

**Cleopatra Through Roman Eyes**  
 Analysis of Plutarch's Account  
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**Who Was Cleopatra? (According to Plutarch)**

- Cleopatra VII: Last pharaoh of Egypt
- Known mainly through Roman sources
- Plutarch focuses on her romantic relationships
- Written 150 years after her death

Source: Britannica

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**Cleopatra & Julius Caesar**

- Smuggled to Caesar in a bed sack
- Described as seductive, bold, clever
- Plutarch emphasizes Caesar's fascination with her
- Political strategy is downplayed

Source: Smithsonian Magazine

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### Cleopatra & Mark Antony



- Antony becomes "enslaved" by love
- Cleopatra is blamed for his bad decisions
- Described as magical and manipulative
- His downfall is tied to her influence

Source: National Geographic

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### Cleopatra vs. Octavia



- Octavia: Antony's Roman wife, loyal and modest
- Cleopatra: Exotic, manipulative, extravagant
- Romans admired Octavia, blamed Cleopatra
- Used as moral contrast

Source: British National Archaeological Museum (Octavia)

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### Roman Values Behind the Story

- Roman anxiety about powerful women
- Foreignness = threat
- Cleopatra symbolizes excess and emotion
- Plutarch reflects Roman propaganda



Source: Reginald Arthur

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<p><b>MYTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Irresistibly beautiful and seductive</li><li>• Destroyed Mark Antony</li><li>• Brought down a great empire</li></ul>	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plutarch gives a Roman version of Cleopatra</li><li>• Focuses on love, not leadership</li><li>• His writing says more about Rome than Cleopatra</li><li>• Historical bias shapes how</li></ul>	 <p>Source: Plutarch by Science Source</p>
<p><b>REALITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clever and ambitious ruler</li><li>• Allied with Mark Antony</li><li>• Struggled to hold on to power</li></ul>	<p><b>Questions/Comments?</b></p>	

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