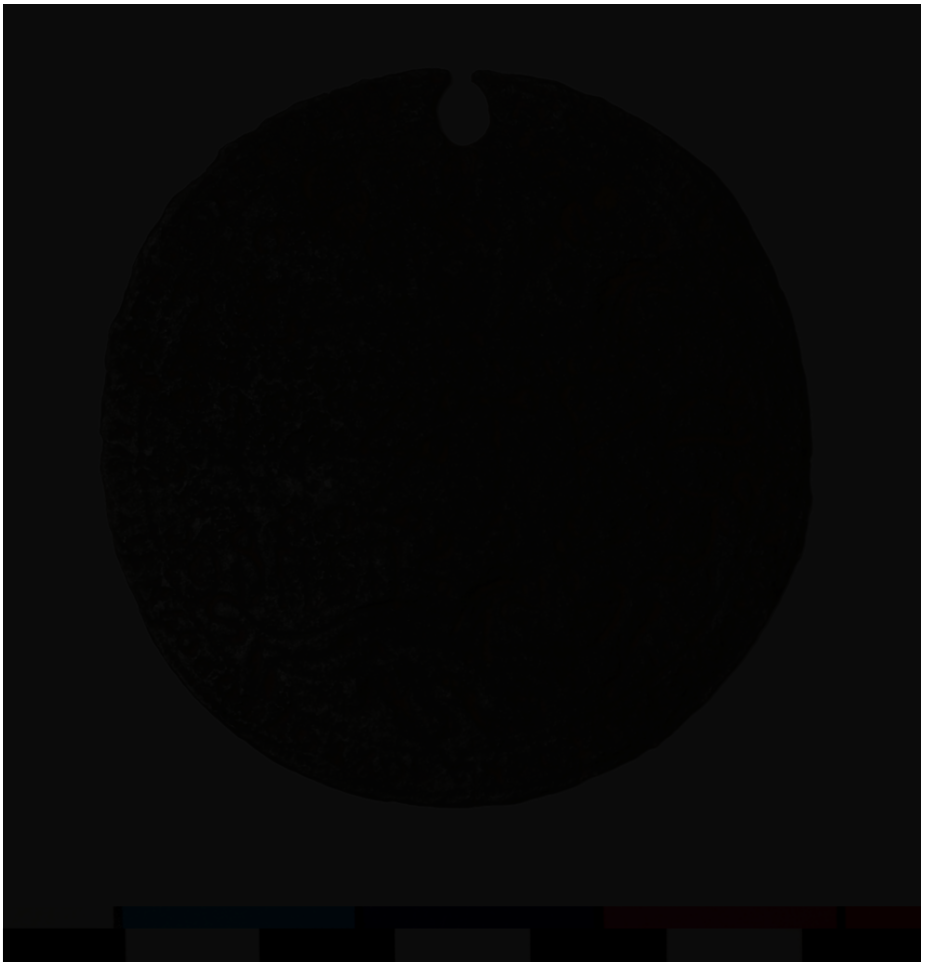


Figure 5. Holy Rider Amulet, Reverse. Early Byzantine, bronze, sixth century CE (or slightly later) Syria. Dumbarton Oaks Museum, Washington, D.C., BZ.1950.15 (© Dumbarton Oaks Museum). Measurements same as Figure 4.



Figure 6. Holy Rider Amulet, reverse with color manipulation for detail (photo by author). Measurements same as Figure 4.



Figure 7. Kelsey Pendant reverse detail of Christ in Majesty and hole piercing (photo by author).



Figure 8. Kelsey Pendant obverse detail of garments of rider and angel (photo by author).



Figure 9. Kelsey Pendant reverse detail of charaktêres (photo by author).



Figure 10. Kelsey Pendant obverse detail hole piercing (photo by author).



Figure 11. Kelsey Pendant obverse detail cross upon apex of rider's lance (photo by author).



Figure 12. Holy Rider Amulet obverse detail of cross upon apex of rider's lance. BZ. 1950.15 (© Dumbarton Oaks Museum).



Figure 13. Kelsey Pendant obverse detail of horse's ornamentation (photo by author).



Figure 14. Amuletic Armband with Christ in majesty roundel. sixth- seventh centuries CE. Museum of Art and Archaeology. University of Missouri, Columbia, 77.246. H-2.55cm, Dia-7.90cm. (https://maacollections.missouri.edu/ArgusNET/Portal.aspx?lang=en-US&g_AAEM=77.246&d=d [accessed 20/12/2024]



Figure 15. Marriage ring with Christ in Majesty and Trisagion. Gold, Niello, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Egypt. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. #45.15. (CC Creative Commons License, H:1.7cm, W:2.3cm, D:2.6cm. https://art.thewalters.org/detail/11447/marriage-ring-with-scenes-from-the-life-of-christ/ [accessed 20/12/2024])

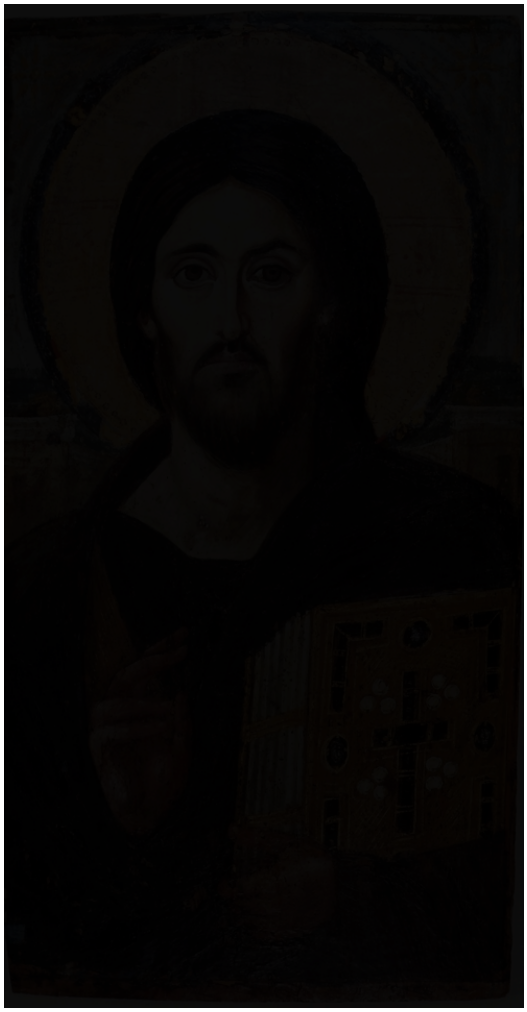


Figure 16. Christ Pantokrator, Encaustic on panel sixth-seventh centuries CE. St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. Image number: BLP876969. Dimensions: n/a. (Bridgeman Education, https://www-bridgemaneducation-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/en/asset/876969/summary [accessed 20/12/2024]



Figure 17. Solidus of Justinian II, Reverse Pantokrator, Gold, 692-695. Made in Constantinople. 2cm x 0.1cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 10.130.1495 (Image in the public domain)

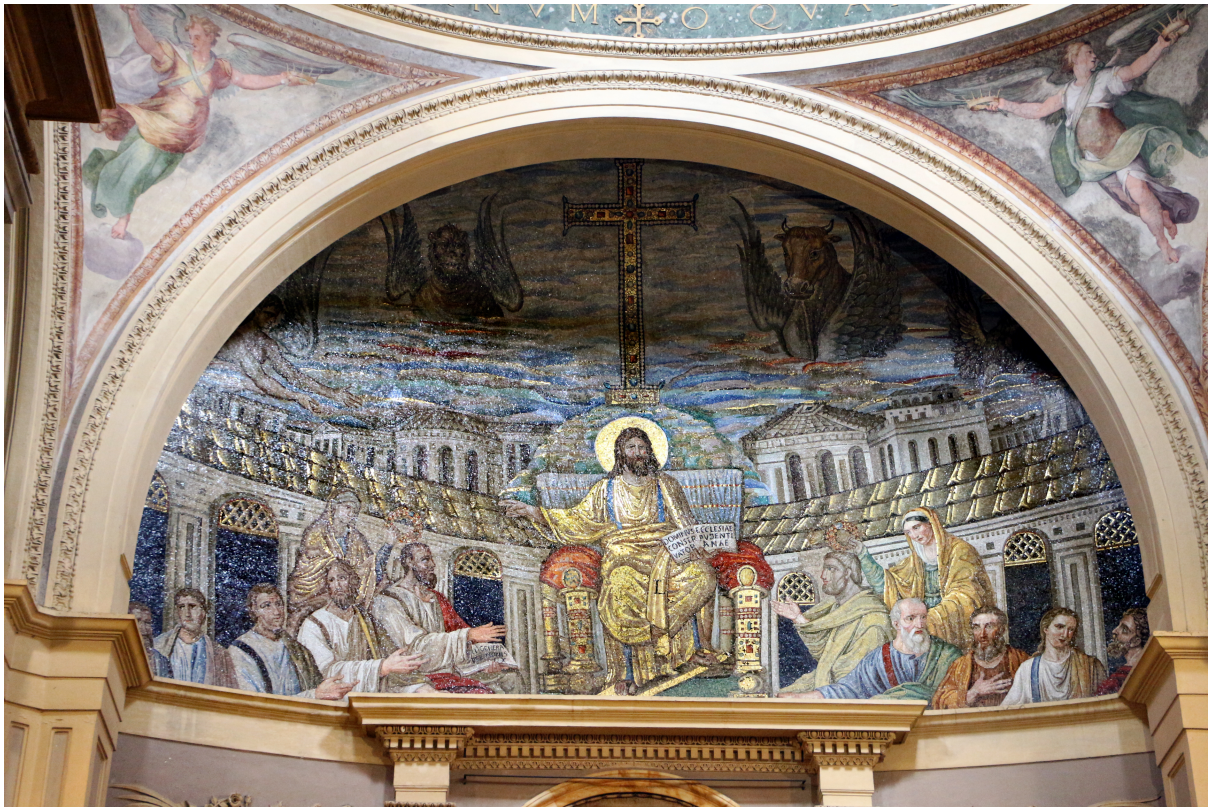


Figure 18. Christ in Majesty with Church of Golgatha at Jerusalem and Nativity at Bethlehem. Apse Mosaic, fourth century CE. Rome, St. Pudenziana Church. Dimensions: n/a. (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13719886 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 19. Detail of Christ in Majesty with Church of Golgatha at Jerusalem and nativity at Bethlehem (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13719886 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 20. Rome St. Pudenziana apse mosaic. Christ in Majesty with Church of Golgatha at Jerusalem and nativity at Bethlehem. Rendering of full illustrative program of the apse. Dimensions: n/a. (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13729348 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 21. Christ in Majesty and Virgin and Child with Apostles. Fresco. Sixth-seventh centuries CE. Chapel VI Niche, Monastery of St. Apollo. Bawit, Egypt. Dimensions: n/a. (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13581822 [accessed 20/12/2024])



Figure 22. Carnelian Amulet. Third-fourth centuries CE. L:15.4mm x W:10.7mm (CBd-1227) (Nagy, 2010. CBd-1227).



Figure 23. Bronze Amulet. Fifth-sixth centuries CE. L:52mm x W:26mm (CBd-814) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-814).



Figure 24. Hematite Amulet. Ouroboros enclosing cross and charaktêres, Isis, Harpocrates, Bes, Khnum. Second-third centuries CE. L:23mm x W:17.4mm x D:3.8mm. (CBd-231) (Nagy, 2010, Cbd-231).



Figure 25. Statuette of Dionysos with text of Psalm 28:3, Bronze, Rome (second-third centuries CE), Inscription-Byzantine (eighth-ninth centuries CE), Dimensions: n/a. (Althaus and Sutcliffe, 2006, 86).



Figure 26. Detail of statuette of Dionysos with text of Psalm 28.3 (Althaus and Sutcliffe, 2006, 86).



Figure 27. Church of Bishop Sergius at Umm al-Rasas (c. 587-588 CE). Dimensions: n/a. Psalms 86:2 LXX at foot of chancel steps indicated by red arrow (Leatherby, 2020, Fig. 6.17, 269).



Figure 28. Bronze Rider Amulet, Obverse, *Almond shaped image suggested to be Evil Eye. L:43mm x 20mm. (CBd-1493) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1493).



Figure 29. Bronze Rider Amulet, Reverse, first two words of Psalm 90 LXX. Measurements same as Figure 28. (CBd-1493) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1493).



Figure 30. Magical Pendant Copper, Obverse Rider spearing demon “one God” inscription; Reverse Partial Psalm 90 LXX inscription. Fourth-sixth centuries CE. L:50mm x W:32.7mm x D:0.8mm. Bible and Orient Museum, GA 2010-1 (CBd-1700) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1700).



Figure 31. Bronze Bracelet with four roundels *Two comprised of rider and Psalm 90 LXX. Diameter of bracelet: 75 mm—width of ribbon: 6 mm—medallions: 18-20mm x 16 mm. (CBd-1494) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1494).



Figure 32. Bronze Bracelet (CBd-1494) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1494). Measurements same as Figure 31.



Figure 33. Bronze Rider Amulet. Obverse “One God” inscription, Reverse archangel names, fifth-sixth centuries CE. L:42mm x W:21mm (CBd-809) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-809).



Figure 34. Bronze Rider Amulet, Obverse “One God” inscription, fifth-sixth centuries CE. L:40mm x W:23mm. (CBd-811) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-811).



Figure 35. Rider Amulet, Obverse: ‘The sole God, who overcomes evil;’ Reverse: Evil Eye, lion, snake, and scorpion, Bronze, fifth-sixth centuries CE. L:40.9mm x W:26.2mm (CBd-1722) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1722).



Figure 36. Amulet with Holy Rider. Obverse, Bronze, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Syria-Palestine or Egypt, Princeton Art Museum, #y1931-34. H: 6.1cm x W:3.0 cm (Image in the public domain).



Figure 37. Amulet with Holy Rider. Reverse. Princeton Art Museum, #y1931-34. Measurements the same as Figure 36. (Image in the public domain).



Figure 38. Tomb relief of Sasanian King, Ardaxshir I, third century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Naqsh-e Rostam, Fars Province, Iran. Bridgeman Education. GDG486902 (Bridgeman Education. © Gerard Degeorge. https://www-bridgemaneducation-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/en/asset/486902/summary [accessed 20/12/2024])



Figure 39. Column of Trajan. Detail of conquered Dacian commander, Decebalus, second century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Rome, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13919944. [accessed 20/12/2024])



Figure 40. Portion of "Great Trajanic Frieze" Slabs 5/6, second century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Repurposed for the fourth-century CE Arch of Constantine, Rome, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13889812 [Accessed 20/12/2024])

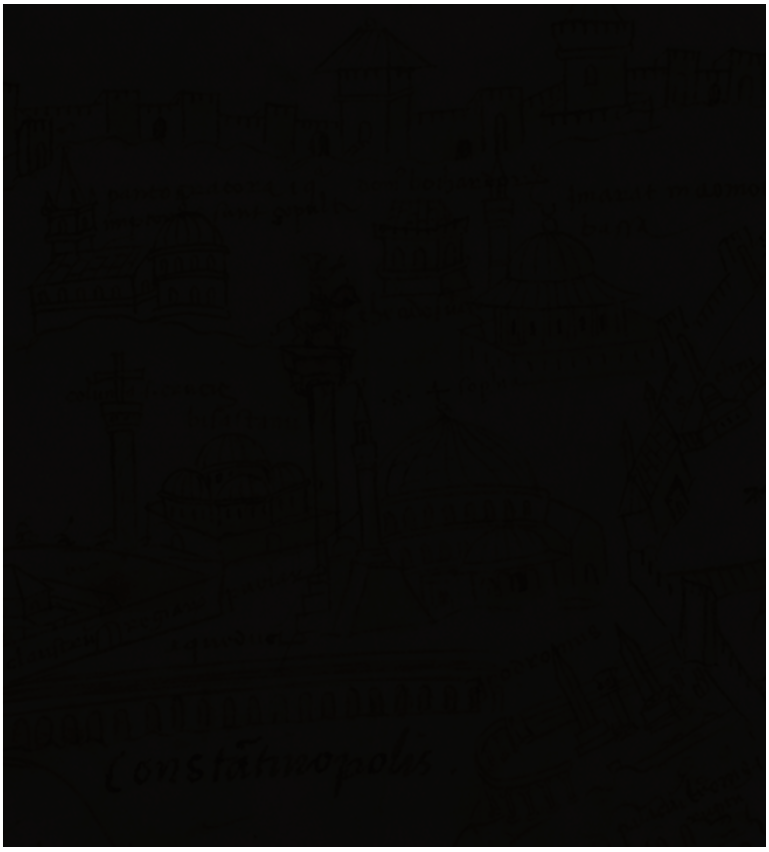
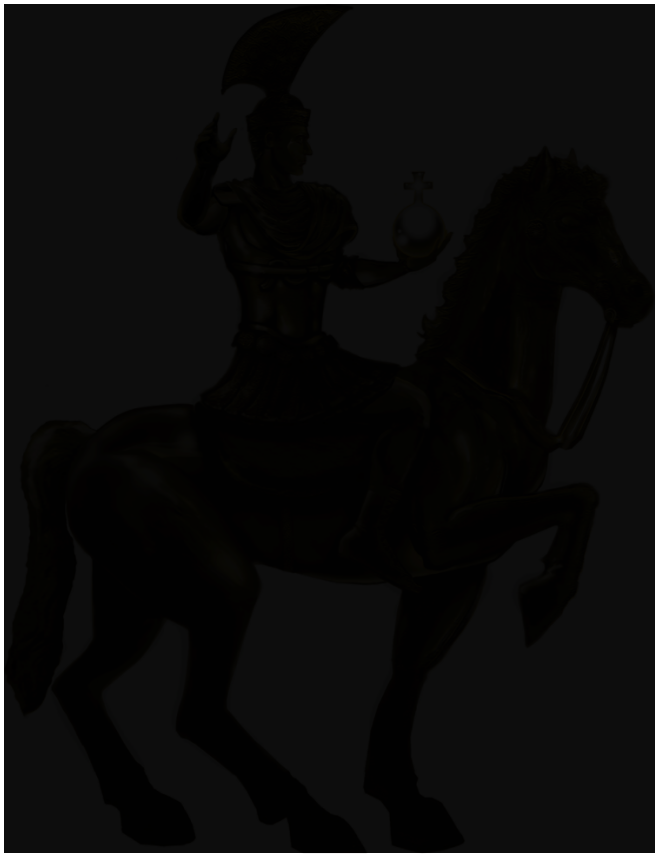


Figure 41. Column within wider city context. ‘Detail from the view of Constantinople in Cristoforo Buondelmonti’s Liber Insularum Archipelagi, ca. 1481 (Düsseldorf, Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek, Ms G 13, fol. 54 r)’ Dimensions: n/a. (Boeck, 2021, fig 14.1b, 328-329).


Figure 42. Modern artistic representation of the bronze horseman, by Rob Hassan (Boeck, 2021, Fig. I1, 3).

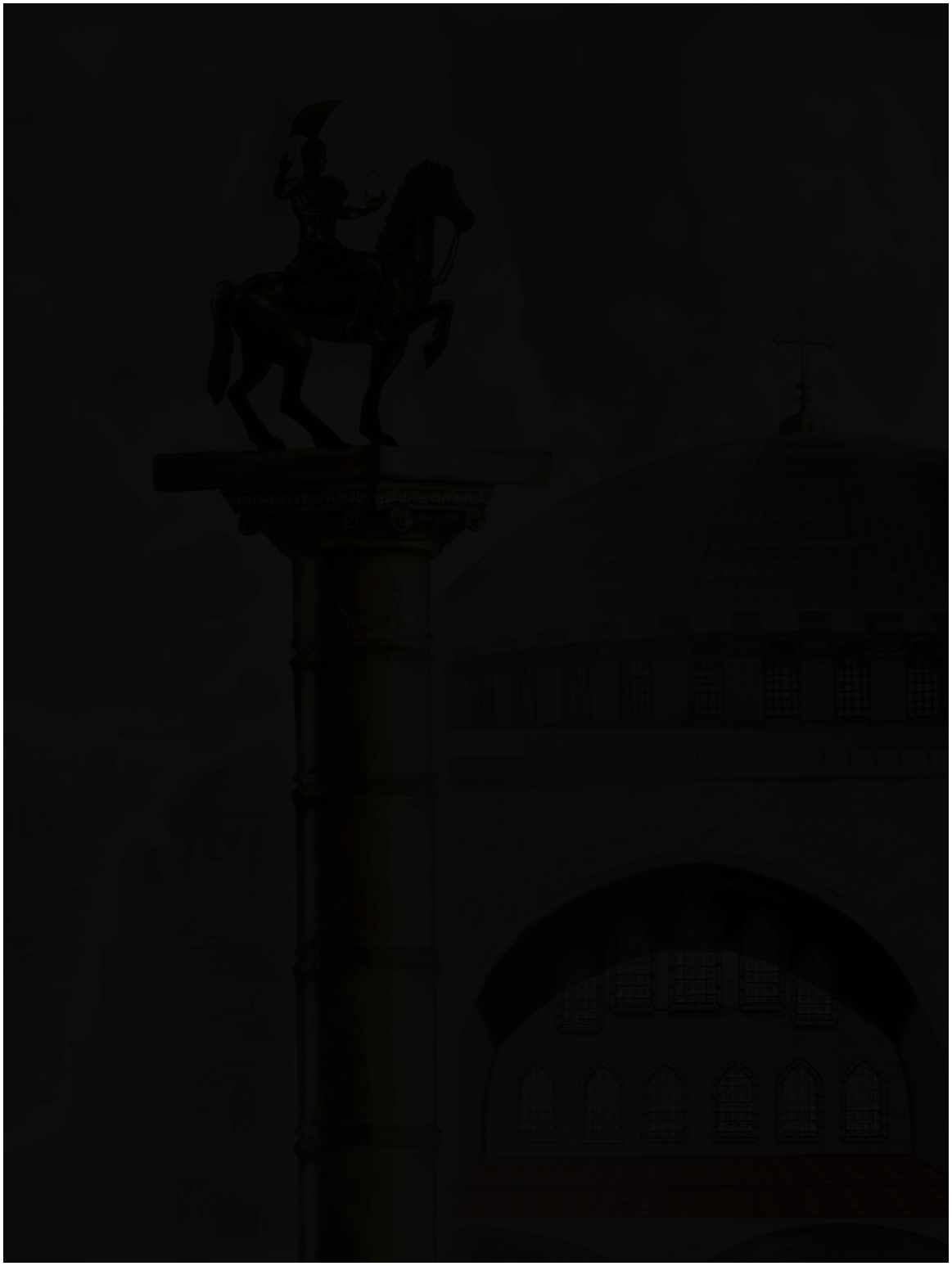


Figure 43. Modern artistic representation of Justinian's bronze horseman and Hagia Sophia, by Rob Hassan (Boeck, 2021, 43).



Figure 44. Sasanian hunting plate depicting equestrian king hunting rams. Silver, mercury gilding, niello inlay, fifth-sixth centuries CE. H: 4.6 cm Dia: 21.9 cm. Iran. Object number: 34.33 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, image in public domain).



Figure 45. 'The Emperor Triumphant' Barberini Diptych Ivory, sixth century CE. L:34.2cm x W:26.8cm x D: 2.8cm. Louvre, France. Image number: XIR159131 (Bridgeman Education, https://www-bridgemaneducation-com.ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/en/asset/159131/summary [accessed 20/12/2024])



Figure 46. Electrotype of Justinian Medallion. Side B. Original medallion excavated in Caesarea Mazaca, Turkey, British Museum B.11501, Asset number: 111863500. Dimensions: n/a. (© Trustees of the British Museum).



Figure 47. Sarcophagus of Helena depicting Roman Cavalry and subdued conquests, Porphyry, fourth century CE. Vatican Museum, Italy. MV.238.0.0. Dimensions: n/a. (Vatican Museum, https://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/museo-pio-clementino/sala-a-croce-greca/sarcofago-di-s--elena.html [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 48. Electrotype of third century CE gold Arras Medallion. Side B. Constantius I on horseback with personification of London in supplication. British Museum B.11477. Dia: 42mm, Weight: 36g. Asset number: 123601001 (© British Museum)



Figure 49. Solomon Amulet. Copper Alloy. Obverse: 'Seal of Solomon help the wearers;' Reverse: 'Flee detested one, the angel Araaf casts you out', sixth-seventh centuries CE. Dia: 4.4 cm. Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France inv: reg. M. 6662 (Pitarakis, 2015, Fig. 33, 248-249). https://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/c33gb2356x



Figure 50. Solomon Amulet. Guilded Bronze, Obverse: ‘Flee detested one, Araaf the angel, and Solomon, casts you from the wearer;’ Reverse: ‘Seal of the living God, protect him who wears it! Holy, holy, holy Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with glory’, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Dimensions: 4.8 cm. Discovered in Kula, Turkey. Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France inv. Schlumberger 67. (Pitarakis, 2015, Fig. 32, 246-247). https://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/c33gb15683



Figure 51. Amulet. Solomon Spearing Lilith. Rider spearing demon. Obverse ‘Solomon’ with unidentified voces. Reverse ‘Seal of God’, charaktêres, and Chnoubis sign, hematite, fourth century CE. L: 35mm x W: 22mm x D: 3mm. (CBd-789) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-789).



Figure 52. Amulet. Solomon Spearing Lilith. Obverse. Rider spearing demon. ‘Solomon’, Reverse ‘Seal of God’, hematite, fourth century CE. L: 31mm x W:15mm x D:3.5mm. (CBd-793) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-793).

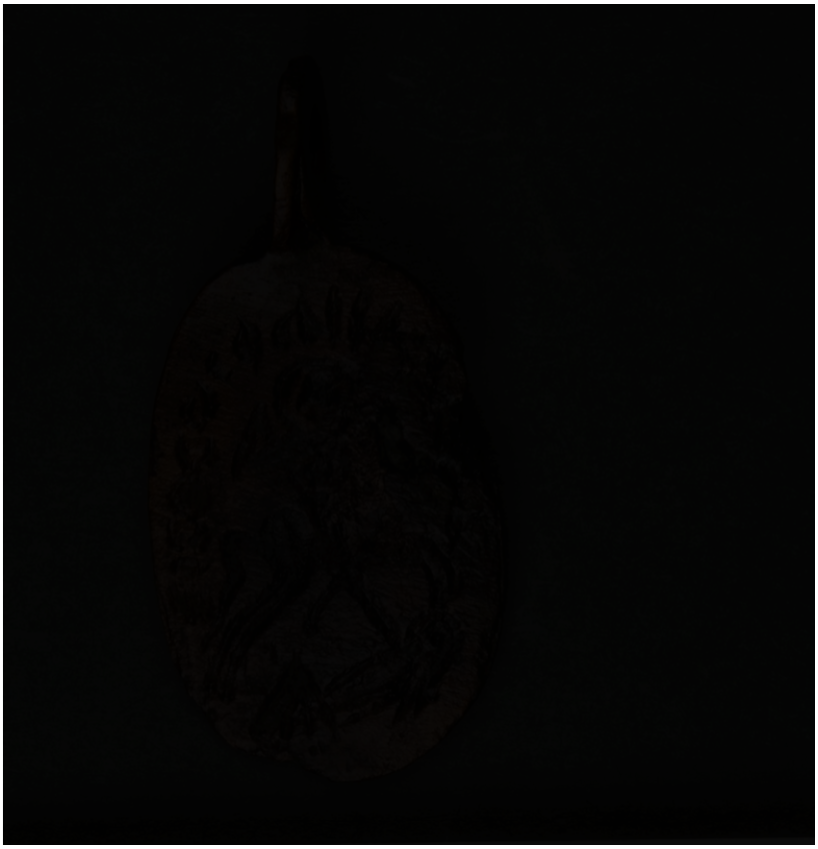


Figure 53. Amulet. ‘Rider Saint Piercing Dragon’ (Obverse), third-seventh centuries CE. H:4.7cm x W:2.3cm x D:1.1cm. Excavated at Beth Shean (Beisan), Israel. Object: 29-108-254 (Penn Museum, https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/104091 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 54. Animals Attacking Evil Eye (Reverse), third-seventh centuries CE. Excavated at Beth Shean (Beisan), Israel. Measurements same as Figure 53. Object :29-108-254 (Penn Museum, https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/104091 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 55. Solomon Amulet, obsidian, fifth-sixth centuries CE. Dimensions: n/a. Benaki Museum, Athens #13539 (Benaki Museum, https://www.benaki.org/index.php?option=com_collectionitems&view=collectionitem&id=108121&lang=en [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 56. Amulet with Evil Eye and Holy Rider, embossed bronze, fifth-sixth centuries CE. Discovered in Turkey. H: 5.1cm. Side A. Walters Museum, Baltimore #54.2628 (CC Creative Commons License, https://art.thewalters.org/detail/27029/amulet-with-the-evil-eye-and-the-holy-rider/ [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 57. Amulet with Evil Eye and Holy Rider, embossed bronze, fifth-sixth centuries CE. Discovered in Turkey. Measurements same as Figure 56. Side B. Walters Museum, Baltimore #54.2628 (CC Creative Commons License, https://art.thewalters.org/detail/27029/amulet-with-the-evil-eye-and-the-holy-rider/ [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 58. Detail of Enthroned Christ flanked by angels holding a sceptre, mosaic, sixth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Basilica of Sant' Apollinare, Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13886147 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 59. Detail of angel from Enthroned Christ flanked by angels holding a sceptre, mosaic, sixth century CE. Basilica of Sant' Apollinare, Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13886147 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 60. Triumphal Arch: det.: Annunciation, Adoration of the Magi and Massacre of the Innocents, mosaic, fifth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13722065 [accessed 20/12/2024]).

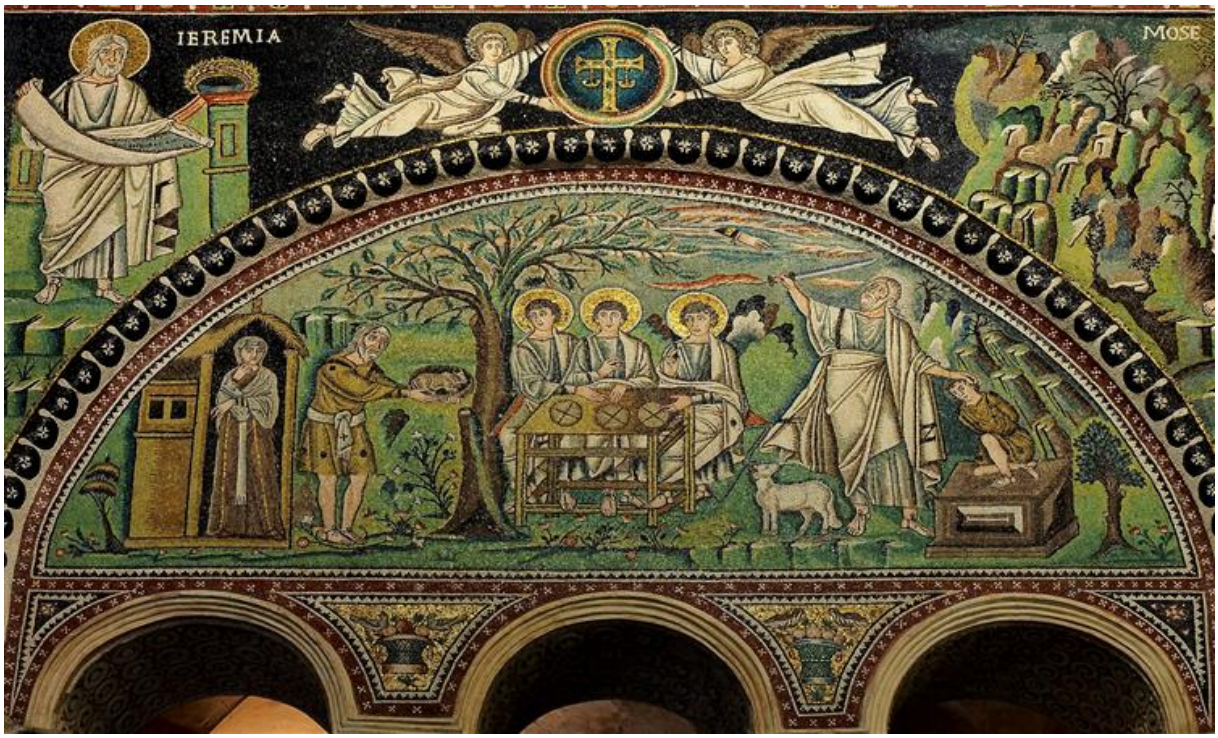


Figure 61. Detail of chancel, north wall in the lunette below, Abraham and the Three Angels at Mambre and the Sacrifice of Isaac; in the spandrels, the Prophet Jeremiah on the left and Moses Receiving the Law on the right; above, Saint John the Evangelist on the left, mosaic, sixth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.15996125 [accessed 20/12/2024]).

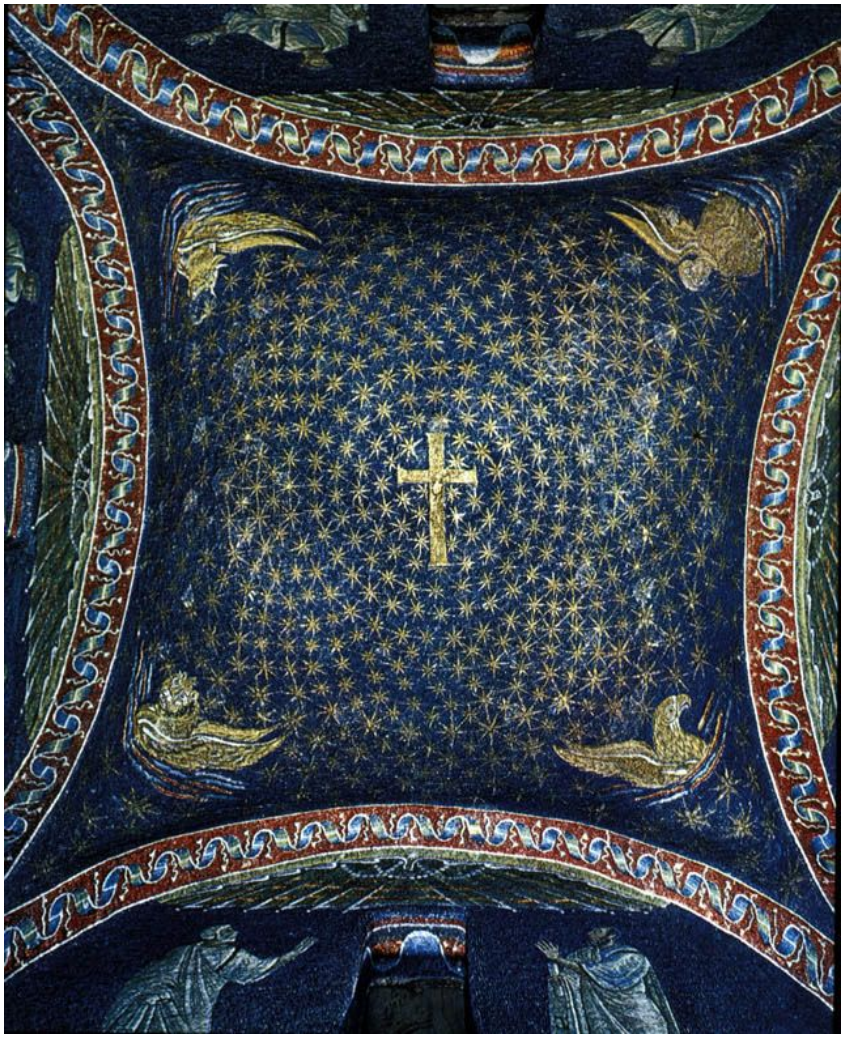


Figure 62. Dome of Galla Placidia Mausoleum, Starry sky with Cross (Christ) and four Evangelists in symbolic form, mosaic, fifth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Ravenna, Italy (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.15995742 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 63. Amulet with Saints and Angels in Combat. Obverse: holy rider with angel, demon, and star. Reverse: charaktêres, gorgon/wandering womb, branches, angels, etcetera, silver, second to fourth century (101 - 400 CE) (date of creation). Dia: 5cm. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England. Antiquities, AN 1980.53. 'Flee Abizou, Anabardalea, St. Sisinnios pursues you.' (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/476916 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 64. Amulet, Angel holding sceptre with cross, glass, sixth- seventh centuries CE. L: 24.1mm x W: 18.8mm x D: 4.1mm. (CBd-1966) (Nagy, 2010, CBd-1966).



Figure 65. Rider Amulet. Obverse: 'The sole God, who overcomes evil,' bronze. L: 56mm x W: 29mm x D:1mm. Weight: 7.114 g. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, University of Michigan. KM 26114 (photo by author).



Figure 66. Saint Sisinio kills the she-devil Albasdria, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Dimensions: n/a. Coptic art, drawing made by J. Clédart following a mural painting, Bawit Monastery, Egypt (Rodriguez Peinado, 2010, 59).



Figure 67. Amulet with Lamashtu Demon, Stone. 800-550 BCE. L: 12.7cm x W: 6.35cm Mesopotamia. Museum Number: 117759. British Museum registration number:1925,0715.1 **(**© The Trustees of the British Museum**.** Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.)



Figure 68. Incantation Bowl with illustration of Lilith. 6th-8th centuries CE. Pottery. Diameter: 17.6cm, Height: 7.4cm. Iraq. British Museum asset number: 1613742309. Museum number: 136204. © The Trustees of the British Museum**.** Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence.



Figure 69. Moses striking the rock, Chamber of the Four Seasons, Catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus, Rome, third-fifth centuries CE. Dimensions: n/a. (Jensen, 2024, Fig. 3.17, 106).



Figure 70. Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, Dino Compagni (Via Latina), Catacomb, Rome, fourth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. (Jensen, 2024, Fig. 3.18, 107).

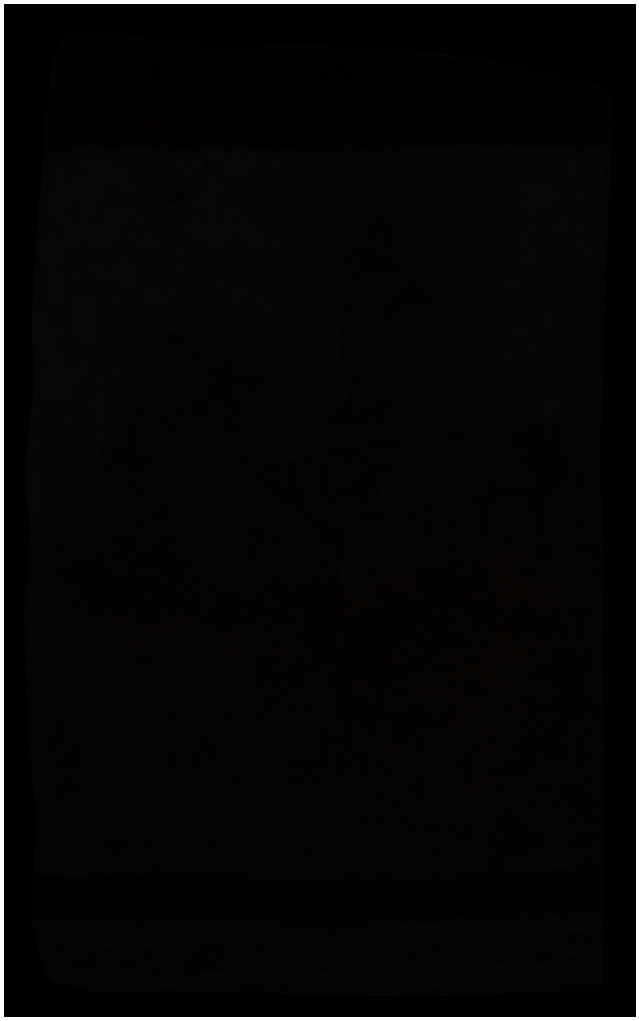


Figure 71. Christ Healing the Paralytic, Dura Europos Baptistry, paint on plaster, third century CE. L: 145cm x W: 88cm. Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos. Accession number: 1932.1202 (Yale University Art Gallery, https://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/34498 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 72. Ascension. Cod. Plut. I. 56: fol. 13v., sixth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Rabbula Gospels (Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=53846 [retrieved 20/12/2024]. Original source: Image donated by Jim Womack and Anne Richardson).

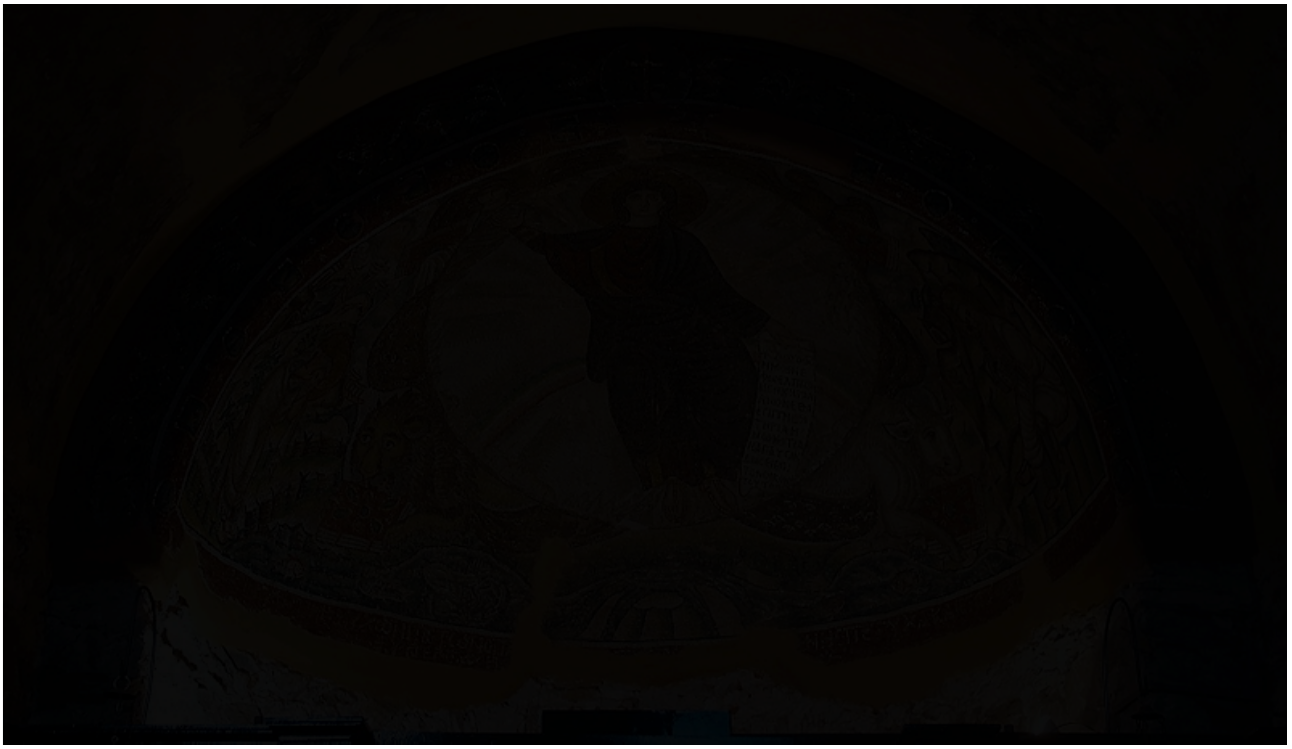


Figure 73. Christ in Majesty with symbols of the Evangelists Luke and Mark, Hosios David Apse, mosaic, fifth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Salonika, Greece (Artstor Slide Gallery, https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13883581 [accessed 06/06/2021]).



Figure 74. Transfiguration of Christ. St. Catherine's Monastery, mosaic, sixth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Mt. Sinai, Egypt (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13880625 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 75. Coin of Kanishka I. Gold. second century CE. 7.97g Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum. (Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum. https://silkroad-museum-collection.jp/kanishka-i-gold-coin%EF%BC%88ancient-greek-unit-of-gold-coins%EF%BC%89/ [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 76. Serpentine Bronze Amulet (obverse), tenth-eleventh centuries CE. The State Hermitage Museum, Russia. Dia: 4.2cm. Inventory number: W-634 (The State Hermitage Museum, Russia. https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/digital-collection/482780 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 77. Cloisonné medallion with Gorgon head and prophylactic inscription, 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord, Sabaoth the heavens and the earth are filled with [his glory]' (obverse), twelfth century CE. Dia: 6.8cm. Weight: 65g. Syria. Louvre, France. OA 6276 (Louvre, https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010117588 [accessed 20/12/202



Figure 78. Apamea, Maison « au triclinos », floor mosaic room B, fifth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. (Donceel-Voûte, 1988, Plate XIX, 32).



Figure 79. Knight Saint textile from the Valley of the Nile, linen and wool, L: 33cm x W: 34cm., ninth-tenth centuries CE. Museo Departamental de Antigüedades de Seine-Maritime, Rouen (France), 2481A.2 (Rodriguez Peinado, 2024, 59).



Figure 80. Wall Painting. Pigment on plaster, secco technique. Late sixth to early seventh centuries CE. Caesarea. H: 103 x W: 303 cm. (Israel Antiquities Authority. IAA: 2000-803. © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. https://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/198258-0#:~:text=This%20wall%20painting%20decorated%20the,The%20Israel%20Museum%2C%20Jerusalem%2C%202015 [accessed 17 August 2025]).



Figure 81. Detail of Wall Painting (necklace and medallion). Pigment on plaster, secco technique. Late sixth to early seventh centuries CE. Caesarea. H: 103 x W: 303 cm. (Israel Antiquities Authority. IAA: 2000-803. © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. https://www.imj.org.il/en/collections/198258-0#:~:text=This%20wall%20painting%20decorated%20the,The%20Israel%20Museum%2C%20Jerusalem%2C%202015 [accessed 17 August 2025]).



Figure 82. Limestone Statuette of Temple Boy. Limestone. Hellenistic period, fourth century BCE. Cyprus. H: 39.5 cm. Object number: 74.51.2754. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain.)



Figure 83. Pottery: fragment of a white-ground *lekythos*: seated woman, woman with baby, man. Fifth century BCE. Attica (Greece). Dia: 15.85 cm. British Museum number: 1905,0710.10 (© The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) license.)



Figure 84. Terracotta squat *lekythos*. Fifth century BCE. Classical Greek. H: 9 cm. Dia:7.1cm. Object number: 30.11.8. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain).



Figure 85. Detail of Terracotta squat *lekythos*. Fifth century BCE. Classical Greek. H: 9 cm. Dia:7.1cm. Object number: 30.11.8. (Metropolitan Museum of Art image in public domain).

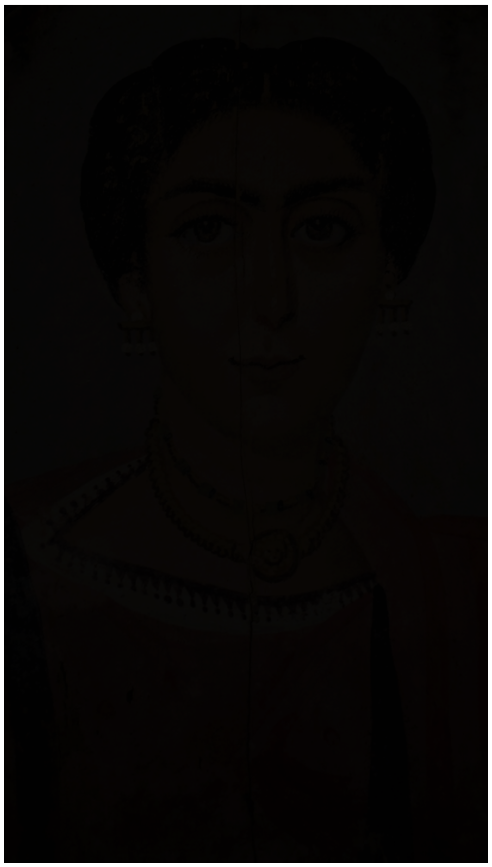


Figure 86. Mummy Portrait: Woman with [gorgon] Necklace. Encaustic on wood. Second century CE. Egypt. H: 365 cm X W: 215 cm. Inventory name: ANSA x 301(Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien. http://www.khm.at/en/collections/collection-of-greek-and-roman-antiquities).

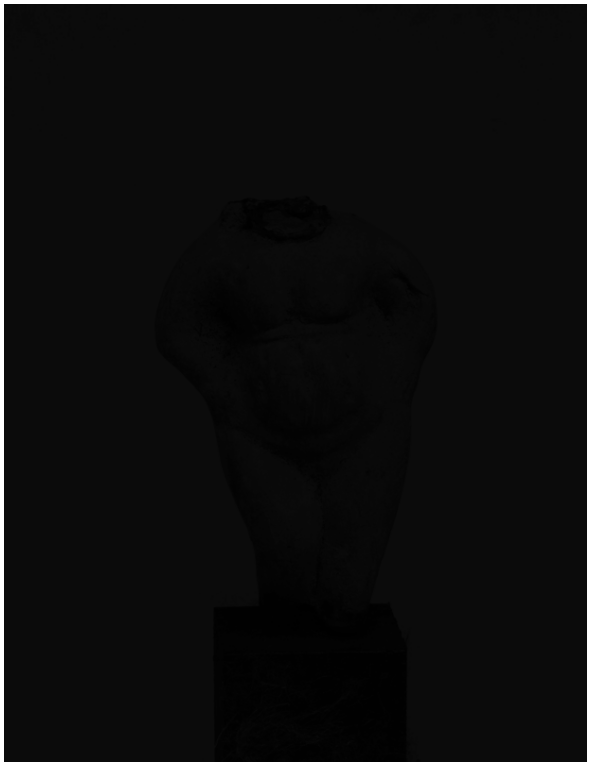


Figure 87. Figurine. Clay. Hellenistic period, second-first centuries BCE. Symrna/Izmir. H: 5.8 cm x W: 3.8 cm x D: 2.7 cm. (Musée du Louvre CA 5231, Paris. © 1970 Louvre Museum, Dist. GrandPalaisRmn / Maurice and Pierre Chuzeville. https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010262130).

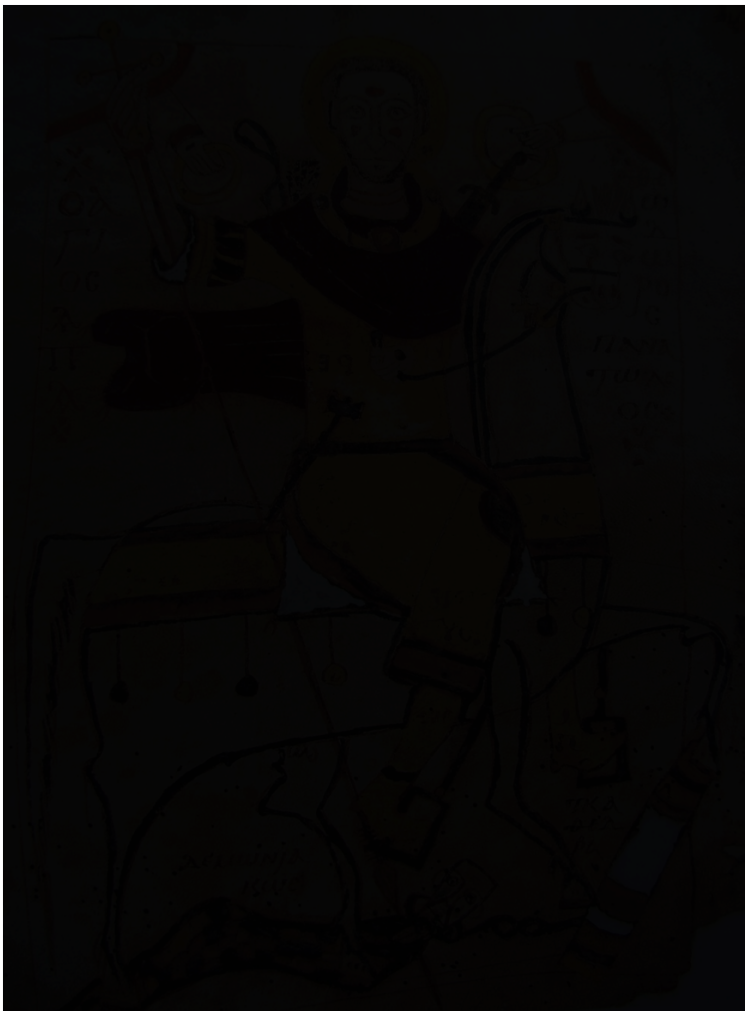


Figure 88. Saint Theodore the Anatolian, Coptic art, manuscript illumination, tenth century CE. L: 33.4cm x W:26cm., M.613, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. (Rodriguez Peinado, 2024, 59).

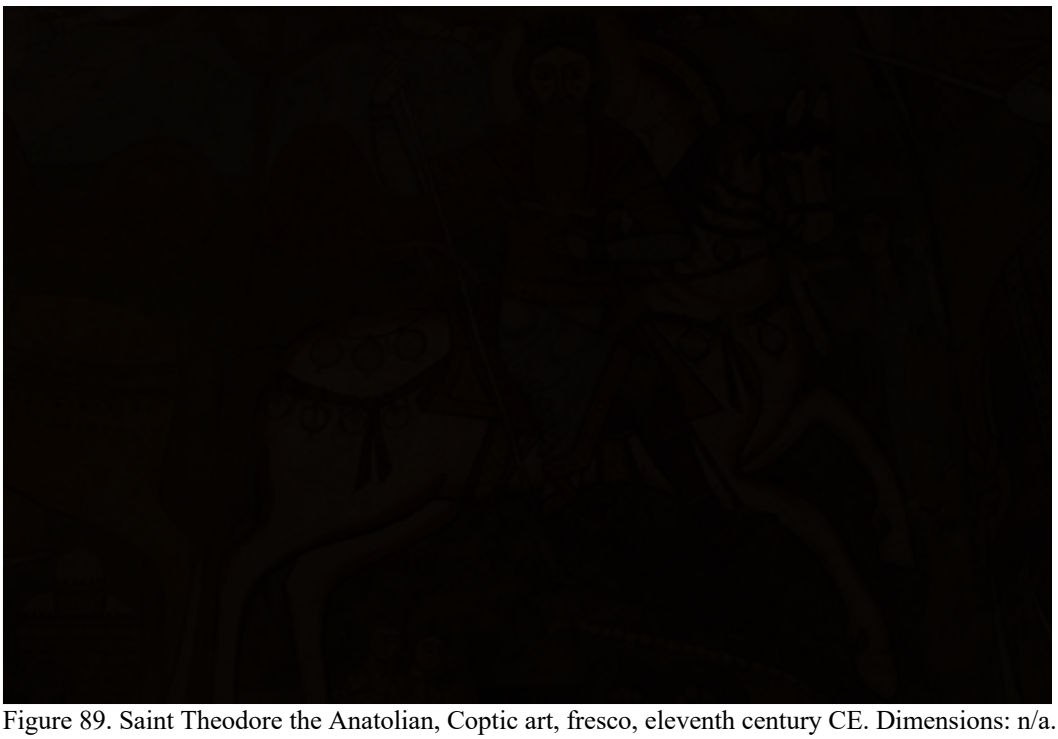


Figure 89. Saint Theodore the Anatolian, Coptic art, fresco, eleventh century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Convent of Saint Anthony, Egypt (Rodriguez Peinado, 2024, 60).

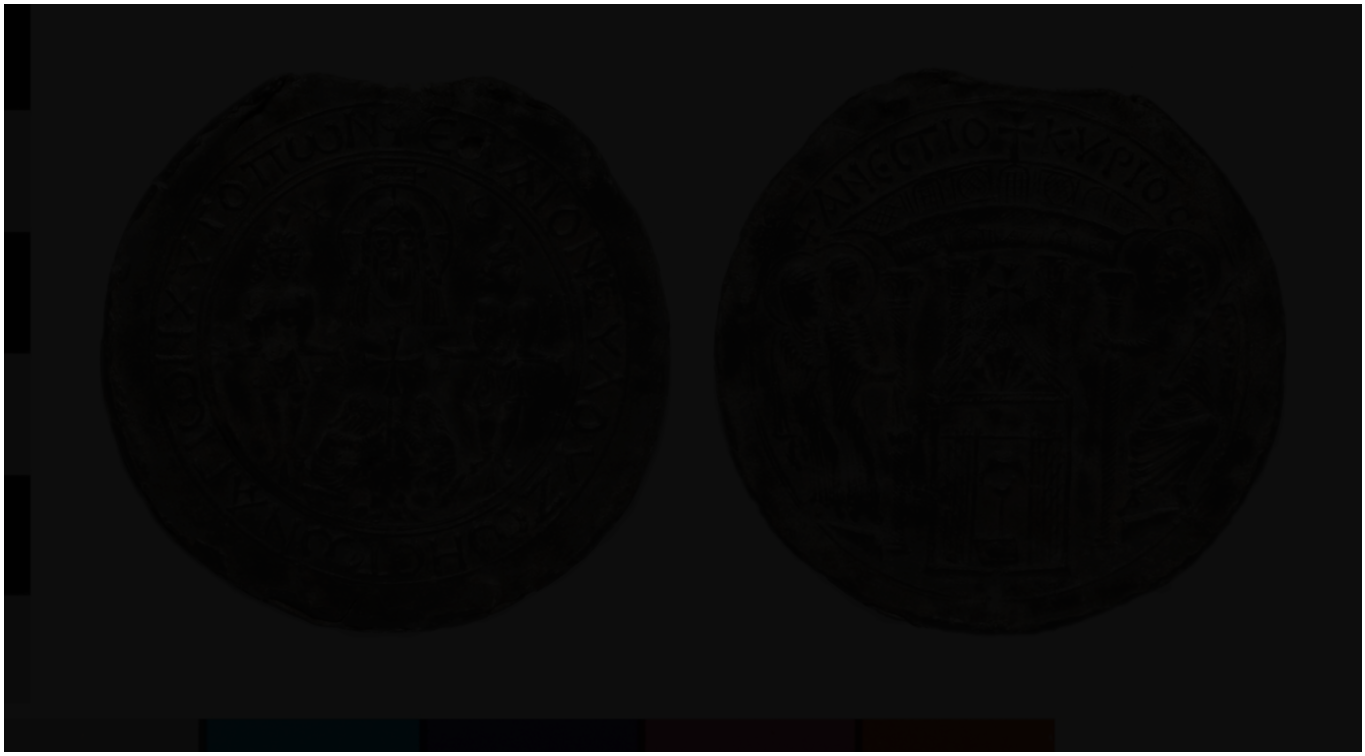


Figure 90. Pilgrim's Ampulla with (Symbolic) Crucifixion and Mary's at the Tomb. Lead. (Obverse and Reverse) sixth-seventh centuries CE. Dimensions: n/a. Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. BZ 1948.18 (© Dumbarton Oaks Museum).



Figure 91. Bust of Christ, Fresco, fourth century CE. Dimensions: n/a. Catacombs of Commodilla, Rome. (Visual Arts Legacy Collection. Artstor. https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.13606466 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 92. Reliquary in the form of a church or shrine. Top and one of the four sides, limestone, sixth-seventh centuries CE. H: 20.7cm x W:16.6cm x D:16.9 cm. Object number: 2003-88 (Princeton Art Museum, https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/41864 [accessed 20/12/2024]).



Figure 93. Reliquary in the form of a church or shrine. View of different side, limestone, sixth-seventh centuries CE. Measurements same as Figure 82. Object number: 2003-88 (Princeton Art Museum, https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/41864 [accessed 20/12/2024]).