

A STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE'S DEPARTURES FROM
PLUTARCH / IN THE CHARACTERIZATION OF
CLEOPATRA IN ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

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PREFACE

The author has always wished to examine closely a work of Shakespeare in order to evaluate for himself Shakespeare's power in the fusion of word and idea. This opportunity has been afforded partially in the thoroughness of Dr. Berkeley's course in Shakespeare. However, it was in the preparation for the present work that the author has fulfilled his wish. To compare a play of Shakespeare with its source was to witness the dynamic power of genius in action. In many instances it was sheer delight for the author to interpret Shakespeare.

To Dr. David S. Berkeley, who is the inspiration for these studies, the author extends sincere thanks; to Joe F. Watson, graduate student, Glen Pinchback, student, and many others, this author also expresses appreciation.

In particular, he is indebted to his wife, Kathryn, for her patience to balance his impatience, for her fortitude to balance his despair, and for her many helpful criticisms on the work in general.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A complete and detailed study whose main purpose is the discussion of Shakespeare's departures from Plutarch in his characterization of Cleopatra is not known to the present author. This is not to say that valuable work has not been done on the subject by men whose striking insights have revealed much.

In regard to the characterization of Cleopatra, critics can be loosely grouped into the following two categories:

1. Critics who believe that Cleopatra's actions and words tend to resolve her into a person somewhat less than noble, that is, Dickey, Farnham, Muir, Spenser, Stempel, and Harrison.

2. Critics who believe that the beautiful poetry of Cleopatra's speech, by its own magical power, uplifts her to an almost sublime state. These critics are Knight, Stauffer, Mark Van Doren, Stoll, Stuart, and especially Adler.

Trying to separate Shakespeare's poetry from a study of Cleopatra's character is much the same as trying to separate the leaven from bread after the baking has been completed. In the author's opinion it is equally invalid to ignore all the actions of Cleopatra and interpret only the symbols of her poetry.

Critics in the first group deny that Cleopatra died a heroic love death, as Knight¹ would have us believe. From Dickey's arguments, one

¹G. Wilson Knight, The Imperial Theme (London, 1931), pp. 210, 286-287.

may distinguish three methods of criticism:

1. The critics in the first group point to the literary tradition built up around Cleopatra--the tradition Shakespeare borrows from--and show that, with the exception of Chaucer's Legend of Good Women, Cleopatra was invariably presented as a symbol of lust and extravagance.²

2. Faculty psychology,³ which was in vogue during Shakespeare's age, would judge Cleopatra guilty of perversion of the natural and divine order of reason, both within herself and within the Egyptian state,⁴ wherein she exercised authority. The resulting reaction of the cosmos toward this perversion of reason destroyed her.

3. By a textual comparison of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra with its source, these critics show the force, substance, and meaning of the dramatic changes Shakespeare works in the characterization of Cleopatra. This is perhaps the most objective way a critic can analyze the processes that occur during Shakespeare's characterization of Cleopatra.

While Shakespeare's Cleopatra is generally less evil than Plutarch's, she is still guilty of betraying Antony by both actions and words. In the last act, it is only as the beauty of Shakespeare's poetry affects a dramatic change in Cleopatra's character that she is ennobled. Examples of critical opinion in both these areas as they relate to Shakespeare's use of his sources are varied, as the reader will now be shown.

²Franklin M. Dickey, Not Wisely But Too Well (San Marino, California, 1957), pp. 144-160, 161-176.

³Ibid., pp. 3-45.

⁴Daniel Stempel, "The Transmigration of Crocodile," Shakespeare Quarterly, VII (1956), 59-72.

Critics hold diverging views on the relationship between Plutarch's queen and Shakespeare's, especially in regard to the change in Cleopatra's dramatic nature as the play develops. Farnham's keen insight reveals that, while Plutarch's Cleopatra is covertly vicious to Antony before the battle of Actium, she is both good and bad to him after this catastrophe. Shakespeare, he believes, creates a genuinely paradoxical Cleopatra by paying respects with "marked evenhandedness" both to the tradition that Cleopatra committed suicide for love of Antony, and to the tradition that she killed herself because queenly pride caused her to reject the idea of her becoming a part of Caesar's triumph.⁵ Schücking is astonished to find how inferior the Shakespearian Cleopatra of the first part of the play is to Plutarch's cultured queen. He points out that Shakespeare makes the Cleopatra following Antony's death too noble to have been the strumpet of the earlier part of the play and follows Plutarch too closely, even slavishly, in presenting Cleopatra's death. He feels that there is no dramatic reason for Cleopatra to outlive Antony.⁶

Stewart implies that, while Shakespeare's Cleopatra acts as maliciously as Plutarch's, she more truly reveals her nature by the beautiful poetry she speaks. He believes that Cleopatra is neither completely disloyal (to Antony) at the beginning of the play nor completely loyal at the end.⁷ Adler is more definite on this point. He believes that

⁵William Farnham, Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1950), pp. 147-148, 196.

⁶Levin L. Schücking, Character Problems in Shakespeare's Plays (New York, 1948), p. 117.

⁷J. I. M. Stewart, Character and Motive in Shakespeare (London, 1949), pp. 59-78.

Shakespeare completely transmutes, that is, uplifts and ennobles Plutarch's Cleopatra.⁸ Dickey believes that Shakespeare's Cleopatra, like Plutarch's, expresses no sincere feeling for Antony until after his death;⁹ Stauffer, on the other hand, contends that Shakespeare's Cleopatra, unlike Plutarch's, maintains undying love for Antony throughout the play.¹⁰ Stoll says that, like the Cleopatra of Plutarch, much of the old unredeemed Cleopatra of Shakespeare remains to the end of the play.¹¹

The unifying element of Shakespeare's poetry gives an identity of tone to Cleopatra that Plutarch's medium cannot. Viewing the play in its psychological implications, Bethell makes the point that the earlier vicious and vulgar Cleopatra is inconsistent with the more sublime character we find at the end of the play--except possibly in terms of poetry. This splitting of character, he implies, is not present in Plutarch's queen.¹²

Dickey, Harrison, Adler, Granville-Barker--all have something to say about Shakespeare's divergence from source material, particularly Plutarch. Dickey¹³ and Harrison believe that Shakespeare has followed

⁸Fritz Adler, "Das Verhältniss von Shakespeare" 'Antony and Cleopatra' zu Plutarchs Biographie des Antonius," Jahrbuch Der Deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft, ed. F. A. Leo (Weimar, 1895), p. 264.

⁹Dickey, p. 198.

¹⁰Donald A. Stauffer, Shakespeare's World of Images (New York, 1949), p. 244.

¹¹Elmer E. Stoll, Shakespeare Studies (New York, 1942), p. 144.

¹²S. B. Bethell, Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition (Durham, North Carolina, 1944), pp. 116, 145.

¹³Dickey, pp. 184-187.

Plutarch closely in presenting Cleopatra as a harlot, which, according to Harrison, denies the play classification as a tragedy.¹⁴ Adler indicates that Plutarch, presenting no integrated view of Cleopatra, regards her as important only as she affects Antony's life while Shakespeare, by giving a new interpretation to Plutarch's events, develops Cleopatra into a character fully equal with Antony.¹⁵ Granville-Barker points out that Plutarch gives importance to Roman material, partly by giving it so much space; but that Shakespeare gives importance to the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra by impressing it upon one's attention early in the play¹⁶--and, after all, Shakespeare entitles his play Antony and Cleopatra.

The present author finds no incontestable case where Shakespeare follows Appian¹⁷ and Dio Cassius¹⁸ in his dramatization of Cleopatra. Shakespeare draws more heavily from Plutarch and Daniel, softening Plutarch's hard, intellectually controlled Cleopatra here, expanding Daniel's Cleopatra there, bestowing upon her a volatile mixture of attributes characterized by an inclination toward soaring praise (of Antony), strident yet elegant mockery, and subtle but deadly irony. The earthy sensuality of Cleopatra's speech when Antony is absent stems

¹⁴G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare Tragedies (London, 1951), p. 226.

¹⁵Adler, p. 294.

¹⁶Harley Granville-Barker, Prefaces to Shakespeare (Princeton, 1952), I, 376.

¹⁷Appian of Alexandria, Appian's Roman History, tr. Horace White (New York, 1899), IV.

¹⁸Dio Cassius, Dio's Roman History, tr. Earnest Cary (London, New York, 1917), IV, V, VI. There is some indication that Shakespeare follows or at least parallels Appian and Dio Cassius in certain particulars of other characterizations.

from Ovid's Art of Love,¹⁹ whereas most of the mythological allusions are from Ovid's Metamorphoses.²⁰

¹⁹Publius Ovidius Naso, The Art of Love, tr. Charles D. Young (New York, 1931).

²⁰Ovid, The Metamorphoses, tr. A. C. Watts (Berkeley, 1954).

CHAPTER II

I, i

Shakespeare's use of Philo and Demetrius springs from the episode of Geminus in Plutarch. Shakespeare presents the material thus:

Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure. Those his goodly eyes
. . . . now bend, now turn
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front. His captain's heart
. . . . is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gypsy's lust. (I, i, 1-10)²¹

Then Cleopatra, by calling Antony a puppet of Rome, and thus putting him on the defensive, continues by saying that he does not actually love her. She answers his question of ". . . What sport to-night?" with an ironical statement: "Hear the ambassadors." Antony replies, ". . . Fie, wrangling queen!" Then Antony commands Philo and Demetrius, ". . . Speak not to us." Thus Shakespeare's Cleopatra easily rids herself of the ambassadors. We then hear Demetrius speak:

. . . I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome; but I will hope
Of better deeds to-morrow. Rest you happy! (I, i, 48-62)

Since we hear no more of them we can perhaps assume that they were not killed by Cleopatra or Antony but allowed to return to Rome. We see a different situation when we observe Shakespeare's source, Plutarch:

²¹All Shakespeare quotations follow George Lyman Kittredge's Sixteen Plays of Shakespeare (Boston, 1946). Quotations from Shakespeare will be indicated parenthetically within the text.

. . . Nevertheless they that loved Antonius, were intercessors to the people for him, and amongst them they sent one Geminius unto Antonius, to pray him be would take heede, from him & that he should be counted an enemy to the people of Rome. This Geminius being arrived in Graece, made Cleopatra jealous straight of his coming; because she surmised that he came not but to speake for Octavia. Therefore she spared not to tawnt him all supper tyme, and moreover to spyte him the more, she made him be set lowest of all at the borde, the which he tooke patiently, expecting occasion to speake with Antonius. Now Antonius commanding him at the table to tell him what wind brought him thither: he answered him, that it was no table talke, and that he would tell him tomorrow morning fasting: but dronke or fasting, howsoever it were, he was sure of one thing, that all would not go well on his side, unles Cleopatra were sent backe into AEGypt. Antonius tooke these wordes in very ill part. Cleopatra on the other side answered him, thou doest well Geminius, sayd she, to tell the truth before thou be compelled by torments: but within fewe dayes after, Geminius fled away, and fled to Rome. The flatterers also to please Cleopatra, did make her drive many other of Antonius faithful servaunts & friends from him, who could not abide the injuries done unto them: amonge the which these two were chiefe, Marcus Sullanus, and Dellius the Historiographer: who wrote that he fled, because her Phisitian Glaucus tolde him, that Cleopatra had set some secretly to kill him.²²

Shakespeare modifies Cleopatra's part in his adaptation of Plutarch. He uses this episode of Geminius as one of the foundations of his first scene, but Plutarch has made Cleopatra's tone cruel to a degree that Shakespeare never condones. In Plutarch, this Roman, who had come to Athens to explain to Antony how the latter's position was being weakened at home, was scorned, degraded, and finally threatened by Cleopatra until he fled back to Rome to save his life. Shakespeare never allows Cleopatra to become vicious except under extreme emotional duress.

²²Plutarch, The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes, tr. (Greek to French) James Amyot, tr. (French to English) Thomas North (Oxford, 1928), p. 369. Quotations from this edition of North's Plutarch will be indicated parenthetically within the text.

In Shakespeare neither Philo nor Demetrius says anything directly to Cleopatra that might incur her wrath. Shakespeare's presentation of this first scene, like Plutarch's, reveals the Roman hatred of Cleopatra and their disgust with the "un-manned" Antony. This material, however, serves only as a brief introduction to and crescendo towards the all-important personal relationship between Antony and Cleopatra. With the advent of all these elements in the play practically simultaneously, we feel we have arrived in medias res.²³ However, this important difference is seen in the portrayal of Shakespeare's Cleopatra: instead of being Plutarch's Machiavellian-type monster, who worked through fear, she is a wittily taunting tart who mocks Antony into disregarding the ambassadors, thereby accomplishing the same purpose as Plutarch's queen. Cleopatra's character is considerably elevated in relation to what it would have been if the play had started with her coldly sinister threat to Geminius. She is an exotic temptress who has snared Antony and rendered him "eyeless with passion."

In the following passage Lucretius described the dangers involved in wearing the rose-tinted glasses of the lover:

Crossed Love and helpless there be such
 As through shut eyelids thou canst still take in
 Uncounted ills
 A fall into the hunting-snares of love
 Is not so hard, as to get out again,
 When entangled in the very nets, and burst
 The stoutly-knitted cord of Aphrodite.
 Yet even when there enmeshed with tangled feet,
 Still canst thou escape the danger--lest indeed
 Thou standest in the way of thine own good,
 And overlookest first all blemishes
 Of mind and body of thy most preferred
 Desirable dame. For so men do
 Eyeless with passion, and assign to them
 Graces not theirs in fact

²³Adler, p. 264.

To placate Venus, since their friends are smit
 With a base passion--miserable dupes
 Who seldom mark their own worst bane of all.
 The black-skinned girl is "tawny like the honey."²⁴

Philo, it is to be noted, refers contemptuously to the "tawny front," which he uses almost as an ironic euphemism for the words "black-skinned." He is closer to his intended meaning with the words "gypsy's lust." Both Shakespeare and Lucretius are describing people helplessly in love with unworthy women whose undesirable qualities are of paramount importance. Antony's "goodly eyes," as Lucretius said, "now eyeless with passion," might as well be shut for all they can help his judgment because they serve no other purpose except to look on Cleopatra. This is another instance which might indicate that Shakespeare was reading Lucretius when he wrote the passage. Another interesting similarity is in the verb "burst." The heart that burst "the buckles on his breast" during "the scuffles of great fight" cannot now "burst the knotted cords of Aphrodite" but is "become the bellows and fan to cool a gypsy's lust."

From the words "tawny front" (I, i, 6) and "gypsy's lust" (I, i, 10) we see that in Shakespeare's characterization, Cleopatra's badness is to be attributed to uncontrollable passion which during Shakespeare's time was assumed to be an integral part of people ranging from the dark-skinned race to those merely having dark hair. "Gypsy" is a shortened form of the word Egyptian, meaning "people from Egypt." Shakespeare evidently disregarded the fact that Cleopatra was Macedonian and would probably have been of lighter complexion. The color of Cleopatra's skin is a subject not treated in Plutarch.

²⁴Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, tr. William Ellery Leonard, Book IV, (London, 1921) pp. 175, 177-180.

Dickey comments upon the words,

his captain's heart.
 . . is become the bellows and the fan
 To cool a gypsy's lust. (I, i, 6-10)

"The folio then describes the entrance of Cleopatra 'with eunuchs fanning her.'"²⁵ One of the themes which recurs here, if not symbolic, is at least singularly appropriate to the actions which follows. Antony is compared to an eunuch. The use of this symbolism is not like Plutarch, yet, like Plutarch, it shows the almost castrated Antony.

There is, perhaps, in the following an unusual fusion of duplicity and nobility:

Cleo. If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
Ant. There's beggary in the love that can be
 reckon'd.
Cleo. I'll set a bourn how far to be belov'd.
Ant. Then must thou needs find out new
 heaven, new earth. (I, i, 14-17)

I agree with Granville-Barker that this language is the height of convention.²⁶ Cleopatra is expecting Antony to tell her how much he loves her because she is aware that he knows how to please women. Antony is promising everything and swearing by everything sacred that his love is beyond words. In my opinion Shakespeare has borrowed these ideas from the first book of Ovid's Art of Love, such as follows:

Tell her you are wild about her; throw in a few
 compliments; if necessary, plead with her . . .
 Above everything else, promise, promise, promise.
 Promises cost you nothing. You're a millionaire
 in promises. You can do wonders if Hope is carefully
 fostered. She's, of course, a deceitful goddess, but
 an uncommonly useful one.²⁷

Here are two sophisticated lovers old in the ways of passion and deceit.

²⁵Dickey, pp. 179-180.

²⁶Granville-Barker, p. 436.

²⁷Ovid, The Art of Love, pp. 15-39.

They know the pathways to the heart and take them with mechanical sureness. But this sophisticated desire of Shakespeare's Cleopatra for Antony has little in common with the brazen reason that Plutarch's Cleopatra has for wanting Antony to love her. The closest similarity between the two is found where Plutarch's Cleopatra, pretending to be sick for the love of Antony, kept him going to see his wife Octavia:

Octavia his wife

whome he Antony had left at Rome, would needes take sea to come unto him Cleopatra knowing that Octavia would have Antonius from her

suttelly seemed to languish for

the love of Antonius, pyning her body for lacke of meate. Furthermore, she everywhay so framed her countenaunce, that when Antonius came to see her, she cast her eyes upon him, like a woman ravished for joy. Straight againe when he went for her, she fell a weeping and bluddering, looking rufully of the matter, and still found the means that Antonius should often tymes finde her weeping: and then when he came sodainly upon her, she made as though she dryed her eyes, and turned her face away, as if she were unwilling that he should see her weepe. All these tricks she used

(North, pp. 360-362)

By following Ovid, Shakespeare may be showing sophistication but never plain trickery as in Plutarch. Shakespeare's Cleopatra never goes to such great physical lengths to convince Antony of her sincerity as Plutarch's queen does. Shakespeare's Cleopatra has real passion for Antony.

Stauffer indicates that these lines show the greatness of the love that these pair had for each other: "To set limits to the love of this noble pair requires the finding out of 'new heaven, new earth.'"²⁸ It was comparable to the love to be found in the new heaven and new earth of the Apocalypse. Saint John "saw new heaven, and new earth, for the first heaven, and the first earth were passed away"²⁹

²⁸Stauffer, p. 245.

²⁹Kenneth Muir, Shakespear Sources (London, 1957), p. 218. Revelation XXI.

I believe that Cleopatra and Antony are not expressing apocalyptic nobility but rather are following Ovid's advice in that they are both "free to swear by all the god," and they believe Ovid when he announces, "Don't worry, for Jove looks down upon all lovers' treachery and smiles benignly."³⁰ Perhaps one may say here that Shakespeare is using Ovid's device and the language of John. According to Tucker Brooke, however, these are very serious lines because Cleopatra is demanding that the measure of Antony's love be proved to her. It is not until he follows her from the battle of Actium that he does prove himself and thereafter she is satisfied with his devotion.³¹

The irony in the following speech of Shakespeare's Cleopatra is probably from a source other than Plutarch.

Nay, hear them, Antony.
 Fulvia perchance is angry . . .
 Where's Fulvia's process . . .
 Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
 Is Caesar's homager! Else so thy cheek pays
 shame
 When shrill-tongu'd Fulvia scolds . . .
 (I, i, 19-32)

I am in agreement with Franklin Dickey³² and Kenneth Muir³³ that Shakespeare found his source for these words in particular and for the whole scene in general in Samuel Daniel's A Letter Sent From Octavia Into Egypt to Her Husband Marcus Antonius (p. 121):

Although perhaps, these my complaints may come
 Whilst thou in the armies of that incestuous Queene,
 The staine of Aegypt, and the shame of Rome

³⁰Ovid, Art of Love, p. 35.

³¹Tucker Brooke, A Literary History of England, ed. A. C. Baugh (New York, 1948) p. 538.

³²Dickey, p. 172.

³³Muir, p. 210.

Shalt dallying sit, and blush to haue them seene:
 Whilst proud disdainfull she, gessing from whome
 The message came, and what the cause hath beene,
 Will scorning say, Faith this comes from your Deere,
 Now Sir you must be shent for staying heere.³⁴

Thus with this hint from Daniel, which shows Cleopatra's reaction to messages from Rome, Shakespeare condenses the essence of Cleopatra's mockery around the already dramatic sequence of events in Plutarch where Antony receives the messages which will later motivate him to action.

Although there is nothing in Plutarch that we can definitely assign as the source of this speech in Shakespeare, Plutarch has contributed the idea of the mocking, sarcastic Cleopatra in the fishing episode:

On a time he Antony went to angle for fish, and when he could take none . . . he secretly commaunded the fisher men, that when he cast in his line, they should straight dive under the water, and put a fishe on his hooke, Cleopatra found it straight . . . commaunded one of her men to dive under the water before Antonius men, and to put some old salte fish upon his baite . . . When he had hong the fish on his hooke, Antonius thinking he had taken a fishe indeede, snatched up his line presently. Then they all fell a laughing. Cleopatra laughing also; said unto him: leave us (my lord) AETyptians (which dwell in the contry of PHARVS AND CANOBVS) your angling rodde: this is not they profession: thou most hunt after conquering of realmes and contries (North, pp. 331-332)

Shakespeare could possibly have used the fish story from Plutarch at the beginning of the play except for the fact that he could hardly explain the presence of the two disapproving Romans, Philo and Demetrius, on this idle fishing expedition of the two lovers. The Romans are necessarily at the beginning of the play in order to present at once the

³⁴Samuel Daniel, "A Letter Sent From Octavia Into Egypt to Her Husband Marcus Antonius," The Complete Works In Verse and Prose of Samuel Daniel, ed. Rev. Alexander B. Grosart (London, 1885). Quotations from Daniel will be indicated parenthetically in the text.

dramatic tension of the reaction of Rome to Cleopatra and Antony. There are here three points involved in the change from Plutarch's to Shakespeare's conception of Cleopatra:

1. The Antony-Cleopatra relationship, the primary idea to be presented, is naturally presented first. Within the framework of this first relationship Cleopatra is to be a mocker.³⁵

2. Shakespeare found the idea for his mocking Cleopatra from Plutarch, but he found no episode which presented itself as a proper place from which to start. Then he read Daniel's Letter from Octavia.

3. The Antony-Cleopatra relationship, must be such that it will mesh with the Roman material while the scene itself must be interesting.

A dramatic feature of Cleopatra's bitterly ironic attack upon Antony is that we feel that she is almost too eager to chastise him. She is venting her aggressions against him because she guesses that he will soon depart. This is far from being the almost overconfident Cleopatra in Plutarch who mocked as she overreached him.

. . . who knows
 If the scarce-bearded Caesar have not sent
 His powerful mandate to you. Do this, or
 this;
 Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that;
 Perform't, or else we damn thee
 Perchance? nay, and most like;
 You must not stay here longer, your dismissal
 Is come from Ceasar; therefore hear it, Antony.
 (I, i, 20-27)

This derision of Antony as compared to Caesar is not in Daniel's Letter. I do not find a satisfactory source for this material in Plutarch unless it occurred when Octavius first came to Rome after Julius Caesar's death. This event was presented as follows:

³⁵Granville-Barker, p. 376.

While matters went thus in Rome, the young Caesar, Caesar's niece's son, and by testament left his heir, arrived at Rome from Appolonia . . . This first thing he did was to visit Antony, as his father's friend. He spoke to him concerning the money that was in his hands . . . Antony, at first laughing at such discourse from so young a man, told him he wished he were in his health, and that he wanted good counsel and good friends to tell him the burden of being executor to Caesar would sit very uneasy upon his young shoulders. (North, p. 327)

Shakespeare continually builds upon the idea that Antony is plagued by the fact that he must triumph over this young upstart Caesar or face the infamy of losing to him:

. . . The very dice obey him;
And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance . . . (II, iii, 33-35)

Canidius, we
Will fight him by sea . . .
. . . For that he dares us to 't. (III, vii, 27-28, 30)

Spoke scantily of me; when perforce he could
not
But pay me terms of honour . . . (III, iv, 4-5)

. . . Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties,
dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness. (III, xi, 61-62)

Antony's horror of being humbled by the young Caesar was not brought out quite so strongly in Plutarch although we do find Antony's challenge to Octavius of personal combat. For Cleopatra to scorn Antony as a tool of Caesar serves to heighten the degree of her invective, adding dramatic value to the scene by showing Antony's subservience to Cleopatra.

Cleopatra is not duped by the glibness of Antony's protestations of love.

. . . Excellent falsehood!
Why did he marry Fulvia, and not love her?
I'll seem the fool I am not, Antony
Will be himself. (I, i, 40-43)

There may be some relation to Daniel's Letter here as follows (p. 122): "How oft haue poore abused I tooke part/ With Falshood, onely for to make thee true." Shakespeare's Cleopatra takes a more sophisticated view than Daniel's, saying that Antony loved Fulvia when they were first married, but now Antony is philandering with Cleopatra. Soon it will be Cleopatra's turn to be betrayed. In Daniel's play Octavia is saying that she spent a long time trying to convince herself that Antony was still true in his affections toward her even while her better judgment dictated otherwise. Both are expressing doubt in Antony, but Cleopatra does not have to be abandoned before she can believe Antony capable of this kind of action. We are rapidly brought to understand that Cleopatra is no young and foolish lady but a subtle woman who does not underestimate her lover, but piques his imagination with many interesting pursuits:

Ant. To-night we'll wander through the streets and
 note
 The qualities of people. Come, my queen;
 Last night you did desire it. (I, 1, 53-54)

The source for this adventure is Plutarch:

At night she would go rambling with him to disturb and torment people at their doors and windows, dressed like a servent woman, for Antony also went in servant's disguise, and from these expeditions he often came home very scurvily answered (North, p. 331)

Shakespeare has reversed this episode from one in which Cleopatra is flattering Antony by doing everything with him, to one in which Antony is going with Cleopatra because she desires it. Thereby Shakespeare shows one of the fundamental changes from Plutarch -- Cleopatra is no longer merely a flatterer. Another change in the concept of these adventures is easily seen in that Plutarch indicated that the Romans regarded these activities of Antony as base and low whereas Shakespeare

treats them as just unusual but harmless adventures for monarch.³⁶ This comparison might suggest that Antony and Cleopatra shared much more than just sex.

I, ii

Shakespeare's Cleopatra, perhaps, had many interests, even the art of fortune telling.

Char. Where's the soothsayer that you prais'd so to the Queen? (I, ii, 3-4)

Our source here is of course Plutarch:

With Antonius there was a soothsayer or astronomer of Aegypt, that coulde cast a figure, and judge of mens nativities, to tell them what should heppen to them. . . . He, either to please, or else for that it so by his art, told Antonius plainly, that his fortunes (which of it selfe was excellent good, and very great) was altogether blemished, and obscured by Caesars fortune: and therefore he counselled him utterly to leave his company, and to get him as farre from him as he could. (North, p. 335)

Plutarch had the Smoothsayer appear only once whereas Shakespeare has him appear twice, once earlier in the play. Shakespeare implies that Cleopatra may have seen this soothsayer, which might indicate that she has worried about her future relationship with Antony. If, however, she did not believe in the soothsayer's predictions, might she not have tried later to employ this one to talk Antony into returning from Rome, since she knew that Antony, like many Romans of the times, believed that smoothsayers could foretell the future? The Soothsayer says: "You shall outlive the lady whom you serve." (I, ii, 30-31) Here Shakespeare definitely predicts the death of Cleopatra. This is completely different from Plutarch, who gave us only a hint that everything will proceed to bring

³⁶Adler, p. 265.

about the ascension of Octavius as ruler of the world. Here, in the midst of all this laughter, Shakespeare begins to plant the suspicion of the forecoming doom of Cleopatra in our minds. If Cleopatra were aware of the prediction of the Soothsayer and gave it only the smallest possible credence, what effect might this have on her behavior towards Antony? Would she be more inclined to "pack cards" with Caesar, or would she make the best possible use of her remaining life with Antony? The presence of the Soothsayer looms more powerful and ominous since it touches Cleopatra so deeply from the very first. Cleopatra seems so powerful in the first scene, but she is fearful by the second as she says, "Saw you my lord?" (I, ii, 84)

Plutarch has given us no picture of his queen that resembles the disturbed Cleopatra of Shakespeare in the following:

He was dispos'd to mirth, but on the
 sudden
 A Roman thought hath struck him.
 Seek him, and bring him hither.
 Where's Alexas?
 . . .
 We will not look upon him: go with
 us. (I, ii, 89-91)

One may compare Cleopatra's use of Alexas in Shakespeare with Cleopatra's use of Alexas in Plutarch:

For Alexas Laodician, who was brought in-
 to Antonius house and favor by means of Timagenes, and
 afterwards was in greater credit with him, than any other
 Grecian: (for that he had always been one of Cleopat-
 reas ministers to win Antonius, and to overthrow all his Antony's
 good determinations to use his wife Octavia well) . . .
 (North, p. 385)

Cleopatra is probably having Alexas find out whether Antony actually plans to leave or not, since she seems to know that he is going by the beginning of scene iii. Alexas's character has improved from what it was in Plutarch. In Plutarch he was definitely employed to beguile

Antony's thoughts away from Octavia, and since his only business in Shakespeare is to carry out Cleopatra's will, his improvement serves to redeem her character also.

Antony's feelings are further revealed in his statement, "Name Cleopatra as she is call'd in Rome; / Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase" (I, ii, 110-111). These lines are closely related to the following: "Yet all this did not so much offend the Romanes as the unmeasurable honors which he did unto Cleopatra." (North, p. 340). We also might add Geminius' words to Antony about Cleopatra as indicative of Plutarch's rendition of Roman opinion of Cleopatra. Instead of telling us in long expository sentences about the badness of Cleopatra, Shakespeare has Antony in rather short, clipped sentences, in what amounts to a dramatic change or revelation of character, inform us that he can see Cleopatra as others see her and that he is not completely blinded by love. This seeming reversal of this attitude of dependency on the charms of Cleopatra is rather a shock.

Eno. Cleopatra, catching but the least noise of
this, dies instantly. (I, ii, 144-146)

The closest that Shakespeare comes to using the material of Plutarch is in the following:

She suttelly seemed to languish for the love of
Antonius, pyning her body for lacke of meat . . .
Then the flatterers that furthered Cleopatraes mind,
blamed Antonius, and tolde him that he was a hard
natured man and that he had small love in him,
that would see a poore Ladye in such torment for
his sake, whose life depended only upon him alone.
(North, p. 361)

I, iii

The art with which Cleopatra handles men is shown as she tells Charmian,

If you find him sad
 Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report
 That I am sudden sick. (I, iii, 3-5)

There is no source for this portraiture in Plutarch except in the expression of mockery as already mentioned. I am inclined toward the opinion that Shakespeare uses Ovid's Art of Love as the source for Cleopatra's advice on love here. Ovid's idea may be presented thus:

My advice is simple to follow and you will be
 successful in the end. Be cheerful in her joy
 and weep with her sorrow; in short become the
 mirror of her moods.³⁷

Perhaps Cleopatra is unsuccessful in keeping Antony in Egypt because she uses the words of Ovid but turns his words to their diametrically opposite meaning. She insists upon mocking Antony instead of flattering him. Here Shakespeare has presented Cleopatra talking about her method of holding her lover to herself. It is a reversal of the planned method of Ovid, but the rhetoric follows his style closely. Although this method is in some respects a subterfuge, we have been presented with no indication that all her passion is for ulterior motives. We are not assured, however, that Cleopatra is in love with Antony. We might say, however, that Cleopatra has a passionate desire for Antony.

This author agrees partly with Fritz Adler that the lines of Cleopatra's character in Plutarch were incompletely drawn. There were lines favorable and unfavorable about her in the same paragraph.³⁸ She was a flatterer, but she taunted Antony. She was aware of all of Antony's needs and satisfied him completely. She would not deliberately oppose Antony, thinking thereby to hold him; but would discern what his

³⁷Ovid, pp. 48-49.

³⁸Adler, p. 294.

desires were and present these same desires to him as his own. Political ambition and desire to stay alive were Plutarch's Cleopatra's prime objectives.

If Plutarch's Cleopatra won or lost it was the result of the planned thinking of an alert mind prompted by personal and political ambitions which has used sex as a weapon in furthering these ends. Shakespeare's Cleopatra will win or lose Antony by her intuitive sagacity. Her motives are passion and a sense that her love-charms may be fading with her age. She somewhat naively thinks that her success as a queen depends entirely upon her close personal relationship with Antony. Shakespeare never lets Cleopatra handle any business that might be termed affairs of state. We either have to assume that she is competent in these affairs and executes them off stage or that she, like Antony, has given all for love.

From the very first of the play Shakespeare's queen mocks Antony:

What says the married woman? You may go.
 Would she had never given you leave to come!
 Let her not say 't is I that keep you here;
 I have no power upon you; hers you are.
 (I, iii, 20-23)

The source is Daniel:

To thee (yet deere) though most dis-
 loyall lord,
 Whom impious loue keeps in a
 barbarous land,
 Thy wronged wife Octauia sendeth
 word
 Of th' unkind wounds receiued by thy
 hand. (Daniel, Letter, p. 121)

Shakespeare has, of course, changed Octavia of Daniel's Letter to Fulvia. If Octavia were already married to Antony most of the Roman business of the play of Shakespeare would already be over. Shakespeare has taken the polite coldness of tone in Daniel and changed it into bitter sarcasm at the beginning of this scene which reveals so much of the lovers and their

differences. Certainly here Cleopatra plays no sycophant to Antony as she did in Plutarch: "O never was there queen / So mightily betray'd!" (I, iii, 24-25). Cleopatra takes this remark of her vanquished rival from Daniel as her own. In Daniel's Letter we find Octavia saying, "(Thou royall Concubine and Queen of Lust) / And his untruth that hath betraid her [Octavia's] trust" (Daniel, p. 122). Plutarch's Cleopatra never mentioned Fulvia or said anything about Antony's departure for Rome. Here, using the vehicle of Octavia's righteous indignation from Daniel's Letter, Shakespeare reveals a greater depth in Cleopatra's character than ever realized in scene one. Shakespeare has given her a new dimension hardly suggested by Plutarch. We find that instead of using Fulvia just to scorn Antony, Cleopatra is capable of understanding how Fulvia possibly feels concerning Antony's absence. Shakespeare begins to develop our sympathy. We would almost believe that Cleopatra had seen the message (in Octavia's Letter) earlier, for she cries, "Yet at the first / I saw the treason planted" (I, iii, 25-26), indicating how her untrusting nature differs from Fulvia's.

Antony unwittingly strengthens Cleopatra's argument by saying that Fulvia is dead, which only causes Cleopatra to further identify herself with Fulvia. Antony hands Cleopatra the message and pleads that he is going off to war as her hero.

My precious queen, forbear;
And give true evidence to his love, which
stands
An honourable trial. (I, iii, 73-75)

Cleopatra replies sarcastically: "So Fulvia told me." This reply seems to be a direct reference to Daniel's Letter: "Tis she that sends the message of thy Shame / and his untruth hath betraid her trust" (p. 122). From the very earnestness with which Cleopatra echoes Octavia's betrayed

love, Shakespeare builds a stamp of dramatic validity which carried our unbelief and creates within us a feeling that this passion of Cleopatra is not entirely a mask. This feeling must be established to some degree if the Cleopatra of the latter part of the play is to be credible.

Cleopatra now ironically asks Antony to show his love for her even if it is only a pretense of love.

So Fulvia told me
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears
Belong to Egypt. Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling; and let it look
Like perfect honour. (I, iii, 75-80)

Shakespeare has taken from Daniel this idea of a lover who wishes to hear endearing phrases of his love even if they are false. In the following stanza of Daniel's Letter:

How oft haue poore abused I tooke part
With Falshood, onely for to make thee true?
How oft haue I argued against my heart,
Not suffering it to know that which it knew
And for I would not haue thee what thou art,
I made my selfe, vnto my selfe vntrue:
So much my loue labour'd against my sinne,
To shut out feare which yet kept feare within.
(Daniel, p. 122)

The subject here amounts to the person saying that she wants to hear of love although the love is ultimately false and the lover, a philanderer. It is perhaps this theme which is the heart of Cleopatra's argument to Antony. The irony of the situation is furthered by the fact that Cleopatra knew that Antony would leave her, which causes us to wonder just how egoistic the love is that Cleopatra bears for Antony. Yet, whatever our predilections on the matter, we are bound to admit that this argument of Daniel's Octavia has become the plea of Shakespeare's Cleopatra as she repeats the stanza again now in very poignant, almost subliminal terms: "Sir, you and I must part-but that's not it" (I, iii, 87). Cleopatra

interrupts herself, but the thought may be finished with the idea from Daniel from whence Shakespeare derived the thought: I had tried to convince myself that you loved me and would not leave me, but I knew this to be untrue. Daniel says: "I tooke part / With Falshood, onely for to make thee true" (p. 122). Proceeding with Shakespeare we find: "Sir, you and I have lov'd-but there's not it. / That you know well" (I, iii, 88-89). To paraphrase this: We have loved, but that is not true because you did not love me although I tried to convince myself that you did.

Cleopatra now appears to have identified herself with Fulvia on this point of desertion:

Now I see, I see
In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be.
(I, iii, 64-65)

Antony has announced Fulvia's death as something Cleopatra should be pleased to hear. If this were Plutarch's Cleopatra she would have been completely pleased with this news.

With the sureness of inborn artistry, Granville-Barker touches the life pulse of this matter at this point:

For a moment in the middle of it we see another Cleopatra, and hear a note struck from nearer the heart of her. She is shocked by his callous gloss upon Fulvia's death. Vagaries of passion she can understand, and tricks and lies to favor them. But this hard-set indifference! . . . She takes it to herself, of course, and is not too shocked to make capital of it for her quarrel. But here, amid the lively wrangling, which is stimulus to their passion, shows a dead spot of incomprehension, the true division between them.³⁹

There is much that recommends Granville-Barker's suggestion here, especially if we consider Cleopatra's continued desire for Antony after

³⁹Granville-Barker, p. 426

he has gone to Rome. Her love is capable of subterfuge and could hardly be termed self-sacrificing. Yet she is shocked by Antony's composure in accepting Fulvia's death. Cleopatra has already stated that Antony loved Fulvia when they were first married but now is seeking his pleasure elsewhere. This she can understand, but his denial seems to imply that there was never anything of importance between himself and Fulvia, which Cleopatra interprets as applicable to herself. This, in addition to the fact that she continues to desire his return from Rome, establishes a need of Cleopatra for Antony. Plutarch's Cleopatra, however, was an opportunist who took advantage of Antony whenever he was present but went to no great lengths to have him return once he was gone. We can imagine her happy, indeed, over Antony's reception of Fulvia's death. Her happiness lay outside the realm of Antony's love. Thus, as long as she could control him, his cold indifference to other people could hardly have made an impression on her.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra, on the other hand, seems to be involved emotionally with Antony and is disturbed at his statement:

But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself. (I, iii, 91-93)

Cleopatra answers:

Tis sweating labour,
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. (I, iii, 93-95)

Again Cleopatra is referring to the knotty problem from Daniel:

How oft have I argued against my heart
Not suffering it to know that which it knew
And for I would not have thee what thou art
I made myself unto myself be vntrue.
So much my loue labour'd against my sinne,
To shut out feare which yet kept feare within.
(Daniel, Letter, p. 122)

"Idleness" could be the physical, lustful Antony and the "sweating"

could be sexual embrace. However, Shakespeare gives us the other meaning also. This meaning is derived from Daniel. "Idleness" is the belief of Cleopatra that Antony does love her. This thought may not, however, have objective reality, and as Cleopatra recognizes this, it becomes increasingly difficult for her to believe this thought, "bear such idleness so near the heart." Daniel says: "How oft have I argued against my heart." There was no comparable revelation of Cleopatra in Plutarch. That queen's only method of showing sorrow was in physical self-punishment. Shakespeare has borrowed, not only from Daniel's taunting Cleopatra but also from his proud Octavia, in order to lend dignity to Cleopatra's rather spotted testimony of love for Antony.

I, iv

Caesar believes that Cleopatra's love emasculates Antony:

/Antony/ is not more man
like
Than Cleopatra; nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he. (I, iv, 5-7)

Kittredge glosses this passage as pertaining to the fact that Cleopatra was married to a younger brother.⁴⁰ I do not find any statement to this effect in Plutarch. Dryden's "Caesar" has the following passage:

Caesar was first captivated by this proof of
Cleopatra's boldness, and was afterwards so over-
come by the charm of her that he reconciled her
and her brother, on the condition that she
should rule as colleague in the kingdom.⁴¹

Instead of saying that Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy were married, Plutarch merely states that they rule Egypt jointly.

⁴⁰Kittredge, p. 1366.

⁴¹Plutarch, Eight Great Lives, tr. John Dryden, revised Arthur Hught Clough, ed. Charles Alexander Robinson, Jr. (New York, 1960), p. 288. The author of this paper was not able to obtain a copy of North's translation of Plutarch's "Caesar."

I, v

Shakespeare's Cleopatra appears to be completely upset because Antony is away.

Give me to drink mandragora
 . . .
 That I might sleep out this great gap
 of time
 My Antony is away. (I, v, 4-6)

Plutarch has provided no basis for such a speech by Cleopatra. During the time Antony was in Italy, Cleopatra was only mentioned once, in jest, as the lover of Antony. Here, Shakespeare is indicating the passage of time, but he is primarily concerned with showing the great amount of feeling Cleopatra has for Antony.

Since we have already been introduced to the idea that Cleopatra emasculates Antony, it is interesting to note that she states here that she takes no pleasure in an eunuch.

. . . I take
 no pleasure
 In aught an eunuch has (I, v, 9-10)

Plutarch only mentions Mardian briefly when Octavius contemptuously suggests that Mardian is one of the generals in the opposing army at Actium since Antony is completely effeminate and useless for any task.

Nowe, after Caesar had made sufficient preparation he proclaymed open warre against Cleopatra, and made the people to abolishe the power and Empire of Antonius, bicause he had before given it uppe unto a woman. And Caesar sayde furthermore, that Antonius was not Maister of himselfe, but that Cleopatra had brought him beside him selfe, by her charms and amorous poysons: and that they that should make warre with them, should be Mardion the Eunuke, Photinus, and Iras, a woman of Cleopatraes bedchamber, and friseled her heare, and dressed her head, and Charmion,
 (North, p. 370)

To continue with the quotation from Shakespeare:

Cleo. Being unseminar'd thy freer thoughts
 May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?
Mar. Yes, gracious madam.
Cleo. Indeed!
Mar. Not in deed, madam, for I can do
 nothing
 Yet have I fierce affections, and think
 What Venus did with Mars. (I, v, 11-18)

It is from Christopher Marlowe's translation of Ovid's Elegies that we find a possible source for this speech:

Ay me, an eunuch keeps my mistress chaste
 That cannot Venus's mutual pleasure taste
 Who first deprived young boys of their best part
 With self-same wounds he gave, he ought to smart.
 To kind requests thou would'st more gentle prove
 If ever wench had made luke warm thy love.⁴²

Besides the quotation, which merely mentions Mardian as being a eunuch with the resulting innuendo about Antony, there is not basis for Shakespeare's passage in Plutarch. In the elegy Ovid is speaking as the lover of a woman guarded by a eunuch. Ovid speaks of the eunuch as being definitely unnatural and therefore inappreciative of the power of passion which renders this sexless being not only senseless to love but to the other manly virtues such as war. Shakespeare has Cleopatra mock Mardian as a nonentity as compared with Antony. There is a surprising similarity to the way that she mocked Antony as the tool of Octavius in the first scene. Thus we have Antony in Plutarch ridiculed as being a worse general than the eunuch, whereas in Shakespeare he is contrasted sexually with a eunuch. Yet there is another sense in which Antony is like the eunuch as when he fanned Cleopatra's passion as the eunuchs fanned her body. Later he fulfills the requirement of Ovid's eunuch: "All manly hopes resign / Thy mistresses ensign must be likewise thine."⁴³ One can

⁴²Publius Ovidius Naso, "Ovid's Elegies," Book II, tr. Christopher Marlowe, The Art of Love, tr. Charles D. Young (New York, 1931), p. 261.

⁴³Ibid., p. 261.

hardly imagine the Plutarchian Cleopatra spending much time doing nothing but sleeping, listening to music, or laughing with a eunuch. One senses the business of her court when Plutarch mentioned the many languages she knew and used for diplomatic reasons. There was the social life of which she was a part and to which she introduced Antony--the Inimitable Livers. Shakespeare has concentrated her attentions on Antony entirely while Antony in turn thinks mostly of her. Thus Shakespeare constantly reflects the attention of the audience from one lover back to the other and bends our thinking to the main theme which is the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra. No such attempt was made by Plutarch who viewed Cleopatra as a horrible but necessary catastrophe since she was the final corruption that contributes to the overthrow of Antony.

One should note the association of the idea of the eunuch, sex, and Antony in Cleopatra's mind from the hint of Mardian's statement: "What Venus did with Mars" (I, v, 18). This phrase is perhaps based upon Ovid, but it brings us to the sharp contrast between the eunuch and the mighty Antony: "The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm/ And burgonet of men" (I, v, 23-24). As noted by Farnham⁴⁴ and Muir,⁴⁵ the source for Cleopatra's statement is Daniel's Cleopatra: "My Atlas, and supporter of my pride / That did the world of all my glory sway" (p. 17). Certainly the image of Atlas, the supporter of the heavens, shows Shakespeare to be a debtor here. Not only does Antony hold the very sky, but he is the source of Cleopatra's power as queen. Had this statement been presented earlier in the play it would have presented Cleopatra as a political opportunist. Now the image created is loaded with sexual overtones which render

⁴⁴Farnham, p. 170.

⁴⁵Dickey, p. 170.

Antony lord of love to Cleopatra as well as political sovereign of the world. Shakespeare has not lost sight of Cleopatra the woman as he presents Cleopatra the queen.

Or is he on his horse
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely horse! for wot'st thou who thou
mov'st. (I, v, 21-22)

Here Shakespeare combines perverse sexual overtones with images of war and manliness. The source for this passage is perhaps from Ovid although there is a contrast in the persons to whom the ideas refer: "Thou wert not born to ride, or arms to bear / Thy hands agree not with the warlike spear."⁴⁶ Certainly the inability of the eunuch to perform in the service of love or in war is the similarity between the two passages. The dramatic function here seems to be that Cleopatra's mental image of Antony is that of a god-like hero, but that her use of him renders him an effeminate being.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra can still take great pride in Antony's affection for her.

Where's my serpent of old Nile?
For so he calls me. Now I feed my selfe
With most delicious poison. (I, v, 25-27)

Ovid is perhaps the source for this imagery:

Timbrels were there, and Egypt's snake, whose breast
With slumbrous poison swells.⁴⁷

It is interesting to note that Ovid used the goddess Isis, whom Cleopatra emulates, to change the sex of a person in the story from which this passage was taken. The poison mentioned here is part of a repeated theme

⁴⁶Ovid, The Art of Love, p. 261.

⁴⁷Publius Ovidius Naso, The Metamorphoses, Book IX, tr. A. E. Wats (Berkeley, 1954), p. 212.

that echoes through the play. The poison here is delicious because it has brought Antony under Cleopatra's spell, but it is fatal to both lovers, for the asp, a child of the Nile, sucks the breast of Isis, or mother of the Nile, asleep-to death. Yet again we have the other part of the imagery. The god-like Antony and the delicious part of the poison which causes death to undergo "a sea-change into something rich and strange," reminds one of the mistaken use of the word "immortal" for the word "death" at the end of the play. The poison seems to be the instrument by which Cleopatra not only emasculates Antony but also destroys herself. The Roman ambassadors and Octavius have already said that Antony is no more of a man than Cleopatra. When Cleopatra thinks of a eunuch, she is reminded sometimes of Antony.

Later in Act II, scene v, Cleopatra recalls almost an inversion of sex in the scene where she states,

I drunk him to his bed
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Phillippan. (II, v, 20-23)

The inversion of the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra by Shakespeare does not conflict with Plutarch, but employing other sources Shakespeare has expressed the matter much more ably. The above quotation may be a conscious reminiscence of the Hercules-Omphale episode. Antony was reputed to be descended from Hercules.

Ovid also creates another image that is appropriate: "By thine own hand and fault by hurt doth grow / Thou mad'st thy head with compound poison flow."⁴⁸ Ovid here had described a lover who by dyeing her hair a more pleasing color had poisoned it altogether and later has none. Ovid was here close to Daniel in presenting a lover who, in giving herself

⁴⁸Ovid, The Art of Love, p. 251.

completely to love, has destroyed the charms she had been improving during the years.

And yet thou cam'st but in my beauties vvaine,
 When nev v appearing vvrinckles of declining
 Wrought vvith the hand of yeares, see'd to deatine
 My graces light, as not but dimly shining.
 (Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 39)

This is perhaps one of the sources for the following lines of Shakespeare:

. . . Think on me
 That am with Phoebus's amorous pinches black
 And wrinkled deep in time. . . (I, v, 27-29)

Some of the sympathy we would feel for Daniel's queen in this passage has carried over into Shakespeare's adaptation of it. We are susceptible to the dignity of wrinkles no matter how obtained. The other source for this passage lies in Ovid:

Beauty is skin deep, each passing day robs you of some
 of it Be reconciled to the fact that your
 face will be a web of wrinkles and While
 there is time equip yourself with such accomplishments as
 shall defy time.⁴⁹

Perhaps through the love of Antony, Shakespeare's Cleopatra believes she has somehow defied time and is willing to sacrifice any thing to maintain the passion of their love. There was little sympathy created for Cleopatra in Plutarch except to admit that she was brave enough to take her own life. This point is also brought out in one of Horace's Odes.⁵⁰ Plutarch's Cleopatra was at the peak of her enchanting powers and played with Antony as a queen would a pawn. Shakespeare's Cleopatra, who is past the glory of her beauty, we feel, has a strong need to hold Antony. Fritz Adler believes that we are not to take seriously the idea that Cleopatra

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 46.

⁵⁰Quintus Horatius Flaccus, The Works of Horace (New York, 1892), pp. 36-38.

is older.⁵¹ I disagree. Shakespeare makes the passion of the lovers too strong for it to be of secondary importance. From the talk of Cleopatra and Charmian in the following we can deduce that Cleopatra would have had less reason to have loved deeply in her youth.

. . . Broad-fronted Caesar
 When thou wast here above the ground, I was
 A morsel for a monarch; and great Pompey
 Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow
 There would he anchor his aspect and die. (I, v, 29-34)

Plutarch is one of the sources here:

She had some faith in the words of Dellius but more in her own attractions; which having formerly recommended her to Julius Caesar and the young Gnaeus Pompey, she did not doubt might prove yet more successful with Antony. Their acquaintance with her was when she was a girl, young and ignorant of the world, but she was to meet Antony in the time of life when women's beauty is most splendid, and their intellects are in full maturity. (North, p. 329)

Pompey the Great, one notes, is introduced as the former lover of Cleopatra in Shakespeare. He replaces his less important son. Plutarch definitely gave Cleopatra an ulterior motive for seducing Antony which Shakespeare does not. In fact, in Shakespeare the mention of Caesar and Pompey seems to be Cleopatra's self-assurance that her feminine powers are great enough to attract any man, including Antony, back to her. Her flippancy here, however, is none too assured. Here is one way of presenting the queenly aspect of Cleopatra without sacrificing the womanly side of her nature. She has loved two of the greatest Romans as befitting a queen; now she appears to be truly in love with Antony. Plutarch used this passage as Cleopatra's scheme in which she assured herself that her plan to seduce Antony would work because it had worked already with

⁵¹Adler, p. 295.

comparable men. In Shakespeare, however, Cleopatra is convincing herself, that because two former leaders loved her, Antony loves her and will return to Egypt.

I believe that Shakespeare also formed his conception of the above quotation from Shakespeare from Daniel as follows:

For vvhilst my glory in her greatness stood
 And that I saw my state, and knew my beauty;
 Saw how the vworld admir'd me, how they woo'd
 I then thought all men must loue me of duty
 And I loue none: for my lasciuious Court
 Fertile in euer fresh and new-choyse pleasure
 Afforded me so bountiful disport
 That I to stay on loue had never leisure:
 My vagobond disere no limites found,
 For lust is endlesse, pleasure hath no bound.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 38)

There may be a trace of repugnance for her former life with Caesar and Pompey in Shakespeare's Cleopatra as she disagrees with Charmian that there is any comparison between Julius Caesar and her Mark Antony. However, this repugnance is not so easily discerned in Shakespeare's queen as in Daniel's redeemed queen. In Shakespeare there is no change in pace from Cleopatra's boasts about her love trysts with Antony to her remembrances of her affairs with Caesar and Pompey. Shakespeare is equivocal here. Yet, like Daniel and unlike Plutarch, Shakespeare's Cleopatra talks as if Antony is her real lover. She regards him as magnificent as compared with Alexas.

How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
 Yet, coming from him, that great med'cine
 hath
 With his tinct gilded thee.
 How goes it with my brave Mark Antony?

(I, v, 35-38)

It is possible that the thought of these lines is from Daniel:

Thou coming from the strictness of thy city
 An neuer this loofe pomp of monarchs learnest,

Inur'd to vvarres, in women vviles unwitty,
 Whilst others faind, thou fell'st to loue in earnest.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 39)

Perhaps the "great medicine" is the honest simplicity and warriorlike qualities of Antony to be found in Daniel's concept. They could only gild the outside of Alexas, who personifies the sophistication and lechery of Egypt's court. If Cleopatra is not merely acting for her little following of servants we must accept her words as truth, for why would she bother to lie to anyone present here? The weight of evidence suggests that Cleopatra is praising Antony, but her mockery is everywhere present so that we may not be definite.

Perhaps in the autumn of her beauty Cleopatra actually needs real affection.

By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth
 If thou with Caesar paragon again
 My man of men . . .
 . . My salad days,
 When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
 To say as I said then. (I, v, 70-75)

Much of the idea that Antony loved her in the autumn of her beauty is expressed in Daniel:

That men loue for themselves, and not for us
 Then and but thus, thou didst loue most sincerely
 O Antony, that best deseru'dst it better,
 This Autumne of my beauty brought so dearely,
 For which in more than death, I stand thy debter.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 39)

It is from Daniel that Shakespeare derives the sympathy for his Cleopatra, although he never draws such a clear-cut, repentant Cleopatra as the former. One notices that Shakespeare leaves out those elevating statements which warm our hearts toward Daniel's Cleopatra: "thou didst loue most sincerely For which in more than death, I stand thy debter." Just as certain, however, he does parallel the idea expressed

in:

This Autumne of my beauty
(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 39)

with his:

My salad days
When I was green in judgment. (I, v, 74)

We must admit that Cleopatra's statement is somewhat deceptive, yet she is not talking to Antony. Why would she bother to deceive Charmian? "Cold in blood" would tend to signify that she had never known love before Antony. All her former affairs existed for other reasons.

Cleopatra will sacrifice anything to continue communicating with Antony.

Get me ink and paper
He shall have every day a several greeting,
Or I'll unpeople Egypt. (I, v, 76-78)

Even as Shakespeare reveals Cleopatra's later destruction of Antony he indicates she has an overwhelming desire for him that causes her to treat recklessly all other aspects of her life. Her desire for him is very real. If Cleopatra turns on Antony it is because she feels he has betrayed her. Plutarch's Cleopatra, to the contrary, detained Antony from what might have been a very successful engagement of war with the Parthians in order that he might have spent a season with her. She appeared to have used Antony entirely for her own purposes disregarding what might have been best for him. Her emotion for him seems to have been directed to the purpose of winning him so that he would do more for her. No real emotion involvement was found for Antony in Plutarch's queen.

CHAPTER III

II, i

The view of the writers of the Middle Ages who wrote on Cleopatra emphasized her ability with witchcraft.⁵² This concept of Cleopatra stems partially from Plutarch, and we notice that Shakespeare gives Sextus Pompeius this opinion of Cleopatra when Pompeius says,

But all the charms of love,
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy wan'd lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
(II, i, 20-23)

The source for this passage is Plutarch:

Antonius was so ravished with the love of Cleopatra . . . he yeilded him selfe to goe with Cleopatra into Alexandria . . . where he spent and lost in childish sports . . . the most precious thing a man can spende . . . and that is, time. For they made an order between them, which they called Aminetobion (as much to say, no life comparable and matcheable with it) one feasting each other by turnes, and in cost, exceeding all measure and reason. Cleopatra . . . still devised sundrie new delights to have Antonius at commaundement, never leaving him night nor day . . . (North, pp. 328-329)

In this passage Shakespeare does borrow almost directly from Plutarch in showing that the charms of Cleopatra overcome Antony. The importance of this comparison is that we have young Pompey taking the viewpoint of Plutarch in presenting Cleopatra as the ultimate charmer with infinite

⁵²Dickey, p. 185.

finesse. When we see Cleopatra on stage, however, she does not always live up to these expectations, as seen in the following:

Horrible villain! or I'll spurn your eyes
Like balls before me. I'll unhair thy head!
(II, v, 63-64)

The physical display of anger, as well as her strident mockery of Antony in I, i reveals much that is not charming in Cleopatra.

II, ii

The praise of Cleopatra's charm and beauty is rendered more believable because Enobarbus, the realist, is the person who describes her meeting with Antony on the Cydnus.

When she first met Mark Antony, she
purs'd up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus.
. . . .
The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them: the oars were silver
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description: she did lie
In her pavilion-cloth-of-gold of tissue,
O'erpicturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
(II, ii, 191-207)

Shakespeare borrows directly from Plutarch:

she /Cleopatra/ disdained to set forward otherwise,
but to take her barge in the river of Cydnus, the
poope whereof was of gold, the sailes of purple,
and the owers of silver, which kept stroke in
rowing after the sounde of the musicke of flutes,
howboyes, citherns, violls, and such other
instruments as they played upon in the barge.
And not for the person of her selfe: she was
laid under a pavillion of cloth of gold of
tissue, apparelled and attired like the goddesse
Venus, commonly drawen in picture: and hard by her
on either hand of her, pretie faire boyes apparelled
as painters doe set forth god Cupide, with little
fannes in their hands, with the which they fanned

wind upon her . . . others tending the tackle
and ropes of the barge, out of the which there
came a wonderful passing sweete savor of perfumes,
that perfumed the wharfes side, pestered with
innumerable multitudes of people.

(North, pp. 326-327)

Cleopatra is presented by the realist Enobarbus, as approaching perfection in poised manner. Yet this perfection is not always borne out by later happenings in which she participates. In fact the contrary to poised manner is more often found in her behavior. Plutarch had Mark Antony summon Cleopatra to answer charges of treason. She had been accused of aiding Cassius in his battle against the Second Triumvirate. Thus she had a powerful ulterior motive for seducing Antony which Shakespeare cogently deletes in order to elevate the character of his own Cleopatra. According to Shakespeare she merely captures his heart by her magnificence and poise, not to mention her feline sensual coquetry. This beautiful passage in which Enobarbus paints a picture of Cleopatra which is more magnificent than we generally find her to be reminds us of Cleopatra's dream of Antony in the final act where she talks as if Antony were godlike. During most of the play Antony certainly does not display these noble virtues.

II, v

The idea of music being the food of love appears at least twice in Shakespeare.

Give me some music; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

(II, v, 1-2)

Dickey takes Shakespeare's lines to mean that Cleopatra is a self-admitted prostitute.⁵³ I believe the source here is probably Ovid:

⁵³Dickey, p. 186.

"Well-modulated voices and kind words are the very food of love"⁵⁴ It is my opinion that Shakespeare borrowed the meaning, as well as the words, from Ovid who in context was telling his readers to develop a trained voice and ear for music in order to increase their stature as lovers. The idea of prostitution was not in Ovid. Shakespeare is having Cleopatra merely state that music would be appropriate to her thoughts of passion for Antony. Shakespeare borrowed the same lines for the first of Twelfth Night: "If music be the food of love, play on!" (I, i, 1-2). Here the love motif is not to be taken seriously and it is to be admitted that somewhat the same applies in Antony and Cleopatra. Cleopatra wishes to reconquer Antony's love. She has a passionate desire for him. I am not advocating that this is a perfect love, as Stauffer indicates.⁵⁵ We do not find any similarity between Cleopatra as presented here and Plutarch's presentation of her. There is very little reason to feel sympathy for the Cleopatra of Plutarch because we are always aware that her interests were completely political. Shakespeare elevates the level of Cleopatra's nature to the extent that we can feel sympathy for her position since Antony seems to have abandoned her.

The sensual imagery is turned to irony when Cleopatra views Antony as betrayed rather than glorified:

Give me mine angle! we'll to th' river. There
 My music playing far off, I will betray
 Tawny-finn'd fishes. My bended hook shall pierce
 Their slimy jaws; and as I draw them up,
 I'll think them every one an Antony,
 And say, 'Ah, Ha! y'are caught!'
 (II, v, 10-15)

⁵⁴Ovid, The Art of Love, p. 47.

⁵⁵Stauffer, p. 233.

The source for this passage is perhaps from Ovid's The Art of Love as follows: "The bird with clipped wings will not soar high. The time to talk to fish is when they are on the hook."⁵⁶ Admittedly here we find a Cleopatra who appears to be boasting of her mastery over Antony. The admission of control over Antony is not a part of the character of Plutarch's queen. While she did exercise a far greater influence over Antony than does the Cleopatra of Shakespeare, she hesitated to boast about it. In Shakespeare this possibly implies that Cleopatra's dominion was more naive than in Plutarch. Possibly this "hooking" of Antony is more of a reminiscence of love play than serious intentions of enslavement of Antony. Actually the intimation is inconclusive. We may have an indication of the political aims of Cleopatra which may include having Antony as her dumb right arm.

More is said on the rather inept and ridiculous figure that Antony sometimes becomes,

Char. . . . 'Twas merry when
 You wager'd on your angling, when your diver
 Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
 With a fervency drew up.

Cleo. That time? O times
 I laugh'd him out of patience; and that night
 I laugh'd him into patience; and next morn
 Ere the ninth hour I drunk him to his bed.

The source for this passage is the fishing episode in Plutarch and has already been quoted on page eight of this thesis. It is interesting to note Shakespeare's reinforcing comment on this most revealing scene from Plutarch in regard to his use of the character of Cleopatra. Here we have the taunting Cleopatra combined with the flattering Cleopatra.

Cleopatra laughing also, said unto him: leave us (my lord)

⁵⁶Ovid, The Art of Love, p. 27.

AEgyptians . . . your angling rodde: this is not thy profession: thou must hunt after conquering of realmes and contries. (North, p. 332)

In Plutarch Cleopatra caught him in an unmanly act and laughed at him reprovingly, yet at the same time (and this art shows her genius at handling men) she laughed him back into patience by flattering him as a fisher of kingdoms, which reminds one of her dream of Antony in the last act:

. . . in his livery
Walk'd crowns and crownets. Realms and
islands were
As plates dropp'd from his pocket.
(V, ii, 90-92)

Shakespeare takes the thrust of Plutarch's meaning and enormously increases the power of the original image. Shakespeare's Cleopatra mocks Antony up to the point of his becoming angry. Only then does she flatter him back into submission.

Shakespeare, unlike Plutarch, shows Cleopatra's concern for Antony.

Antony's dead! If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill'st thy mistress;
If thou so yield him, there is gold
. . .
Yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well
Or friends with Caesar or not captive to him
I'll set thee in a shower of gold and hail
Rich pearls upon thee. (II, v, 26-28, 43-46)

There is nothing like this in Plutarch. Here Shakespeare shows us a Cleopatra concerned with the health of Antony. She hopes that he is friendly with Caesar but fears that Caesar may have imprisoned him. Here are very startling differences from Plutarch. Plutarch's Cleopatra was never concerned with Antony's health except as it implied benefits for herself. In fact she was willing to let him lose battles when the world was at stake and finally commit suicide because of the false information that she was dead. For Cleopatra to be anxious that Antony should

be friends again with Octavius is diametrically opposed to Plutarch's views. The latter queen's main purpose at Actium was to insure the fact that Octavia would not be able to effect a reconciliation between Antony and Octavius. Plutarch's queen was willing to hazard a war with Octavius in order that she might become mistress of the world. Wanting Antony to remain on friendly terms with Octavius implies that Shakespeare's Cleopatra wants the situation between these two powers to remain the same so that Antony may return to her. She understands that the indignant Octavius may have imprisoned Antony for grossly neglecting his duty. If we could assume from this information that Shakespeare's Cleopatra feels that Caesar is more powerful than Antony it would be a great argument to the point that she is in love with Antony. She is then choosing Antony as a lover regardless of political advantage.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra is a furious, unqueenly, passionate woman capable of extreme jealousy in the following lines:

The most infectious pestilence upon thee!
 What say you?
 Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes
 Like balls before me. I'll unhair thy head!
 (II, v, 61-64)

We have no report from Plutarch how Cleopatra received the news of Antony's marriage to Octavia, but we can imagine that there would be no display of temper connected with such tidings. In Shakespeare we see Cleopatra's passion for Antony is directly displayed but displayed with considerable force and in a most unladylike manner. Plutarch's Cleopatra only displayed such passion when her treasure was at stake and Seleucus betrayed her to Caesar. The outburst of Shakespeare's queen at the marriage of Antony to Octavia appears to conflict with the Cleopatra described by Enobarbus when she met Antony on the Cydnus. That Cleopatra was in complete control of herself and would never have become so upset emotionally.

Dickey refers to Cleopatra's rage as entirely Shakespeare's invention showing that the "inevitable consequence of excessive passion is punishment by more passions."⁵⁷ I would say that Shakespeare is presenting a more emotional Cleopatra--a Cleopatra capable of being hurt by Antony.

Here Shakespeare presents Cleopatra the queen of Egypt:

. . . I will not hurt him
These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
A meaner than myself; since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

(II, v, 81-84)

A comparison with the Geminius episode from Plutarch readily shows the contrast between the two Cleopatras on the subject of nobility. I agree with Granville-Barker in the following: "This is a notable touch. It forecasts the Cleopatra of the Play's end, who will seek her death after the 'high Roman fashion;' it reveals, not inconsistency but that anti-thesis in disposition which must be the making of every human equation."⁵⁸

One is not certain if there is queenliness in the Cleopatra of the following quotation. If one could be certain whether "Caesar" refers to Julius Caesar or to Octavius, a much better interpretation could be made of this passage.

Cleo. In praising Antony I have disprais'd Caesar.

Char. Many times, madam.

Cleo. I am paid for't now.

(II, v, 108-109)

If Cleopatra is referring to Julius Caesar it would mean that she has decided that Antony did not truly love her as she had thought. Antony is then not even the lover that Julius Caesar had been, whom she may have considered only a means to a political end. If, on the other hand, she

⁵⁷Dickey, p. 189.

⁵⁸Granville-Barker, p. 442.

is referring to Octavius, then it is she who has been the pretender in love. She chooses Antony because she believes she could more easily conquer him and thus become mistress of the world. By choosing him she makes an enemy of Octavius who would be the only other person by which she might obtain the same ends. The choice could be that the reference is to Julius Caesar because of Cleopatra's explosion showing the emotional Cleopatra who is passionately involved with Antony. However, the real choice should be Octavius because Shakespeare has laid in Cleopatra's rage a reason for her possible betrayal of Antony at Actium.

Cleopatra may be hurt too deeply to talk.

Pity me, Charmian
But do not speak to me. (II, v, 118-119)

This childlike withdrawal is not at all the forceful, dominant Cleopatra of Plutarch who moved some of her fleet from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. Granville-Barker, again, expresses the author's views here: "The end of the scene sees her, with her maids fluttering round her, lapsed into pitifulness, into childish ineptitude."⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 442.

CHAPTER IV

III, iii

Cleopatra is possibly indicating a political as well as a personal need for Antony when she indicates a desire for Herod's head.

Alex. Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you
But when you are well pleas'd.

Cleo. That Herod's head
I'll have! but how, when Antony is gone
Through whom I might command it?

(III, iii, 3-6)

Either Plutarch or Josephus might be the source for Cleopatra's speech regarding Herod. A passage from Plutarch is to be considered.

Antonius sent Fonteius Capito to bring Cleopatra into SYRIA. Unto whome, to welcome her, he gave no trifling things: but unto that she had already, he added the provinces of PHOENICIA, those of the nethermost SYRIA, and Ile of CYPRUS and a great part of CILICIA, and that contry of IVRIE where the true balme is, and that parte of ABABIA where the NABATHELIANS doe dwell, which stretcheth out towards the Ocean. These great gifts muche misliked the ROMANS. But now, though Antonius did easely geve away great seigniories, realmes, and mighty nations unto some private men, and that also he tooke from other kings their lawfull realmes: (as from Antigonus king of the IEWES, whom he openly beheaded where never king before had suffred like death) yet all this did not so much offend the Romanes, as the unmeasurable honors which he did unto Cleopatra.

(North, pp. 339-340)

The similarity of Shakespeare to Plutarch lies in their allusion to the decapitation of a king of Judea; the difference is that Plutarch referred to a particular king Antony had actually executed, whereas Shakespeare's Cleopatra refers to Herod the Great, who is not beheaded, but whose head she covets.

Shakespeare presents a politically-minded Cleopatra interested in whatever she can command from Antony, but the sigh with which she ends this speech softens the snarl with which it begins.⁶⁰ Perhaps in this manner the speech is changed into an expression of longing for the presence of Antony.

The source, however, might be Josephus:

Cleopatra made the case her own and would not let Antony be quiet, but excited him to punish the child's murder, for that it was an unworthy thing that Herod, who had been by him made king of a kingdom that no way belonged to him, should be guilty of such horrid crimes against those that were of the royal blood in reality. Now at this time the affairs of Syria were in confusion by Cleopatra's constant persuasions to Antony to make an attempt upon every body's dominions.⁶¹

Here we find Alexandra of the royal family of Judea hoping to regain family status through her son Aristobulus. Accomplishing her desire with aid from Cleopatra, she incurs the wrath of Herod. When she again sent a long complaint to Egypt, Cleopatra advised both Alexandra and Aristobulus to come to her. Herod learned of their plan to escape and had Aristobulus killed as if by accident while the young man was swimming. Cleopatra did not succeed with her plot to have Herod executed for the murder of Aristobulus even though he was brought to trial before Antony. She tried again later to ruin him but was never successful. Her insatiable greed was certainly stressed more in Josephus than in Plutarch, who merely stated that Antony gave her whole notions as presents to welcome her to Syria. Josephus certainly presents us with a genuine reason why Cleopatra would like to have Herod's head. One should consider

⁶⁰Granville-Barker, p. 442.

⁶¹Flavius Josephus, The Works of Flavius Josephus with Three Dissertations, tr. William Whiston (Cincinnati, 1844), pp. 305-306.

Shakespeare's almost humorously childish and jealous Cleopatra of the following passage:

Dull of
tongue, and dwarfish!

What majesty is in her gait? Remember
If e'er thou look'st on majesty.

Mess. She creeps;
Her motion and her station are as one;
She shows a body rather than a life,
A stature than a breather.

Cleo. The fellow has good judgment.

I will employ thee back again. I find thee
Most fit for business. (III, iii, 19-40).

One should compare Shakespeare's queen with Plutarch's merely jealous Cleopatra:

Cleopatra on the other side, being jealous of the honors which Octavia had received in this citie, where in deed she was marvelously honored and beloved of the Athenians: to winne the peoples good will also at Athens, she gave them great gifts; and they likewise gave her many great honors, and appointed certain Ambassadors to cary the decree to her house,
(North, p. 366)

There is no further source for this passage in Plutarch. Cleopatra as Shakespeare presents her here, is like the Octavia of Daniel's Letter, an Octavia who is quite willing to believe anything pleasing.

If it can be assured that Shakespeare's Cleopatra deliberately does not abet the war with messages upon learning of Antony's marriage to Octavia,

Where I will write. All may be well enough,
(III, iii, 50-51)

then certain special meanings may be considered. In Plutarch's version Cleopatra was the direct cause of the war between Octavius and Antony. She convinced Antony that she was dying for want of his love and that she was proud to be his concubine:

Then the flatterers that furthered Cleopatraes mind, blamed

Antonius, and . . . Octavis, sayd they, that maryed unto him as it were of necessitie, because her brother Caesars affayres so required it: hath the honor to be called Antonius lawfull spowse and wife: and Cleopatra being borne Queen of so many thowsands of men, is onely named Antonius Leman, and yet that she disdayned not so to be called, if she might enjoy his company, and live with him: but if he once leave her, and then it is impossible she should live . . . They so wrought Antonius effeminate mind, that fearing least she would make her self away: he returned againe unto Alexandria.

(North, p. 362)

Antony, under this influence committed himself to war with Octavius in the following ways:

1. He made peace with the Parthians, though they were in a state of civil war and though he could conquer them if he attacked.
2. He had his son (by Cleopatra) to marry a daughter of the Parthian king, probably to secure a valuable ally.
3. He determined to make war with Caesar. This was to be expected since sending Octavia to Rome alone would be regarded as insulting by Caesar.
4. Antony proceeded officially to recognize Cleopatra and her children as rulers with himself.

For he assembled all the people in the show place, where younge men doe exercise themselves, and there upon a high tribunal silvered, he set two chayres of gold, the one for him selfe, and the other for Cleopatra, and lower chaires for his children . . . and at that time also, Caesarion king of the same Realmes.

(North, p. 363)

III, v

Shakespeare's Cleopatra, however, seems only indirectly connected with causing the war inasmuch as Octavius has already waged war against Pompey and seized Lepidus:

Eros. Caesar and Lepidus have made war upon Pompey
This is old, what is the success?

Caesar, having made use of him /Lepidus/ in the war 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivalry . . . seizes him: the poor third is up. (III, v, 20-21)

III, vi

Thus Antony is already prepared for war before he leaves for Alexandria, where he crowns Cleopatra and her children.

I' th' market place, on a tribunal silver'd
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthron'd. At the feet sat
Caesarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust
Since then hath made between them. (III, vi, 3-8)

Plutarch's Cleopatra almost singlehandedly caused the battle of Actium, whereas Shakespeare greatly de-emphasizes Cleopatra's part in the beginnings of this conflict.

III, vii

Cleopatra informs Enobarbus that she has a valid reason to be at Actium.

Thou hast forspoke my being in
these wars,
And say'st it is not fit.
Eno. Your presence needs must puzzle
Antony;
Take from his heart, take from his brain,
. . . .
Cleo. as the president of my kingdom, I will
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it;
I will not stay behind. (III, vii, 3-20)

The source for this passage is definitely from Plutarch:

So Antonius, through the perswasions of Domitius, commauded Cleopatra to returne againe into AEGypt, and there to understand the successe of this warre. But Cleopatra, fearing least Antonius should againe be made friends with Octavius Caesar, by the meanes of his wife Octavia: she so plyed Canidius with money, and filled his purse, that he became her spokes man unto Antonius, & told him there was no reason to send her from this warre, who defraied so great a charge; neither than it was for his profit,

bicause that thereby the AEGyptians would then be utterly discouraged, which were the chiefest strength of the army by sea: considering that he could see no king of all kings their confederate, that Cleopatra was inferior unto, either for wisdom or judgement, seeing that longe before she had wisely governed so great a realme as AEGypt,

(North, p. 365)

Plutarch had Cleopatra bribing Canidius to prolong her stay at Actium so that she could prevent any reconciliation between Antony and Octavius that Octavia might be able to effect. In Shakespeare, Cleopatra is merely informing a character (Enobarbus) that she is head of a state and that she has some responsibility in the war effort. The character of Shakespeare's Cleopatra is considerably elevated by this dramatic departure from Plutarch.

One may wonder whether Cleopatra is rebuking Antony or is laughing at him in her answer to his following question:

It is not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundusium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian Sea,
And take in Toryne? You have heard on 't,
sweet?

Celerity is never more admir'd
Than by the negligent. (III, vii, 21-26)

The source for this comment is Plutarch:

Caesars shippes were not built
. . . were light of yarge, armed and furnished with
water men as many as they need, and had them all in
readines, in the havens of TARENTVM, and BRVNDVS-
IVM

. . . Now whilest Antonius rode at anker, lying
idley in harbor at the head of ACTIVM. . . Caesar
had quickly passed the sea Ionium, and taken a place
called TORYNE, before Antonius understoode that he had
taken shippe. Then began his men to be affraid, bicause
his army by land was left behind. But Cleopatra making
light of it: and what daunger, I pray you, said she, if
Caesar keepe at TORYNE? (North, p. 372)

The sameness of the names of places helps establish that Plutarch was the source here for geographical setting. Plutarch's Cleopatra taunted

Antony and his generals about their fear of being divided from their land forces whereas Shakespeare's Cleopatra, on the contrary, is perturbed that a negligent Antony is not well informed of Octavius' movements.

Reading Plutarch one feels that his Cleopatra had no faith in Antony, that she was preparing to desert him, and that here she was nurturing a false sense of security in him. In Shakespearean characterization, Cleopatra appears forthright in her manner (with Enobarbus and Antony).

By the tone of Cleopatra's remark one might believe that she has previously mentioned fighting by sea to Antony.

Ant. Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.
Cleo. By sea? What else?
Can. Why will my lord do so?
Ant. For that he dares us to't. (III, vii, 28-30)

Again our source is Plutarch:

Now

Antonius was made so subject to a womans will, that though he was a great deale the stronger by land, yet for Cleopatraes sake, he would needes have this battell tryed by sea: though he saw before his eyes, that for lacke of water men, his Captaines did presse by force all sortes of men out of GRAECE Furthermore, his fleete and navy that was unfortunate in all thinges, and unready for service, compelled him to chaunge his minde, and to hazard battell by land. And Canidius also, who had charge of his army by land, when time came to follow Antonius determination: he turned him cleane contrary, and counselled him to sent Cleopatra backe againe, and him selfe to retyre into MACEDON, to fight there on the maine land . . . if he should not employ the force and villiantnes of so many lusty armed footemen as he had ready, but would weaken his army by deviding them into shippes. But now, notwithstanding all these good perswasions, Cleopatra forced him to put all to the hazard of battel by sea: considering with her selfe how she might flie, and provide for her safetie, not to helpe him to winne the victory, but to flie more easily after the battel lost.
(North, pp. 371-374)

Plutarch's Cleopatra persuaded Antony to fight by sea so that she could

more easily flee if Antony lost. She continued with her argument against the advice of Antony's best generals, including Canidius, who, regretting his weakness (of succumbing to Cleopatra's bribe), changed his position and tried to persuade Antony to send Cleopatra back to Egypt. In Plutarch Cleopatra appears to have betrayed Antony.

Sometimes Cleopatra does not appear to be a traitor. She gains thereby in mystique which is one of the potent forces that carries her characterization throughout the play. She is angry with Enobarbus for trying to send her back to Egypt. She is inclined to oppose him in any argument, even one as serious as this. It is Antony who first mentions a sea battle. Cleopatra's support of Antony in this case may be no more than a feminine response to Enobarbus -- a need to be on Antony's side of the argument.

III, x

Cleopatra, not Antony, is aboard the Egyptian vessel, the Antoniad.

Eno. Th' Antoniade, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder,
To see 't mine eyes are blasted. (III, x, 2-4)

The source for this passage is Plutarch:

The Admiral galley of Cleopatra, was called Antoniade, Howbeit the battle was yet of even hand, & the victorie doubtful, being indifferent to both: when sodainely they saw the three score shippes of Cleopatra busie about their yard masts, and hoysing sails to flie. So they fled through the middest of them that were in fight. (North, p. 377)

This is a good example of Shakespeare's dramatic departure from Plutarch. Shakespeare gives us the sudden flight of Cleopatra and her fleet of ships through the eyes of Enobarbus.

For some reason Parrott glosses the Antoniad as "Antony's flag

ship,"⁶² which might seem to indicate that Antony's ship turned and fled with, or even preceded the Egyptian ships; however, we discern from the text that Enobarbus sees the retreat of the Antoniad and refuses to look any longer. Scarus comes in and tells him of Cleopatra's flight, and Enobarbus admits he already knows of it. Then Scarus informs him of Antony's flight after Cleopatra. Enobarbus' groans of dismay would seem to indicate that Antony's ship does not flee while Enobarbus is watching, and is not the Antoniad.

III, xi

Shakespeare's Cleopatra, unlike Plutarch's, asks forgiveness for her flight from Actium:

O my lord, my lord
 Forgive my fearful sails! I little thought
 You would have followed. (III, xi, 54-56)

There is no source for this passage in Plutarch's version. Plutarch's Cleopatra never apologized for running away at Actium. The passage above would seem to indicate that Shakespeare's Cleopatra makes a serious blunder -- but the action is, perhaps, a blunder, not a part of some dark plan. The shadow of suspicion must fall darkly over Plutarch's Cleopatra, for she never gave a reasonable explanation to Antony. In the passage above, where Shakespeare's Cleopatra calls fear her reason for flight, one may question her alleged belief that Antony would not follow. Can she be as ignorant of his emotional dependency upon her as this speech would indicate? Is she unaware of the effect of her presence -- or the lack of it -- upon him, particularly in regard to his abilities

⁶²Tomas Marc Parrott, ed., Shakespeare's Twenty-Three Plays and the Sonnets, by William Shakespeare, (Revised ed., New York, 1953.) p. 887.

as a leader? Shakespeare does not commit himself here. Antony follows Cleopatra almost as a little boy would follow his mother, even before defeat is indicated. Is there pretense in Cleopatra's childlike answer? Perhaps she is fully aware of her powerful influence over him, yet she does not seem to understand fully that her influence will cause a change in his relationship with his men and affect his judgment as a general. In any case, Shakespeare does not make Cleopatra a traitor in the strictest sense. After all, she is Egypt -- she never betrays that; moreover, collusion with Octavius does not necessarily mean betrayal of her love for Antony in that strict sense. Shakespeare's Cleopatra is not that uncomplicated. If she thinks she has influence over Antony, she is not alone:

Caes. Cleopatra
 Hath nodded him to her. He hath given his
 empire
 Up to a whore; who now are levying
 The kings o' the earth for war: (III, vi, 66-67)

From her previous talk about the "hook" with which she has caught Antony, one can believe that she exhilarates in her power over him. Later, however, as Antony talks to his men, Cleopatra does not understand him:

"What does he mean?" (IV, ii, 23). She must ask this of Enobarbus.

Cleopatra seems naive concerning leadership qualities in men. Ethel Seaton⁶³ brings to light a Biblical reference for Shakespeare's injection of the word whore above:

I will shew thee the damnation of the
 great whore that sitteth vpon many waters.
 With whom have
 committed fornication
 the kings of the
 earth

⁶³Ethel Seaton, "'Antony and Cleopatra' and the Book of Revelation," Review of English Studies, XX (1946), 219-224.

The close similarity of this well-known phrase in the Bible suggests Shakespeare makes use of its familiarity to make the point (through Caesar's words) that Cleopatra is promiscuously lewd and sells her services to Caesar, and that Antony is betrayed even before the battle begins.

III, xiii

Shakespeare's Cleopatra asks how much she is to blame for Antony's defeat.

Cleo. What shall we do, Enobarbus?
Epo. Think, and die.
Cleo. Is Antony or we in fault for this?
Eno. Antony only, that would make his
 will
 Lord of his reason . . .
 'T was a shame no less
 Than was his loss, to course your flying flags,
Cleo. Prithee! peace. (III, xiii, 1-12)

One may compare Shakespeare with the following passage from Garnier's

Marc Antoine:

Eras. Are you therefore cause of his overthrowe?
Cleo. I am sole cause: I did it, only I.⁶⁴

Shakespeare has Cleopatra raise this point as a question, whereas Garnier has Cleopatra deal with it as an affirmative answer to someone else's question. In Shakespeare she either feels some pangs of guilt or is amazed and curious as to why Antony leaves the battle; in Garnier, there is no question of guilt, that is, Cleopatra admits it. Shakespeare's leaving this question of guilt open tends to create more sympathy for his queen over Garnier's. Especially when we consider that Plutarch's queen was with Antony during all the preparations for the battle as well as all

⁶⁴ Robert Garnier, Marc Antoine, tr. Countess of Pembroke, ed. Alice Luce, (Boston, 1897), p. 72.

the feasts and celebrations, in which they appeared to be acting as if victory were the only possible outcome of the battle, do we find this omission significant. Then for her to have stayed against Antony's better judgment, persuaded him to fight by sea, which weakened his position incalculably, and finally to have fled in the midst of the battle with never a word of explanation, gives us a characterization we can scarcely call sympathetic. She caused the war, participated in the action, lost the war, and fled.

Shakespeare's heroine indirectly abets the war, but the decision to make war is determined before Antony reaches Cleopatra: Eno. "Our great navy's rigg'd / Eros. For Italy and Caesar" (III, v, 20-21). Yet Cleopatra does not always appear so innocent:

Ant. To the boy Caesar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.
Cleo. That head, my lord? (III, xiii, 17-19)

The source for this passage is Plutarch:

For Cleopatra, he made her answer, that he would deny her nothing reasonable, so that she would either put Antonius to death, or drive him out of her contrie. (North, p. 385)

Shakespeare's Cleopatra does not immediately deny that she would assassinate Antony in order to ingratiate herself to Caesar. Here, as the idea is bluntly presented to her for the first time, she meets the shock of it with some aplomb; nevertheless her character begins to darken as compared to Plutarch's queen, who says nothing. Shakespeare's Cleopatra says:

He is a god, and knows
What is most right. Mine honour was not yielded
But conquer'd merely. (III, xiii, 60-62)

The source here is Plutarch:

There withall he sent Thyreus one of his men

unto her, a verie wise and descreete man,
 who bringing letters of credit from a young
 Lorde unto a noble Ladie, and that besides
 greatly liked her beawtie, might easely by
 her elogence have persuaded her. He was
 longer in talks with her than any man else
 was, and the Queen her selfe also did him
 great honor. (North, p. 386)

When Caesar had made her lye downe againe,
 and sate by her beddes side: Cleopatra began
 to cheere and excuse herselfe for that she
 had done, laying all to the feare she had of
 Antonius. (North, p. 395)

In so far as these passages are concerned, I agree with most other critics that Shakespeare's queen treats Antony worse than does Plutarch's. Shakespeare borrows from both places above in Plutarch to present a Cleopatra who claims that she is forced to obey Antony. It may be that, in Shakespeare, she is being ironical and playing games with Thyreus, and through him deceiving Octavius for Antony's sake as well as her own; but there is no conclusive evidence to support this, as the following passage illustrates:

Cleo. Your Caesar's father oft
 When he hath mus'd of taking kingdoms in
 Bestow'd his lips on that unworthy place
 As it rain'd kisses (III, xiii, 82-85)

There is no actual source for this passage in Plutarch's "Antonius," but it could without a doubt be deduced from Plutarch's "Caesar." Another possible source is Dio Cassius, who has Cleopatra in her final talk with Octavius tell him of the love that Julius Caesar had for her.⁶⁵ At this point Shakespeare's Cleopatra is probably toying with the thought of betraying Antony in order to save her own life. This episode was little more than an interview in Plutarch; in Shakespeare it is spelled out as possible betrayal:

⁶⁵Dio Cassius, Book LI, VI, p. 35.

Cleo. Have you done yet.
Ant. Alack, our terrene moon
 Is now eclips'd and it portends alone
 The fall of Antony!
Cleo. I must stay his time.

Ant. Cold-hearted toward me.

Cleo. From my cold heart let heaven engender hail
 And poison it in the source, and the first stone
 Drop in my neck; as it determines, so.
 Dissolve my life. The next Caesarion smite!
 Till my degrees the memory of my womb.
 lie graveless. (III, xiii, 153-166)

Since Cleopatra in the consequences of her oath foretells the ending of the play, one might take this to imply she is quite guilty of "packing cards" with Octavius. When at the end of the play, she falsely notifies Antony of her death, she contributes to his death and perhaps to her own -- fulfilling the augury -- for her nature is such that she would die at her own hand rather than submit to Caesar's triumph. One may wonder if Cleopatra is fully aware of her own nature in this respect. Does she deliberately or does she inadvertently contribute to Antony's death? If her contribution is deliberate, then this step is not suicidal -- assuming that Cleopatra is sufficiently aware of her own nature and of the extenuating circumstances?

Caesarion is killed by Octavius in Plutarch but not in Shakespeare. However, Shakespeare is not above making obscure references to this execution, though he in no way prepares the spectator for it.

CHAPTER V

IV, ii

Why would Cleopatra fail to understand Antony's rapport with his soldiers in the following?

- Ant. Well, my good fellows, wait on me
to-night
Scant not my cups; and make as much of
me
As when my empire was your fellow too,
And suffer'd my command.
- Cleo. /Aside to Enobarbus/ What does he mean?
- Eno. /Aside to Cleopatra/ To make his
followers weep. (IV, ii, 20-24)

There is no source in Plutarch for these lines unless it is the harangue Antony delivered to his troops in the battle against Parthia. The significant relationship here between Plutarch's and Shakespeare's passages has to do with Cleopatra's understanding. While Cleopatra may need a peculiar rapport with her servants, and occasionally even flattery, she still cannot understand that Antony needs this relationship with the men, that it has something to do with the key to his gift for leadership. Plutarch's usually intellectual Cleopatra seemed not to understand this factor either -- unless, as I earlier suggest, Cleopatra betrayed Antony. In any case, Shakespeare's Cleopatra does not understand, and this is a factor that may properly be considered in connection with possible betrayal. If one attributes naïveté to Shakespeare's Cleopatra here, then one may well ask if she unwittingly tampers with forces that contribute to Antony's downfall, and to her own.

IV, iv

Cleopatra's following comment in the play appears to be a rather cold acceptance of a possible complete and immediate destruction of Antony.⁶⁶

Cleo. He goes forth gallantly. That he and Caesar
 might
 Determine this great war in single fight!
 Then Antony--but now--Well, on! (IV, iv, 36-38)

Plutarch's Cleopatra made no comment upon this subject. Here is a Cleopatra who all but admits she believes Antony will lose the battle.

IV, vi

There seems to be a correlation between what Cleopatra believes and what Caesar believes. Caesar also expects Antony to lose this battle.

Our will is Antony be took alive
 .
 .
 .
 The time for universal peace is near.
 Prove this prosp'rous day, the three-nook'd
 world
 Shall bear the olive freely. (IV, vi, 1-7)

One may compare with Plutarch:

When the citie of Pelvsium was taken, there
 ran a rumor in the citie, that Seleucus,
 by Cleopatraes consent, had surrendered the
 same. (North, p. 386)

Plutarch hinted at treachery in mentioning the yielding of the city of Pelusium to Octavius; Shakespeare does not directly mention this at all. Perhaps Shakespeare uses this episode with its veiled suggestion of Cleopatra's conspiracy with Caesar to replace the more obvious hint of conspiracy in Plutarch.

⁶⁶Granville-Barker, p. 443.

IV, vii

A disappointed voice is heard in Agrippa:

Retire, we have engag'd ourselves too
far.
Caesar himself has work, and our oppression
Exceeds what we expected. (IV, vii, 1-3)

Why are Agrippa and Caesar so certain of victory, and why are they so surprised when it does not materialize? We note the same surprise in Cleopatra's speech which occurs in the scene immediately following.

IV, viii

One wonders why Cleopatra is surprised in the following!

Lord of lords!
O infinite virtue, com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught? (IV, viii, 16-18)

Cleopatra has already mentioned a previous trap she has set for Antony in the following:

I will betray,
Tawny-finn'd fishes. My bended hook shall
pierce
Their slimy jaws; and as I draw them up,
I'll think them every one an Antony. (II, v, 12-15)

Is she again trapping Antony? Unlike Plutarch's Cleopatra, who praised Antony continually, and who took drastic steps to convince Antony of her innocence, Shakespeare's Cleopatra, with childlike deference, asks why she should be suspected of treachery (III, xiii, 122).

There is a possibility that Shakespeare creates a case for Cleopatra's betrayal of Antony in the following sequence of quotations:

Cleo. In praising Antony, I have disprais'd
Caesar.
Char. Many times, madam.
Cleo. I am paid for't now.
. . .
Let him forever go!--let him not!--Charmian,
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. (II, v, 107-108, 115-117)

Plutarch hinted of Cleopatra's betrayal at Actium, at Pelusium, with Thyreus, and with Antony's navy and foot soldiers at Alexandria; Shakespeare builds up a maze of circumstantial evidence on Cleopatra, but it is so tenuous that her guilt cannot be determined for certain.

Plutarch never presented a view of Cleopatra's reaction to the marriage of Antony to Octavia. Apparently, he did not consider Cleopatra important enough for her reactions to be presented.

In the following quotation Shakespeare's Cleopatra is definitely referring to Octavius as Caesar, and she may be contemplating no further relationship with Antony:

Cleo. I have one thing more to ask him
 yet, good Charmian:
 But 'tis no matter: thou shalt bring him to
 me
 Where I will write. All may be well enough.
Char. I warrant you, madam. (III, iii, 48-53)

Perhaps Cleopatra conceives a plan that entails either causing Antony's return or betraying him to Octavius for revenge, or perhaps for security. If there is a plan it could be implemented by a letter which may have brought the information Antony reveals to Octavia as follows:

Ant. Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that--
 That were excusable, that and thousands
 more
 Of semblable import.--but he hath wag'd
 New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and
 read it
 To public ear;
 Spoke scantily of me. (III, iv, 1-6)

One notes that we have several actions reported by messengers. Although we may assume Antony would have messenger reporting to him of the affairs of Octavius, we wonder if Cleopatra could have influenced a slanted interpretation somehow:

Eros. /Caesar/ accuses him /Lepidus/ of letters he
 had formerly wrote to Pom-
 pey; upon his own appeal, seizes him. So that

poor third is up till death enlarge consine.
(III, v, 7-13)

Possibly the source for this passage was Appian as follows:

Lepidus had been accused
of betraying the affairs of the
triumvirate to Pompeius.⁶⁷

Plutarch did not give a reason for Octavius' overthrow of Lepidus. Shakespeare seems to follow Appian here. Is it possible that Cleopatra could write letters that would give the ambitious Caesar a pretext to overthrow Pompey and Lepidus, thus alienating Antony? There is the added possibility that Antony could more easily be persuaded to return to Egypt. Another possibility is that Cleopatra pledges her support to Caesar by promising aid in the destruction of Antony, thus giving Octavius the bolster he needs to rid himself of Pompey and Lepidus.

Enobarbus indicates that Antony's navy is ready even before Antony has departed from Athens: "Our great navy's rigg'd." And Eros replies: "For Italy and Caesar" (III, v, 20-21).

One notices in the preceding quotation that Antony is prepared for war already and has an adequate fleet of ships before going to Cleopatra. Since Caesar receives word from Egypt of Antony's affairs there (even though Antony leaves Athens after Octavius and Octavia has just reached Rome), there is a possibility that only Cleopatra could send the news so fast--perhaps even before it actually happens.

Antony's speech gives one the feeling that he is emotionally determined on a decision he cannot intellectually accept.

Ant. Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.
Cleo. By sea? What else?
Can. Why will my lord do so?

⁶⁷Appian, Book V, IV, p. 381.

Ant. For that he dares us to't.
 But if we fail,
 We then can do't at land.
 (III, vii, 28-54)

One notes here that Antony gives an unreasonable, egoistic reason for fighting at sea. Has he been previously persuaded by Cleopatra? It appears that Cleopatra, like Caesar, wants and expects the fight to be by sea, even though such a fight is contrary to the advice of Antony's best military admirers. Antony does not believe that losing the battle at sea is equivalent to losing the war. He does not actually need Cleopatra's sixty ships (He says that he will burn an overplus of shipping) so we may assume her ships were there because she especially wants them there. Does she expose her fleet unnecessarily? Enobarbus has already explained to her that, if she is there, Antony will fight by emotion rather than by reason.

One should consider the following:

Caes. Taurus!

Taur. My lord?

Caes. Strike not by land; keep whole; provoke not to battle

Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed
 The prescript of this scroll. Our fortune lies
 Upon this jump. (III, viii, 1-6)

I feel that when Caesar hands Taurus the scroll and states that "our fortune lies upon the jump" he must be doing more than reiterating plans that they have certainly discussed previously. What Caesar is saying appears to be much more. He is perhaps showing Taurus a planned method by which Antony can be destroyed, which is probably the only way Antony can be destroyed. Possibly this method is not the product of Caesar's own brain for then it would already have been known to Taurus and there would be no need for Caesar to present the scroll to Taurus at this time. The scroll is possibly from Cleopatra and tells

Caesar not to fight by land but by sea. During the sea engagement Cleopatra will desert Antony and his troops, perhaps unbalancing Antony altogether. This is the culmination of Cleopatra's plans to revenge herself upon Antony for his marriage to Octavia.

This interpretation of Cleopatra's character stems from the following argument and is based on evidence already presented:

1. Any work of art, certainly any good play has some kind of consistency, some kind of integrity in and of itself, that is, independent of the author's sources, and must be considered at this level. The play can, of course, be analyzed in connection with its sources, but only so long as the analyst is aware of the two levels -- the play's independent level, which can be analyzed and interpreted in relation to itself, and the level of the play's success, for fusion of the two levels can only lead to conjecture, to futile, almost endless speculation. (Shakespeare is not above making a few allusions that assume the spectator's familiarity with Plutarch.)

2. One must expect, if not the best, at least the tolerable from a mature playwright. Surely Shakespeare at the period of his artistic career may be considered mature. Shakespeare does not idly make as perceptive a character as Octavius declare with such force, with such authority -- does not idly make Octavius himself declare unequivocally that the scroll is the crucial factor, that "our fortune lies upon this jump." Surely it would be pointless for Shakespeare to announce at a crucial point in the play, through Octavius himself, that all is contingent upon this scroll, only to have the significance of the announcement die, stillborn, in relation to the play's main characters.

3. Octavius cannot beat Antony on land, either with or without an ordinary kind of sea victory, and he is acutely aware of this. He

cannot beat Antony without something extraordinary, and he knows it. He wants nothing less than the annihilation of Antony as a man and the demoralization of Antony's forces: more specifically, he wants Antony to desert his men in battle -- and for a woman.

4. It appears that the person who sent the scroll to Octavius is Cleopatra.

At the other level, the source level -- in this case Plutarch -- there is one passage that is particularly applicable to this entire area:

. . . notwithstanding all these good persuasions, Cleopatra forced him to put all to the hazard of battel by sea: considering with her selfe, how she might flie, and provide for her safetie, not to helpe him to winne the victory, but to flie more easily after the battel lost.
(North, p. 374)

In this area Shakespeare's dramatic departure from Plutarch lies in that Shakespeare tones down Plutarch's fairly direct suggestion of treachery. As the present author points out earlier, Plutarch offered no motive except self-preservation; Shakespeare offers revenge: Cleopatra feels betrayed by Antony's marriage to Octavis. Plutarch showed an unprepared Octavius; Shakespeare shows a suddenly confident Octavius. Plutarch offered a Cleopatra that used Antony as she used everything else, sentient or insentient -- as a chattel; Shakespeare offers a Cleopatra who cannot keep Antony at that level, that is, a Cleopatra that cannot use Antony indifferently as one would use a chattel. Shakespeare offers a jealous Cleopatra.

IV, xiii

Shakespeare's Cleopatra has perhaps not previously planned to escape Antony by running to the monument.

Char. To th' monument!
There lock yourself, and send him word you

are dead.
 The soul and body rive not more in parting
 Than greatness going off.
Cleo. To th' monument!
 Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself;
 Say, that the last I spoke was "Antony,"
 And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence, Mar-
 dian,
 And bring me how he takes my death. To th'
 monument! (IV, xiii, 3-10)

The source for the dialogue referring to the monument was from Plutarch. Shakespeare mistakenly uses the monument: that is, he uses it as though it had been introduced before in the play -- rather than in Plutarch --

Cleopatra had long before made many sumptuous
 tombes and monumentes, as well for excellencie of
 workemanshippe, as for height and greatnes of
 building, joyning hard to the temple of Isis.
 (Plutarch, Lives, tr. North, p. 387)

He [Antony] then fled into the citie, crying out
 that Cleopatra had betrayed him unto them, with
 whom he had made warre for her sake. Then she
 being affraised of his fury, fled into the
 tomb which she had caused to be made, and there locked
 with great boltes, and in the meane time sent unto
 Antonius to tell him that she was dead.
 (Plutarch, Lives, tr. North, p. 389)

In Plutarch everything seemed to follow a pre-arranged plan. I mentioned earlier that Cleopatra had built the monument at the same time she had given Seleucus' family to Antony to torture. Rumor linked Cleopatra's name to that of Seleucus as the instigators of the capitulation of Antony's forces at Pelusium, and Cleopatra offered Seleucus' family as evidence of her innocence (of collusion). It appeared that she built this tomb as a citadel in which to take refuge during the last moments of Antony's fight, anticipating the eventuality of Antony's discovering her treachery. Cleopatra falsely notified Antony of her death and ran to the monument.

In Shakespeare one feels that Cleopatra does not expect Antony to take his own life. One feels she gives him false news of her death in

order to counteract his anger, whereas in Plutarch it would seem that Cleopatra did expect Antony to kill himself. Then, certain he was helpless, she sent for him.

IV, xv

One should compare Shakespeare with Garnier:

O sun,

Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in! Dark-
ling stand
The varying shore o' th' world. (IV, xv, 10-11)

daughters of the Sunne
. . . wade . . . false into the stream
with . . . darkness . . . upon the banks.⁶⁸

In borrowing from Garnier (as he probably does), Shakespeare ennobles Cleopatra's speech and thus uplifts her character; her suffering appears to be real. Plutarch, with eye-for-an-eye justice, had Cleopatra resort to self-mutilation on seeing the lover she had caused to be mutilated. Shakespeare, on the other hand, pignantly recasts Cleopatra in a noble light. Shakespeare dignifies Cleopatra's sorrow and elevates her character by having her speak with grand sweep of poetic line, as she cloaks Antony in almost unearthly dignity. This has brilliant dramatic effect:

Not th' imperious show
Of the full-fortun'd Caesar ever shall
Be brooch'd with me; if knife, drugs, serpents
have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
Demuring upon me. (IV, xv, 23-29)

Plutarch is only a partial source for these lines:

Cleopatra in the meane time was verie carefull

⁶⁸Robert Garnier, Marc Antoine, p. 116.

in gathering all sorts of poysons together to destroy men So when she had dayly made divers and sundrie proofes, she found none of them she had proved so fit, as the biting of an Aspicke, the which only causeth a heavines of the head, without swounding or complaining, and bringeth a great desire also to sleepe. . . no living creature perceiving that the pacientes feele any paine. (North, pp. 384-5)

Plutarch just mentioned that Cleopatra was trying to find an easy way to die as a precaution against becoming Caesar's slave, not, as Shakespeare has it, that she is worried about becoming a major ornament in Octavius' triumphant celebration, and finally the object of Octavia's revenge.

Adler says that Shakespeare's Cleopatra starts experimenting with poisons long before the comparable time in Plutarch's story.⁶⁹ The present author finds no basis for this conclusion. Plutarch's queen began experimenting with easy ways to die just before ambassadors were sent from Antony and Cleopatra to Octavius. In Shakespeare it is after this, when the dying Antony is brought to her, that Cleopatra first mentions knowing many ways to die. The thrust of Adler's statement is to show that the Cleopatra of Shakespeare has intended to die for some time and would not be guilty of betraying Antony.

A more probable source for the above passage of Shakespeare may be found in Daniel:

Thinke Caesar, I that liu'd and reign'd a Queene
Do scorne to buy my life at such a rate
That I should vnderneath my selfe be seene,
Basely induring to surviue my state:
That Rome should see my scepter-bearing hands
Behind me bound, and glory in my teares;
That I should passe where as Octauius stands,
To view my misery, that purchas'd hers.

⁶⁹Adler, p. 295.

No, I disdain that head which wore a crowne,
Should stoope to take up that which other giue;
I must not be, vnlesse I be mine owne,
Tis sweet to die vvnen we are forc'd liue.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, pp. 34-35)

Borrowing from Daniel's concept of a Cleopatra afraid of being exposed to Octavia (together with aversion to being displayed before the hordes of Roman commoners), Shakespeare enlarges and intensifies, showing us a very feminine, queenly, and proud Cleopatra. Plutarch presented the matter in a confusing way. When his queen grieved that she would be taken away and shown in Rome as a captive, she had already determined and made arrangements for her death. Did Plutarch's Cleopatra, prior to this time, fear degradation at Caesar's hands? At no other time did she mention these fears, and this fact might support the argument that she never anticipated this degradation until the last. One may consider Plutarch:

I buried thee here, being a free woman;
and now I offer unto thee sprinkling and
oblations being a captive and prisoner.

(North, p. 397)

Perhaps she was surprised by Octavius' methods. Her words suggest she thought herself a free woman at the time she buried Antony, which was certainly after she had been conquered by Caesar. Only later did she have occasion to feel different, as she told Dolabella.

Shakespeare's dramatic purpose in this connection is to give a sensual, womanly, and queenly Cleopatra sufficient motive to end her own life, by making known her very real fears concerning Rome. These fears must be balanced against her desire to live, which spring from her inclination to dominate men. One could almost believe that Cleopatra dies because her charms do not affect Octavius. This interpretation presents a Cleopatra capable of betrayal (of Antony), a Cleopatra who

could love Pompey, then Caesar, then Antony. The following words support such an interpretation:

but since
my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra. (III, xiii, 186-187)

Now Octavius will be her lord, and she will be his Cleopatra. Shakespeare is saying that there is little and perhaps no taint of the mercenary involved. But when Caesar replies, "Not so Adieu" (V, ii, 190), Cleopatra kills herself as Antony's queen.

One may wonder just how much sorrow Shakespeare's Cleopatra feels for the dying Antony.

Cleo. Here's sport indeed! How heavy
 weighs my lord!
 Our strength is all gone into heaviness:
 That makes the weight. (IV, xv, 32-34)

Plutarch was a source for this passage,

But Cleopatra stooping downe with her head, putting
to all her strength to her uttermost power, did lift
him up with much a doe, and never let goe her hold.
(North, p. 390)

but Daniel provides a closer parallel:

When shee afresh renews
Her hold, and with reinforced power doth straine
And all the weight of her weake bodie laies
Whose surcharg'd heart more than his body wayes.
(Daniel, p. 8)

Muir mentions the close similarity between Shakespeare and Daniel in the figure of speech that says Cleopatra's sorrow weighs more than anything else on the chains.⁷⁰ However, there is another interpretation which suggests itself concerning Shakespeare's passage. Prior to this, Cleopatra, uses sensual and powerful imagery in referring to Antony as a weight, "O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony," (I, v, 21).

⁷⁰Muir, pp. 215-216.

Now ironically she observes that the object of her sport and her tower of strength has become a burden pulling her down. May not Cleopatra believe that Antony is attempting to betray her into the hands of Caesar as he so indicated when he raged at her,

Ant. Vanish, or I shall give thee thy diserving
And blemish Caesar's triumph. Let him take thee
And hoist thee up to the shouting plebians.
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex. (IV, xii, 32-36)

Perhaps Cleopatra is afraid Antony will wish to revenge himself for having committed suicide because she falsely sent him news of her own death.⁷¹

Thus she answers negatively his advice to make peace with Caesar.

Ant. Of Caesar seek your honour, with your safety O!
Cleo. They do not go together.
Ant. . . . None about Caesar trust but Proculeius
Cleo. None about Caesar. (IV, xv, 46-50)

Does Cleopatra think that she prompted Antony to try to destroy her through Caesar's triumph? This might lead her to regret the revenge she had taken on him and cause her to feel genuine sorrow for Antony as he dies.

One finds grief interwoven with praise in the following:

Noblest of men, woo 't die?
Hast thou no care of me? Shall I abide
In this dull world, which in thy absence is
No better than a sty? (IV, xv, 59-62)

The source for this passage is Daniel's Cleopatra, in which Daniel's queen begins the play: "Yet doe I liue, and yet doth breath extend / My life beyond my life?" (Daniel, Cleopatra, I, i, 1). Shakespeare uses powerful poetic image to uplift the character of Cleopatra. This great world of the lovers will be nothing more than a filthy sty to a Cleopatra without Antony. In the ironical statement "Here's sport indeed!" as contrasted

⁷¹David S. Berkeley, "The Crux of Antony and Cleopatra," Bulletin of Oklahoma A. and M. College (Stillwater, 1953).

with her subsequent praise in "Noblest of men," one finds divergent elements of her character. These different elements produce radically different interpretations of Cleopatra's character by the most careful scholars. For example, one notes in Dickey's interpretation of the passage immediately following:

The crown o' th' earth doth melt. My lord!
 O, wither'd is the garland of the war,
 The soldier's role is fall'n! Young boys and girls
 Are level now with men; the odds is gone
 And there is nothing left remarkable
 Beneath the visiting moon. (IV, xv, 63-68)

Shakespeare's Cleopatra is torn by passions: "Like Daniel's Cleopatra, Shakespeare's heroine never really demonstrates true devotion until schooled by Antony's death. . . . Cleopatra faints with sorrow, and, when she revives, she sees herself no longer as queen of Egypt, but as a mortal torn by passions."⁷² However, no less a critic than Granville-Barker, who generally presents Cleopatra as having a less vicious character than Dickey's Cleopatra takes an almost opposite view here. Actually he adds four more lines for consideration to the above, and this makes all the difference:

It were for me
 To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods.
 To tell them that this world did equal theirs
 Till they had stolen our jewel. (IV, xv, 75-85)

Granville-Barker states, "She had no tears for Antony." In fact throughout the play Cleopatra never weeps, Antony does, "but her spirit is unquelled. Defiant over his body."⁷³

It is in these amalgamations of the different conceptions of Cleopatra that Shakespeare creates her seductive sorcery. Shakespeare has

⁷²Dickey, p. 198.

⁷³Granville-Barker, p. 444.

joined the broken sorrow of "such poor passions as the maid that milks and does the meanest chores," to the almost violent defiance of "It were for me to throw my sceptre at the injurious gods." By the poetic interchange of contrasting ideas Shakespeare uplifts Cleopatra from the mercenary -- politically-minded -- sexual destroyer of Plutarch to the passionate woman, emotionally motivated, impulsive in action, incapable of real fidelity under pressure, but forced by circumstances into taking her life in the high Roman fashion in order to make a lover of the dead Antony, since the living Octavius would not be her lord.

The emotion that causes Cleopatra to faint can be traced to a similar faint in Garnier and Daniel.

And there is nothing left remarkable
Beaneath the visiting moon. /Cleopatra swoons/ (IV, xv, 67-68)

There is no source for this passage in Plutarch. Cleopatra's fainting is based upon the ending of Garnier's Marc Antoine:

Fainting on you, and fourth my soul may flowe,⁷⁴

whereas her revival from the faint is in the beginning lines of Daniel's Cleopatra: "Yet doe I liue, and yet doth breath extend / My life beyond my life" (Daniel, Cleopatra, I, i, 1). From Garnier's presentation of Cleopatra, the spectator cannot be certain as to whether Cleopatra is dying or fainting. Shakespeare uses this uncertainty in the fear of Iras and Charmian, who generally try to be a calming influence upon Cleopatra.

Char. O, quietness, lady!
Iras. She is dead too, our sovereign. (IV, xv, 69-70)

Shakespeare's Cleopatra entertains the thought that she might be dying rather than merely fainting. Since Shakespeare's Cleopatra is emotionally prepared to die, the faint becomes a spiritual rebirth which makes

⁷⁴Garnier, p. 118.

her take a nobler view of herself. This view leads her to say the following:

Then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death
Ere death dare come to us. (IV, xv, 80-82)

Shakespeare is trying to establish a dramatic reason for Cleopatra's failure to commit suicide. His final reasoning in the matter is to have Cleopatra decide that

We'll bury him; and then, what's brave,
 what's noble,
Let's do after the high Roman fashion
And make death proud to take us! (IV, xv, 86-88)

CHAPTER VI

V, i

Shakespeare's queen appears to have changed her mind in regards to her death. The Egyptian is sent to probe Caesar.

A poor Egyptian yet. The Queen
my mistress,
Confin'd in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instruction
That she preparedly may frame herself
To th' way she's forc'd to. (V, i, 52-56)

In Plutarch there is no source for this Egyptian messenger. There was no need for one since Proculeius came to the outside of the monument as Antony died. Plutarch reads as follows: "As Antonius gave the last gaspe, Proculeius came that was sent from Caesar" (North, p. 391). Shakespeare's dramatic change from Plutarch darkens Cleopatra's character, for her decision to live appears to be based upon the hope that Caesar will look favorably upon her. She has previously stated that her only reason for remaining alive is to bury Antony and die a high Roman death (IV, xv, 86-88). She does not ask Octavius through her Egyptian messenger for permission to bury Antony, so this cannot be her reason for remaining alive.

Shakespeare makes important changes in Cleopatra's character through his change of dramatic time from his source and his neglect in mentioning the burial of Antony. These problems are interlaced. Plutarch painted the picture of the splendid ceremony of Antony's funeral and the time consumed by the requests of the kings for Antony's body and the bural process itself.

Many Princes, great kings and Captaines did crave Antonius body of Octavius Caesar, to give him honorable burial: but Caesar would never take it from Cleopatra, who did sumptuously & royally burie him with her owne handes, whom Caesar suffred to take as much as she would to bestow upon his funeralls. (North, p. 394)

The scene of V, i is obviously performed primarily to get Antony's body off the stage and merely to suggest, thereby, time for a burial of his body. It would appear that Shakespeare is leaving out good material which would show a woeful Cleopatra. To present the funeral scene, however, would mean that too much time would pass, and certainly Caesar's forces would capture the monument before this ceremony, however brief, could be performed.

V, ii

Another advantage accruing to Shakespeare by his complete deletion of Antony's burial is that he tremendously compresses the time between the departure of Cleopatra and the maids (with the body of Antony) in IV, xv, and her reappearance in V, ii. By this, Shakespeare shows her determined to die with Antony; then pictures her changing her mind and thrusting forward her Egyptian pawn as a gambit through which she hopes to learn Caesar's intent. Finally, Shakespeare has Cleopatra beginning to speak in V, ii:

My desolation does begin to make
 A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Caesar;
 Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
 A minister of her will: and it is great
 To do that thing that ends all other deeds;
 Which shackles accidents and bolts up change:
 Which sleeps, and never palates more the
 dung,
 The beggar's nurse and Caesar's. (V, ii, 1-9)

Here Cleopatra returns to her former decision to die following Antony's example. The dramatic pitch of her vacillation between life and death

is the result of much greater tides than those found in Plutarch. There her decision to die was not so dramatic because she seemed already on the point of death from her self-inflicted wounds, and her decision to live was not the eternal desire of a feminine spirit to stoop and conquer a strong man but rather the less romantic desire to save her children:

Now was she altogether overcome with sorrow and passion of minde, for she had knocked her brest so pitiefully, that she had martired it, and in divers places had raised ulsers & inflamacions, so that she fell into a fever withal: whereof she was very glad, hoping thereby to have good colour to absteine from meate, and that so she might have dyed easely without any trouble But Caesar mistrusted the matter, by many conjectures he had, and therefore did put her in feare, and threatened her to put her children to shameful death. With these threats, Cleopatra for feare yelded straight, as she would have yelded unto strokes: and afterwards suffred her selfe to be cured and dieted as they listed.

(North, pp. 394-395)

Finally it must be realized that practically no time elapses between IV, xv, and V, i because Dercetas has just reached Caesar and he has had perhaps more than sufficient time -- the time from Diomedes' discovery of the slain Antony to the end of Act IV. Presumably Caesar's forces are extremely close to Antony and Cleopatra by now; if so, Dercetas would have little distance to travel, and, as a follower of Antony's, he is probably brought directly to Caesar. If the time sequence is extremely short between IV, xv, V, i, and V, ii, then Antony has been wondrously buried offstage in an illusion of dramatic time, Cleopatra has vacillated between conflicting desires to live and die, and the play has moved on with inexorable intensity. There is also the possibility that Cleopatra sends the Egyptian to Caesar before the knowledge of Antony's death causes her to determine to die. In that case it would appear that, when she sends the false news of her death to Antony, she is quite willing to transfer her allegiance to Caesar if his terms are

not too harsh. The difference in time would make her declaration of intent to die with Antony valid; that is, though she may waver in her decision, it is a true decision, not theatrics.

By his compression of time Shakespeare does not allow the spectator's estimate of Cleopatra's loyalty to fall too low. Cleopatra's reaffirmation of her intention to die follows so quickly the Egyptian's speech that for a time we are certain that Cleopatra meant to die and that the Egyptian was sent as a ruse to assure Caesar of Cleopatra's intent to live.

Plutarch described the painful physical demonstration of Cleopatra's grief for Antony at the formal burial scene. By shifting the expression of Cleopatra's grief to the scene of Antony's death and by having Cleopatra resolve to die unmarred by self-inflicted wounds, Shakespeare greatly strengthens our belief that Cleopatra may have loved Antony:

Pray you, tell him
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn
A doctrine of obedience, and would gladly
Look him i' th' face. (V, ii, 28-32)

At this point Shakespeare presents a Cleopatra whose infidelity to Antony is more definite than Plutarch's. There was no source for this in Plutarch, where Cleopatra did not speak long to Proculeius before she was captured.

Cleopatra demaunded the kingdome of AEgypt
for her sonnes: and that Proculeius aunswered
her, that she should be of good cheere,
(North, p. 392)

Plutarch's Cleopatra merely demanded Egypt for her sons. This could be irony on the part of Shakespeare's queen because both Proculeius and Cleopatra are unctuously benevolent to each other without meaning what they say, until Proculeius captures Cleopatra.

Proculeius says the following: "You see how easily she may be surpris'd / Guard her till Caesar come" (V, ii, 35-36). This meaning was taken from Plutarch:

One of her women which was shut in her monuments with her, saw Proculeius by chance as he came downe, and shrieked out: O, poore Cleopatra, thou art taken. Then when she saws Proculeius behind her as she came from the gate, she thought to have stabbed her selfe in with a short dagger she ware of purpose by her side. But Proculeius came sodainly upon her, and taking her by both the hands, said unto her. Cleopatra, first thou shalt doe thy selfe great wrong, and secondly unto Caesar: to deprive him of the occasion and oportunitie, openly to shew his bountie and mercie, and to geven his enemies cause to accuse the most curteous and noble Prince that ever was. (North, 392)

Shakespeare has concentrated into a few dramatic lines this stilted material in Plutarch.

In the last section of Plutarch's "Antonius" there are three important episodes whose comparison with corresponding scenes in the play illustrates Shakespeare's dramatic development of Cleopatra's character:

1. Cleopatra's success at obtaining information from Dolabella.
2. Her lamentations at the tomb of Antony.
3. Her talk with Octavius Caesar.

In Plutarch's presentation of Dolabella the character was not an integral part of the story but suddenly appeared on the scene to aid Cleopatra:

There was a young gentlemen Cornelius Dolabella, that was one of Caesars very great familiars, and besides did beare no evill wil unto Cleopatra. (North, p. 396)

Plutarch offers no reason for Dolabella's friendliness to Cleopatra. There was an indication that they may have at some time contacted one another in some way: "He sent her word secretly as she has requested him" (North, p. 396). Shakespeare, by ridding himself of the dramatically superfluous character, Epaphroditus, and by using Dolabella to

relieve Proculeius as guard to Cleopatra, introduces Dolabella into the play in a more organic way:

Proculeius
 What thou hast done thy master Caesar knows,
 And he that sent for thee: for the Queen
 I'll take her to my guard. (V, ii, 64-67)

More importantly Shakespeare supplies a reason for the young Dolabella's aid to Cleopatra:

Dol. Most noble empress, you have heard
 of me? . . .
Cleo. No matter, sir, what I have heard or
 known.
 You laugh when boys or women tell their
 dreams;
 Is 't not your trick? . . .
 I dream'd there was an Emperor
 Antony . . .
 Think you there was or might be
 such a man
 As this I dream'd of?
Dol. Gentle madam, no . . .
 Your loss is as yourself, great; and you bear it
 As answering to the weight . . . I do feel
 By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites
 My very heart at root. (V, ii, 70-104)

He presents Dolabella as a rather egoistic courtier whom Cleopatra proceeds to charm with much success:

Cleo. Know you what Caesar means to do with me?
Dol. I am loth to tell you what I would
 you knew,
Cleo. Nay, pray you, sir --
 Though he be honourable, --
 He'll lead me, then, in triumph?
Dol. Madam, he will. I know 't. (V, ii, 106-110)

Shakespeare follows Daniel in stressing Dolabella's infatuation for Cleopatra as being the cause of Dolabella's giving her this information. In Act III of Daniel's Cleopatra Dolabella is rebuked by Caesar when Dolabella has pity for Cleopatra. By Act IV Dolabella has already sent a note telling Cleopatra of Caesar's plans for her. Cleopatra is already resolved to die, but she wants to see if she can help her children:

What hath my face yet power to win a Louer?
 Can this torne remnant ferue to grace me so
 That it can Caesar secrets plots discover.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 71)

Shakespeare's version has Dolabella give Cleopatra his opinion of Caesar's plans for her in a scene which precedes her meeting with Caesar. Then after Cleopatra's interviews with Caesar, Dolabella gives Cleopatra the factual information as to Caesar's intent concerning her, but, by then, Cleopatra has already determined to die.

Shakespeare's idea for the Dolabella scene comes from a combination of two episodes from Plutarch, the Dolabella episode and the lament-at-the-tomb episode. This latter episode in Plutarch followed immediately after Cleopatra's communication with Dolabella. Shakespeare beautifully integrates these two episodes. Plutarch's presentation of Cleopatra's lament was enigmatic. One can almost visualize the effect this enigma has on Shakespeare's creative furor, the enigma generating in his mind various ideas on dramatic development from that point. Plutarch's queen began by addressing Antony: "O my deare Lord Antonius," (North, p. 396) and proceeded to speak as though Antony was with the gods and had influence with them:

If therefore the gods where thou art now have any
 power and authoritie, sith our gods here have forsaken
 us: suffer not thy true friend and lover to be carried
 away alive. (North, p. 397)

Plutarch's Cleopatra usually condescended to control Antony as a chattel, but here she imputed godlike powers to him. In the midst of her present misery and sorrow she appeared to find a love, albeit a selfish love, for Antony. She stated obliquely that she was a free person when she buried Antony but that she was little better than a slave to be borne away to Rome for display later. Though this Cleopatra was viewing Antony as a super-being rather than as a puppet, she was nonetheless suffering from

a trace of fondness for Antony. She was still equivocal as to whether she was guilty of betraying Antony to Caesar.

Shakespeare transposes selected elements of this revealing episode and makes them useful in the cause-and-effect relationship of the play, whereas Plutarch merely presented an obscure ritual in which Cleopatra may or may not have shown a change in attitude towards Antony.

The following passage from Shakespeare resembles Daniel in some ways:

Cleo. I dream't there was an Emperor
Antony.
O, such another sleep, that I might see
But such another man! . . .
His face was as the heavens; and
therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course and
lighted
The little O, the earth . . .
His legs bestrid the ocean; his rear'd
arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in 't; an autumn 't was
That grew the more by reaping: his delights
Were dolphin-like, they show'd his back above
The element they liv'd in: in his livery
walk'd crowns and crownets; realms and
islands were
As plates dropp'd from his pocket. (V, ii, 76-92)

From Daniel Shakespeare merely borrows some of the words of praise having to do with Cleopatra's image of Antony as Atlas, whose physical movements cause the entire world to shake:

Wont but an Fortunes fairest side to looke,
Where naught was but applause, but smiles, and
grace
Whiles on his shoulders all my best relide
On whom the burthen of m' ambition lay,
My Atlas, and supporter of my pride
That did the world of all my glory sway,
(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 1594)

As the present author shows earlier, most of the underlying ideas for the

formulation of this passage come from the association in Shakespeare's mind of two separate episodes in Plutarch, the Dolabella episode and the lament-at-the-tomb episode, which closely follows. Shakespeare's Cleopatra describes to Dolabella her dream of Antony, and attributes to him godlike qualities which are only indirectly suggested by Plutarch's tomb scene. In Shakespeare, the emotionally piercing beauty of the poetry of this dream enchants Dolabella and prompts him to divulge the information that Caesar intends to use Cleopatra in his coming triumph. Shakespeare shows a Cleopatra resentful of the harsh treatment given her by Proculeius and other Romans. Shakespeare has her returning to thoughts of Antony and glorifying Antony as a forever-silenced lover whose hand translated her every wish into action.

Here Cleopatra does not design to be obviously seductive, but she is probing:

Sole sir o' th' world,
I cannot project mine cause so well
To make it clear; but do confess I have
Been laden with like frailties which before
Have often sham'd our sex.

(V, ii, 120-124)

A probable source for this statement is Daniel, who has Cleopatra mention several reasons for her loyalty to Antony, as she tries to excuse her actions to Caesar:

Caesar what should a woman doe
Opprest with greatnes? What, was it for me
To contradict my lord, being bent thereto?
I was by loue, by feare, by weakenesse, made
An instrument of such disseignes as these.

(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 54)

In Daniel's lines, one finds "I was by loue, by feare, by weakenesse, made an instrument of such dissignes as these," but Shakespeare prefers not to use the fear, perhaps because it would imply humility where

Shakespeare prefers sarcasm on Cleopatra's part, or, perhaps he prefers to remain noncommittal. However, he makes the "loue" and "weakenesse" to mean the usual vulnerability of a woman in love, "I have been laden with like frailties which before have often shamed our sex."

In Plutarch, Cleopatra excused her actions, attributing them to fear of Antony:

Cleopatra began to cleare and excuse her selfe
for that she had done, laying all to the feare
she had of Antonoius. (North, p. 395)

Since fear is the only element in the comparable passage from Plutarch, one may assume that Shakespeare here draws exclusively from Daniel.

In Plutarch the following keynote of Cleopatra's behavior before Caesar was her helplessness. The scene with Caesar took place almost immediately after Cleopatra's burial of Antony, during which she appeared to realize the hopelessness of her situation as a captive of Caesar. Caesar's threats to her children have forced Cleopatra to allow herself be treated for the fever lately sprung from her self-disfigurement:

Caesar did put her in feare, and threatened to put
her children to shamful death. With these threats
Cleopatra for feare yelded straight as she would
have yelded unto strokes: and afterwards
suffred her selfe to be cured and dieted as they
listed. (North, p. 395)

Plutarch's Cleopatra appeared abjectly dependent before Caesar in order to convince him of her own harmlessness. She laid the blame for her former opposition to Caesar on her fear of Antony. She appeared to be overcome with emotion and "prayed him to pardon her, as though she were affrayed to dye, and desirious to live" (North, p. 395). Her weakness was illustrated when she was betrayed by Seleucus, one of her loyal subjects:

But by chaunce there stood Seleucus by,

one of her Treasures, who to seems a good
 servant, came straight to Caesar to disprove Cleopatra.
 (North, p. 395)

Plutarch's Seleucus betrayed Cleopatra by pointing out that she neglected to report all her treasure in the accounting to Caesar. Her queenly stature had fallen to such low estimate that even this loyal subject openly transferred his loyalty.

Shakespeare maintains Cleopatra as a queen; that is, he does not allow her to drop in the spectators' estimation. Since part of the Dolorosa scene precedes the interview of Cleopatra with Caesar, Cleopatra is almost certain that it is hopeless to gain from Caesar an honorable existence. She does not attempt to appear abject by disfiguring herself nor does she beg outright for permission to live. There is even gentle mockery in her voice as she unctuously bows, "Sir, the gods will have it thus"; and so she points out his absolute authority, "and we your scutcheons and your signs of conquest shall / Hang in what place you please" (V, ii, 135-136). Her "weakness of our sex" implies passion and love for Antony more than fear. Seleucus does not step forward to cry falsehood on his own initiative as in Plutarch, but is called to testify:

Cleo. This is the brief of money, plate,
 and jewels
 I am possess'd of: 'tis exactly valued,
 No pretty things admitted. Where's Seleucus?
Sel. Here madam.
Cleo. This is my treasurer; let him speak,
 my lord,
 Upon his peril, that I have reserv'd
 To myself nothing. Speak the truth, Seleucus.
 What have I kept back?
Sel. Enough to purchase what you have
 made known. (V, ii, 138-148)

The above quotation indicates a probable conspiracy to enable Cleopatra to seek a noble end for herself without being subjected to such close scrutiny and supervision by Caesar and his guards; that is, Seleucus and

Cleopatra probably conspire to maneuver the course of the interview in such a way that Caesar will be tricked into thinking she wants to live. Seleucus tells Caesar that Cleopatra is withholding treasure, thus implying she intends to live.

In Shakespeare even love for her children will not allay Cleopatra's determination to remain queenly:

Caes. . . . if you seek
 To lay on me a cruelty by taking
 Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
 Of my good purposes, and put your children
 To that destruction which I'll guard them
 from
 If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.
Cleo. And may, through all the world; 'tis
 yours: (V, ii, 128-134)

She does not even bother to reply to Caesar's threat to her children. Caesar's almost cannibalistic concern⁷⁵ expressed in "Feed and sleep" has no effect except to spur her on to a noble end. She does not, as does Plutarch's Cleopatra, exchange her crown for her life: "He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not / Be noble to myself" (V, ii, 190-192). A possible source for this passage is from Daniel, whose Cleopatra is also expressing belief that Caesar is being false with her:

But Caesar, it is more than thou canst do
 Promise, flatter, threaten extreamity,
 Employ thy wits and all thy force thereto,
 I have both hands, and will, and I can die.
 (Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 18)

It is interesting to note that, where Daniel uses the words promise and flatter, which designate the various types of verbal pressures Caesar put on Cleopatra, Shakespeare recognizes the usefulness of these words, and, using words as a verb, effectively highlights Cleopatra's recognition of and reaction of this verbal deceit. The essence of Shakespeare's and

⁷⁵Granville-Barker, p. 446.

Daniel's Cleopatra is determined to take the royal way and die.

Plutarch's lines were dissimilar in purpose. His Cleopatra, in her lament at Antony's tomb, prayed to Antony, admitting Caesar's superior strength. She wished to die:

being a captive and prisoner, and yet I am
forbidden and kept from tearing and murdering
this captive body of mine with blowes, which
they carefully gard and keepe, only to triumphe
of thee . . . but receive me with thee, and
let me buried in one selfe tomb with thee.

(North, p. 397)

Thus Plutarch's Cleopatra did not express the determined attitude of either Shakespeare's or Daniel's Cleopatra, both of whom have her state that Caesar did not have the power to stop her suicide. She seemed surprisingly docile for so forceful a queen, a queen who had attempted to move her fleet from the Mediterranean across the isthmus to the Red Sea. Yet, after admitting that she was powerless to prevent her own removal to Rome, Plutarch's Cleopatra proceeded to commit suicide, and and this did tend to make the episode more a ritualistic prayer and an expression of sorrow than a forecast of her future actions. Her attitude at this ritual, especially toward Antony, may have produced a re-evaluation of her former mercenary character if there was occasion to view the episode with character change in mind. How much Plutarch may have intended this episode to reveal the inner Cleopatra is a most interesting point. Shakespeare, like Daniel, obviously feels its importance because Shakespeare builds not only the great monologue of Cleopatra's dream of Antony upon this scene, but, following Daniel's lead, he moves this change in Cleopatra's character to an earlier place in the play.⁷⁶

⁷⁶Daniel changes Cleopatra's character at the beginning of his play. She is repentant because she has seen Antony's downfall. Shakespeare attempts to show that change somewhere in the framework of the play; he solves the problem by introducing that element in the first part of the play and developing it from there.

The problems created by this gradual change in character are solved by the simple device of splitting Cleopatra's personality so that she utters statements that are in opposition to one another. Part of the time she derides Antony as a strumpet's fool; part of the time she reveres him as a god. She assumes the former attitude while Antony is near to her, and she assumes the latter while he is away. Much of the play, in regards to Cleopatra's character, is done in the style conforming to Plutarch's episode of Cleopatra's lamentations at Antony's tomb, where she sorrowfully told that she was to be taken to Rome as though there was nothing she could do to prevent this from happening. Then she committed suicide. In Shakespeare's play Cleopatra is continually doing one thing and saying the opposite. The false report of her death is only one example. Cleopatra praises Antony as an Atlas of the world, yet deserts him in his battle to possess this title in actuality. By having Cleopatra utter these remarkable praises sporadically throughout the play, Shakespeare creates a paradoxical image of Cleopatra, a Cleopatra who possibly dies for love of Antony.

Both Shakespeare and Daniel have Cleopatra declare her intent to die symbolically at the River Cydnus:⁷⁷

Show me, my women, like a queen: go fetch
My best attires: I am again for Cydnus
To meet Mark Antony. (V, ii, 227-229)

Euen as shee was when on thy cristall streames,
O Cydnos shee did shew what earth could shew.
When Asia all amaz'd in wonder, deemes
Venus from heauen was come on earth below
Euen as shee went at first to meet her Loue
So goes shee now at last againe to find him.

Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 84)

Shakespeare's lines, with a sweep of seemingly effortless majesty,

⁷⁷Farnham, p. 277.

express these ideas taken from well-turned phrases of Daniel. At this point in Plutarch there was a paucity of relevant material; Plutarch included a mass of inconsequential details. Here, Shakespeare uses only the significant material or material that he can make more significant by his dramatic treatment. Plutarch's ending said that Cleopatra bathed, etc., received the man with the figs, and wrote a letter (to Caesar). He then speculated as to the cause of her death, and opined that she probably died from the bite of an asp hidden in the figs. Shakespeare seems to be attempting a quasi-heroic ending, for he uses the redeemed Cleopatra of Daniel for his examples as much of his characterization and language, with the possible exception of Cleopatra's talk with the clown:

Guard. Here is a rural fellow
 That will not be deni'd your Highness' presence
 He brings you figs.

Cleo. Let him come in.
 What poor an instrument
 May do a noble deed! He brings me liberty.
 My resolution's plac'd, and I have nothing
 Of woman in me. Now from head to foot
 I am marble-constant. Now the fleeting moon
 No planet is of mine. (V, ii, 236-241)

Freedom from degradation is the keynote that links Shakespeare to Daniel in this speech:

And now by this, I thinke the man I sent,
 Is neere return'd that brings me my dispatch
 God grant his cunning for to good euent
 And that his skill may well deguile my watch:
 So shall I shun disgrace, leaue to be sorry
 Flie to my loue, scape my foe, free my soule
 So shall I act the last of life with glory.
 Die like a queen, and rest with controule.
 (Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 74)

Shakespeare follows Daniel in emphasizing Cleopatra's queenly defiance of Caesar, rather than Plutarch, who presented a helpless Cleopatra.

In Shakespeare the clown bringing the figs creates just enough

ironical humour to provide relief and to correct any element of melodrama that could otherwise weaken this magnificent ending. Shakespeare's clown scene is an elaboration on the following Plutarchian episode:

There came a contrieman, and brought her a basket
 at the gates, asked him straight what he had in
 his basket. He opened the basket, and took out the
 leaves that covered the figges, and shewed them
 that they were figges he brought. They all of
 them marvelled to see so goodly figges. The
 contrieman laughed to heare them, and bad them take
 some if they would. They beleved he told them truly
 and so bad him carie them in
 Some report that this Aspicke was brought unto
 her in the basket with figs.

(North, pp. 397-398)

Shakespeare's humour in the clown's speech is built from two particular sentences in Plutarch,

The all of them marvelled to see so goodly figges.
 The contrieman laughed to heare them, and bad them
 take some if they would,

and is probably built from the laughter of the clown as he asks the guards if they will take figs, the idea being that, if the guards do take figs, they may be taking death. Shakespeare would never leave his main character, Cleopatra, out of a scene like this, but he is confronted with a problem. He cannot have both Cleopatra and the Roman guards here, for the Cleopatra he presents would never design to allow Roman guards to participate in this banter. He resolves this problem by having Cleopatra dismiss the guards. Thus, for this intercourse, Cleopatra is exchanged for the guards, and their play on the word "fig" is given a new dimension, in which part of the play is the mistakes of the clown, another Dogberry, who is anxious to please his queen but who at the same time, wishes to inform her and the audience -- of the dangers of the asp. The spectator wonders if Cleopatra discerns the possible significance of the punning

on the words immortal, lie, and eat as referring to her in connection with the honesty of her motive for dying.⁷⁸ Certainly the clown brings us close to the earthy fact that Cleopatra now has Death in her possession in the form of an asp. The clown blunders into using immortal as a synonym for death, a pseudo-synonym that Cleopatra quickly accepts and uses adroitly to mean not only death but "immortal" as well:

Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me
I am fire and air; my other elements
I give to baser life. (V, ii, 282-292)

A similar treatment contrasting immortality with an unacceptable earthly existence can be found in Daniel:⁷⁹

But honor scorning life, doe forth leades the
Bright Immortalities in shyning armour:
Throw the rayes of whose cleere glory, shee
Might see Lifes baseness, how much it might harm her.
(Daniel, Cleopatra, p. 88)

In the following passage of Shakespeare, the spectator notices the mortal insecurity expressed in Cleopatra's reaching desperately for the word immortal, as she tries to gather courage to die a queenly death. The immortal theme is not maintained long, however, for a short time later she

⁷⁸The author ventures the following comments or questions on the words die, lie and eat. 1. Is Cleopatra dying in order to live immortally with Antony or is she dying to be dead and not have to face Caesar's triumph? 2. Is Cleopatra lying when she says she wants to die to be with Antony or has she lain with Caesar /at least metaphorically/ and betrayed Antony from the beginning. 3. Will the gods eat /accept/ Cleopatra and will she be reunited with Antony after death, or has she eaten of the forbidden fruit and offered it as death to Antony -- a death she now must share? 4. The quotation "for in every ten that they make the devils mar five" shows that Shakespeare will never indicate whether Cleopatra is guilty or not. These are suggested as possible explanations for the clown's puns on the words die, lie, and eat in the final scene of the play. This footnote does not mean to imply that the clown is aware of any of the meanings I have pointed out.

⁷⁹Muir, p. 215,

cries,

This proves me base
If she first meet the curled Antony
He'll make demand of her, and spend that
kiss
Which is my heaven to have. Come, thou
mortal wretch. (V, ii, 303-306)

Only with the motivation of jealousy can Cleopatra finally bring herself to embrace death. As the present author illustrates with numerous passages elsewhere in this work, there was more ritualistic fatalism in Plutarch's conception of Cleopatra's death. In Daniel, Cleopatra's admission of guilt shows the strength which leads to redemption. Shakespeare's "unparalleled lass" vacillates from "immortal longings" to "base" irresolution, as does neither Daniel's nor Plutarch's, and thereby creates a breathing spirit who reacts against death instinctively as would a wild creature of the forest.⁸⁰

Charmian vindicates Cleopatra as a queen by adjusting her crown:

Your crown's awry
I'll mend it, and then play. (V, ii, 321-322)

As Farnham points out, "Plutarch remarks only that after the death of Cleopatra, Charmian was found 'trimming the Diadem which Cleopatra wore upon her head'; he offers nothing in the way of explanation. Daniel has the 'wrying' of the crown by Cleopatra as she sinks down at her death:"⁸¹

And sencelesse, in her sinking downe shee wryes
The Diadem which on her head shee wore,
Which Charmian (poore weake feeble mayd) espyes
And hastes to right as it was before.
(Daniel, p. 90)

Cleopatra is both fearful and defiant, exalted and base. Charmian's final act of adjusting the crown of her queen, and calling her "a lass

⁸⁰Granville-Barker, p. 447.

⁸¹Farnham, p. 169. Muir also mentions this comparison, p. 215.

unparalleled" brings the conflicting sides of Cleopatra's nature (as borrowed from both Plutarch and Daniel) to rest with her. She has fought death with all the resources of her command; now, hunted to earth, she goes to death her own queenly way and is praised in this purpose even by Caesar, who resolves before our eyes the queen and woman in a monumental image.

she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.
(V, ii, 349-351)

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Cleopatra's characterization in Plutarch does not elicit sympathy. She was obviously more interested in Antony for material rewards than for love. When she first met Antony, it was to convince him that she was not guilty of the treason of helping Cassius against the triumvirs. If she was found guilty the sentence could have been death. What better reason could she have had for charming Antony? As a political opportunist she took advantage of his passion for her to acquire six countries. She was ruthless in Plutarch as was indicated by her relationship to Geminius and to the prisoners on whom she experimented to find painless ways to die. Later her children were given titles which conferred much of Antony's world with added expectations that upon his death they would receive all. Never did Plutarch's queen speak of love except when she was obviously pretending illness to keep Antony from Octavia in Athens, and at Antony's tomb when she realized fully how degraded her position in life was to be. She and her flatterers contributed greatly to the cause of the war of Antony with Octavius as follows:

1. They convinced the now utterly dependent Antony that Cleopatra would die without the love of Antony.

2. They showed, by comparison, that Cleopatra loved Antony more than did Octavia, since Octavia had the title of Antony's wife while Cleopatra was content to be his concubine as long as she could be near him. These arguments caused Antony to take certain fatal steps which

Plutarch (in his marginal notes) said led to war:

- a. He married his daughter by Cleopatra to a king.
- b. He allowed Octavia to return from Athens to Rome without seeing her, which Caesar interpreted as an insult.
- c. He had Cleopatra and her sons crowned with himself in the market place at Alexandria.

In I, i Shakespeare establishes Cleopatra as the superbly controlled and mocking Cleopatra much like the Cleopatra of the fishing episode of Plutarch. It is well that we see her in this state, for she is changed by the next scene and is never seen again at the height of her triumphant queenly exploitation of Antony. The idea of the messages in this scene is from Plutarch, but Shakespeare borrowed the greater amount of it from Daniel's Letter of Octavia to Antony.

The play begins in "medias res" with the relationship of Antony and Cleopatra presented as dominant while the secondary plot, Rome's disgust at Antony and hatred for Cleopatra, looms through the two Roman ambassadors as sinister, dangerous, and exciting.

Shakespeare has not started with the dramatic meeting of Antony and Cleopatra on the Cydnus for two reasons:

1. Antony has called Cleopatra to answer charges of treason because she is reported to have aided Cassius in his fight for the republic. Shakespeare probably found it unnecessarily difficult to present Antony's complete change from his haughty prosecution of Cleopatra to his almost subjugation by her.
2. In seducing Antony, Cleopatra would, therefore, have an obvious ulterior motive -- that of saving her life. This would practically make impossible any attempt by an audience to believe that love for Antony could ever motivate Cleopatra.

By I, ii, in contrast to her light-hearted maids, Shakespeare's Cleopatra has changed to an anxious, fearful person whose control of Antony, which seemed so certain, is fading. Perhaps, the spectator notes, she was more fearful in the first scene than was realized. This interpretation of urgency seemed to undergird all the actions of Plutarch's queen. She desperately feigned illness to keep Antony close.

In Plutarch this disturbed aura about Cleopatra was broken by mockery, flattery, and imperturbability in episodes which seemed to indicate that she was not so dependent upon Antony as her emotional behavior predominantly suggested. In Shakespeare's queen, unlike Plutarch's, there is generally sufficient cause for a change of mood in Cleopatra. This is not to say that Shakespeare's queen is uncomplicated or unchangeable; it is to say that, however subtly she is characterized, she can be understood. Plutarch's Cleopatra, on the other hand, appears to be a strong woman with easy command of the situation through her ability to speak, as in her superb flattery on the fishing expedition. Nevertheless within a paragraph or so, she is soft and dependent as when she pretends to be deathly ill. Then, again, she is cruel and hard as with Geminus. The pictures of her are too varied and will not admit good characterization.

In Plutarch there was no mention that Cleopatra was ever disturbed by Antony's departure from Egypt, or that she in any way wished his return from Rome. Her wishes were mercenary. When Antony had gone to Syria the next time and sent for her, he must have given her several small nations as gifts. After this, when he talked of departure, she became positively ill.

In I, iii Shakespeare presents Cleopatra's reaction to the determination of Antony to go to Rome more in terms of feminine wiles. She

begins with feigned sickness, but when Antony responds condescendingly, she berates him illogically in terms of his unfaithfulness to Fulvia. Then finally, on an almost nonverbal level, she tries to state the true relationship between them. Here, we have the greatest difference from the mocking, flattering Cleopatra of Plutarch whose machinations of love were always presented as mere deception.

Octavius Caesar in I, iv refers to Cleopatra as simply a harlot who is selling herself to Antony and is causing the entire empire to pay too heavily. This attitude is close to that of Plutarch.

By abstaining from her normal sensual life in deference to her love of Antony the Cleopatra of Shakespeare in I, v moves entirely away from Plutarch's conception of her. The only possible hint at love in Plutarch is Cleopatra's lament at Antony's tomb, where she says that life has been miserable without him. This present scene and II, v and III, iii probably show the influence of Ovid's sensualism on Shakespeare's pen as Shakespeare creates erotic speeches of love in Cleopatra's tributes of praise to her surprisingly godlike Antony. The redeemed Cleopatra of Daniel's play, Cleopatra, is also a source for these speeches. Shakespeare softens the mercenary motive of his queen by having the political benefits accruing to Cleopatra--the crowning of Antony, Cleopatra and their children in the market place of Alexandria -- told by the prejudiced Octavius and not presented on stage. There is no mention in Shakespeare of the destructive influence Plutarch's queen had on the success of the Parthian war.

In Shakespeare, Cleopatra's actions at Actium tell of an emotional woman who destroys her lover while pretending to aid him. She is angered by his marriage with Octavia and it appears that she possibly wrote to Octavius of her planned betrayal of Antony while she convinced Antony

that he should accept Octavius' challenge to fight by sea much against the advice of his generals. The evidence is none too strong for this concept of a betrayal, but it supplies two answers for important points in that play that would otherwise remain unanswered:

1. Cleopatra's jealous anger over Antony's marriage to Octavia has no basic use in the plot unless it is her motive for betraying Antony.

2. Cleopatra's flight during the battle of Actium is merely a sudden onslaught of feminine terror if it is not her planned betrayal of Antony at a most crucial point.

This was certainly not the brazen Cleopatra of Plutarch, who merely enjoyed the more material aspects of Antony's lordship of the world, and never had real loyalty to him. In Shakespeare's account she deserts with her ships to destroy him personally and demoralize his navy. It is possible that Antony could have lost the sea battle and still won the more important battle by land if he had not followed Cleopatra away.

Plutarch's account was much different. His Cleopatra bribed Canidius to persuade Antony to let her stay at Actium in order to keep Octavia from affecting a reconciliation between Antony and Caesar. She had Antony fight by sea in order that she might easily escape if Antony was overthrown. It was her own purposes entirely that interested her. She deserted at Actium without regard for Antony. Perhaps she had decided that the carousing Antony would never defeat the calculating Octavius. Her decision was devoid of emotion. She merely wanted to be on the winning side.

After the battle of Actium, Plutarch's Cleopatra showed many signs of her independence from Antony. She planned a way of escaping from the domination of Octavius Caesar by dragging her fleet of ships across

the narrow isthmus which separated the Red Sea from the Mediterranean. Antony discovered her plan only because he came upon her in the process of putting her plan into operation. Another way of escaping from Octavius, which Cleopatra does not appear to have shared with Antony, was her extensive experiments with poisons of various kinds. These poisons she used on prisoners to observe their effects, especially in regard to easy and painless death. The episode of Plutarch's queen with Thyreus was intimate enough to incite an already disturbed Antony to rage.

A rumor, which Plutarch credited with enough validity to mention, was that Seleucus, a high counsellor of Egypt's queen, with Cleopatra's consent, engineered the fall of the coastal city of Pelusium to Octavius. In trying to convince Antony that this rumor was unfounded in fact, Cleopatra gave Seleucus' family to Antony to torture as he pleased.

A comparison of Shakespeare's Cleopatra with Plutarch's Cleopatra in the above-mentioned episodes shows that in Shakespeare's account Cleopatra is dependent upon Antony after the battle of Actium, either by force, or, as more probable, by choice. She is too preoccupied with Antony's affairs with Octavius and with watching for signs of Antony's inner disturbance to be capable of engineering the feat of removing her fleet to the comparative safety of the Red Sea. Shakespeare's Cleopatra possesses intuitive ability with which she may motivate men, but we see very little of her ability to plan and to effect this great physical feat. To Shakespeare, Cleopatra's world is more within herself; and her effect on other personalities, together with the intuitive ability to accurately judge the status of this relation, is incredible. Thus, when fateful choices loom near she takes the safest route left open to her. Her contact has been since youth only with the most powerful individuals on earth. These she has invariably conquered. To live and not to

conquer Octavius would be to have nothing. No movement in the physical world to a place of safety could serve her needs as a Queen. She will not be a fugitive. Thus, when the terrible possibilities of enslavement by Octavius are near only a few courses are open to her. The easier is the seduction of Octavius. The harder is painless death by poison. No cruel treatment of prisoners while experimenting with poisons is mentioned in Shakespeare to mar a concept of queenliness as in Plutarch, who hinted at morbid preoccupation of her Cleopatra with this business. In Shakespeare we have a woman who lives to conquer the conqueror and cannot help wondering if she might not conquer again. Her scene with Thyreus is, therefore, more a betrayal of Antony than in Plutarch. It is thus the other side of her nature which helps her to die a high Roman death. To seduce Octavius will be to act queenly. Pelusium is not mentioned in Shakespeare because, as already shown, Shakespeare's Cleopatra does not make great use of the external world.

If Cleopatra destroys Antony at Actium she does so by personally withdrawing her support from him during the height of battle when she feels he personally needs her most. She strikes him personally. To her the battle is probably insignificant. She uses it as the best place where she can deny him as he has denied her in his marriage to Octavia. She is more sensitive in this respect than in Plutarch's queen who, whatever else she may be, is not afraid to die. To Shakespeare's queen, dying is a most difficult task. If she does not betray Antony at Actium she runs simply because she is afraid.

It is interesting to note that Shakespeare follows rather closely the account of Plutarch, who told of the defection of Antony's ships and soldiers in the battle at Alexandria. What is Shakespeare's Cleopatra doing alone out of the city walls during this battle? Perhaps her presence

there causes Antony to threaten her life. Ironically, Cleopatra may not have betrayed Antony at this point. The evidence is insufficient.

Plutarch's Cleopatra makes her predetermined decision to go to the prepared safety of her monument. Perhaps this might have been her plan to escape the final anger of the now demonic Antony. Shakespeare's Cleopatra appears stricken with fear and puts her life -- for the moment -- in the hands of her servants, who take her to a heretofore-unmentioned monument. Then there is the great difference between the planned and the unplanned false communication to Antony of her death. While Shakespeare proceeds to let Cleopatra be the verbal instrument which sets in motion that chain of events prompting Antony's immediate suicide, a complete decision damning her absolutely must be held in abeyance unless Diomedes is purposefully sent too late to save Antony from suicide. Caesar has promised freedom for Cleopatra in return for Antony's head. She may now claim her freedom, but she is fearful of Caesar.

Plutarch's queen was in the sad position of having betrayed Antony and now finding that she in turn was being betrayed by Octavius. Only at this point did Antony's real worth become apparent to her. She did not lament over Antony's body immediately after his death. She demanded the kingdom of Egypt for her sons. Later, after burying Antony, Plutarch's Cleopatra seemed to realize she was to be a slave because she mentioned in her formal lament at Antony's tomb that when she buried him she was free, but later she became a prisoner. She tried to let herself die from infection which resulted from the self-inflicted wounds she had made while Antony was dying, perhaps to convince him then that she had not been false. Caesar threatened her children with ignominious death, and Cleopatra allowed herself to be cured. Plutarch's Cleopatra

was told by Dolabella, for some unknown reason, of Caesar's plans for using her and her children, and since she did not wish to be led in triumph through Rome, she paid homage to an idealized Antony and died a ritual death.

Shakespeare's Cleopatra faints over the body of Antony and later, surprised to find herself alive, resolves to die a high Roman death. She is not constant in her resolve and makes efforts to be sure that there is no possibility of living commensurate with her present way of life. Shakespeare's Cleopatra finds in Antony's death, surcease from her own fears for a brief time, during which she resolves to die. She changes her mind in trying to conquer Caesar and Dolabella. Finding out what Caesar means to do with her and, more importantly, realizing that she cannot seduce Octavius, she returns to her former purpose,⁸² without regard for her children. Making death her lover -- Cleopatra must be loved -- she builds her courage to die, but is unsuccessful until one of her faithful maids shows the way, illustrating somewhat the illusion of her great love. Then Cleopatra dies to be buried "near" or "beside" Antony.

Shakespeare lets one see more of the womanly Cleopatra and her relationship with Mark Antony rather than the relationship of the Queen of Egypt to an Emperor of a large part of the world, as Plutarch did.

If Shakespeare's Cleopatra does betray Antony, and it is the author's studied opinion that she does, it is because she is betrayed by Antony in his political marriage to Octavia. In Plutarch the betrayal of Antony was a case of political expediency.

⁸²Dio Cassius, p. 37. This is extremely like Dio Cassius, but to call Dio Cassius a source would be to overstate the case.

The last act shows Shakespeare indicating the interplay of the opposing forces in Cleopatra's nature -- the womanly and the queenly. These forces are integrated and beautifully resolved in her death, supremely justifying, in the author's opinion, Shakespeare's final act against the charge by Professor Schücking of slavish and unnecessary imitation of the source.⁸³

⁸³Schücking, p. 127.

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