“ . . . Nothing of Woman in Me:”

The King’s Two Bodies and Gender Nonconformity in *Antony and Cleopatra*

by

Em Rawn

A thesis presented for the B.A. degree

with Honors in

The Department of English

University of Michigan

Winter 2023

This thesis is dedicated to my parents.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank my family. Without your unrelenting support I know I would not have made it here–in more ways than one. Your belief in me has carried me more than you know.

Thank you to my thesis advisor, Professor Walter Cohen. Thank you for all of your help, advice, comments, letters of recommendation, and encouragement. Thank you for seeing something in me that I didn't always see. And thank you for holding me to the standards that you knew (more than I did!) that I was capable of.

Thank you to Professors Adela Pinch and Madhumita Lahiri for your support for my cohort and for me. It was awesome to have space to be a thesis writer and researcher, and that was not a space I could have had without either of you. Your endless encouragement, advice, and feedback have been invaluable. Thank you to Scott Larson for fostering my trans research and for your feedback and advice on graduate school applications, among many, many other things.

Thank you to my thesis cohort! We did it, y'all! Thank you for understanding the vision, and for all the feedback. I have grown as a writer, student, critic, and person because of all of you.

Thank you to all my friends and my roommates for asking endlessly about this project and for knowing when NOT to ask about this project. Thank you for being my found family these last four years when I was so far away from my biological one.

Thank you to Sophie, my cat, for all the kisses and bites. You can't read this (probably).

And last but not least, thank you to Kathie Trzecinski, my seventh grade English teacher. I can still remember the scene in *Macbeth* that pushed me onto this road. It hasn't led me astray so far.

Abstract

This thesis confronts Cleopatra's performance of gender nonconformity and political embodiment in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra.* I draw conclusions about the way that various hegemonic powers such as colonizer states treat people who practice gender nonconformity, especially in imperial contexts. I begin with studying how Cleopatra's actions and dialogue can be read through Ernst Kantorowicz's theory of the "King's Two Bodies." I later move on to discussing Cynthia Herrup's article, "The King's Two Genders," which argues that a ruler's political embodiment of the state necessitates gender nonconformity, and I draw parallels between this article and Cleopatra's actions in the play. Using "trans" as a verb and modifier rather than an adjective, I then discuss how Cleopatra "transes" her gender throughout the play, performing traditionally masculine or feminine acts to acquire power in different contexts. Though we cannot call her "queer" or "trans" by today's standards because of changing ideas about gender, her performance of gender and sexuality is nonetheless transgressive. Finally, I confront the way that the intersection of empire and gender proves deadly for Cleopatra at the hands of the Romans. Nevertheless, Cleopatra maintains her queer dignity and power to the last, choosing to perform as the persona that allows her to remain a majestic sacrifice rather than a captured tribute to Roman colonialism. In the conclusion, I further explore historical figures like Cleopatra, when people who threaten the status quo of religion, gender conformity, or racial supremacy are attacked in ways that focus on their gender performance. I believe that Cleopatra's literary life and death can be used as a way to further the discussion of gender nonconformity in Shakespeare and other early modern literature, and why it matters today.

Keywords: Shakespeare; Kantorowicz; gender nonconformity; political embodiment; imperialism

Table of Contents

Introduction

For hundreds of years, Shakespeare's character of Cleopatra in his play *Antony and Cleopatra* has been represented in both scholarship and popular culture as the paragon of womanhood, female sexuality, and female power. She has been portrayed by Hollywood A-list actresses for nearly a century, including Elizabeth Taylor and Vivien Leigh. In her opulent courts, dramatic love affairs, and tragedy lay feminine mystique and intrigue. However, images of an overly feminized Cleopatra completely ignore the way that Cleopatra performs masculinity alongside femininity in a constant reach for power. She seizes authority from and shares characteristics with the male rulers and generals around her, such as Mark Antony and Octavian, historically known as Augustus Caesar. In this thesis, I argue that Cleopatra performs masculinity and femininity only as functions of power, and that her gendered performances vary based on context.

I will be using two main bodies of theory to guide my investigation. The first one will be the theory of the King's Two Bodies, used throughout medieval and early modern Christian monarchies and brought to scholarly attention later by Ernst Kantorowicz's 1957 book *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology.* The theory, which will shape my first chapter, argues that a monarch has two "bodies:" the physical body natural, which lives, dies, eats, and sleeps; and a metaphysical body politic, which encompasses the God/gods, population, identity, and physical geography of their nation. This theory initially drew in part from early theories of classification of intersex people, or people born with bodies that defied sexual categorization. These theories also asked questions about how a human body could exist in liminal spaces between social roles such as male and female, just as the King's Two Bodies explores how a person could exist as both king and god. Beyond theory, the performativity of

social roles such as gender or monarchy was being called into question constantly at the moment of *Antony and Cleopatra's* writing as well. Gender roles were strict and rife with anxiety at this time, and over England ruled Queen Elizabeth I. Queen Elizabeth I still called herself a prince and king of England, which is in line with Cynthia Herrup's claim in "The King's Two Genders." Because of the continuity inherent in a metaphysical body politic, Herrup argues, any ruler had to occupy a multi-gendered space that allowed for peace and strength, motherly love and fatherly protection. In this bridging of gender and the theory, I connect my argument concerning Kantorowicz to writings about gender and move into my second chapter, which will investigate the gender variance inherent in Cleopatra's character arc.

To more thoroughly discuss Cleopatra's performance of gendered and ungendered power, I will also be working with more modern theories about transness and gender nonconformity, including Candace West and Don Zimmerman's pioneering 1987 essay, "Doing Gender." The essay argues that gender is performed and imagined by a person themself, but also analyzed and constructed continuously by outside human interactions that confirm or deny the validity of a person's gender performance. Much of their argument is not only that gender is an identity within itself, but also a function based on one's relationality among others. This idea of gender is quite relevant to Cleopatra, who must operate among influential men and still remains the most powerful voice in most rooms.

However, in a book chapter entitled "Impure Resistance," Melissa Sanchez argues that it is precisely these relational experiences of gender that ultimately result in Cleopatra's death and the end of Egypt, which will be what my third chapter will revolve around. As Augustus Caesar captures Alexandria, she must be realistic about her capture and her female body, which, like her country, will also likely be raped and pillaged. Though even in her dying moments she speaks as

someone trying to escape her feminine body, she still must succumb to the expectations that other rulers are using that culminate in the destruction of her and the state she embodies.

Ultimately, I believe that Cleopatra's performance of power, followed by her highly feminized death and conquest, is a helpful analog for modern societies' treatment of marginalized bodies. When Cleopatra acts from a malleably gendered power, she is successful, and so, too, is Egypt. It is only when Roman ideas about who she should be and what she has done to Rome with her "feminine wiles" emerge that she must finally die alongside her country.

I argue that the state uses strictly policed expectations for queer and un-queer bodies to enforce a violent status quo. When Cleopatra is limited only to a feminized body lacking power, she commits suicide. When Mark Antony becomes only a warlord past his prime, he falls on his sword. We tell ourselves this story even today, when people with uteruses are subjugated as child-bearers or forcibly sterilized, depending on the desires of the state.

But one may ask: why is a four hundred-year-old play about the power struggle and love story between an Ancient Roman and Egyptian a good comparison for modern politics concerning trans life and state power? Then again: why was it a good comparison for the political world in which Shakespeare lived as he wrote the play, four hundred years ago? This play was performed for the first time only a few years after the death of Queen Elizabeth I, and Shakespeare saw the opportunity to reimagine an old story to implicitly comment on his own milieu. Though I am hardly the Bard, I, too, am taking that opportunity. Cleopatra has acquired a mystique among historical queens, and Shakespeare a reputation among legendary authors. To use this play as a comment on the world in which I live is to recognize the play and the story's prestige and use its place in the public eye to draw parallels to our own time, just as Shakespeare did hundreds of years ago.

I. Kantorowicz and Cleopatra

Upon his deathbed Mark Antony cries out, “I am dying, Egypt, dying. / Give me some wine, and let me speak a little” (4.15.41-42). However, he does not call for the literal nation of Egypt, which armies from his own country are conquering–rather, he calls for the queen Cleopatra, his long-time lover. But why does he call her *Egypt*? Why does she respond?

The theory of the King’s Two Bodies can explain in part Antony’s dialogue. As we have previously stated, Kantorowicz’s theory states that the ruler of a nation has two “bodies:” the body natural, which lives as a human does, and eats, sleeps, marries, and dies; and the more metaphysical body politic. The body politic is the metaphorical personification of the state over which a ruler reigns, along with the personification of its religion, beliefs, and citizens (Plowden qtd. in Kantorowicz 7). As the state persists over time, each ruler’s body politic becomes part of a larger continuum that comprises the history of the country and its heads of state (Kantorowicz 316). Though the theory was mostly used in a Christian context in its heyday in medieval monarchical society, the theory’s applicability is hardly limited to just those societies; even the arguably secular phrase “The King is dead; long live the King” stems in part from the concept of the dual-bodied continuity that Kantorowicz discusses.

It is with Kantorowicz’s ideas in mind that I will be reading Shakespeare’s characterization of Cleopatra VII Philopator in *Antony and Cleopatra.* Cleopatra was the queen of Egypt from 51 BCE to 30 BCE, the final ruler in the Ptolemaic Egyptian dynasty before Egypt fell to Rome at the Battle of Actium. In the last years of her life, she and Mark Antony, a Roman statesman, were in a relationship, and she even bore some of his children. It is their love affair and later deaths, along with Octavius Caesar’s imminent invasion of Egypt, that comprises the plot of the play. I am most interested in the way that Cleopatra embodies the state of Ptolemaic

Egypt, and how that affects the arc of her character and the language and actions she chooses. Why does it matter that she dies by suicide in full royal regalia? How do her characterization and Shakespeare's depiction of Hellenistic Egypt inform each other?

I will begin by discussing the way that Cleopatra performs as a personification of Ptolemaic Egypt itself, moving later to Egyptian belief and religion. The first, most literal use of "Egypt" as a title for Cleopatra comes in the third scene of act one, and in this instance, Cleopatra herself is the one using it. As she speaks to Antony about his departure back to Rome, he pleads for her forgiveness and makes excuses for his upcoming absence. She finally says, "I would I had thy inches; thou shouldst know / There were a heart in Egypt" (1.3.40-41). In this way, she evokes the country over which she rules, but still ties her own body to it through conflating her own anatomy with that of the state. On the surface, she asks not for a beating heart in her breast, but for one in her own state. But, as one reads this passage through Kantorowicz's theory, one understands that Cleopatra still inquires about her own body and what she feels. Instead of making herself vulnerable by sharing her own feelings, she centers the country she rules over instead to disconnect Antony–and herself–from her own emotions for the sake of her pride.

The other characters, even characters coming from outside of Egypt, also perpetuate Cleopatra's desired mythology of herself as an extension of her country. I return to my earlier example with which I began this chapter–Mark Antony, dying in Cleopatra's arms. At this moment, he has dealt himself a fatal blow after being betrayed by military allies and hearing of Cleopatra's staged death. As he is lifted onto Cleopatra's monument, he says, to repeat, "I am dying, Egypt, dying!" (4.15.41). Even as he begs to be with her as he dies, and after he has slain himself for want of her, he knows he sits not only with Cleopatra, but with the country she

embodies. He calls her by the name of the nation that ultimately abandoned him at Actium, while still loving her enough to let her hold him as he is about to be parted from her–and all he knows–by death.

However, in the play's diegesis, Antony has also assisted Cleopatra in her embodiment of the Egyptian state. At one moment, as she discusses Antony's absence with her handmaid, Charmian, Cleopatra conjectures upon what he might be doing a sea away from her. She says, "He's speaking now, / Or murmuring "Where's my serpent of old Nile?"/ For so he calls me" (1.5.29-31). One of his pet names for her further connects her to the river snaking through Egypt, or literally to the snakes that live among it. Throughout their time together, he has identified her with the land over which she rules, assisting her in her embodiment of Egypt in times of both affection and anguish.

Antony's perpetuation of Cleopatra's Egyptian mythos grows more complicated when we consider its origins. Ptolemaic Egypt was technically ruled by Cleopatra at this time. But as Rome moved in to claim and control the territory, its more official head was considered to be Antony, who managed the Roman territories of the Eastern Mediterranean, like Egypt. However, Octavian complains that Antony passed dominion on to Cleopatra, saying, "Unto her / He gave the 'stablishment of Egypt, made her / Of lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia, / Absolute queen" (3.6.8-11). In Antony's eyes, Cleopatra would not have been the queen of Egypt–and thus, its embodiment–if he had not made her so. Ultimately, as she acts as his doting lover who comforts him upon his deathbed, Antony has effectively feminized the state of Egypt in his eyes. The Nile after which he affectionately names Cleopatra and the ground over which it winds are instead given the face of the woman Antony loves, and one from which he expects comfort and love in return.

In a broader sense, Shakespeare's Cleopatra is also an appropriate embodiment of the state given its historical context, for she is not ruling over Egypt, but *Ptolemaic* Egypt. Historically, three hundred years before the events of the play, Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great, the ruler of Ancient Macedon and Greece. (The capital city is even called Alexandria because he named it after himself.) After his death in 323 BCE, the colony of Egypt then came under the rule of Ptolemy, one of Alexander's right-hand men. Although Ptolemy was himself Greek, his monarchy takes on some Egyptian traditions, such as marriage practices taken from Egyptian mythology and historical customs. By no means is Egypt under indigenous control; it is under the Ptolemaic dynasty. The culture of the crown takes on a hybrid character that links Greek and Egyptian lifestyles through customs, art, and belief, a phenomenon that Classical archaeologist Katelijn Vandorpe ascribes to " . . . innovation and tradition on an institutional level and balancing give-and-take *vis-à -vis* the population and elite groups, resulting in a double-faceted Graeco-Egyptian society" (131). Part of the aforementioned double-faceted society came from children being born to mixed couples, including many children born into the royal family.

Near what proves to be the end of the Ptolemaic dynasty, Cleopatra was born and ascended to the throne a mixed-race woman, a status that is even addressed in the opening lines of the play, as one of Antony's friends, Philo, says, "Mars, now bend, now turn / the office and devotion of their view / upon a tawny front" (1.1.4-6). The "front" in question is Cleopatra, a Brown woman. This racial fixation is discussed and confronted in John Michael Archer's "Antiquity and Degeneration in *Antony and Cleopatra."* Although the historical figure of Cleopatra did not necessarily understand herself as an African or Egyptian woman, the play views her in an entirely different manner. As Philo says, the Romans regard her as dark-skinned

and Egyptian. With her embodiment of Egypt and with her literal othered-race identity, Cleopatra bears the ethnic anxieties of the Romans, who view her as a cultural outsider. From what we see of her rule in the play, Cleopatra is an extension of a nation whose culture has been mixed with that of a colonizing state, and, as a result, she lives within a liminal space between the two cultures (Archer 150-151). Within the hybridized status of Ptolemaic culture, Cleopatra still preserved distinctive features of Egyptian culture in certain contexts, such as religion. The historical Cleopatra and her Ptolemaic ancestors married their brothers or sisters, just as the Egyptian gods Isis and Osiris supposedly did. This is also briefly mentioned in the play. It is only her marriage (and later murder) of her brother that allows her to be the queen of Egypt, a role she fully embraces.

Cleopatra also upholds the mythology and beliefs of pre-Ptolemaic Egypt in her performance as queen in the play. As Octavian and two of his right-hand men talk about Cleopatra and Antony, they note that in the royal court, Cleopatra "in th' habiliments of the goddess Isis / that day appeared, and often before gave audience, / As 'tis reported, so" (3.6.17-19). Isis was one of the most prominent Egyptian goddesses, and one of the goddesses from which the Ptolemies drew much inspiration in their own cultural performance. Isis was also later accepted as a part of Greco-Roman religion, but only through contact with Egypt. It only makes sense that Cleopatra would depict herself as an incarnation–and perhaps reincarnation–of the goddess. In doing so, she also draws a connection between herself and the gods of her country that only she can as the queen of Egypt, just as she embodies a new kind of post-Alexander Egyptian culture that both sustains some Egyptian qualities while embedding traits from the Greek culture that once fought to control the state.

With embodying the Ptolemaic dynasty comes the need for continuity. Kantorowicz defines this necessity as a "perpetuity of both the whole body politic (head and members together) and the constituent members alone" (Kantorowicz 314). If the body of Egypt and of the dynasty is one body, that body must inform the state, and be informed by the state. The body is a living history that always shifts and crosses barriers within any one king or queen, as the body must maintain a history of every ruler before them. In this way, Cleopatra must continue to embody another liminal space: that of the multi-racial and multi-*gendered* body of rulers within the Ptolemaic dynasty, not only herself but every ruler before her.

It is this multi-gendered and complexly raced body, both physical and metaphorical, that I will be exploring in future chapters. In her previously-mentioned article "The King's Two Genders," Cynthia Herrup explores the necessity of gender-crossing within Kantorowicz's theory, both as a result of multi-gendered expectations for the crown and because of the continuity of past and future rulers. According to Herrup, the traits that monarchs hoped to exhibit took from characteristics associated with both masculinity and femininity, and were surprisingly uniform throughout time. She explains that one of the first codexes for royal behavior was written by Seneca for future Roman emperor Nero in 54 CE. Seneca emphasizes the same sets of qualities as the other monarchies that Herrup references, even from later centuries (497). Though of course Cleopatra's rule ended eighty-five years before Seneca's codex, the continuity of these qualities would suggest that Egyptian standards for royal behavior were not dissimilar.

Herrup details some of the characteristics of an ideal ruler highlighted in these sources as a series of gendered dichotomies, saying, " . . . kings had to be both unyielding and tender, both economical and bountiful with words and goods, and both courageous and peace-loving" (498).

We can clearly see these qualities in the character of Cleopatra with her unyielding determination to protect her country, and her both "economical and bountiful" use of her navy that helps Antony and later withdraws, perhaps to protect the homeland. We also see this in the real-life rule of Octavian. Though he worked to expand the Roman empire, he also created a persona that valued peace within and outside of the original Roman homeland through monuments representing the order he supposedly brought to the lands over which he ruled (Tuck 131). Given that both Octavian and Cleopatra were performing these multi-gendered traits, the gender crossing necessitated by Kantorowicz's theory clearly is not limited to only female rulers like Cleopatra.

Another aspect of Herrup's argument is that often, female rulers would call themselves kings *and* queens. For example, at the time of writing *Antony and Cleopatra* in Britain, Queen Elizabeth I had recently died. As I referenced earlier, in one of her most famous speeches, she addresses her troops at Tilbury and says that she has the "heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England, too" (qtd. in Levin 144). This is also present in Cleopatra's real-life rule. The play gives the issue a distinctive spin. After Cleopatra has died, one of Octavian's guards comes in to announce Octavian's arrival at the palace. However, upon seeing her body, the guard asks one of her handmaids, Charmian, whether she is truly dead. The following exchange takes place:

First Guard: What work is here! Charmian, is this well done?

Charmian: It is well done, and fitting for a princess / descended of so many royal kings. (Act 5, scene 2, lines 325-327)

This line is directly taken from accounts of this event, published originally in Latin and Greek. And according to Sarah B. Pomeroy's *Women in Hellenistic Egypt,* the original quote does not include the term "princess." Rather, the word Charmian uses is the masculine form for

"descendant" (38). Through this real-life example of gender-crossing, we see Kantorowicz's theory's ideas of continuity in action. Charmian has tied Cleopatra to those who have ruled before her, and she has become masculine in conjunction with them. However, within the play, this continuity takes a new form as these kings descend to a *princess,* rather than just an ungendered royal. The kings before her become somewhat feminized in conjunction with Cleopatra, just as Cleopatra is masculinized in conjunction with them. Keeping this balance is what allows Cleopatra to maintain a gender-crossing persona, a persona to be discussed in later chapters. Ultimately, we will explore the further ways that Cleopatra crosses gender during her rule in the play, necessitated by both her desire for power and for the embodiment that she sought to fulfill.

II. Cleopatra and Gender

Throughout the play, Cleopatra's hyper-awareness of gendered norms manifests in both subversion and perpetuation of these norms to maintain control of various situations, even unto her death. I do want to acknowledge that the definition of gender transgression is in a constant state of flux, due to changing societal norms and medical advances that shape expectations and options for gender-variant people. For the purposes of my writing, I will be viewing Cleopatra's performance of gender through a lens of the early modern period in which Shakespeare wrote the work. I will also be viewing "trans" as something that people can *do* as well as *be*–we can never truly confirm whether Cleopatra *was* trans, whether in the play or in real life, but we can witness her actions as *doing* transness. In addition, the words we use to describe gender identity have changed vastly in the centuries since the play's writing, and our understanding of gender has also metamorphosed. However, we can also perceive that Cleopatra transgresses the gender norms set up in the play's time period and in that of the play's writing, so for this thesis, we will consider her transgression as "trans" through action and speech, no matter how other characters define her gender.

From the beginning of the play, Antony's comments establish a link between Cleopatra and the earth and water of Egypt. Although we have previously discussed the idea of Cleopatra as an embodiment of the Nile River, Anthony's dialogue makes the connection between Cleopatra and earth and water in additional ways. For example, in the very first scene, Antony is called back to Rome, but he protests, saying, "Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch / Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space, / Kingdoms are clay: our dungy earth alike / Feeds beast as man" (1.1.33-36). As we have already covered, Antony and the text both see Cleopatra as the embodiment of Egypt. In this quote, he calls Egypt his desired designated space, with live-giving

earth that fosters him and those around him. Ultimately, if we read this through Kantorowicz's theory, he also says the same of Cleopatra, as he has repeatedly established her as the embodiment of the state. He has also shared her bed, so realistically, the prosperity of her and her land is not beneath his concern. At this moment in time, Cleopatra has also borne his children, and those of Julius Caesar, so although Antony has also had other children with other wives, her fertility is personal and highly relevant to him. In his wish to stay behind with her in Egypt, he creates a mythos of Cleopatra as the fecund earth where he wants to reside.

Even Antony's speech about the earth of Egypt and figuratively of Cleopatra certainly ties into the performance and perception of gender through astrology. In Shakespeare's time, there were believed to be four elements: earth, water, fire, and air. Earth and water were considered the "baser" elements, and fire and air were the "higher" ones (Signet Classics *A&C* 143). These four elements are also present in astrology. In the western zodiac, which had long been a tradition at the time of the play's setting and at the time of its writing, each astrological sign corresponds to one of the four elements in human life, with each element comprising three signs. But each of these elements that provide the basis for these signs is labeled "masculine" or "feminine." The feminine elements? Earth and water. As Antony describes the fecund earth of Egypt, he comments not only on Cleopatra's fertility, but upon her femininity as well, such as in the "serpent of old Nile" reference mentioned before. Whenever he uses elemental terms to refer to her, he only ever uses earth or water to do so, creating a mythos of her femininity that sustains the previously mentioned feminization of the state of Egypt as well.

However, instead of accepting Antony's vision of her as just a fertile female, Cleopatra chooses instead to perform masculinity in a way that asserts her power over him. At one point in the play, she explains to her handmaid Charmian that in public and in private, she is more

powerful and masculine than he is: “That time – O times! – / I laughed him out of patience, and that night / I laughed him into patience; and next morn, / Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed; / Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst I wore his sword Philippan” (2.5.19-23). She drinks him under the table, and upon returning to her bed, they switch garments, and she wields his weapon. At face value, Cleopatra establishes herself as the partner in control of Antony’s tools of war, and when she wears his clothes as he wears hers, she enters into the greater context of crossdressing as well. The sword’s “Philippan” status also references the battle where Antony and Octavian defeat their rivals, Brutus and Cassius, during the instability in Rome after Julius Caesar’s death. On every level, the sword offers up the creation of an empowered Cleopatra and a submissive Antony: the sword is not only a symbol of war, but a symbol of Antony’s victory over other men. By holding it, Cleopatra seizes power even over Antony’s prowess in warfare. Even without wearing his clothes, the phallic imagery of the sword lends itself to more anatomical terms in this intimate context.

The power dynamic of the Roman general in queen’s livery and the queen wielding the sword is one that might be discussed in relation to Candace West and Don Zimmerman’s 1987 text “Doing Gender.” In this proto-Butler essay, they examine the concept of gender as continuous, societally conditioned acts rather than as innate. At one point, they argue that in the heterosexual dating dynamic, the dichotomy between socially conditioned men and women is often one of power. They explain that the societally masculine partner is defined by his willingness to show strength and mastery, and the feminine partner by her willingness to bow to it in deference and awe (158). However, in the context of Antony and Cleopatra, these roles are reversed. Cleopatra is the one displaying strength through the wielding of Antony’s sword. Through this reading of the characters’ dynamic, we see that Cleopatra has established herself as

the actor with power in this relationship, as evidenced by the masculinity she embodies in her relationship with Antony. Although Antony's words encode her as the feminine state, her own actions with him defy perceiving her gender in this way.

However, the embodiment of her power does not always manifest as masculinity, especially when she must compare herself to other women. One example of this is when she hears of Antony's marriage to Octavian's sister, Octavia. She sends messengers out to get more information, and when they return, she presses them for information about Octavia's walk, voice, and appearance. To begin, the following exchange takes place:

Cleopatra: Is she shrill-tongued or low?

Messenger: Madam, I heard her speak; she is low-voiced. (3.3.14-15).

In asking whether she has a shrill or a low voice, Cleopatra ultimately sets Octavia up for failure. Either Octavia's voice is high and grating, or low–whether she means literally low-pitched, quiet, sultry, or simply masculine. There is no good option between these two. She then inquires about the way that Octavia walks, asking, "What majesty is in her gait? Remember, / if e'er thou look'st on majesty" (20-21). Cleopatra hopes to assert that Octavia is not only less of a woman, but also less of a queenly figure, with a lack of royal grace. How can Octavia compare to Cleopatra, queen of Egypt with centuries of royal blood in her veins? Even if Cleopatra wields masculinity like a weapon at her disposal, she can still choose to perform and use femininity at any time. In the context of competing for Antony's affections, she does not "return" to a womanly state, but rather puts on femininity the way she might masculinity. In this situation, she feels it benefits her to be feminine, as through femininity she is able to gain the upper hand over Octavia, Antony's new wife. Her insecurities concerning Antony marrying Octavia manifest in her deciding that Octavia's femininity does not measure up to hers. The

messengers in the room with her also pick up upon this, and Octavia's female persona that they describe, whether performed or innate, stands no chance.

Ultimately, Cleopatra deems Octavia nonthreatening for Antony's affections, and eventually says, "This creature's no such thing" (42-43). In this way, she also takes away Octavia's femininity or masculinity by calling her a *creature*. The word *creature* is interesting because of its original meaning–though now we use the word for any living thing, the word initially meant something that was created by another.[1] Rather than being the master (or mistress) of herself, Octavia is derivative and powerless. And in the eyes of Cleopatra, there is no greater sin than powerlessness. If she is performing the persona the messengers describe, she is failing at doing so; if she comes upon it innately, she is still intrinsically less than Cleopatra. As Cleopatra transcends gender, Octavia, on the other hand, is unable to reach it.

Cleopatra's final moments are some of the most notable instances of her performance of multiple genders. At the end of the play, she has heard of Octavian's arrival and realizes that Egypt is no longer hers to rule. As Egypt's queen, she expects to be captured and paraded as a war prize, at best derided, most likely killed. The land she has worked to embody is now certainly a victim of figurative rape by the armies of Augustus; the end is near. So, she requests a basket of figs be brought to her, along with her best clothes. When the guards return with the figs, she reveals their purpose: beside the figs in the basket nest venomous asps, which she plans to use to kill herself. Her mind is made up, and she proclaims: "He brings me liberty. / My resolution's placed, 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" (5.2.237-241). In this situation, she divorces herself from the mercurial and cowardly stereotype of femininity. Even as she asks

1 Taken from Merriam-Webster dictionary.

for her queenly clothes to be brought to her to die in, she also leaves behind traits she views as feminine in exchange for taking a suicidal stand.

Her disregard for her perceived gender also continues as she reaches to attach the biting asp to her skin in one of her most famous speeches, describing some of her final thoughts. Halfway through the speech, she declares, "I am fire, and air; my other elements / I give to baser life" (5.2.289-290). Earlier in the play, we recall that Antony has used water and earth metaphors to refer to her to assert her femininity; finally, she has claimed the other, masculine elements to embrace the power therein. She connects these aspects with her lifegiving ability and with her courage, as she also seems to bear a sense of pride in dying for her country as it, too, dies alongside her. She makes a reference to the dead Antony looking down on her, and she expects him to " . . . praise [her] noble act" (5.2.285). She perceives that in the eyes of her beloved, she has done the right thing, and in perceiving this way, she displaces her own satisfaction with her choices upon an unseen, smiling specter, using verbiage such as "noble" to suggest knighthood and empowerment.

Her mindfulness of the presence of Antony continues as she looks to an invisible ghost of her lover. She announces just before she applies the snakes, "Husband, I come" (5.2.287-288). In this situation, she has claimed that they are a married couple. To (presumably) address the spirit of Antony as "husband" is interesting in two ways: the first is because she positions herself as the "wife," if a reader continues the classification of Antony and Cleopatra as a married couple–a point to which I'll shortly return. In doing so, she casts herself in a feminine role. Addressing Antony as "husband" is also interesting because of the biblical ramifications of the holy spirit of Antony as a husband. In the Bible, Jesus makes multiple references to himself as a groom and his believers as brides who will "marry" him at the time of their death. One notable example of this

is in the book of Ephesians, written by Paul the Apostle or by a writer closely emulating Paul's teachings. He directs the Ephesians, **"**Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord. / For the husband is the wife's head, even as Christ is the head of the Church, and the same is the Savior of *his* body" (Ephesians 5:22-24). This translation is from the Geneva Bible, which is the 1560 translation Shakespeare would likely have used. Many scholars have discussed references to the Bible in *Antony and Cleopatra,* including Ethel Seaton's argument that Shakespeare references the book of Revelation as Cleopatra describes Antony[2]. What is notable here is that in understanding Antony as a Christ figure-husband, Cleopatra has given some of her power away, if we apply the above bible verse to Cleopatra's declaration of the husband-wife relationship. What happened to the Cleopatra who wielded the sword Philippan? Why would she relinquish some of her agency now, at the hour of her death? I would argue here that Cleopatra does not truly address Antony as a wife to a husband, but as a believer to a god. Cleopatra has demonstrated before that she sees herself as a goddess, and in this moment, she characterizes herself also as cognizant of the other gods of her own pantheon. Thus, she meets the spirit of Antony not as a subservient wife, but as an equal, ascending to another heaven where she can stand beside him.

Some of her very last words, however, exist in a space made more complicated through a gendered lens. When she applies the asps to her body, she applies the first to her chest and lets it bite her. The second goes on her arm to speed along the process as her staff die around her as well. Just as she applies the asp to her breast, her handmaid Charmian cries out, "O eastern star!" (5.2.307). In response, Cleopatra hushes her, saying, "Peace, peace! / Dost thou not see my baby at my breast, / That sucks the nurse asleep?" (5.2.307-309). At first glance, she claims motherhood and fertility, typically feminine traits, one last time as she draws a connection

2 See Seaton's "*Antony and Cleopatra* and the Book of Revelation," bibliography.

between the biting asp on her bosom and an infant breastfeeding. She also uses surprisingly soothing imagery to describe her own death, choosing to consider it as a nurse being lulled to sleep by a quiet moment of connection with a baby. Furthermore, as we saw in Cynthia Herrup's "The King's Two Genders" previously, valuing peace was considered a feminine trait at the time of the play's conception (498). Cleopatra quite literally asks for peace by calling out for it, and makes a quiet moment of her own death amidst the calamity of Octavian's invasion.

Nevertheless, her words describing herself and the asp as a nursemaid and child are still a complicated analogy when seen through the realm of royal performance. According to Herrup, nurturing one's subjects was a trait typically seen as feminine that was essential to a quality ruler, no matter their gender. Herrup even references the Bible, where God directs a king to take care of his subjects like a nursing parent in the book of Isaiah. In modernized translations of the Bible, including the New International Version from 1978, the direct quote is: "Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers" (Isaiah 49:23). However, in earlier English translations of the Bible, this was not the case. In the Geneva Bible, the book of Isaiah reads, "And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens shall be thy nurses" (49:23). Thus, in calling herself the nursing parent of the infant-asp, she creates a mythos that she is both father and mother, dying as a queen/king/god in her finest queenly dress. Notwithstanding her own intent, however, Roman feminization of Cleopatra affects the way she approaches her own death–the topic of the next chapter.

III. The Persona of Cleopatra

Despite her desire to appear as an ungendered Egyptian state/body, the Roman reading of Cleopatra's body as female ultimately leads to her downfall as Augustus's perceptions read both her body and the state of Egypt as feminized, just as Antony had before the play had even begun. The Roman expectations and plans for her body lead her to make the choice between different personas, choosing the one which, though fatal, allows her to hold the most power and retain a sense of gender-fluid dignity, both because of the expectations of the period and through maintaining control. Her choice allows her to continue to engage with gender in a way that gives her the most power, even at the cost of her life.

Despite the placement of her suicide in the play, Cleopatra's possible reasonings for committing suicide are inseparable from the rest of the events of the play. Chronologically, the planning of Cleopatra's suicide begins immediately after hearing of Caesar's plans for her in Rome. But at this point in the play, Cleopatra has lost nearly everything. Antony has died, and Octavian has defeated Egypt at Actium. She has lost her lover, her title, and her home, and she hears that Octavian plans to take her dignity as well. Her life as she knows it is over. But although we have these contexts and can make this inference, the fact is that we simply do not know one hundred percent why Cleopatra commits suicide. In her essay on feminism and gender in tragedy, Melissa Sanchez argues that all of the reasons above are indivisibly in play–as she loses her home, she loses her title, and as she loses her title, she loses any sense of a self that once loved and could be loved in return. Even her love of Antony is a political move, whether it is real or not. As a result, she must constantly perform, whether that manifests as Cleopatra the lover or Cleopatra the queen. Ultimately, the interconnection of her relationship and her politics lead to a death that one cannot truly "blame" upon either one or the other (Sanchez 314). Her

identity disappears as she loses control, and as she loses control of the state, she loses control of her own life.

Furthermore, Cleopatra's embodiment of the Egyptian state results in the interwoven Roman anxiety about both Cleopatra and Egypt's "foreignness" in a way that ultimately exterminates both Cleopatra and Ptolemaic Egypt. The body of Cleopatra, already established as the figurative body of the Egyptian state, becomes a site of the colonizing Roman gaze that seeks to control her, and by extension, her country. Rather than fostering a culturally distinctive, racially diverse country, Rome seeks to create another territory out of Egypt in a rapidly expanding empire. With the death of Cleopatra will come the return of a stricter, racially hegemonic rule that erases the Brown history of Egypt.

Though she undoubtedly has anxieties on every level concerning her country's conquest, given that she has lost both her lover and her country, Cleopatra initially concerns herself most completely with the way that she will be viewed and performed as a political enemy, as well as a woman. She expects that Roman dramatists telling of the events of Antony and Cleopatra's defeat will depict her downfall as femme fatale and overly sexual foreign queen, only exacerbated by the lack of women on the Roman stage at this time–although female actors existed, they were more rare than male actors. However, just as interesting is the wider scope of Shakespeare's time as well–in this time, women are not allowed on the stage. While she shares her stress over the boying of her gender, behind the makeup in 1607, a boy performs her words. She stresses, "Antony / Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see / Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness / I' th' posture of a whore" (5.2.265-268). Her anxiety comes from not only her depiction as a whore, but from the performance that a boy actor will create of her own gender. She has established herself as a master performer, the most powerful person in any

room given her choices to use or abandon femininity and masculinity. But in this moment, she is about to become a trope to satisfy Roman thirst for blood and ridicule, and all of the calculation and manipulation she has engaged in to try and gain the most power will be obliterated by the Romans' portrayal of a weak, stupid harlot. She does not expect nuance from those who want to see her powerless.

Furthermore, Cleopatra's rightful anxiety as she confronts the way her death will be used as a political tool to invalidate her rule and power acknowledges the persona that Rome has made of her–one of otherness and weakness in opposition to the successful, all-powerful Roman empire. The use of Cleopatra as a character of gendered, racialized sexuality and strangeness is ultimately a reflection of Roman anxiety about the status of the Roman state and about Rome's place in the global hierarchy of racial and imperial power. John Michael Archer discusses this in his essay "Antiquity and Degeneration in *Antony and Cleopatra*," where he argues that much of the Roman response to Cleopatra is their anxiety about Egyptian differences. These differences, for the Romans, manifest metaphorically in the play as Cleopatra's burial monument, where she basks as Antony dies and where she later dies as well. For the Romans, these monuments were a visual representation of all that was different about Egyptian culture, and were a site of sexuality, race, and signification (158). According to one of the very first descriptions of Cleopatra in the play, Antony has fallen prey to her charms and to "a gypsy's lust" (1.1.9). To have the death of the two titular characters at this place is to draw attention to the way in which Cleopatra will continue to be sexualized and derided by the Romans as a result of these imperial cultural prejudices..

However, Roman characterization of Cleopatra as a weak, racially inferior whore is only complicated further by the nature of Cleopatra's death, which exists at an intersection with the

suicide of several Roman military and state leaders. According to Catharine Edwards's article "Modelling Roman Suicide? The Afterlife of Cato," suicide was somewhat common among Roman military leaders and aristocrats who had lost a battle, whether that be martial or societal. For some, suicide was read as a way to maintain dignity; for others, it was a way to make a moral stand. However, in both cases, suicide was read as a brave end equivalent to falling in battle. One such example of a moral stand is that of Cato the Younger in 46 BCE, who killed himself after Caesar's military advance for (the correct) fear that the Roman Republic would give way to rulers with absolute power over the new Roman empire. He apparently was so unwilling to live with the death of the Roman Republic that he only wished to die. In collective remembrance of this act, " . . . another strand in Roman tradition focused precisely on Cato's death as his most glorious hour. For his contemporary Cicero, Cato's death was spectacular evidence of his determination and commitment to the republic" (Edwards 203). Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Younger* describes Cato's death even as a provider of redemptive power, saying, "But all such ill-report [about Cato] was blotted out and removed by the manner of his death. For he fought at Philippi against Caesar and Antony, in behalf of liberty; and when his line of battle was giving way, he deigned not either to fly or to hide himself, but challenged the enemy, displayed himself in front of them, cheered on those who held their ground with him, and so fell, after amazing his foes by his valour" (411).[3] Suicide, for a Roman soldier or leader, is a continuation of masculine honor and performance of power. Cato's suicide acting as a kind of death knell for the Roman Republic creates a connection between his own lifespan and that of the republic–one that suggests that at least in this instance, he embodies Roman republicanism and the anxieties that some Roman republicans at the time would have.

3 In reality, Cato died some years before Philippi.

Previously, we have discussed Cleopatra's transcendence and triumph in her suicide–she dies in her best clothes, delivering some of her best speeches. Just as tradition saw Cato's death as his greatest moment, Cleopatra's, too, can be read the same way. She, too, falls to preserve her dignity and her identity from the ravages of a political conqueror. Though she experiences a social death as a result of going from being a queen to an overtly feminized pawn, she is in control of her death until the very end. She has the upper hand over Octavian, because she will leave behind her a royal legacy of bravery and honor rather than dying in chains. Furthermore, Octavian is less than a generation away from the death of Cato, and to him, her death will be legible as a Roman political suicide akin to Cato's. She, rather than the Romans, has the final say in her fate, and she will not be humiliated for being a woman, being foreign, or being an enemy. She will be a valorized object in her death rather than a subjugated, feminized performer of her own failure[4].

This is why I argue that these Roman anxieties about the intersections of gender and empire are what drive Cleopatra to suicide. Though within the play she has seemingly lost everything, she still has more to lose: her dignity, and the power to control her legacy. If she is to live, she is to surrender her persona as a god-queen in favor of that of a whore before being killed. But if she is to die at her own hand, she can preserve her image. By choosing suicide, she chooses a death that is already encoded with power and meaning in the eyes of her Roman conquerors. In her final acts, she chooses to immortalize herself, and escape Roman ridicule and expectation by transcending it to become an honored, courageous heroine, maintaining her power through her sacrifice.

4Horace's portrayal of her death seems to respect her bravery in "Nunc est Bibendum," the first known Roman comment about her death after its occurrence.

Conclusion

Within the space of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cleopatra's conscious embodiment of her state and ever-shifting gender creates a stage for Shakespeare to implicitly explore expectations and limitations of the royal women of his own time. But as we read the play hundreds of years later, we do not have such literal analogs of embodiment of the nation-state, especially when it comes to women and bodies that are hegemonically legible as "other". However, in the years since Cleopatra's rule, we have countless examples of what violent state power does to bodies that perform outside accepted norms for gender, sexuality, and race. What follows are some notable examples .

In the year 1431, the Catholic Church burned nineteen-year-old Jeanne d'Arc (Anglicized as *Joan of Arc*) at the stake. Jeanne had spent the previous few years of their[5] life dressed as a man, leading French armies against the English to liberate Orléans and to foster a national consciousness for the people of France. They said that the image of the archangel Michael appeared to them, telling them to dress as a man and to lead French armies to victory, and they acted only under His word. They were a hero to the French people, an inspiration to kings, a liberator. However, the Church feared the power Jeanne had over Catholics, and feared for the future of the institution of the Church. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, Jeanne was a blasphemer, a heretic (Feinberg 32).

But Jeanne d'Arc was burned at the stake for crossdressing. Jeanne had been spared in battle after battle in the Hundred Years' War, had risen above their station and their expectations and beyond the Church's wildest imaginings for a Catholic from the village of Domremy. But to justify Jeanne's death, to justify burning them, the Church did not claim blasphemy, or heresy, or

5 I am choosing to use they/them/theirs pronouns for Jeanne d'Arc in this section.

treason. The charge that they leveled against Jeanne was crossdressing. And just to prove that it was their cross-gendered performance that was the killing offense, an observer of the execution reported, "'Then the fire was raked back and her naked body shown to all the people and all the secrets that could or should belong to a woman, to take away any doubts from people's minds'" (*Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris* qtd. in. Feinberg 36). In 1920, Jeanne was canonized as the patron saint of France. The embodiment of the nation of France was a young footsoldier who died as a martyr in the name of courage and crossdressing, whose visions of God scared the Catholic Church so badly they killed Jeanne for a secular crime.

However, anxieties about power on religious, imperial, or racial levels do not only disqualify those who qualify as a white gender-crossed martyr. Even more frequently, cultural anxiety about racial supremacy is played out and then taken out upon the bodies of women of color. One significant and recent example of this in action is Caster Semenya, a runner from South Africa. She first garnered attention at the age of eighteen, when she won her first world championship in Berlin, Germany. She was raised female, identifies as female, and is legally female–but her muscular physique and blistering speed brought her gender and sex into question. The track officials at her events repeatedly ran medical tests to examine whether she was "truly" a woman, as she said she was. The tests came back saying that she had abnormally high levels of testosterone for a woman, and to continue to compete, Semenya would have to take medications that would control her hormone levels. She reported that these medications made her feel sick, and that she felt like she was "going to have a heart attack." At the most recent Olympics in Tokyo, Semenya was barred from competition. Multiple scientists have concurred that there is difficulty in proving that testosterone in women athletes gives an advantage–especially one that is inherently unfair (Franklin, Simon, et.al).

However, whether Semenya has an unfair advantage or not, she had already committed a cardinal sin on the global stage: she was faster than every other woman on the field. But when she had beaten everyone, her fellow runners did not express their disappointment using comments about her speed; instead, they accused her of hiding her gender. One of her competitors, Elisa Cusma of Italy, opined, "These kind of people should not run with us. For me, she is not a woman. She is a man" (qtd. in. North). Cusma probably would not have said this if Semenya was shorter, whiter, or slower. But because Semenya was tall, Black, and fast, she became an outsider and a threat to what Olympic runners should look like.

Just as with Jeanne and with Cleopatra, violence against outsiders and those deemed a "threat" to those in power manifests in ways that target a person's gender performance. Too often, people who do not fit the white-cisgender-straight-man performance must kill themselves spiritually–dress the way they "should," rather than how they are; expose themselves or else give up their dreams and talents; or die the humiliated, captured whore–or else kill themselves literally. The means of death for outsiders doesn't matter to those in power, just as long as they're dead. Cleopatra's persona may have the upper hand by not dying the parodied whore, but has she really won? The fact that Cleopatra is brought to suicide in order to preserve her own greatness is one of the great tragedies of the play.

In conclusion, to read Cleopatra as "trans"ing her gender performance to maximize her own power is to see a person seizing nonconformity successfully until her own death; however, we can also recognize in this reading the way that Roman leaders ultimately used her nonconformity to justify her ridicule and death. Imperialism creates embodiments of danger to a narrow idea of a social order–one that creates second-class citizens of people born with the wrong sex organs, skin tones, sexualities, abilities, or desires; all to satisfy the greed and

expectations of a select few people who are born with the right ones who seize power using wealth and prestige. To read Cleopatra as an embodiment of transgender theory is to examine the way that people who are read as “different” in cases of sexuality, gender, or race are ultimately exposed to heinous violence at the hands of imperialist power that seeks to destroy them, often using that same gender difference to bring them down. But just as importantly, to analyze Cleopatra as a person engaging with transness is to show how those who are “different” can still be powerful, and can maintain control to the last on their own terms.

Works Cited

Archer, John Michael, "Antiquity and Degeneration in Antony and Cleopatra." *Race, Ethnicity, and Power in the Renaissance.* 1997, Associated University Presses, Cranbury, NJ; edited by Joyce Green MacDonald.

The Bible: That Is, the Holy Scriptures Contained in the Old and New Testament. Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings Most Excellent Maiestie, 1590. (Geneva Bible)

"Creature." Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creature. Accessed 23 Feb. 2023.

Edwards, Catharine. "Modelling Roman Suicide? The Afterlife of Cato." *Economy and Society*, vol. 34, no. 2, May 2005, pp. 200–22. *Taylor and Francis+NEJM*, https://doi.org/10.1080/03085140500054578.

Feinberg, Leslie. "Chapter 4." *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman*, Beacon Press, 1996, pp. 31–37.

Franklin, Simon, et al. "New Eligibility Regulations for Female Athletes with 'Differences of Sex Differentiation.'" *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 26 Apr. 2018, https://blogs.bmj.com/bjsm/2018/04/26/new-eligibility-regulations-for-female-athletes-with-differences-of-sex-differentiation/.

Herrup, Cynthia. "The King's Two Genders." *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 45, no. 3, July 2006, pp. 493–510. *Cambridge University Press*, https://doi.org/10.1086/503588.

Holy Bible. New International Version, Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.

Kantorowicz, Ernst. *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology.* Edited by Conrad Leyser, Princeton Classics ed., Princeton University Press, 2016.

Levin, Carole. *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994.

North, Anna. "Caster Semenya: What Her Story Says about Gender and Race in Sports." *Vox*, 3 May 2019, https://www.vox.com/identities/2019/5/3/18526723/caster-semenya-800-gender-race-intersex-athletes.

Plutarch. "Life of Cato the Younger." *University of Chicago*, 13 Apr. 2018, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Cato_Minor*.html.

Pomeroy, Sarah B. *Women in Hellenistic Egypt,* 1984, Schocken Books, NY.

Rumsby, Ben. "Caster Semenya: 'Athletics Chiefs Thought I Had a d--- so I Offered to Prove I Didn't.'" *The Telegraph*, 23 May 2022. *www.telegraph.co.uk*, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/athletics/2022/05/23/caster-semenya-athletics-chiefs-thought-had-d-offered-prove/.

Seaton, Ethel. "Antony and Cleopatra and the Book of Revelation." *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 22, no. 87, 1946, pp. 219–24.

Shakespeare, William. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Edited by Barbara Everett, Second Revised Edition, Penguin Group, 1998.

Tuck, Steven L. *A History of Roman Art*. 2nd ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2021.

Sanchez, Melissa E. “Impure Resistance: Heteroeroticism, Feminism, and Shakespearean Tragedy.” *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*. Ed. Valerie Traub. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 2016, pp. 302–317.

Vandorpe, Katelijn. “History: Ptolemaic Period.” *The Blackwell Companion to Ancient Egypt*, edited by A.B. Lloyd, vol. 1: State and Society, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, pp. 159–79.

West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. “Doing Gender.” *Gender and Society*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1987, pp. 125–51. JSTOR.