

Mia Tsuchida

Professor Rochelle Johnson

First Year Seminar

6 December 2021

A Piece of the Sky

When you look at this lapis lazuli, you see unearthly beauty. Though the Orma J. Smith Natural History Museum lies in a windowless basement, it is not completely devoid of the sky. In a sideroom full of gems and minerals, tucked in a tall, glass-paned shelf, sits a small orb of Chilean lapis lazuli, deep blue and mottled with white and silver-gray veins. Looking at it, one might wonder if it was a piece Mother Nature had taken from the night sky and stored in the ground for safekeeping. Looking at it, one might understand how many people did believe this—that lapis lazuli resembled a piece of the night sky—long ago (Gonzalez). Unearthly and stunning in appearance, the blue rock has woven itself through history and cultures, influencing the very conception of the color blue. Reverence for the stone is evident in its use in important forms, such as royal jewelry, tombs of monarchs, paintings of the Virgin Mary, and exorcisms of unwanted spirits (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli;” Amschler; Finlay 280; Duffin). In addition, there are ample references to it in ancient mythologies, literature, and spiritual writings such as the Bible—all of which suggest that it is not of this earth (“Lapis Lazuli Symbolism;” Variance; King). Lasting in both physical appearance and ancient lore, it has an immortality comparable to that of deities. Lapis lazuli is woven into the histories, mythologies, religions, practices, and art of the world, and all associate it with the beautiful and the heavenly.

To begin to understand the unearthliness of lapis lazuli, we first must understand its earthly composition. Lapis lazuli is technically a rock, as it is a conglomerate of several minerals

(“Chilean Lapis Lazuli”). These minerals include hauyne; sodalite; lazurite, a mixture of hauyne and sodalite responsible for the rock’s heavenly blue color; and nosean (Webster). Calcite inclusions create the mottled white veins, and iron pyrites create starlike flecks of gold in the blue rock. Additional minerals may also be present, but these minerals are what make lapis lazuli the aluminum silicate rock that it is (Webster; “Ultramarine”). Lapis lazuli forms when either limestone or marble is heated by magma, a process called “contact metamorphism” (King). Examining lapis lazuli on this level makes it appear mundane: it is a rock, a mutt of minerals. But the physical impurities of lapis lazuli make it an embodiment of purity. In an almost magical way, the mix of minerals becomes a shockingly blue rock, and the impurities of calcite and pyrite complete the resemblance of the rock to a starry night sky. Earthly impurities become unearthly beauty.

Long ago, this beautiful, metamorphic rock formed deposits from which it eventually flowed like heavenly rivers into the fabric of human culture. These deposits are located in Chile, Argentina, the United States, Canada, Russia, Tibet, China, Iran, Pakistan, and, most prominently, Afghanistan (Pastoureau; King). The most notable deposit, Sar-e-sang, or “the Place of the Stone,” resides in a northeastern region of Afghanistan (Finlay 128-282). Sar-e-sang became known as a “mythical land” that fed lapis lazuli into ancient Mesopotamia and eventually other ancient civilizations (Mynarova). Because of its rarity, the rock had an aura of mystique. When ancient cultures saw it, a beautiful rock mined from a faraway land, it was quite easy to believe it was a fallen piece of the heavens.

Hence, the unearthly beauty of lapis lazuli caught the eye of ancient people; many cultures valued the rock and considered it sacred and heavenly. The root of the European name for the rock stems from the Arabic word meaning “heaven, sky, or blue:” *lazaward* (“Chilean

Lapis Lazuli”). The first two translations of the Arabic word communicate unearthliness; lapis lazuli’s name sets it above other rocks. Curiously, the rock was given this name in the Middle Ages, long after it had developed uses in many cultures (early accounts of the rock refer to it as sapphire) (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli”). One could say this title—lazuli—cemented the association between lapis lazuli and the heavenly. Furthermore, so great was the value of lapis lazuli that some referred to it as “blue gold,” and others regarded it as “the physical flesh of the Gods” (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli”). In Egypt, it was synonymous with “the Divine cosmos;” in the Middle East, it was considered “holy and magical;” in Sumeria, it was believed to hold “the soul of the deity;” and in Europe it was associated with luck, love, and a “divine disposition” (Gonzalez; “Chilean Lapis Lazuli;” “Lapis Lazuli Symbolism;” Ramilevna). Lapis Lazuli was seen as something transcending the earthly in both value and substance. It was as if lapis lazuli was a physical representation of the spirit, the closest a physical object could come to being metaphysical. To the ancients, the rock was a link between the mortal and the divine, a sacred object capable of influencing fate. Perhaps, because they valued beauty and because they valued divinity, they valued lapis lazuli. The significance of lapis lazuli to many cultures stemmed from the striking, divine beauty of the rock, which inspired divine stories about it.

This ancient association between lapis lazuli, the unearthly, and the beautiful, is evident in its presence in centuries-old literature, mythology, and religion. Lapis lazuli plays a prominent role in “The Epic of Gilgamesh,” an ancient story thought to be the first “great work of literature” (“Lapis Lazuli in Ancient Mythology”). The story involves a lapis lazuli-and-gold chariot given by Ishtar, “the goddess of love and war,” to King Gilgamesh, whom she has fallen in love with; and a Bull of Heaven with horns made of the heavenly blue rock. When he defeats the Bull, Gilgamesh keeps these lapis lazuli horns as a trophy (“Lapis Lazuli in Ancient

Mythology”). Both appearances of lapis lazuli, as a chariot and as the horns of the Bull, associate it with unearthly beauty. The chariot is extravagant, beautiful, and not of this earth; it is a mark of a goddess’ love. As Ishtar believed it would win her the heart of King Gilgamesh, she likely highly valued lapis lazuli for its divine beauty. Additionally, in the form of a chariot, the blue rock served as a mark of love—arguably, a form of divine beauty. That the Bull of Heaven—no doubt a powerful, divine being—was crowned with horns of lapis lazuli, speaks to the divine, heavenly power associated with the rock. Ishtar was not the only deity associated with lapis lazuli. Inanna, the goddess of love in Sumerian mythology, adorns herself with a necklace of lapis lazuli and uses a lapis lazuli rod to measure lifespan, and ancient Egyptians carved figurines of their goddess of truth, Maat, from the rock (“Lapis Lazuli Symbolism”). Lapis lazuli’s association with these goddesses speaks to its divinity and its beauty; it is thought to be worthy, in both power and beauty, of deities. Additionally, the skin of the Tibetan Buddha Bhaishajyaguru Vaiduryaprabha, also known as “the Medicine Buddha” or “the Healing Master of Lapis Lazuli Radiance,” is, specifically, the blue of lapis lazuli. This Buddha is said to possess knowledge of how to alleviate illness of both the mind and the body (Duffin; “Medicine Buddha”). Not only does lapis lazuli’s association with the Medicine Buddha associate it with divinity, but it also associates it with divine healing—arguably, something unearthly and beautiful. The association between lapis lazuli and ancient literature and belief systems associates lapis lazuli with the divine and beautiful powers of love, truth, and healing.

Even in literature unrelated to mythology, lapis lazuli appears beautiful and unearthly. In the 2nd century, Marbod, a French Bishop, composed the poem *De sapphiro* in his book, *Liber Lapidum* (Emerson). In this poem, he writes: “*Splendid its glitter, so much like the unsullied heavens, / Inferior to none in miraculous powers and charm*” (Emerson). Marbod, and no doubt

other Europeans of his age, compared the beauty of lapis lazuli to that of the heavens. He regarded the rock as “unsullied” --pure and divine. Furthermore, he recognized the rock’s “miraculous powers and charm,” divine traits that raised it above other, more earthly rocks. Centuries later, Pablo Neruda wrote his poem, “Lapis Lazuli in Chile,” in which he describes lapis lazuli as “my land’s blue skeleton” (Felstiner). While lapis lazuli was named the national stone of Chile as of 1984, the Chilean author regards lapis lazuli as something beyond that (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli”). He regards it as the very framework on which his country is built. He sees it as something divine and ancient, a beautiful entity that makes up the very roots of his culture and his identity.

Furthermore, lapis lazuli’s connection to the Bible augments its association with heavenly beauty. An excavation of Queen Shubad’s tomb in what was formerly Mesopotamia unearthed a figurine of a ram with “ears of lapis lazuli” who is “bound with a costly chain to a little golden tree” (Amschler). Some believed the ram resembled the “ram caught in the bushes by his horns,” a Biblical ram sent by God for Abraham to sacrifice (Amschler; NET Bible). The lapis lazuli-eared ram symbolizes a gift from above. No doubt, the biblical ram it possibly represents would have looked beautiful to Abraham, who, seeing it, realizes that he will not have to sacrifice his son. That the sculptor of the Mesopotamian ram used lapis lazuli to communicate the ram’s divinity is indicative of the perceived divinity of the rock itself. Additionally, lapis lazuli shows its lovely face multiple times in some translations of the Bible (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli”). After describing the Garden of Eden, one version of Genesis describes a river that breaks off from the main river that winds through Eden and “runs through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is pure; pearls and lapis lazuli are also there)” (NET Bible). It seems rather out of the way to mention what lies in a land not of the subject at hand (Eden), yet Genesis

digresses and does so. That lapis lazuli finds a place in the beginning of the Bible speaks to its value and significance in the religious world, as well as its association with the holy and the sacred. Additionally, in Exodus, lapis lazuli appears as one of the twelve stones in the Breastplate of Aaron, a breastplate used to speak to God (“A History of Birthstones”). Something about these stones, lapis lazuli included, is believed to enhance one’s connection with God. Put in a broader sense, lapis lazuli connects one to the spiritual and the unearthly. No doubt, these connections to religion helped construct lapis lazuli’s divine, unearthly aura.

Inspired by the stories and religions surrounding the rock, ancient architects incorporated lapis lazuli into magnificently beautiful structures to honor divine beings. A prominent example of this is The Babylonian Ishtar Gate, a vivid-blue, castle-like archway built in the 500s BCE in honor of Ishtar, the same goddess who reputedly gave Gilgamesh a lapis-lazuli-and-gold chariot (Fleischer). The gate is unearthly both in its association with the Mesopotamian goddess and its majestic beauty. With its bricks colored blue with lapis lazuli and its gold and white embellishments, it like a fragment of a heavenly kingdom that has fallen to earth (Fleischer).

On a smaller magnitude, lapis lazuli was used for personal embellishment; when used as a jewelry and a cosmetic, the rock empowered its wearers with beauty and unearthly power. Lapis lazuli’s divine status is evident in its title as “the stone of kings” (Ramilevna). The Kings and Queens of ancient Babylon and Egypt, as well as Asia, Africa, and Europe, decorated themselves with the blue stone (“Chilean Lapis Lazuli;” “Lapis Lazuli Symbolism”). That it was sought after by royalty indicates its desirable beauty and its association with divinity—for monarchs touting the “divine right to rule,” a divine stone would certainly be coveted. Perhaps, by adorning themselves with the beautiful stone, these monarchs hoped to associate themselves with the unearthly. In the 1st century BCE, Queen Cleopatra, also known as “Cleopatra the

Father-Loving Goddess,” dusted her eyelids with powdered lapis lazuli (Breau; Tyldesley). Though she was a mortal, her position as queen, as well as her “seductive beauty,” elevated her above others; they made her a figure of unearthly beauty and power (Tyldesley). It is believed that Cleopatra’s divinely beautiful appearance won her the hearts of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony, enabling her to merge Egyptian and Roman power—and some speculate that this divine beauty was due in part to her enchanting appearance, created in part by her lapis lazuli eyeshadow (Breau). The divine power of the rock imbued Cleopatra with a mystique that enabled her to influence the hearts of two powerful men. When used for personal adornment, lapis lazuli imparted divine and influential beauty.

Beyond simple, aesthetic beauty, lapis lazuli was thought to promote miraculous physical and spiritual healing—arguably a divine, metaphysical form of beauty—in traditional cultures. *The Ebers Papyrus*, an Egyptian document written in the 14th century, contains two medicinal recipes, one for the treatment of cataracts and one for the treatment of “eye surfaces,” that call for lapis lazuli (Duffin). According to *The Ebers Papyrus*, Egyptians believed lapis lazuli held divine healing power. Based on these recipes, it is no surprise that Egyptians saw lapis lazuli as a miraculous and heavenly stone. Furthermore, some cultures used lapis lazuli for metaphysical afflictions. Ancient Assyrian tablets unearthed in the 1800s prescribe lapis lazuli for the exorcism of an unwanted spirit; Romans prepared lapis lazuli poultices “to draw out spiritual impurities;” and those who practiced Ayurvedic medicine believed lapis lazuli improved the wellbeing of the three *doshas* (according to the Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, each dosha “has a number of corresponding qualities that are expressed in the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of one’s being”) (Duffin; Lapis Lazuli House; “What’s Your Dosha?”). Lapis lazuli is associated with divine healing and the protection of our bodies, minds, and souls.

Ancient cultures that used lapis lazuli for healing likely regarded the rock as beautiful, heavenly, and miraculous. Furthermore, ancient Egyptians believed that the purifying power of lapis lazuli extended beyond the mortal realm. Egyptians used amulets of lapis lazuli to ward off “evil spirits” from the dead (Lapis Lazuli House). They saw the aura of lapis lazuli as a divine shield against unwanted evils—a guardian to protect the peace of their dead. In a beautifully purifying manner, lapis lazuli pushes out spiritual impurities so that our bodies may be closer to divine.

Lapis lazuli’s healing, divine presence soothes things beyond the human body: some believe that lapis lazuli took part in a divine, beautiful, and peaceful resistance against violence in Afghanistan. According to Victoria Finlay's book, *Color (A Natural History of the Palette)*, “There have been folktales of the lapis veins drying up under the chaotic mujahideen rule ... ‘because, people said, the mine itself objected to the regime’” (Finlay 290). According to these “folktales,” Sar-e-sang, the notable lapis lazuli deposit in Afghanistan, suddenly stopped yielding the rock as if a divine hand had stopped the heavenly flow in protest of the violence taking place in its country. While this may simply be a “folktale,” it speaks to the spiritual connection between the Afghans and lapis lazuli. Based on this folktale, they associate lapis lazuli with their livelihood and safety; it disappears under oppression and bloodshed. Later in her book, Finlay describes how two Buddha sculptures in Bamiyan with auras of made from lapis lazuli paint—these auras are said to be the first instance in which lapis lazuli was used for paint—were violated and eventually severely damaged by the Taliban (Finlay 291, 294, 295). However, despite the damage to the statues, the painted auras behind the Buddhas remained (Finlay 295). That lapis lazuli was used to represent the invisible presence of these ancient Buddhas’ auras conveys the centuries-old association between lapis lazuli and the divine. The Taliban’s destruction of their divine presence symbolizes the destruction of Afghanistan’s peace, but the

resilience of the blue paint symbolizes resistance against violence; the lapis lazuli auras are like the beauty of Afghanistan that no evil can destroy. In spite of the Taliban's violence, the lapis lazuli paint remains, an immortal, beautiful, hope-giving presence that refuses to abandon its people.

Long after the ancient people of Bamiyan first used lapis lazuli to paint their Buddhas' auras, Renaissance artists used the lasting, coveted, rich blue pigment derived from lapis lazuli, primarily to depict holy figures. Even as a paint, lapis lazuli retains its divine qualities. From Egypt, lapis lazuli traveled to Europe, where, in a labor-intensive process, it was powdered and mixed with "resin, wax, gum and linseed oil" to create a paint ("Chilean Lapis Lazuli;" Finlay 291). The name of this pigment, *ultramarine*, means "from beyond the sea" ("Chilean Lapis Lazuli"). Though this name refers to the source of lapis lazuli, which was usually Afghanistan, it adds to the mystique of the rock. From an untraveled European's perspective, "beyond the sea" could simply be that distant point above the horizon where the sky kisses the sea. Thus, the name of the pigment itself is unearthly and divine. Because of the rarity of the stone, the distance it traveled between its source and Europe, and the intensive labor required for both the mining of lapis lazuli and its conversion to paint, ultramarine paint was held to great esteem, and only gold paint exceeded its price in Italy during the Renaissance (Pastoureau; Finlay 280). Thus, Renaissance painters used ultramarine sparingly and only for the most important parts of the most important paintings (usually paintings for wealthy patrons who provided money to buy the paint); ultramarine was primarily used for skies and the robes of the Virgin Mary (Finlay 280, 287; King). Like any divine and beautiful thing, ultramarine paint was valued, revered, and reserved for special occasions. With it, painters transformed rough canvases into beautiful, divine bodies of the sky and holy figures. Because of the extreme demand and expense for

ultramarine paint, people sought alternatives for the pigment. One of these, called azurite, may have served its purpose for some painters, but it fell short of the lasting, violet-tinged hue of ultramarine: though less expensive, azurite has a greenish tinge, and over time, it fades to a brownish color (Finlay 281-288). It is almost as if the pigment derived from lapis lazuli is immortally rich, outliving any other, less unearthly pigment. Like any divine being, no replacement will do it justice. Upon close examination of paint chipped from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco, researchers discovered that the pigment used for the rich, blue sky was likely derived from lapis lazuli that had traveled down the Silk Road from Pakistan to Europe centuries before (Cordua). Thus, because of lapis lazuli, when tourists come to gaze upward at the majestic fresco in the Sistine Chapel, they see a breathtaking spread of heavenly figures surrounded by a rich, heavenly sky. The rock is immortalized in the Sistine Chapel as if it were one of the divine figures painted there. Like any divine being, its existence is unbound by time.

In Renaissance paintings, lapis lazuli's enchantingly beautiful hue enhances the divinity of the subjects, and the subjects enhance the divinity of lapis lazuli. In understanding this, one must look no further than Sassoferrato's *The Virgin in Prayer* (mid-1600s), a beautiful painting of the Virgin Mary wearing a soft, gentle smile and rich, ultramarine-blue robes (Hoakley). According to the article, "Pigment: The Blue From Over the Sea, Ultramarine," in this painting, "The Virgin's cloak looks as if it was painted only yesterday" (Hoakley). The richness and lasting quality of ultramarine paint sets it apart from other pigments; there is something divine and immortal about it. Its unearthly hue attracts the eye and conveys the beautiful divinity of the painted Virgin Mary. According to Michel Pastoureau in his book, *Blue, A History of Color*, the prevalence of blue in paintings of the Virgin Mary "has transformed blue into a color of sanctity and divinity" (Pastoureau 49). Interestingly, it is not because lapis lazuli is blue that it was used

to portray divinity; it is because lapis lazuli was used to portray divinity that blue became associated with divinity. With an influence comparable to that of a divine power, the rock influenced the very meaning of the color blue. This alone conveys the divine and powerful nature of lapis lazuli. In the case of the Virgin Mary, lapis lazuli portrayed the unearthly beauty of what was already divine. Johannes Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* portrays how lapis lazuli bestows divinity on the earthly. This piece depicts a beautiful, young, and innocent-looking woman with a headscarf painted in true ultramarine ("The Girl with a Pearl Earring"). There is something unearthly and mysterious about the painting, a feeling achieved in part by the striking contrast between the blue of her headscarf and the black background. The ultramarine complements the natural beauty of the girl, enhancing her image into something divine.

As new uses for lapis lazuli surfaced over time, new meanings for the rock emerged, though, in essence, these meanings trace back to the beautiful and divine nature of lapis lazuli. It is fitting that the bird whose Latin name is *passerina amoena*, or "beautiful sparrow," inherited its name from lapis lazuli. Even in the form of a bird, lapis lazuli remains unbound to the earth. The sharp blue head and wing feathers of the male lazuli bunting flash from dull bushes, catching the eye with their shocking beauty ("Lazuli Bunting"). That "lazuli" was deemed a worthy name of this beautiful bird that graces the earth like a piece of the heavens speaks to the beauty associated with lapis lazuli. Additionally, today, lapis lazuli is linked to "wisdom, love, and healing," and some even "claim it nurtures and promotes psychic ability" ("Lapis Lazuli Symbolism"). To some, lapis lazuli is a divine helper; it helps expand our mental and emotional capacity and preserves our physical health. Furthermore, lapis lazuli is believed to act as a bridge to spirituality (Zaidy). With the rock, it is believed, we can transcend the physical realm and

reach a space of inner peace. Today, lapis lazuli reminds us of beauty and connects us to the divine.

From the flashes of blue lazuli bunting feathers to the rich, ultramarine blues of the Virgin's robes and the skies of Renaissance paintings to the less visible influences of makeup and mythology, lapis lazuli has, and still is, blessing the world with its divinity. Because of its rare and unearthly beauty, it has been set aside, reserved, for the gods, the queens, the kings, the Virgin Mary, the beautiful bird. Whoever receives lapis lazuli is blessed as if divine. There it sits, in that corner of the shelf in the natural history museum, humbly waiting for someone to acknowledge its unearthly beauty. There it sits, an orb of lapis lazuli from the country that honors it as its national stone. Why is it here? I think, through its beauty, it asks us to see. It asks us to see its history, its uses, its potential. It asks us to see how it is connected to all other pieces of lapis lazuli that have shaped the history of the world, to see how a simple rock can link the world to the divine. It asks us to see the divine, not only in a religious sense, but in an unearthly, magical sense. It lifts people's gazes to the heavens and urges them to wonder and see something beyond the mundane and the earthly, just as our ancestors once did. It embodies that mysterious part of nature that whispers, *There's something more to this world. Just look, and you will find beauty that transcends its earthly home.*

Works Cited

- “A History of Birthstones and the Breastplate of Aaron.” *Gemporia*, 12 Sept. 2017,
www.gemporia.com/en-us/gemology-hub/article/631/a-history-of-birthstones-and-the-breastplate-of-aaron/.
- Amschler, Wolfgang. “Goats from Ur and Kish.” *Antiquity*, vol. 11, no. 42, 1937, pp. 226–228.,
doi:10.1017/S0003598X00116722.
- Breau, Amy. “Why Did Cleopatra Wear Makeup?” *A Moment of Science - Indiana Public Media*, Moment of Science, 31 Aug. 2012,
indianapublicmedia.org/amomentofscience/cleopatra-wear-makeup.php.
- “Chilean Lapis Lazuli: History, Products, Properties, Source, Care.” *Chilean Lapis Lazuli: History, Products, Properties, Source, Care.*, Lazulita, www.lazulita.cl/.
- Cordua, William Sinclair. “Michelangelo's Minerals.” *Leaverite News*, v. 31, no. 4, p. 4, 2006.
Minds.wisconsin.edu/handle/1793/11533.
- Duffin, Christopher J. “The Pharmaceutical Use of Lapis Lazuli in the Ancient East.” *British Society for the History of Pharmacy*, vol. 21, no. 4, Dec. 2014. *Academia*. Accessed November 2021.
www.academia.edu/9571604/The_pharmaceutical_use_of_Lapis_Lazuli_in_the_Ancient_East.
- Emerson, Don. “Lapis Lazuli – the Most Beautiful Rock in the World.” *Preview*, vol. 2015, no. 179, 17 Jan 2019, pp 63-73,
www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1071/PVv2015n179p63?needAccess=true.
- Felstiner, John, and Pablo Neruda. “Lapis Lazuli in Chile.” *The American Poetry Review*, vol. 32, no. 4, American Poetry Review, 2003, pp. 6–6, www.jstor.org/stable/20682263.

Finlay, Victoria. *Color: A Natural History of the Palette*. Random House Trade paperback ed., Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2004.

Fleischer, Stuart. "Narrative and Ancient Architecture." *Ancient Art, University of Alabama*. 24 April, 2015, ancientart.as.ua.edu/narrative-and-ancient-architecture/.

Gonzalez, Julian. "What is the Spiritual Meaning of Lapis Lazuli?" *Spirit Restoration*, 27 Sept. 2020, geocult.org/stones-talismans/lazurit.

Hoakley. "Pigment: The Blue from over the sea, Ultramarine." *The Eclectic Light Company*, 11 May 2018, eclecticlight.co/2018/05/11/pigment-the-blue-from-over-the-sea-ultramarine/.

King, Hobart M. "Lapis Lazuli." *Geology.com: Geoscience News and Information*, Geology.com, geology.com/gemstones/lapis-lazuli/.

Lapis Lazuli House. "Lapis Lazuli Folklore & Legends." *Lapis Lazuli House*, 24 Jan., www.lapishouse.com/blogs/lapis-lazuli-house-blog/108199879-lapis-lazuli-folklore-legends.

"Lapis Lazuli in Ancient Mythology: The Epic of Gilgamesh." *Vairiance*, varianceobjects.com/blogs/gemstone-history/lapis-lazuli-in-ancient-mythology-the-epic-of-gilgamesh.

"Lapis Lazuli Symbolism." *International Gem Society*, International Gem Society LLC, 7 July 2021, www.gemsociety.org/article/history-legend-lapis-lazuli-gems-yore/.

"Lazuli Bunting." *Cornell University*. www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Lazuli_Bunting/overview. Accessed 8 Nov. 2021.

"Medicine Buddha: The Healing Master of Lapis Lazuli." *Enlightenment*, enlightenmentthangka.com/blogs/thangka/medicine-buddha-lapis-lazuli.

Mynarova, Jana. "From the Mountain or from the Kiln? Lapis Lazuli in the Amarna Letters."

The Perfumes of Seven Tamarisks, Herstellung: Hubert & Co, Göttingen, 2012.

NET Bible. Bible.org, netbible.org/bible/Genesis.

Pastoureau, Michel. *Blue: The History of a Color*. Translated by Mark Cruse, Princeton University Press, 2018.

Ramilevna, Garipova Lilia. "Lapis Lazuli. The Magical Properties of the Stone." *GeoCult.Org*,
geocult.org/stones-talismans/lazurit.

"The Girl with a Pearl Earring, 1665 by Johannes Vermeer." *Johannes Vermeer*,
www.johannesvermeer.org/the-girl-with-a-pearl-earring.jsp.

Tyldesley, Joyce. "Cleopatra". Encyclopedia Britannica, Invalid Date,
www.britannica.com/biography/Cleopatra-queen-of-Egypt. Accessed 16 November 2021.

"Ultramarine." *Pigments through the Ages - Overview - Ultramarine*, WebExhibits,
www.webexhibits.org/pigments/indiv/overview/ultramarine.html.

Webster, Robert, and Peter G Read. *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*. 5th ed. / ed., Butterworth-Heinemann, 1994.

"What's Your Dosha?" *Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health*, kripalu.org/content/whats-your-dosha.

Zaidy, Syed Owais. "The Meaning and Significance of Lapis Lazuli." *House of Pakistan*,
www.houseofpakistan.com/the-meaning-and-significance-of-lapis-lazuli/.