



PROJECT MUSE®

---

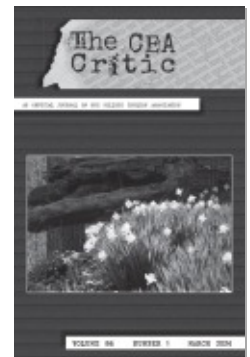
Remediation and Epistemological Revelation in the Archimedes  
Palimpsest and Twenty-First-Century Erasure Poetry

Kiel M. Gregory

CEA Critic, Volume 86, Number 1, March 2024, pp. 46-58 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/cea.2024.a922349>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/922349>

---

KIEL M. GREGORY

## Remediation and Epistemological Revelation in the Archimedes Palimpsest and Twenty-First-Century Erasure Poetry

---

**Abstract.** Contemporary erasure poetry and the poetics of remediated forms are often taken as serving as political battlegrounds and sites of epistemic transference. At the same time, what is missing from the literature is a discussion of medieval manuscripts and the history of palimpsests. This paper explores two topics: (1) how the Archimedes palimpsest allows us to understand blackout poems as sites of knowledge production as well as conversations between polemic positions and (2) how poetic remediation can inform our valuation of the erasures situated in the Archimedes palimpsest. Through analysis of Travis Macdonald's *The O Mission Repo*, Rachel Stempel's "Natal Girl (& Other Repeat Offenses)," Molly R. Sullivan's "Levonorgestrel," and the Archimedes palimpsest, this paper explores how both medieval manuscripts and modern forms of poetry serve us as classroom realia, illustrating that their value extends beyond disciplinary boundaries to reveal new ways of conceiving artistic and pedagogical praxes.

Tania Kleynhans—a specialist in advanced imaging technology and techniques—defines a palimpsest as “a manuscript leaf [page] where the writing has been scraped or washed off, and the parchment recycled for future use” (2). Palimpsesting is the practice of recycling parchment, which, even today, remains an expensive commodity. As an act of re-use, palimpsests are created out of purposeful acts of erasure and thus imply intentionality and necessarily involve a valuation judgment: *If Text B is more valuable than Text A, and there is not enough physical space on the page for both, then Text A ought to be erased to make space for Text B.* This seemingly simple proposition, though, is anything but simple. Indeed, entire libraries would be filled with value discourse. How is value created? What makes a thing valuable? Who is in a position to evaluate what kinds of things? While we can research the answers to these and similar questions, my focus lies elsewhere. For the sake of my discussion, it will suffice to assume that value exists and that evaluations of many different kinds of things are made by many different kinds of people for many different reasons.

In this essay, I shall begin by exploring fundamental issues about palimpsesting as they surface in how fifteenth-century Orthodox Christians erased for their purposes the tenth-century parchment codex the Archimedes Palimpsest (hereafter, "AP"). I shall then assess three contemporary sites and forms of erasure involving literary and non-literary sources: Travis Macdonald's *O Mission Repo* and the *9/11 Commission Report*, Rachel Stempel's "Natal Girl (& Other Repeat Offenses)" and a personal blog post by J. K. Rowling, and Molly R. Sullivan's "Levonorgestrel" and Robert McGill novel *Once We Had a Country*. Along the way, the case of the AP will serve to illuminate my concerns about how these instances of erasure arise, how they appear on the page, what they accomplish culturally and epistemologically, and how, if at all, one can conceive of those erasures as sites of creation as opposed to instances of injury or loss.

### Eastern Orthodox Christians and the AP

The AP is a manuscript whose original text contains copies of seven treatises written by the Greek mathematician, engineer, and inventor. In some cases, the text is the only surviving copy of some of Archimedes' work written in the original Greek (The Walters Art Museum). Regardless, the influence of its contents has been long. Notably, a variety of modern tools and conveniences utilize—or are made possible through the reliance on—key Archimedean scientific advancements. Watch-balance springs, like those found in modern mechanical and automatic wristwatches, utilize the Archimedean spring. Some irrigation techniques still rely on the use of an Archimedes screw. Odometers, like those found in modern automobiles, are based on one of Archimedes' mathematical observations—namely, when a wheel completes one revolution, it has traveled a distance equal to its circumference. Given such contributions to science, it seems obvious that the written records of Archimedes' work remain immensely valuable and deserve preservation. Any scholar familiar with the AP, however, knows that this valuation of Archimedes' work has not been shared by all.

During the Fifteenth Century, the tenth-century volume containing Archimedes' work was palimpsested, and those 174 parchment folios were reused for the purpose of creating a euchologion, which is a recording of liturgical Eastern Orthodox Christian prayers ("About"). While one can accept that liturgical prayers have value in the world, one must agree that there was an evaluative determination made by someone involved in the process of palimpsesting. Whether that valuation was on the part of the monks who chose to undertake the arduous task of mechanically removing the Archimedes text to make room for prayers or perhaps on the part of someone who commissioned those monks to do so might never be known. The point is that a decision was made, and the logic behind that decision must have been rooted in a value judgment that situated Archimedes'

work as less worthy of preservation than the Eastern Orthodox prayers that now most visibly occupy the page.<sup>1</sup> With respect to liturgical texts and the AP, the former has value within a specific community—for example, the community of those identifying as Eastern Orthodox Christians or perhaps those who study the belief systems of said individuals—whereas the original content of the Archimedes text has value to a quantitatively larger set of people. There is something crucial at play here—namely, the distinction between community-specific value and value to the world more broadly. This latter value is broader in scope because it is shared by a larger portion of humankind.

The argument that the erasure of Archimedes' work to make room for liturgical texts was an act of destruction seems to be shared by Roger Easton and William Noel, two scholars who have spent an enormous amount of time imaging the AP. When describing their experience of bringing the AP as a physical object together with early twentieth-century photographs of the object, they note that "superficial comparison of the manuscript with . . . photographs from 1906 shows the extent of the injury that has been inflicted on the book. Many pages have been damaged by mold . . . , some pages have disappeared altogether, and four pages have been painted over with portraits of the Christian evangelists" (53). Here, Easton and Noel analogize damage caused by mold to the fact that some of the folios have been covered with paintings. One can also note the context for their use of the word "disappeared." While some might agree with Easton and Noel that the erasure, disappearance, and painting over of the original Archimedes text represent sites of injury or loss, others might wonder—because not everyone might share that valuation—whether there are other, similar examples of erasure in other pieces of literature that are *more*, not less, valuable than the original text. If so, one would have to find some way to bring these contradictions into equipoise, to balance them in either eliminating the contradiction or developing some way to logically account for the discrepancy.

### **Macdonald's *O Mission Repo* and the 9/11 Commission Report**

Due to the arduous and (semi-)permanent nature of manuscript creation, strikethroughs and redactions are a relatively common appearance in medieval manuscripts. These types of erasures open space for correction or replacement, and this style of error-correction is oftentimes a necessary constructive process of manuscript conception. In this sense, strikethroughs are a way for scribes to "weave in" the appropriate text around a mistake instead of scrapping labor and materials and starting anew. In much the same way that medieval scribes used strikethrough to weave in corrections or alternate text, Travis Macdonald uses strikethrough in his 2008 *The O Mission Repo* to bring a voice to those made voiceless in the aftermath

of 9/11. Part poetry, part storytelling, and part appropriation, the book's substrate is the *9/11 Commission Report*, and against it Macdonald uses four types of erasure: redaction, strikethrough, pixelization, and omission.

Cultural productions are often a way for marginalized or unheard populations to make their voice known. Poetry, in particular, can serve as a means of getting to the truth when traditional epistemological systems fail. In the section titled "Weave Plan," Macdonald writes,

All had been stabbed  
 – possibly killed.  
 But none had guns of voice  
 had the bomb of belief  
 had the intent of error as follows:  
 the sounds of Some can hear  
 can be heard (13)

The events of 9/11 challenged uniquely American understandings of stability, surety, and safety, any of which might very well be illusory. In a sense, those events forced on Americans a discomfort, a challenging of what it means to be an American. In a sense, Macdonald's book is a way of reconceptualizing the epistemological and emotional upheavals caused by the events of 9/11. A central component of Macdonald's work – one largely responsible for its success – is the appropriation of redaction, a censorship technique widely used by government entities to suppress information. Through Macdonald's use of digital technologies, "Weave Plan" refashions the *9/11 Commission Report* into a longform erasure poem. In its new form, the poem primarily accomplishes three things: it provides a voice to the voiceless; it equips readers with a way to navigate and make sense of the post-9/11 world – that is, to arrive at new knowledge; and it offers readers the opportunity to replace feelings of fear and uncertainty with feelings of stability and intrigue. As an interpretative remediation of the original *9/11 Commission Report*, the *O Mission Repo* operates as a medium for transmitting knowledge and eliciting emotion.

Elaine Treharne, a medieval manuscripts scholar, discusses the process of representation as it applies to what she refers to as the "*textual fulfillment or optimal interpretative potential*" of a manuscript (470). For Treharne, a text must be understood as the physical object – the manuscript-in-itself – as well as all that is entailed by the physical object's being a tangible thing. Treharne explains,

With a medieval book, the fortunate momentary owner touches, skin-upon-skin, in **direct tactile intimacy** with the very people who compiled and wrote those books; the user **engages in sensual contact** with other visitors to the book, **seeing** what they saw, **feeling** what they felt, **hearing** the page turn, **smelling** the skin, **smoothing** what remains of the bodily flesh, the integral oldness, **kinetically participating in the movement of the book**,

a movement in terms of light and color and of physical composition that results in a book's changeability, its plasticity, its shifting materiality. (474, emphasis added)

Treharne's assertions, with respect to textual fulfillment, are reminiscent of the discourse surrounding phenomenal consciousness and the qualitative content of certain types of mental events. Jaegwon Kim, a philosopher who worked primarily in the field of philosophy of mind, describes the conscious mental states Treharne mentions as "instances of phenomenal consciousness" (273). Those conscious states have specific, unique felt qualities to them. For example, the content of these types of conscious states might include what it is like to experience the sound of the manuscript's page turning, what it is like to experience the scent of its parchment, and what it is like to experience the difference in tactile sensation arising from one's fingertips brushing over the parchment's hair and flesh sides. One's ability to experience those mental states and their associated sensual content, according to Treharne, are necessarily dependent on a manifestation of the text's optimal interpretative potential. In other words, a manuscript can do what it was designed to do only when a subject can access the optimal form of the manuscript.

Treharne's textual fulfillment can be best exemplified in a thought experiment. The experience of *turning a page in a book by the light of the sun while seated in a field under a wide-open sky* contains entirely different phenomenal content compared to the experience of *interacting with the same book through a computer screen, under fluorescent light, while seated in an office chair, indoors*. For Treharne, the former experience can arise only out of an interaction with an object's fulfillment of its optimal interpretative potential; the latter experience, for Treharne, is necessarily diminished and incomplete. There are a set of unique felt qualities associated with one's first-person, privileged, experiential access to the physical text, and that same unique set of phenomenal states are exactly what is lost in the digitized, mediated experience.

The kind of experiential loss described by Treharne seems to be precisely what Macdonald had intended to accomplish with *O Mission Repo*. According to Stephen Dobson—a specialist on the relationship between education and emerging technologies—this desire of new media to refashion prior media forms is an inherent component of both digital technologies and the logic of remediation (3). The *O Mission Repo* makes use of remediation through various forms of digital manipulation to generate new creative work out of an existing text. The fulfillment of Macdonald's goal—to give voice to the voiceless, to replace distress with an opportunity to contemplate and navigate, to increase knowledge—results in an act of creation. It seems difficult to interpret Macdonald's *O Mission Repo* as anything other than valuable, regardless of the fact that its existence is contingent on—in many instances—acts of erasure.

There are two key differences between the AP and the recorded liturgical prayers and the *9/11 Commission Report* and *O Mission Repo*. First, there are extant copies of the report that have not been altered, and what alterations Macdonald did make to report are non-destructive. If one desired, one could procure either a physical or digital copy of the report and commit redactions on it themselves, or they could preserve it, unedited, by shelving it in their home library. The materiality of the *9/11 Commission Report* contrasts with that of the AP: the original manuscript was the only extant copy of much of Archimedes' work, and the act of palimpsesting is, by definition, destructive. It is only through advanced imaging technologies and countless hours of labor that most of the once-lost work of Archimedes is once again made available to us. Second, there is a sense of precious temporality attributable to the AP. Its value obtains in virtue of its rarity and age.

Part of the work Macdonald does in *O Mission Repo* is transformative in nature; Macdonald creates affect and awareness in a style of writing—the public-facing governmental report—that typically works toward a dissimilar rhetorical purpose. While the palimpsest's liturgical prayers do not emerge through the redaction of Archimedes' writing, an interesting interplay between science and religion does take place on the page. Through Macdonald's conceptual realization of poetics, one can think of the AP as a fusion of mathematics and pragmatics, of human invention and divine devotion. Interesting, then, that Archimedes' mathematics and engineering should reappear through algorithmic manipulation of images taken by means of advanced optical engineering.

### **Stempel's "Natal Girl (& Other Repeat Offenses)" and a Personal Blog Post by J. K. Rowling**

In some instances, a poet's intent to commit an act of erasure against another writer can facilitate the emergence of new creative work. This is certainly the case with Rachel Stempel's "Natal Girl (& Other Repeat Offenses)," which is—as described in the body text of the poem—an erasure of a blog post written by J. K. Rowling (Stempel 1). In Stempel's poem, the labor of the poet's creative expression is designed both to work against Rowling's ideological position through poetic rhetoric and literally to erase Rowling's voice through the redaction of her written words. Much like Rowling's blog post, Stempel's poem is a political statement. Her use of poetry to make a political statement through the erasure of the beliefs that the poet sets out to work against shows a complex display of sharp critical thinking combined with a reimagining of how a poem can take form, on the page, as a type of spatial and political occupation. In their book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin assert that "There are a number of possible strategies for remediation, from respectful

to radical" (200). Stempel's work clearly and comfortably declares itself as representative of the latter category.

The title of Stempel's poem clues readers to the identity of its speaker and adopts Rowling's political voice to serve as the speaker of the poem. In the opening page of the poem, the speaker admits, "I mention all this only to explain that I knew perfectly well what was going to happen on my fourth or fifth cunt concerned about the socio-political about the dangers and the erosion" (1).<sup>2</sup> Not only is this excerpt self-referential in terms of who the speaker is, it references erosion through the use of erasure. In other words, the means by which the poem is made possible — redaction — creates visibility for, and draws attention to, the erosion of Rowling's voice, which is itself both a tool and process of erasure. The result is that Stempel repurposes Rowling's writing and, in a sense, amplifies the political character of the original voice, thereby emphasizing the political position of the original text to draw out further Rowling's agitational, inflammatory language. In the section of *Remediation* dedicated to theory, Bolter and Grusin note that "Creators of . . . electronic remediations seem to want to emphasize the difference [between the original art and its remediation] rather than erase it. In these cases, the electronic version is offered as an improvement, although the new is still justified in terms of the old and seeks to remain faithful to the older medium's character" (46). We can understand Stempel's poem as an experiment in drawing out the inflammatory language present in Rowling's blog post as a means of exposing the original author's political position. In this interpretation, the poem's speaker offers readers a stripped-down, abridged version of the blog post so that readers can get right to the point. By remediating the blog post into a creative form, the resulting poetics advance knowledge through concision. The poem serves as a concise political summary. Stempel's speaker may be taken as saying to readers, *If you want to know this author's position, if you want to hear what they are saying, I can tell you, and in a better way.*

Stempel's work helps readers see, with new eyes, what is potentially happening with the AP. Stempel employs blackout as a technique to both erase the political voice evident in Rowling's blog post and to reveal a satirical revisioning of that same political disposition. In the literature surrounding the AP, scholars often take a common position — namely, that the erasure contained therein is a straightforward instance of science *versus* religion. However, is this position *necessarily* the case? It seems plausible that that attitude arises out of a very modern way of thinking: that *our* way of thinking and doing, in *our* time, is the best way of thinking and conducting ourselves. Ostensibly, if we are cognizant of our past, of our shared history as humans attempting to make sense of our world, then we should want to be involved in a continuous striving toward progress, toward improvement no matter what form that takes or toward what venture that is directed. It seems easy, then, to think of our modern ways as a timeless



standard, ways in which we have always done things because they are the best ways we know. While it might seem obvious that we, in fact, have *not* always done things in the ways we presently do them, it *does* seem common for people to look at the past through a present lens. This practice, though, can be, and often is, a mistake in reasoning. It is of course that we see ideological discrepancies in ways of thinking and doing when we shove our modern beliefs backwards in time. All sorts of conflicts arise when we do so. With the AP, it seems in this light less plausible that the creators of the prayerbook were committing an adversarial erasure of Archimedes' work—an erasure of his cognitive and innovative voice—when they chose to remove his text and replace it with liturgical prayers. Rather, it seems much more likely that those creators thought of their erasure as a necessary process of recycling a precious resource. The difference between the two erasures is a sense of adversarial intentionality.

### Sullivan's "Levonorgestrel" and Robert McGill's *Once We Had a Country*

Molly R. Sullivan's "Levonorgestrel" tells readers a story through verse. Due mainly to its lack of citation, reference, or epigraph indicating otherwise, the poem appears to be an original text; however, the truth is that the poem found its genesis in a Robert McGill novel, *Once We Had a Country*. Sullivan captured a picture of a page in McGill's novel and used electronic tools to overlay redactions on top of the original text. In addition to showing post-redaction edits and modifications—following redaction and the editing process, the sourced text does not exactly match the published poem—Sullivan's artistic process shows how an object can disappear in the interest of creating new text.

Again, the case of the AP is illuminating. In her essay "Touched for the Very First Time," Angela Bennett Segler discusses the "sterilization" of the medieval manuscript through digitization. Segler notes that "As the *text* . . . emerged, the *thing* containing it disappeared" (41, emphasis original). In this context, the *thing* is the manuscript itself, the physical object, whereas the *text* is a reference to a specific string of words, whether they appear on the page or in the digital realm. Segler's argument, then, is conceptual by nature: it centers on the difference between the text as a material object and the text as a concatenation of discrete linguistic elements. In line with Segler's discussion of how the medieval manuscript—as a physical object containing written language—disappears through the remediation of its source text into a visible digital format, Sullivan disappears *Once We Had a Country* by allowing a new creative text to emerge from McGill's novel. Sullivan mediates her poem to the reader through redaction, and the purpose of this erasure is to create an emotional connection with her readers and to transmit knowledge that would otherwise be inaccessible. Save for

the title itself, many of the words constituting “Levonorgestrel” appear on page 290 of McGill’s novel. One can assert that the discrete linguistic elements comprising Sullivan’s poem are contained within that same page, but the emotional and epistemological connection is invisible until Sullivan mediates that knowledge and experience to readers through the disappearance of the object.

It would be useful to examine lines from the text to make this point manifest. Sullivan’s poem is ultimately a story about a deeply broken heart resulting from a specific circumstance. The poem centers around a woman who dreams of having children yet has—up until the events of the poem—been unsuccessful in conceiving a child. The opening stanza shows the speaker hesitating as she “unfolds a trap / destined for her belly” (lines 5, 6). The title of the poem in conjunction with lines 5 and 6 indicates to readers that this trap is an emergency contraception pill. While the specific circumstance is not made apparent to readers, we can interpret the speaker’s pregnancy as arising either from an unhealthy, perhaps abusive, relationship, or from a rape. In either case, the speaker decides to terminate the pregnancy. While the potential emotional journey resulting from one having to choose to terminate a pregnancy cannot be fully understood by those that have not taken that path—no matter the events that led one to that position—the emotional weight of this choice is apparent in the poem. Perhaps the most emotionally crushing aspect of this poem arrives in the final stanza. It is here that the speaker reveals her aspiration of having her own child is so “faint and distant” (line 15) that it is no longer recognizable as a dream, something to be anticipated with fondness and joyous excitement. Thus, the speaker abandons hope that her dream of having a child will ever come to fruition.

The poem’s succinct, three-stanza economy is a testament to the poet’s skill in eliciting emotion. Furthermore, the poem serves as a medium for knowledge. That is, outside a poetic framework, one could describe the speaker’s position, one could even suggest what it is like to feel what the speaker feels—that is, one can know all the relevant propositional knowledge related to the speaker’s phenomenal experience—but it is only through Sullivan’s poem that any semblance of the speaker’s “raw feels” is transmitted to readers. Through the poem, readers come to understand the speaker’s circumstance: we are made to know, and through that knowledge, we are made to empathize. Sullivan’s remediation of the substrate text creates the possibility of our understanding the speaker’s position as well as some version of the emotions related to her losses.

Sullivan’s work may be taken as a pivot to commentary on the AP. With Archimedes’ text, the original work re-emerges through advanced imaging techniques while Sullivan’s text emerges through digital post-processing. Both the poem and the palimpsest have a unique and interesting beginning in that they exist as a part of some other object’s history. But, the

stronger claim — that the existence of both the poem and the palimpsest are necessarily dependent on the continued existence of some other object — cannot be made. While the texts at one time relied on other objects for their genesis, those texts now persist in the digital. The texts and the objects from which they were derived are now separate, individual things; and as individual things, they have value in themselves. In other words, one can conceive of each piece of writing as an act of creation that has value in virtue of its relationship to a specific community or to the world more broadly.

### **Creative Remediation, Ideology, and the Classroom**

Creative remediation of existing tokens of literary and non-literary texts can serve many purposes. In MacDonald's *O Mission Repo*, creative remediation grants a voice to the voiceless and replaces undesirable phenomenal content of certain mental states with new emotional content. In Stempel's "Natal Girl," creative remediation brings visibility to social issues through the advancement and clear exposure of political positions and beliefs. In Sullivan's "Levonorgestrel," remediation creates space to transmit knowledge of unique lived experiences through poetic epistemology and storytelling and creates access for others to come to knowledge of something they would otherwise be potentially incapable of knowing. It is not a matter of these remediations being more or less valuable than their substrate texts; they are valuable as cultural and epistemological objects in their own right. Through various means of erasure, the labor of each creative writer produces a text, a literary object, that deserves its own space and acknowledgement. The issue of valuation raised in the onset seems to be a condition unique to the Archimedes Palimpsest and other similarly injured objects and texts. The difference between the erasure of the AP and the new media examples of erasure cited herein is one of causation and permanency. In this light, the AP appears to be a site of injury due to the resulting loss that permanent erasure causes. The substrate texts through which MacDonald, Stempel, and Sullivan draw out their creative works also undergo acts of erasure, but those instances are impermanent, reversible, and nondestructive — the unedited copies, after all, remain extant.

To draw out further the interaction between palimpsested manuscripts and modern erasure poetry, one can turn to the wisdom of Gabrielle Kingsley, a found poetry collage artist who sources from vintage *National Geographic* magazines. In her poem "keep an ear tuned," Kingsley urges readers to

keep an ear tuned  
to the poetry of  
stars and silence  
They may yet have  
more to say

With Kingsley's advice in mind, the emergence of literary texts from non-literary sources opens space for considering how political and artistic interplays influence evaluation. There is more to say about erasure and creative remediation when we consider the politics of materiality. Modern blackout poetry demonstrates that it is perhaps the case that those who palimpsested the parchment on which Archimedes' work originally appeared were not making a political statement about science. Given the historical context of the period—and considering the ways in which precious commodities were recycled at the time—it seems reasonable that we shift our perspectives on how we, as medievalists, approach manuscripts. Additionally, the AP allows for an understanding of modern blackout poetry as a form of exchange and conversation between polemic positions. The interaction between material objects and emanant texts helps us visualize similarities and differences between ideological dispositions and the rhetorical turns inherent in a given argument. Thus, as literary critics and creative writers, both medieval manuscripts and modern forms of poetry serve us as instructional realia: their value extends beyond disciplinary boundaries to reveal new ways of conceiving artistic praxis.

Finally, the issues surrounding palimpsesting have an influence on our pedagogy and what it is we teach in our classrooms. First, and perhaps most importantly, we can show our students that *who* we cite or *whose* writing we assign can be just as important as what the writing tells us. In writing this essay, I could have cited the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the definition I used at the start of this essay. While the *OED* is a wonderfully valuable tool, the decision to cite a woman and manuscript imaging scholar was a purposeful decision. Citation provides a way for us to recognize one's authority and contributions to a particular discourse community. Citation is also a way for us, as researchers, to create cross-disciplinary conversation. Citations are decisions we make with intentionality.

The problems of "intentionality" lead me to my second point about teaching. Encouraging students to research the etymology of the words they choose to employ in their writing has been enormously productive in my classrooms. For example, 'intentionality' means one thing in the fields of English and psychology and something entirely different in the study of cognitive phenomenology and philosophy of mind. By researching words, students may find new ways of incorporating language into their research. Through their research of words, students might also discover that they have an interest in topics, media, or disciplines that they otherwise would not have encountered.

Third, the sources I chose for this project vary widely. Some are quite formal and traditionally academic while others have a much more casual, conversational tone. Challenging students to think about what constitutes academic publishing or what qualifies a piece of writing as academic introduces students to the conventions of discourse communities. Examining

established conventions and writing styles can provide students with a deeper understanding of the communities they join and engage with; it also allows students the exploratory freedom to bend or break those rules. Introducing students to the diversity in what is currently being published encourages them to bring their own voice and research interests to any topic they set out to explore.

Binghamton University

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The black, vertical text is the liturgical text most obvious on the page. The red, horizontal text is the original Archimedes text, which had been erased and subsequently remediated to us. The technical instrument of mediation—through which Archimedes’ work is re-presented to us—is discussed in the article by Kleynhans et al.

<sup>2</sup> Due to how the poem emerges from the substrate text and how the poem appears on the page, no line breaks have been included. While the lack of punctuation makes reading this excerpt more difficult than it needs to be, I have chosen to preserve that lack of punctuation to remain as close to the original text of the poem—and hopefully, as close to the author’s original vision—as possible.

#### Works Cited

- “About the Archimedes Palimpsest.” *The Archimedes Palimpsest Project*, www.archimedespalimpsest.org/about/.
- Bolter, Jay David, and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. MIT P, 2000.
- Dobson, Stephen. “Remediation. Understanding New Media – Revisiting a Classic.” *Seminar.net: International Journal of Media, Technology and Lifelong Learning*, vol. 2, no. 2, www.seminar.net/images/stories/vol2-issue2/review\_remediation\_dobson.pdf, pp. 1-9. [PDF].
- Easton, Roger L., Jr., and William Noel. “Infinite Possibilities: Ten Years of Study of the Archimedes Palimpsest.” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 154, no. 1, Mar. 2010, pp. 50-76.
- Gregory, Kiel M. “Your Recent Publication.” Received by Molly R. Sullivan, 21 Jan. 2021.
- Kim, Jaegwon. *Philosophy of Mind*, 3rd ed., Westview P, 2011.
- Kingsley, Gabrielle. “Keep an Ear Tuned.” *Instagram*, uploaded by @thistlequiff, 20 Apr. 2022, www.instagram.com/p/CcknQo9ozPP/.
- Kleynhans, Tania, et al. “Low-Cost, User Friendly Multispectral Imaging System for the Recovery of Damaged, Faded or Palimpsested Historical Documents.” *SPIE*, 12 Apr. 2021, pp. 117270F-1-7.
- Macdonald, Travis. *The O Mission Repo: A Repo of the O Mission Error Attacks on Unit, Official Over Edit*, vol. 1, Fact-Simile Editions, 11 Sept. 2011. *Issuu*, www.issuu.com/fact-simile/docs/o\_mission\_repo\_full\_text.
- McGill, Robert. *Once We Had a Country*. Knopf, 2013.
- Office of the Dead; Prayers before Celebrating Mass; Funeral Service; Necrologium*. Cologne, Germany, 1487.

- Segler, Angela R. Bennett. "Touched for the Very First Time: Losing My Manuscript Virginity." *Transparent Things: A Cabinet*. Edited by Maggie M. Williams and Karen Eileen Overbey, Punctum Books, 2013.
- Stempel, Rachel. "Natal Girl (& Other Repeat Offenses)." *Poemeleon*, 2022, [www.poemeleon.me/rachel-stempel](http://www.poemeleon.me/rachel-stempel).
- Sullivan, Molly R. "Levonorgestrel." *Gandy Dancer*, Dec. 2020, [www.gandydancer.org/9-1-poetry/molly-r-sullivan/](http://www.gandydancer.org/9-1-poetry/molly-r-sullivan/).
- The Archimedes Palimpsest: Images and Transcriptions*, vol. 2, edited by Reviel Netz, William Noel, Natalie Tchernetska, and Nigel Wilson, Cambridge UP, 2011.
- Treharne, Elaine. "Fleshing Out the Text: The Transcendent Manuscript in the Digital Age." *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2013, pp. 465-78.
- The Walters Art Museum. "With X-Ray Florescence Imaging, New Ability to Read Previously Unknown Mathematical Treatises in Archimedes Palimpsest." 24 May 2005, [www.thewalters.org/news/archimedes-palimpsest-imaging/](http://www.thewalters.org/news/archimedes-palimpsest-imaging/).