

*An Investigation Concerning Ancient Roman Education:
The Dispelling of Widespread Illiteracy and the Significance of the
Classical Model of Education Grounded in the Lives of Scholars and
Emperors*

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Abstract

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In our analyses of the Ancient World, we tend to attribute literacy in extremes; either someone studied under the tutelage of intellectuals, learned about poetry and debated philosophers or were wholly separate from any educational environment. The intent of this thesis is to demonstrate that ordinary citizens had exposure to written language (Greek or Latin) in varying degrees. In addition to their ability to read and comprehend written text, there were different opportunities for lower class citizens to receive an education that mirrored (at least in part) the education of the upper class and elite. Students learned more than just a pragmatic use of the language; they had acumen of Virgil, Homer, and other prolific poets because their moral education was rooted in the pious heroes that espoused these virtues.

The first part of this inquiry aims to disprove the idea that there was a very limited number of educated elite in the Roman Empire and illiterate masses still functioned cohesively in society; Essentially, arguing against the likening of Rome to Europe in the Dark Ages. Yet, based on the evidence of widespread written text and writing materials, teachers for all levels, and professions requiring a working knowledge of the language, we cannot assert such a rate of illiteracy. The first chapter closes with a look at the relationship between the oral appreciation and the pragmatic understanding of the written language as well as why contemporary students might prefer the Classical Model of education.

The final part identifies the significance of education in the lives of the scholars and emperors; whether they were born in the Italian state or a province of the empire, the quality and depth of one's education raised himself far above his competitors; securing authority rested on exemplary ability in rhetoric and philosophy. Subsequent emperors deemed education so crucial that imperial decrees banished deviant religions from academic institutions fearing their beliefs might overtake their own. In conclusion, this thesis argues that literacy was much higher in Ancient Rome and discusses the vast influence education had on the realisation of an individual's intellectual pursuits and political consequences for the Empire.

Chapter I: The Foundations of Ancient Roman Education: Why All Classes Were Literate and a Distinction between *Educated* and *Literate*

Education in the Ancient World, and by Ancient I am referring to the Greeks and Romans, had a tradition that has steadfastly remained (almost) unchanged as an educational model, even for modern day institutions. This fact is a testament to the importance an education had in the development of a man within his society. However, it should not be ignored that women, albeit with the emergence of the Roman culture, began to share the responsibilities of men concerning an education in religious rights and duties, land and financial ownership, and their legal right in the absence of a husband. When we look to the Ancient World, we are often tempted to dismiss advances in their *mores* and culture, condemning it to a label of cruel and prejudiced practices. These errors in trails only corrected themselves because of the modern lens we use to observe history and perhaps, anachronistically, use to judge the progress of these older civilizations and their societal standards as right or wrong. The foundational belief on which this thinking occurs is a misconception: our beliefs about education stem from what worked and what failed in our classrooms *in the last eighty years*. Saying that it was natural that some ancient practices would have come about inevitably, presupposes that philosophers and

grammarians in ancient schools had the very same techniques succeed or fail that we as a society have. The techniques, materials, and above all subject matter, depended on their needs *at the time of their society*. Acknowledging this, we can try to fully understand, as well as apply, the same motivations for their education into our system.

This chapter will cover the structure of what an education consisted of for a Roman child (and its departures therein based on the gender) and a description of the basic stages; specifically the roles of parents in early education, the progression to grammarians and a more formal education, and finally the duties of rhetoricians. Then, it addresses the claims made in *Ancient Literacy* by William Harris seeking to dispel its prevailing argument about illiteracy of the masses and establishing a firm understanding the Ancient World as having a profound understanding of both spoken and written language. As well as their responsibilities as citizens delineated therein. Now, we must make the distinction between what we will refer to as *Educated vs. Literate*. The former implies having received an advanced education with an exceptional command of the written and spoken language; having been trained to a) construct arguments and speak persuasively, b) be able to identify various classical authors and had already memorised passages from their most famous works, and c) apply that knowledge of argumentation and frame their ideas in

the context of the *mores* exhibited in the *Aeneid*, *Res Gestae*, et cetera. The latter is meant to describe individuals that only completed a simpler version of the aforementioned education or attended a 'trade school'; they have a working knowledge of the language and ability to read and write, although it might only be limited to their name and things related to their lives or *businesses*.

Lastly, this chapter will draw inspiration from both Cato the Elder (Marcus Porcius Cato) and Quintilian (Marcus Fabius Quintilianus) in order to present the cornerstones with which Roman educators believed to be the best way to educate their *discipuli* and prepare them for a pious and good life. These foundations of a Roman Education demonstrate the need to revive classical liberal educations within our own society, and to argue its merits so it that might earn its prestigious place in ours and our children's lives once again.

Section I: The Structure of a Basic Ancient Roman Education and Movement into Higher Learning

The primary education of child began in the home. Whether or not the family lived in the city or in the countryside did not matter. A basic education consisting of letter and numeral recognition, language, and a pragmatic knowledge of how to (aid in) running the household was needed. This is why the parents did the very first semblances of education, or if finances permitted, a slave (traditionally Greek) would instruct the children. Parents were able to make

a strong impression on their children because along with learning the letters and numbers, they learned a sense of morality and what it meant to be a 'good and pious' Roman. Instilling within them social customs that have remained in their family for generations: attitudes, religious practices, and most importantly, lessons learned from experience imparted from an invaluable moral education for their children. However, the quality of formal lessons acquired at this stage of the education could have depended on class. For example, Lisa Maurice writes in her book *The Teacher in Ancient Rome: The Magister in His World*, reflects on Booth's (1979) idea that Rome had two distinct paths through education, and not the one simplified route from elementary teachers to grammarian, and finally to a rhetorician:

Each of these systems serviced a different segment of the population. The students of the upper classes would pursue a liberal education, obtaining their elementary education from one of a number of options...and would study with a *Grammaticus* and then with a *Rhetor*. Those students from relatively humble backgrounds would not follow this model at all, but would instead study under a *Ludi Magister*. Thus, the *Ludi Magister* actually operated a different kind of school, a kind of "trade school", servicing the lower segments of the social spectrum, and teaching a level of "craft literacy." (Maurice, 08)

This illustrates an important point that allows us to contest the claim that illiteracy was more prevalent than any degree of literacy brought up by both Harris and Robert Browning (*Education in the Roman Empire*). Even if there was two distinct tracks for education that discriminates between classes or a uniform system, it cannot be the case that Romans, who did not receive a full classical

education, were illiterate nor is it the case that they could not appreciate epic literature that had been so pervasive in Greece and now Rome. Booth notes specifically that despite being the extent of some Roman's education, the 'pauper's teacher' (*Ludi Magister*) "taught recognition of letters, reading, writing and some arithmetic, and as such his curriculum overlapped somewhat with that of the other teachers who also taught preliminary studies to the children of nobility (Maurice, 09). On what grounds am I able to make the second claim, given that scholars tend to agree that regardless of class, at least some education was given either from the parents (basic written and spoken language, maths, and moral tenants) or in a more professionalized setting (basic classical education to specialisations in rhetoric or law) that many Romans had an affinity for Homer, Virgil and other great poets? Browning's description of primary education postulates an answer: "Beginning with single letters, the pupils go on to copy the alphabet, then syllables, then lists of words – often of names – then formulae for letters, etc., and finally short edifying texts" (Browning, 856-857), allows to ask what names would they have copied? Along with the family name, their names, what else could there have been? The names of heroes found in literature and we know this because within those lessons of a child's moral education, those names would embody the kind of man one needed to be: reverent to the Gods, bold in the face of danger, and a beacon to the rest of his

men espousing an incredible resolve. The heroes' values were those that one ought to carry with them in life and learned while they are young, so they can be internalised; not just Romans, but students far beyond the Italian schools are learning from classical texts: "It is interesting and touching to find a seventh-century schoolboy in upper Egypt copying a long list of characters from the *Iliad* in alphabetical order" (Browning, 857). Yet, I must stress that because of the lack of evidence showing the lower class' levels of education, I am making a distinction between the comprehension of written literature and knowledge gained through oral teaching. Anything besides names or famous passages tantamount to Roman culture, it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the depth of the lower class' insight about the literature. Certainly, only this kind of *pietas* could be learned from the Roman authors and ἀρετή from their Greek predecessors. While other issues concerning literacy will arise in the next paragraphs, it was important to establish an interest in literature to show its importance in both later in classrooms and earlier in the homes. Elementary education is essential in preparing a child to not only be successful in his advanced educational undertakings, but also in his moral development to later benefit and contribute to society.

After a child is given the guidance under his/her parents, a family has to make a decision involving the academic future of their children. Several

important factors were considered regarding whether or not to pursue any further education: Financial status of the family, necessity of children being at home, availability of the teacher, what the child was interesting in studying (here we make the distinction between *gravitas & leges* versus *rhetoric & philosophy*), and lastly asking what was the end goal for the student (career as a statesmen, military, or lawyer, etc.). The factors played a pivotal part in the development of young men. However, why do we focus on the growth of mostly young men? The issue arises with the traditional cultural values of the Romans, who believed that a woman's responsibility rested in taking care of the home and the health of their family. This seems to suggest that without a working knowledge of the household, Roman families would not be able to function as an efficient unit. Males, based on the precedent that they protect their homes, were widely considered to be the ones that ought to venture out so they might bring back with them knowledge and wealth or defend their land from invaders.

Sons of wealthy families were able to seek the tutelage of a *Grammaticus* whose job it was to teach the finer points of the language, while highlighting the sophisticated usage of poetic techniques: "The other principal activity of the grammarian was the explication of poetic texts. This has a long history, in Greek going back beyond the Alexandrian grammarians to the schoolmaster in a fragment of Aristophanes who quizzes his pupils on the meaning of Homeric

words, and in Latin" (Browning, 859). Some students would move on to be educated by teachers of rhetoric and so it was necessary to have knowledge of the intricacies of the language. Again, we are allowed to ask what works did they draw the passages from because it was not the case that they were using contemporary works in the classrooms. Browning asserts:

His commentary is mainly linguistic, and he only occasionally touches upon mythological, historical or literary questions at any length. His main principles of explanation are *natura*, *auctoritas* and *usus*, and he easily slides from linguistic description to linguistic prescription. He is alert to ambiguities and to semantic change, and often elucidates a Virgilian passage by quoting Lucretius or Horace or Lucan. But he scarcely ever refers to the spoken language of his own day" (Browning, 859).

Once again, we see a reference to the classic texts that contained lessons which melded the Roman mind-set and established very early, what a good Roman's duty was. This was the beginning of specific literary knowledge, but not because the themes of the text were taught (these texts were used to demonstrate specific techniques which manipulated the language to elevate its meaning and show the capabilities of well constructed writing), rather they provided the pupil with the necessary comprehension skills to interpret the underlying motifs of the works. Conversely, as it has been postulated, teachers of rhetoric did not focus on literature, but solely on effective use of speech. How exactly were the skills learned from the previous instructor applied to reading prose, poetry, or myth? The rhetoricians taught students to speak in such way that they inspired listeners

to support their cause, not only because of the manner in which they spoke (similar to semantic construction in language), but also because of the *content of their speech* (similar to lessons stressed in the classical literature). In the ancient world, text can be likened to speech, and the more adeptly written works were able to convey a deeper meaning than the words simply printed on the script. The rhetorician taught his students about the techniques which they would employ in their speeches, but most importantly, tasked them with delivering those speeches in the fora and theatres. The original idea, with students being limited to strictly 'forensic' speeches that involved arguing a point, had to follow an arbitrary set of constraints, would be graded on their ability to meritoriously persuade their audience without adjusting or slacking in the conditions the point necessarily followed. "None of these model speeches, political, moral or forensic, betrays any awareness of the Roman empire. When one reflects that a training in rhetoric was regarded as essential both for members of city councils and for those who aspired to play a part in the public life of their province or of the empire as a whole, one cannot but be surprised at this hermetic exclusion" (Browning, 862). Browning goes on to explain that rarely did these speeches even address the physically extant laws, let alone the current affairs of the empire. Yet, Browning's explanation would imply that Roman orators were nothing more than bearers of the sophistic tradition of persuasion and only

carried with them the appearance of ethics. Their credibility seemed to be founded through a podium. They did not seek to educate, they did not wish to edify, but desired the sound of applause from a captivated audience lauding their lovely words. However, more recently there has been evidence suggesting that there were two kinds of speeches made, and that the students practiced certain exercises involving memorizing certain maxims to encapsulate certain ideas or arguments. Matthew Nicholls explains, "Two styles of practice speech that were already evolving became standard at Rome. The *suasoria*, "resembling philosophical or political debates, offers advice to a mythical or historical character" and "[t]he more challenging *controversia* is a role-playing speech, tackling a complex case involving imaginary laws" (Nicholls, 82). In addition, students of rhetoric focused on facial expression and body language to accentuate their points; even though actors utilized some of these practices, the orator (being a noble profession) made sure to distinguish himself from his unsophisticated counterpart by tapering his movements and abstaining in using any emotion (Nicholls, 82). Having two distinct styles of speech is indicative of two things: it dispels the idea that orators spoke exclusively on cases, which did not concern the practical world, and that these exercises would be used in tandem to develop speakers who could speak at length, whether intelligently or struggling through their arguments (as a student does), about certain moral

decisions one ought to make following the example of the heroes (but apply the restrictions that limit mortal men). Students were not replicating the Greek ideal of an 'artistic speaker', but instead were trying to educate the public using appropriate models found in the annals of Roman History to inspire an upstanding citizenry; to make appeals to improve the whole of society, and not simply to entertain decadent tastes ignorant of the great works of their time.

Section II: Defining Harris' Model of Ancient Roman Literacy and Specifically Showing the Widespread Written and Oral Knowledge of the Latin Language by all Classes

Subsection A: Explaining the Climate in which Secondary Languages Developed (From Christianity) and Already Extant Language of the Empire

Understanding the problem of ascertaining the level of literacy in the Roman Empire is difficult because we must define the boundaries in which we are asking for the level of literacy. Languages had already existed before the Romanization of Europe and the Mediterranean. Celtic, Etruscan, Iberian, African (Punic/Libyan), and Greek were already spoken in what was to become the future conquered territories of the Empire. So, let us define the period that we are testing to determine the literacy of all classes of Roman citizen and the prevalence of written language (as it pertained to a person's everyday life) Understandably, many cultures already held established traditions, religious practices, and languages before their renaming as Roman territory. While they

all certainly varied in usage of written text, this section is primarily concerned with the proficiency of Latin in the western empire from the third century onward; we are asking how literate members of all classes were and trying to account for the high frequency of written text (inscriptions, graffiti, etc.) which the average Roman would have encountered. This is not limited to citizens in a city, despite having a larger concentration of *diverse and knowledgeable* persons. Citizens in the countryside, coasts, and outposts of the empire would have had to interpret shipping orders, inventory lists, trade agreements, and other contracts. Soldiers also needed to be able to read battle orders, military formations, and supply lists, sometimes without the use of diagrams or a superior officer's instructions. Given that there was a lot of exposure to the Latin language, it seems that there had to have been at least a basic understanding of grammar and literary tools with which Romans communicated important information. This must have occurred irrespective of what class one belonged to. It was paramount that you understood the written language in order to be an effective part and functioning member of Roman society. As we look towards the fourth century and later, we see a rise in Christianity within the empire. However, written language were not limited to the spread of religious practices, but the fostering of educated individuals (not just in the monastic educational system) that either returned to their home or ventured to the farthest territory in

order to spread the gospel. Their contact with illiterate individuals (persons with no exposure to written text, Latin or Greek languages, and who only had an oral grasp on their language) combined with the apparent distaste for classical culture, gave rise to colloquial languages of the surrounding countries.

Additionally, missions became a system of formal schooling. The pious dedication of Christian disciples introducing new methods to teach Christianity and spreading the message of the Bible conveyed in more than just a language they can understand, but a language they can grapple with to elicit a more profound significance. Browning clarifies:

In those regions of the Roman Empire where the population largely spoke neither Greek nor Latin, the situation differed both from that in the Greek east and that of the Latin west. In these communities, members of the local élites had for centuries sought a Greek or Latin education, and by doing so had distanced themselves from their fellow citizens, who spoke their own tongues, were more often than not illiterate, and neither understood nor esteemed classical culture. It was largely thanks to the missionary and pastoral work of the church, especially since the fourth century, that the vernacular tongues of these peoples became literary languages and the people themselves potentially literate. The Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian and Gothic languages first emerged as vehicles of culture when the Bible, the liturgy and some patristic texts were translated into them, sometimes in an alphabet specially devised for the purpose. Speakers of these languages, who could now become literate without having to learn a foreign language, learnt to read, write and express themselves by the study of Christian texts rather than of profane literature (Browning, 868).

Subsection B: Contending with the Supposed Literacy Levels of Ancient Romans (Spanning all Classes) and Attempting to Refute Harris' Claims

In order to understand the reading levels of the average Roman during this time period (approx. mid 3rd Century AD to the mid 4th Century AD), we need to first understand the purpose of writings and inscriptions in the earlier

periods. Harris' *Ancient Literacy* does an amazing job of providing research, compelling reasoning, and sublime evidence for what he believes to be the purpose of the written word in Rome at this time. Without his research, we cannot conduct the investigation in this paper; additionally, we would not be able to challenge those findings based on biblical evidence (Acts), graffiti in Pompeii, and the pragmatic usage of writing (requiring a basic knowledge of not only word identification, but comprehension, so that a Roman might understand what is being said and in what context it is being said). This section will seek to evaluate Harris' claims based on his evidence, and using the aforementioned sources, attempt to dispel the impression that the ancient world suffered from an incredibly low literacy rate (prominent only among the educated elite and upper classes), while the vastly illiterate still enjoyed the benefits of a functioning society.

Harris begins with the enquiry regarding the availability of supplies; it would seem that to the Romans, there was a question whether wax tablets or papyrus was preferred. He writes on the merits of using wax tablets, that they "could easily be reused. Small tablets were constantly used for everyday purposes such as school exercises, letters and business documents" (Harris, 194). Coupling this with the convenience of the *ostrakon* (durability, cheapness, and easy storage), one begins to wonder why the Romans would be

discouraged in their literary pursuits on account of material on which something was recorded. Harris stresses that the papyrus was the means by which long letters and books were *traditionally written*, and because of its scarcity and price, it would have been hard for common citizens to acquire it, let alone fill it with the appropriate literary talent as the great authors did (Harris, 195).

However, there exists a problem for anyone evaluating his final observation:

“The increasing use of parchment meant that prominent authors were writing with materials, which were virtually inaccessible to the public (on account of the expense to ship and maintain very fragile material), prohibited ordinary citizens from obtaining reading materials and therefore could not have raised the overall level of literacy” (Harris, 195-196). The issue stands with the segregation of the majority of the population and the sole usage of papyrus. Harris already has said the wax tablets and *ostrakon* were used in classrooms and homes to educate children, was it necessary that they have money to pay for papyrus in order to read? The answer is no, because Grammarians, who were supported by private funds that allowed them to purchase books, wrote passages meant to be copied down and recited from *these papyrus scrolls*. They would have already owned copies of the classical authors. The Grammarian transferred the script and themes from poetry, epics, and any author’s musings so the students could read the passages. Harris’ error is believing that papyrus exclusively held on to any

worthwhile knowledge, while the rudimentary and trivial expressions were limited to tablets. Any Romans' cause to write was not inhibited by the high cost of the materials because that presupposes a belief that anyone attempting to compose, was trying to write a masterpiece.

The incredible collection of graffiti that we have unearthed on the walls of theatres and houses in Pompeii ought to be very indicative of the need for any Roman to communicate his or her thoughts to the public; whether it is to a friend, a response to a politician, or simply a string of obscenities aimed at a neighbour. Romans did not wait for "adequate" materials to try to write. Buried trinkets under the Circus Maximus and the Flavian Amphitheater (Colosseum) were inscribed with curses aimed at competitors, love spells bore the names of one's affections; there were tablets detailing shipping manifestos, grain dole allocations, and even formal laws written on larger tablets. Clearly, illiteracy cannot have been blamed on a deficiency of writing materials. Conversely, in order to contend with the claim of mass illiteracy, we are obliged to ascertain the reason why Harris believes in this proposition.

Feasibly, there is some merit in his claim that most Romans encounter formal script and that their literacy was founded on simple sentence structure and word recognition gained through elementary education. Can this perception of Roman literacy explain the focus on education permeating all

Roman classes, but yield a barely literate society? Harris answers this question in his keen observation on the ubiquity senatorial and imperial decrees for which all citizens within the (cities of the) Empire were exposed to and recognised:

The same applied to senatorial decrees: they had to be committed to writing and deposited in the state treasury, and they *might* be displayed to the public on bronze. Under the late Republic a considerable effort was made to inscribe laws in other cities as well as Rome, and a senatorial decree was always likely to be inscribed in any city which was directly concerned. The praetor's edict was posted. He edicts, letters and rescripts of emperors, which came to be a major source of law, were by definition in writing, and the text was commonly put on public view – but they did not have to be, and still less was there any requirement that such texts had to be (Harris, 207).

Again, Harris falls short of attempting to convince his reader that the Romans only “pieced together” difficult and formal writing because of their rudimentary education. Not only, were inscriptions numerous, but the average Roman was expected *to have read and understood them*. How can we assert that obligation of the citizenry? Simply put the laws *were displayed* so that Romans knew their duty to the state, their emperor, and one another. The Twelve Tables (the original codex of laws for Rome) and the Lictors (bearers of penal and legal duties) ensured that Romans *obeyed these laws or be publically punished*. Any cries of ignorance concerning the law fell on deaf ears and heavy rods.

Secondly, we must ask ourselves about the literacy of the military; were the masses that served centurions unable to read the orders of their superiors? How could soldiers move up the ranks if they failed to understand battle formations and unable to read the tactical changes? Harris seems divided on the

issue himself. He states, "The legions include a very considerable number of literates and semi-literates" (Harris, 213), but earlier stressed barely anyone had contact with material that needed reading that was below the rank of Centurion, and that the mere presence of tablets at the camps and barracks did not indicate high levels of literacy (Harris, 166-167). Herein lies an important contradiction, rooted not in the intellectual ability of a Roman soldier, but in his *superbia in proelio*. Roman soldiers were regarded not only for their ability to fight well as a unit, but individual bravery amongst harrowing circumstances. It seems difficult to imagine a soldier who had not been taught to interpret battle lines, read a map, or guide marching columns, leading troops effectively. Commanders could inspire their troops yes, but experience could not be taught. What allowed them to survive so many campaigns against the Germans, Goths, Britons, or the Parthians? Augmenting their ferocity was a literacy of war that demanded paying close attention to written orders, diagramming positions, and adhering to their code of honour learned from heroes consecrated in the annals of Roman History. This analysis comes with two very important caveats: a) the way in which I describe a soldier's literacy as compared to average citizens denotes different kinds of literacy (however, all Romans have the ability to read and comprehend what they have read) and b) this argument is not trying to state universal literacy. In trying to motivate the view that a *larger percentage* of the

population was literate as compared to the number originally postulated, we have to understand that there were people incapable of being literate. This means that there will have always existed a percentage (Harris states a much larger majority, whereas I believe a smaller percentage) of Roman citizens that were not literate.

Lastly, Harris did not account for any biblical evidence; how was Roman society, at least in terms of major differences to that of Christianity, documented? In Acts (of the Apostles), dated by scholars to have been written around 60 – 150 AD, there is a scene in which John and Peter are taken before the authorities in Rome; immediately, the guards notice something about them: “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (*King James Bible, Acts 4:13*). Why would they make it a point to describe the two as “unlearned and ignorant”? Because by being uneducated was a departure from the norm of Roman society. Being labeled as unschooled in Roman society meant that they did not hold pragmatic skills in Latin comprehension or speaking ability. Acts records an astounding amount of detail concerning Christianity developing Rome; it serves a welcome reference to the literacy of both groups and how knowledge was passed. In

Rome, it was through rigorous schooling and ability versus the oral tradition of Christianity.

Subsection C: The Distinction between Oral and Written uses of the Latin Language and the Necessity of a Presence of Written Words

The implicit oral importance that Romans attributed to their language is incredibly evident in their epic poetry and novels, which were formally written and published. The structure of these poems worked with the standard model beginning *in media res*, but the words themselves ran together; no spacing, no punctuation, not even discerning capital letters to help the reader interpret the sentences. With seemingly endless lines of letters, how could literate Romans even read these pieces hailed to be the height of literature in the imperial age? The answer lies in presentations of the poems: not only would they be methodically memorized, but also they would be lyrically recited, following meter and accentuation meticulously. Tyler Lansford expounds on the significance of meter, describing the rising and falling of sentences, and caesura (break between words in a metrical foot) separating the sentences and demarcating important events and themes from the rest of the line. Firstly, it was unlikely that Romans would have scanned (mark the poem's long and short syllables) the piece, so their primary method of comprehending the poem would have been by *reading it aloud*. By doing so, they would have heard pauses that

the author inserted between words, the unique pronunciations of words so they might tell its function in the sentence, and finally to hear the unseen beauty of the written lines when the tongue delineates the carefully placed diction and syntax. We may ask how anyone was able to grasp the pivotal lessons of the work when all they saw were strings of letters. Lansford explains that intonation formed the foundation of Roman's understanding of the Latin language. Yet, its highest purpose was to allow the verbs to delineate the poet's passions, fears, hopes, and ambitions. The aural nuances of the language would not escape anyone in the audiences; those who had received advanced lessons in grammar and rhetoric would have recognized the touches of skill heightening the passages. Powerful lines that embody the stark moral lessons, which are imparted to the hero, resonate with the spectators in the theatre and the imperial courts. However, we can only say that it affects the "reader" in modern society. Nevertheless, there is still an important emphasis on the written word in imperial Rome: it serves to invoke the same emotion or sense of duty or passion in a reader analogous to the connotations those certain words have when heard. They both encapsulate specific ideas that we (as translators) cannot communicate without appealing to a number of words in order to successfully convey the meaning. Bronze tablets bearing the municipal laws, wax tablets with daily lessons, or even trinkets bearing inscriptions of charms, the point being

that despite the oral focus and appreciation of the language, comprehension of words and their grammatical relationship was a necessary skill for Romans, which was born through literacy (or practice with at least basic level texts).

Subsection D: Structure of Education According to Quintilian and Cato the Elder and those Models' Allure to Modern Day Students

When we think of Ancient Education, we are almost instinctually drawn to the Ancient Greek model of learning and speaking harmoniously for both their own sakes. We tend to believe that the ancient Greeks, having fought so many courageous wars at the behest of the Gods, sought pleasure in their poems or their books as a respite from their tribulations. Nevertheless, we cannot forget the Romans and their system, which solidified the iconic parts of a Greek education with the moral backbone of the Roman state. It is important to understand that the concept of doing things for their own sake, that is studying philosophy for example, simply for acquiring more knowledge and better understanding of the world is a Greek motif. The Romans sought that their sons learn Law and Rhetoric, so that they become the next generation's statesmen continuing the tradition of Roman hegemony over the Mediterranean. My belief is that Romans applied a very pragmatic outlook on their lives; every endeavour, every risk was for a greater good kept firm in their interests by their elders. Romans continually pushed towards their anticipated success because they

believed the labours they endured now had a temporary part in their ultimate purpose. As we stated above, a moral education was the parent's job to instill in their children. Though, we can ask, did that education extend past ethics and duty? Yes, Cato the Elder personally taught his son to not only read and write, but to wear armour, throw a javelin, and ride a horse (Plutarch, 362-363). Why were these elements important; surely, not all Roman fathers were seeking to raise soldiers. Soldiers, no, but ideal Romans, yes. Strong, intelligent, and able to defend the fatherland if ever it was threatened. These were more than just their sons, they were sons of Rome and as such, it was their duty to defend her. Still, we cannot forget that these children would grow up to have lives of their own and they varied depending on social class. However, each one of them possessed a robust moral code that went on to shape their children after them, ensuring lines of loyal Romans. The notion that parents pass on their morality to their children is one that has gotten stronger with time. Given a 'place to start' and allowing your children to evaluate and change themselves based on their experience and changing beliefs, showed their development from into capable adults that could contend with moral questions, even if they lacked the proper schooling to express their views sophisticatedly; they still could articulate their thoughts and communicate commendably.

Quintilian, in his writings *Institutio Oratoria*, urged that children should be taught early because their minds are more susceptible to learning more information and he stressed natural ability; if a student has a natural talent for sport or academia, then it must be honed or is in danger of being wasted (Quintilian 1.1.1-24). Of course, the end goal for Quintilian was to produce a brilliant orator, yet distinct from the sophists. He believed that it was foremost rhetoric was the best end for his students and would be learned through a staunch code of morals (Quintilian, 12.1.1). Brilliant speakers who would be fluent in the ideas of philosophy and rhetoric were the Quintilian models.

We may ask ourselves what relevance does the Roman Empire have on our modern educational standards and why do we need to justify our derivations from an 'out-dated and primitive system'? Why is it at all necessary to bring back elements of a classical education? The problem with students in the modern era is not their capacity to learn, nor is it the how much work they choose to put in, rather the structure of their classes is not conducive to producing effective and functioning speakers; they are unable to relate their ideas to anything else outside their area of study, and unfortunately, are unable to communicate the greater implications of their work. However, one might raise the objection that if we do focus on skills in speaking persuasively and arguing well, we will be encouraging casuistry and raising sophists. However, that cannot be the case!

There are innumerable amounts of professions in the academic and scientific worlds, which require hard evidence, whether it is data, textual, or archaeological to name a few. These professions would not allow one to simply word their arguments cleverly without any substantial verification. What we would be doing, however, is rearing students to effectively communicate their ideas and how their work might affect the world around them. In addition, we would train them to ask better questions; instead of asking for a definite numerical or affirmative or negative answer, they would ask about the nature or methodology of the question, thereby perceiving the answer within the entire system, rather than separately, 'as a blank scantron bubble'. This consideration for elements greater than just themselves and their results would allow for better communication within different fields, and even across fields, so that one's findings could be shared. Lastly, as scholars and scientists, we are charged with the duty to help enlighten and embolden the minds of those who have a general interest in our work or field. Students would find the classic model appealing because it can teach one to elucidate his or her ideas comfortably to an audience and successfully defend their proposals against an onslaught of questions asking what the purpose is or why it is necessary. This is not limited to the science and math departments, which have seen the greatest departure from the Classical Model, but can remove the obfuscation in philosophic

arguments such that no one interested in the topic need sift through layers of jargon to find the core premises of the argument. I believe that the Classical Model of education should be brought back to primary and secondary schools for the purposes of creating more efficient and lucid speakers, who are not limited by the complexity of their field, so that they might explain their purpose and goals to a layperson and successfully communicate a difficult and intricate idea with ease. It begins with a generation of better speakers unearthing their brilliant ideas from the veils convoluted language and expounding on their purposes with the knowledge of its effect on the world around it. A classical education is necessary because we can understand more through a didactic dialogue than sequestering ourselves to our departments, condemned to gawk at our colleagues' work because we cannot ask the right questions nor hope to receive the accessible answers.

Chapter II: Education of the Elites and their Emphasis on the Importance of Learning and Understanding Classical Authors as well as Education as a Means to Achieve Political Aims

Education in the Ancient World was modelled after the Greeks institutionalised their practises. It is very evident that the success of these practises allowed the Greeks to export their culture and political will around the Aegean because of the brilliant minds that they were able to foster. Military commanders, lawyers, philosophers, and statesman alike shared a similar

education that edified them in societal mores, tactics and persuasive speech that lifted the individual city states so that they might surmount their ambitious neighbours and protect their homeland. For fifty years, the centre of all Greek education established itself into an empire exacting its will on the surrounding territories and competing city-states. The Delian League retained its prestige for 50 years until its undoing by an emerging Sparta and fatigued Persia. Yet, we allow ourselves to ask, how it can be that the very same unchanged curricula that formed the backbone for the Greek hegemony also supported the pacification of the Mediterranean and Roman peace lasting well over two hundred years? Education was one of the firmest and longest lasting pillars of great empires and the best method to (systematically) to spread an ideology, functional understanding of language, and most importantly, an appreciation for the literature that their countryman laid down as lessons for the next generation. This chapter will discuss the declarations that the Elite and the Emperors had made in support of combining their piety (as Rome had turned to Christianity during the reign of Constantine the Great) with the ardent studying of the 'Classics' (as we know them) and what changes they made to the education systems to encourage more literacy. In addition, this chapter will also look some controversial changes to curricula made in order to preserve the educational system from what Justinian I deemed a threat to Christianity and Emperor Julian

(the Apostate) thought to have usurped the original faith of the Empire: *Paganism* (a term which had changed in meaning with during the rise of Christianity¹, instead we will describe them as *sacrifice offering polytheists*, but still employ *Paganism* when quoting legal documents and other edicts). The last section serves to reinforce the importance of education and the *preservation of the organisation and curricula* by the ruling ideology of the Empire; in addition, it will cover the reconciliation between *Pagan* and Christian Literature and teachings in order to produce a more erudite scholar.

Section I: An Analysis of Constantine the Great's *Oration to the Saints* Showing the Importance of Understanding Classical Authors Connecting Their Work to Christianity

Subsection A: The Context and Background Knowledge of the Rise of Constantine as a Religious Authority

At the time of Constantine's ascension to the seat of the Empire, Rome has just instituted a new form of rule, the Tetrarchy. Established by Diocletian in 293 AD, the Tetrarchy was deliberately aimed to combat the struggles regarding sporadic rises of military generals claiming *imperium* on the backs of their

¹ "Paganus" was a Christian term of abuse for non-Christians in the fourth century (having been adapted from its original definition) argued by James O'Donnell, "Whether the word lapsed completely from use or passed exclusively into common parlance, the effect was the same: the sophisticated, witty derivation of the word was forgotten. When Christianity finally found itself in a position to sneer at paganism (after Constantius II had begun the first acts of genuine repression) the word was recovered from the oblivion of either erudition or ignorance and pressed into common use with new connotation"; *Pagan* now means *sacrifice offering polytheists* and is taken to be a technical term for certain society's religious practises.

*"Paganus," *Classical Folia* 31 (1977) 163-169

legions' fidelity and the capitulation of the Senate in accepting the legitimacy of their titles. A basic explanation of the Tetrarchy can be found in *Diocletian: a Solution to the Crisis of the Third Century*:

Diocletian's creation of the tetrarchy, or 'rule by four' in order to establish a method of succession and stop the incessant rise of new emperors. The system was based on the Augustii, Diocletian and Maximian, that would rule a section of the empire and have some military control and in choosing 'adopted sons' that would enter their family by marriage, two Caesarii that would then become Augustii following the retirement or death of the former. This ensured that the Augustii could pick the future rulers and they would have experience and education in governing because they were given territory and an army to protect their borders. "Questions of succession, in times when survival was uncertain and life generally short, must have been subject to speculation (at the time, as now) and chance" (Bowman, *Diocletian and the First Tetrarchy*). This allowed for the future preservation of the Empire's interests by insuring that the rulers needs to cooperate to achieve success in their military and political goals (Jasvinder Dhesi, 1-2).

This system was unable to foresee the eventual conflicts that led to a civil war with both Maximian (having been demoted to Caesar at the behest of Galerius, an older Augustus, angered by the rising power and influence of Constantine) and his son Maxentius (whom Constantine summarily defeated at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 and famously purported to have had a vision of the Cross and converted to Christianity). The dynastic struggles and duplicity encouraged by underhanded alliances saw that the man that returned victorious from that battle would see himself at the seat of Imperial Rome and would wield an authority that hasn't seen a consummately governed Rome (regarding a standard system of succession) since the Nerva–Antonine dynasty. Now, given context about the rise of Constantine, we may ask what the connection is

between the dissolution of the Tetrarchy and the rule of Constantine. What we have is a consolidation of power under one sovereign, which was not under the threat of being usurped or undermined *by a joint ruler* and he follows this with a consolidation of religious authority legalising Christianity throughout the Empire and making illegal the previous persecutions encouraged under Diocletian. Yet, we still are left adrift of the connection between 'consolidations of power' and classical authorship; what about the actions of Constantine are framed within texts like the *Bucolics* of Virgil?

Subsection B: Evidence of a Classical Education and its Importance in Shaping the Lives of Emperors and their Subjects in Imperial Society Regarding Religion and their Education

Following the appointment of Eusebius as the new Bishop of Rome by Maxentius (Barnes, 38), Constantine (despite being a prevailing view mistakenly attributing the work to Eusebius) had given a speech known as the *Oration to the Saints*, in which he references Virgil's *The Bucolics* (4) almost line by line. The consensus now is that given the vast knowledge and almost line-by-line commentary of the Latin, that it was Constantine himself who wrote it (as well as the dubiously missing lines containing direct polytheist references). The direct quotes come from Vergil's *Eclogues*; the text, which predicts the birth of a miraculous youth who would rule the world after ascending to a divine status. Constantine directly relates the Latin to the birth, suffering, and the resurrection

of Jesus Christ to establish the legitimacy of Christianity within the empire, whereby he attempts to prove that Virgil predicted the birth and divination of Christ (Barnes, 36). In addition, Constantine insisted that it was not a fiction derived from the mind of a "Member of the Christian Church" but instead ordained by the Sibylline Oracles and must be taken as Canon.

Below, let us analyse some excerpts from the *Speech* and see the quoted Latin and his interpretations:

- (1) Who, then, is the virgin who was to come? Is it not she who was filled with, and with child of the Holy Spirit? And why is it impossible that she who was with child of the Holy Spirit should be, and ever continue to be a virgin? This king, too, will return, and by his coming lighten the sorrows of the world. The poet adds,

You, chaste Lucina, greet the newborn child,
 Beneath whose reign the iron offspring ends,
 A golden progeny from heaven descends;
 His kingdom-banished virtue shall restore,
 And crime shall threat the guilty world no more.

We perceive that these words are spoken plainly and at the same time darkly, by way of allegory. Those who search deeply for the import of the words are able to discern the Divinity of Christ (Richardson, Chapter 19)

It is because of an intensive education steeped in the Classics is this a) convincing attempt to argue for the for the connection of Virgil and Christ that formed the opinions of St. Augustine of Hippo and Dante Alighieri and b) allowed Constantine to endear himself to the Romans in the audience whom had been stirred by the use of such an important author. He was also very adept

at Greek, allowing him to make rhetorical insights about works written in the language: he refers to an acrostic poem “**I**êsous **C**hristos **T**heou **H**uïos **S**ôter **S**tauros” or Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, Cross in Greek (Edwards, 41).

Greeks in the audience would have also been compelled with the evidence because it was interpreted wholly and was not transliterated whereby the meaning of the passage might have been removed from its *original* context.

Constantine’s rigorous education which allowed his firm grasp of both languages, and training in persuasive speaking is a testament to what anyone could have achieved in the empire given a inspired pursuit of ancient knowledge that carved the future conquests of the empire from the old texts of myth and heroes. For Constantine was not a native of Rome or even the Italian state, but of Illyria (Balkan peninsula) and it was through his classical education (languages, rhetoric, and military practises) was he able to establish himself first as a prodigy to a Roman ruler and finally as an Emperor himself.

- (2) Another Tiphys shall new seas explore;
 Another Argo land the chiefs upon the Iberian shore;
 And great Achilles urge the Trojan fate.

Well said, wisest of bards! You have carried the license of a poet precisely to the proper point. For it was not your purpose to assume the functions of a prophet, to which you had no claim. I suppose also he was restrained by a sense of the danger which threatened one who should assail the credit of ancient religious practice. Cautiously, therefore, and securely, as far as possible, he presents the truth to those who have faculties to understand it; and while he denounces the munitions and conflicts

of war (which indeed are still to be found in the course of human life), he describes our Saviour (Richardson, Chapter 20).

Here we can plainly see that he directly alludes to Greek epics and compares the Saviour to specific Greek Heroes: Tiphys (who built the Argo in search of the Golden Fleece) and Achilles (the last monumental figure in the Age of Heroes). Constantine foreshadows the strength of Christ through the Heroes' overcoming of incredible (and divinely inspired) challenges to defeat the evils. In addition, to bestow such a title upon Virgil, especially to an audience comprised of both Greeks and Romans, was an incredible statement about the skill of the author and his importance to their (humanity's) history (Edwards, 50). In essence, he thanked Virgil (and other classical authors) for their literary works because of the significance of their predictions, and the context by which the Lord Jesus Christ could be understood by anyone. It was because of his being well versed in ancient literature and brilliant oratory education that Constantine was able to bring the Empire together under religious pretenses that effectively gave Christians back their lives in Ancient Rome *but not at the expense of the polytheistic religious practises*.

Not only was there a focus on the understanding of poetry, but also Constantine expertly referenced ancient philosophy in his *Oration to the Saints*. Again, we see the diversity of an ancient education being applied to more than

just stock lessons of rote memorisations of lines in texts and script repetitions; now here we must make a distinction in recognizing a higher and more sophisticated level in education as compared to the Plebeian classes. Whereas a Plebeian would be familiar with characters, moral, lessons, and a basic understanding of alphabet and grammar, it was the Patricians, or members of the upper class, that enjoyed a deeper and more definite grasp of the esoteric elements in ancient works. In our previous attempts in analysing literacy, we to focus on the ability to read, yet tend to limit it towards literature (from a very simple story book to technical language about law, religion, and lore). There are other elements within one's education that would entail literacy, but not in the traditional sense. Logic was the second step in the tripartite education of future philosophers, orators, and lawyers. It was precisely this knowledge that allowed them to formulate arguments from their thoughts (learning grammar to logic) and then able to articulate that argument persuasively (logic to rhetoric).

Constantine exemplified an understanding logic because of incorporation of philosophy in his *Speech* as T.D. Barnes explains:

The philosophical section of the *Speech*, which appears to owe much to the second century thinker Numenius of Apamea (3-10), uses the phrase 'second god' while praising Plato for propounding ideas which correspond closely to Christianity: according to Constantine, Plato distinguished the two gods as two *ousiai* sharing a single perfection, with the *ousta* of the second god having its existence (*hyparxis*) from the first (Barnes, 34).

The *Oration to the Saints* was intended to describe the Christian doctrine and its core tenets to a people that were accustomed to polytheistic practises and gods. Now, the audience of this *Speech* specifically would have been able to understand his diction and thought process (as well as endearing himself to the roman ears when extolling Virgil) given their advanced education, but it speaks volumes that someone migrating from outside of the Italian State could be educated so well that he set the standard dogma for the empire, not by blade, but instead with carefully crafted words. This was the extent of an ancient education: men learned not only to be brave in battle, but to bravely put polished words (as they have their bodies) in an arena of criticism and defend their arguments with enough skill to persuade conversions. It was not limited to the lands and citizens of conquered lands, but reached towards the hearts and minds of men in the Senate and Councils as well. One noteworthy council was the (First) Council of Nicaea in which he defended the traditional interpretation that the God the Father and God the Son were of the same substance and thereby equal and dispelled the Arian Heresy (that God the Father begot the Son out of his own love and creation and therefore was not equal) (González, 165). To what to we attribute Constantine's success of his rule over the Roman Empire and the intellectual and cultural prosperity that followed? It must rest in the education he received upon arriving in Rome as his previous experience with

Christian and Pagan scholars in Nicomedia (Barnes, 73-74). In addition, it allows us to conclude that the Roman modifications (modest changes to upper levels which directed philosophers to Greece or the near east and lawyers to Rome) and the basic Greek model of education was so widespread and that anyone had to have some exposure to what we refer to as a 'classical education'.

Though not every one person would have been able to freely quote famous authors, they still held an understanding of the material and *its importance in Roman society*. That is to say, they understood the impact such stories, skills in speaking and logic, and ultimately (albeit a limited comprehension of) philosophy, had in living happy and meaningful lives. A farmer was not bound by his fields, a merchant not by his wares, nor a soldier by his sword, all persons within this empire could find *some meaning* beyond their daily labours by virtue of the permeating educational influences.

Section II: Controversial Diktats of Justinian I Concerning *Pagan* Influences and an Imposition of Political Agenda Concerning Education under Julian the Apostate

Like Constantine, Both Emperors Justinian and Julian asserted their ideologies upon the empire throughout the empire by controlling the sources of education. By the hand of the Imperial court, Plato's Academy fell into disrepute and, in a vain attempt to reconvert the Empire, Julian sought to rid the Christian influence being taught to their children by asking magistrates to exclude

Christians from educational employment and may have gone so far as to ban schooling for children of Christian parentage (Hardy, 131-132). Why was education regulated with an iron fist? What was so dangerous about either Christian or *Pagan* influences that bans were instituted to prevent the exposure of these ideas? The answer lies in the prominence of education in Roman society itself. One of the strongest and everlasting pillars of the culture was its education and was one of the most powerful means by which ideas were spread amongst the inhabitants of the empire. Another reason speaking to increased and widespread literacy than originally suggested, if it wasn't reaching as many facets of Roman society, there would be no need to curb such influence; the few and selected educated could have been easily been 'persuaded' by the Emperors to change their teachings, but because literacy was not limited to strictly upper class and a scarce group of intellectuals, education remained and still does today, a significant method by which ideas and changes sweep through society. Secondly, the interpretation of these ideas depends on an initial literate population, and this is evidenced by the amount of students being educated all across the empire by the 4th Century AD. These Edicts represent attempts to restrict the growth and ubiquity of either Christian or *Pagan* teachings and futilely unite the empire under one belief system.

Justinian I took up *Imperium* of the Byzantine Empire and ruled from 527, until his death in 565 AD. During his rule, he sought to curtail what he believed an affront to his faith of Nicene Christianity: *Paganism*. So great was his disdain for the *Paganism* within the empire, that he codified its destruction:

1.11.1. The (pagan) temples in all places and cities shall be immediately closed; access to them is forbidden and incorrigible men are denied the opportunity of sinning. 1. We also want everyone to abstain from sacrificing. 2. If anyone does anything of the kind, he shall be struck down by an avenging sword, the property of the person killed shall be claimed for the fisc.¹ The rectors of the provinces shall be punished similarly if they neglect to avenge such crimes.² Given this 1st day of December (354) (Justinian I).

Moreover, it was not limited to public worship and ritual practises; it extended into private life and education. Justinian's intention was rooted in the idea that education of these desecrations might corrupt the students into accepting anything deviating from Church law or showing it tolerance; a weakness in combatting heretical doctrines could have led to the unseating of his, and by extension the remaining empire's (at this time Justinian was ruling from Constantinople and sought to reclaim the Western Empire back from the grip of German incursions because of the splitting of the empire by Constantine), philosophies:

1. 11. 10. Moreover, we forbid the teaching of any doctrine by those who labor under the insanity of paganism, so that they may not in that manner pretend to instruct those coming to see them in a way to excite pity, while in fact they corrupt the souls of their disciples. Nor shall they receive any salary (annona) in as much as they are not permitted to claim anything of the kind pursuant to a rescript or pragmatic sanction (Justinian I).

It may not seem like much, to remove the aberrant elements from Roman society, but Justinian's *Codex* did more than just seek to Christianize the former Hellenistic East; in removing the *pagan* elements from society's education, Romans were losing their connection to their heritage and original homeland. No longer did they think of themselves as sons of Romulus or descendants of the Trojans because a pagan wrote those radical texts, and the Byzantine Emperor would not have his lineage stained by an association with heathens from the countryside. Although Claudia Rapp notes, "Authors of the sixth century in fact provided [histories of their own time to poetry in the classical style]", she still concedes that many authors turned their attention to literature inspired by Christian belief and practice" (Rapp, 377). Christianity slowly began to replace the foundation myths and traditions on which Rome was built. Given the alarming and surging erosion of Pagan teachers, the Academy now espousing Neo-Platonist Philosophy was barred from the instruction of its pupils in 529. Naturally, a philosophy that combined beliefs of theistic monism and polytheism was deemed blasphemy, and Athens saw the repercussions of a regime resolute in its faith.

Now, we evaluate the rule of Julian the Apostate in all its brevity. While only fully reigning as an Augustus from 360 to 363 AD, we analyse his decrees with greater scrutiny because the precedent that a far more enlightened mind

(as compared to his successors) would institute such educational repression is reprehensible. Acknowledging the sanguineous persecution of Christians by his predecessors, Julian was in a position to let differing religions expose themselves slowly through educations and benefit students because of the expansive literary knowledge they received. But it was the banning of Christian literature, religious teachings, and children of Christian parentage that gave Julian the "early impression, which etched Julian as a religious bigot anxious to deny Christianity of all cultural nourishment and thereby assure its eventual relegation to barbarism, became the standard historical interpretation perpetrated by those who wrote of the "apostate emperor" (Hardy, 133).

However, we must clarify as to why it was such an egregious act, but to do so we must look to the early life to the Emperor. Born in Constantinople (330 BC), he would have not only been exposed to both Christian and *Pagan* literature and educators, but he was raised as a Christian familiar with biblical teachings and church rituals since he was a child (Browning, 38). Robert Browning goes on to say that as a child, already proficient in liturgy, Julian would have been *required* to engage classical *Pagan* literature *and not the Gospels* as the beginning of the Fourth Century had not seen a Christianisation of the schools; being a Christian was wholly separate from a curriculum that emphasised Hellenistic culture; his tutor, Mardonios, had shared with him Homer, the tragedians, and Aristophanes

("The men of the past had attained perfection. It remained only to appreciate it, and, so far as men could, imitate it") (Browning, 37-38). What cemented his love for the classical age was the library of George, Bishop of Caesarea, and the Neo-Platonist books that inhabited its shelves (Browning, 40). Finally, we are left confounded, asking why a youth that benefitted so much from Christian educators, a dual schooling, and saw such intelligence in the products of these schools would, in June of 362 AD, banned any employment in education by Christian and barred Christian students from being educated. This was in stark contrast to his earlier reforms which "Open[ed] the court to intellectuals, sophists and philosophers of all kinds. Christians as well as pagans received the royal summons. Religious toleration was proclaimed and the various heretical sects which had been exiled under Constantine and Constantius were recalled" (Hardy, 135).

The answer is two-fold: One part is that, despite the Christian tradition holding Julian as a religious dogmatist that sought the slow destruction of Christianity, what is more likely to have happened was Julian enacted institutional changes to initiate his conservative political vision and restore Rome to its former *mores* (Hardy, 138). Secondly, Julian was able to foresee what Justinian had learned by example. Based on the same historical precedent that banished sophists from early Rome (Hardy, 138), he recognized the power of an

education, especially one that was rooted in many schools of thought and “Julian reasoned that Christian educators should not profess the works of authors who adhere to a religious system that Christians ridicule” (VanderKolk, 8). Education could beget great change in the empire. Individuals educating masses, and ideas going further still. His actions, and those of his successors, solidified the model that to defeat any alien ideology systematically, it cannot be done by brute force. It must be done through law and education.

Therefore, it seems that the Empire moved past using bloody persecutions to institutionalised discrimination of religions. As soon as Julian’s rule ended, Christianity took its place back at the helm as the state’s religion and paganism might have fallen into the same pattern if it was not for what Daniel VanderKolk calls the second phase of the Christianisation of Hellenism. He explains that St. Basil wrote to the Cappadocian Christians (distinct from the Alexandrian Christians that came before them) that they should embrace an education of *pagan* sources because it “morally prepares the young baptised soul for loftier ethical studies” (VanderKolk, 12). In his *Address to Young Men on Reading Greek Literature*, he explicitly states that his goal is to teach them how to discern the useful lessons within pagan Greek literature from the sinful excesses. He also encouraged them to gather the virtuous examples of their forebears as a preparation for deeper Christian ethical practices (VanderKolk,

14). St. Basil espouses the tenets taught in the classical age because of his use of logic and rhetoric to defend the reading of Greek classical authors. The importance of discerning morals within the stories and trying to embody the same virtues that made the Greek heroes worth remembering, worth emulating, is paramount to interpreting the scriptures and becoming Christ-like. With the 'reacceptance' of both schools into formal education, the empire returned to producing intelligent and comprehensive scholars. The evidence for this rested in the monasteries all over Dark Age Europe, which still produced copies of classical authors so that their brilliant works (encompassing the merits of an ideal scholar and pious man) might not be lost to the world.

Conclusion:

While there have been many inquiries and examinations looking at the finer points of Ancient Roman Education, most seem to focus on the advanced curricula or famed teachers that fostered brilliant students and scholars across the Empire. While we know much about the teaching methods of Seneca in the royal court of Nero, the tried and true lessons that Cato the Elder passed on to his children in every facet of life, and even the skills in oratory that swayed audiences and court rooms, we still question the accessibility of this kind of education for all Romans. We are left with an incomplete view of Roman culture that partitions the intelligentsia and the rest of the upper class against the

plebeian workers and farmers that also contributed to the stability and success of the empire. So, what can be done about the bias that leans towards an educated elite and the illiterate, unwashed masses? This thesis seeks to dispel the claim that there was a small number of educated and literate elites that dominated the Empire and governed the uneducated (because they could not read or reason for themselves). Given the accessibility to basic levels of education (which exposed a citizen of any class to famed literary works *out of necessity*), widespread inscriptions of laws that required comprehension, and many professions that demanded compulsory knowledge of at least one language, literacy had to have been much higher than originally hypothesised. Not only regarding formal schooling, but with our expanded definition of literate persons having composition skills, we can see from the graffiti, curses, and military diagrams that literacy had to have been more than just being able to read the classics; Romans had to have been able to compose sentences for basic communication as well. Moreover, the access to education allowed one to gain an appreciation for acclaimed poetry despite not having the capacity to recognise the literary nuances of the work. The findings in this thesis now lend lower level education a sort of professionalism. We may ask, what factors prevented a member of the lower class from pursuing a higher education in oratory or philosophy? In addition, since many inhabitants of conquered

territories migrated to Italy and Romans further throughout the Empire, what effect did extant colloquial languages have on one's learning, and are there any instruction of a similar kind of education in those societies?

What kind of consequences did accessible education have for the Empire, which began to see its faith shaken by civil war and a new belief inaugurated with a new emperor? Constantine was able to eloquently introduce Christianity to the empire and denounce the persecutions of his predecessors; he framed his understanding of Christianity and its tenets through classical Latin literature and endeared himself to an audience of intellectuals when we spoke of Platonic logic to describe the substance and nature of God Himself. Elites had already been accustomed to debating and discussing philosophic issues amongst themselves, but surely, these were the only individuals to think critically, the only individuals to challenge the justification for any edict or law? Education in the beginning of the fourth century became somewhat of a 'double-edged' sword for the ruling ideology of the empire. Julian (the Apostate) had received an education indescribably extensive from both Christian and *Pagan* scholars, but understood that just as he began to turn away from Christianity *having been exposed to different philosophies through his education* that education itself was a tool by which new ideologies could take hold of the disciples and force large-scale change in the empire. Therefore, Julian acted first and banished Christianity

from the schools. A bigoted and religiously obsessed guise suited the harsh imposition to return to the politically conservative and *Pagan* Rome. Justinian followed his example, but went even further. Whereas Julian tried to eliminate Christian influences in schools, Justinian codified the destruction of *Paganism* because knew education was not limited to formal schooling. It occurred in temples, in libraries, and even in someone's private home. These emperors suppressed education because that was the best way to prevent the dissemination of rebellious or alien ideas. Yet, opposing philosophies and different methodologies continued because the high exposure to different cultures and religions of the Byzantine Empire.

Finally, this thesis validates the notion that modern day students and curricula would benefit from the Classical Model because it would allow students to formulate better questions concerning the system by which an answer is conceived, and not simply ask for an easy solution. It would foster better speakers and confident minds willing to challenge the prevailing norms for the sake of finding the absolute truth. The greatest accomplishment of the Classical Model was inspiring minds to engaging in foreign subject for the sake of learning, and in the process enduring failures to necessary to see what does and what doesn't work. The Romans built their empire around a system of education they *learned* from the Greeks and with it, pacified the Mediterranean for well

over two hundred years; the Byzantine East enjoyed an even longer rule. Orally, Romans recounted their legendary feats and accolades to come, but it was not until the words "His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; imperium sine fine dedi" were written down did the whole of Rome reach out for more than just the sword and spear.

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