

# Cleopatra VII Philopator's Final Moments: Depictions in Five Paintings

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## Abstract

The paintings depicting Cleopatra VII Philopator's death by five painters, namely Jean-André Rixens, Reginald Arthur, Louis-Marie Baader, John Maler Collier, and Valentine Cameron Prinsep deserve discussion in terms of network of items connected with ancient Egyptian antiquities which contextualize Cleopatra VII as a legitimate Pharaonic ruler. The paper unites academic "Egyptology" and pictorial "Egyptomania" with literary studies (plays dramatizing Cleopatra VII's death) to bridge the space between literary and artistic imagination. Also Cleopatra VII emerges as a much deeper personality following the studies of these paintings.

**Keywords:** Cleopatra VII, religion, pantheon, drama-visual interconnections

## Introduction

Cleopatra VII Philopator's much debated death/suicide by snakebite had inspired many painted variations, because the compositions featuring Egyptian/Pharaonic/Ptolemaic essence appeal in the registers of visual, verbal, and performance. The five paintings studied in this paper connect studies in material items expected in Egyptological discipline with pursuit of interpretative liberty in "Egyptomaniac" contextualization (for conceptual perception of these terms, see Bob Brier's *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs*), which explains the artists' individual modes of approaching the composite identity of Cleopatra VII. As perceived in Stacy Schiff's much informative

book *Cleopatra: A Life*, Cleopatra VII has been stereotyped due to centuries of erotic associations; popular imaginations do not leave much scope for her iconographic associations beyond the objectified body principle. Cleopatra VII defies individualism, constituted as a woman to be viewed as an object involved even in the performance of suicide, and/or as a spectacle on death-bed.

## Selected Literature Review: Religious and Literary

By theology, as John Gwyn Griffiths argues following Wilhelm Spiegelberg's observation, Cleopatra VII, following her earthly demise, was guaranteed celestial union with her solar father Ra/Re, so her extraneous use of the asp initiated an authentic self-killing (Griffiths 113–115), as she used the very reptilian agent of symbolic annihilation (Griffiths 113, 115–116). Griffiths credits Spiegelberg for elaborating upon the connection between the snake and the solar cult: the celestial absorption through snakebite would have been auspicious and Ptolemaic Cleopatra VII (her "Macedonian Greek" identity is historically established [Schiff 2]) required similar suicidal passage if she really needed to be a Pharaonic figure, even in death (Griffiths 113–115). Thus painters envisioning Cleopatra VII's death scene require materialization of the serpent-myth in the composed space to enact a ritualistic drama.

Mary Thomas Crane, following and applying Mary Floyd-Wilson's perceptions on the climate-human interaction, while discussing Cleopatra VII's affinity with the snake in William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, notes that by designating her aquatic serpentine status, Cleopatra VII does not distinguish between the natural habitat of Egypt and her own identity (Crane 7). Egyptian ethos is certainly reflected in the presence of Charmian/Charmion as well as Iras with Cleopatra VII like conventional criers, aptly noted by John M. Bowers (289), which we can link with the divine female duality of Nephthys as well as Isis as the performers in ceremonial display of grief, observed by Barbara S. Lesko (172–175).

L. T. Fitz observes that the ever-transmuting Cleopatra VII is assigned a degree of fidelity towards the conclusion of Shakespeare's play as she prepares for her suicide (Fitz 299–300) and this persistence can be projected (from performative to painted medium) as architectonically stable: lifeless, permanent, appropriately concomitant with the flatness yet expression eternally captured on the flat surface of painting. Fitz mentions Plutarch and Shakespeare providing sympathetic picture of Cleopatra VII imbalanced by military failure, the despair for Mark Antony, the fear of immediate Roman capture of Alexandria, her subjugation: Plutarch's Cleopatra VII inflicts wounds upon herself and loses control over speech; Shakespeare however devotes the full span of the Final Act (Fifth) to Cleopatra VII and gifts her exquisitely poignant lines, rich in poetic flavour (Fitz 308, 313–314), which might also have been absorbed, envisioned and visually projected by painters. Literary studies need to observe the visual potential simultaneously: unlike other death scenes of tragic protagonists, Cleopatra VII's final moments are interwoven with material registers because the Pharaonic spaces enable deification of both the divine and the human, as projected by the five paintings discussed in this paper.

### Methodology

Paintings bearing signs of “Egyptomania” need to be freshly reviewed in terms of bringing together material art forms and architectonic language linked with the space witnessing Cleopatra VII’s final moments. As Sally-Ann Ashton observes, the fact of the double storey constituting Cleopatra VII’s tomb had been supported by Cassius Dio as well as Plutarch, subscribing to the inference drawn conducive to the Greek trend of the tomb (Ashton 187–188). The tomb was an example of engineering dexterity: Judith [Sheila] McKenzie mentions, quoting and following Plutarch that the “drop doors” (quoted in McKenzie 78) were quite durable and could be lowered (McKenzie 78) and as Schiff aptly specifies, the doors were assigned a portcullis-like function (273). Schiff mentions the Pharaonic regalia marking the final dressing of the Queen: her funeral attire was distinctly Egyptian, she held the “crook and flail” and died on a bed having Egyptian features (284–285). Iras was barely alive while Cleopatra VII’s diadem was being fixed by the struggling Charmian/Charmion (Schiff 285); if the painters knew this information then presumably the standing and/or conscious female figures in the paintings (studied in this paper) represent Charmian/Charmion.

The approach to the selected five paintings would involve creating a network of material associations, that is, if the placement of the object - its mythopoetic, cultural, iconographic, and aesthetic interpretation might assist in perceiving each artwork as a condensed representation of Pharaonic art and culture, and summing up of Cleopatra VII’s image as an Egyptian figure. The material associations in the paintings become important because without the asp/cobra, the subject (Cleopatra VII) becomes visually equivalent to any representation of a female monarch with her attendants-in-waiting. First we shall identify the objects (metallic) which we can associate as ancient Egyptian. Secondly, we will take up the objects in attention and see if the representations of similar objects could be found in ancient Egyptian art forms. Thirdly, we shall raise the question of the relevance of these objects and we shall explore the forms in which the artists presented those and hinted their roles. Fourthly, we shall try to explore the connection between those objects and the spaces of compositions. And finally, these answers shall be achieved if we could contextualize the objects, and justify their ornamentation and reason behind inclusion.

#### *La Mort de Cléopâtre [The Death of Cleopatra] (1874) by Jean-André Rixens*

Comparison could be drawn between Jean-André Rixens’s inclusion of the Isis-statue suckling her son Horus in the background in his *La Mort de Cléopâtre [The Death of Cleopatra]* and the Isis-sculpture seemingly opening one breast to Horus preserved in the Louvre Museum (Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, *Isis, the Egyptian Sky Goddess of Fertility, Cuddling the Sun God Horus*, p. 20, Plate 22). Diana E. E. Kleiner notes that the Dendera Temple built for Hathor was furnished considerably under Cleopatra VII’s supervision which enabled her to select the subject matter(s) of the elaborately etched images in the facade (86–87). We see, following the established pattern, Caesarion along with his mother in duplicated depiction as mutual mirror reflection (Kleiner 86–87). Schiff observes that after Gaius Julius Caesar’s murder, the Egyptian subjects saw a parallelism between Osiris murdered by Seth prompting Isis to safeguard Horus (for mythical account

see Viaud 16–23); similarly Cleopatra VII had to watch over Caesarion, born from Caesar’s seed (Schiff 134–136). Similarly, Kleiner notes that Hathor in a geographical separation from Horus (established in Edfu), had her religious supremacy in Dendera, which was reflected (in a terrestrial, political context) in Cleopatra VII ruling Egypt following Caesar’s departure for Rome; the temple thus provided instruction to the subjects to follow Cleopatra VII’s bidding as a monarch (85–88). These architectonic associations between the goddesses and Cleopatra VII established by Kleiner (83–88) and Schiff (134–136) can also be supported by Griffiths’s view that through her depiction in the form of “Hathor-Isis” Cleopatra VII gained dual reverence (Griffiths 113). Here in Rixens’s painting we find a diagonally divided light-dark space: Isis-sculpture is in semi-darkness, as Cleopatra VII (in the light) is also dead and we know that Caesarion was assassinated to keep Octavian’s (Augustus) position unchallenged (Schiff 291). Rixens’s painting thus encapsulates the fall of the queen, deified in a limited space. Let us explore the associations between the Breastplate and the vulture motifs with Pharaonic royalty in Rixens’s painting.

The dual motif of the vulture and the cobra on the curtain in the right in Rixens’s painting bears similarity with the Breastplate/Pectoral belonging to Ramesses II (consult the cited entry of the photograph of the Breastplate, entitled *Pectoral of Ramesses II* [Lowvre E79.jpg/Pectoral Bearing the Name of Ramesses II, New Kingdom](#), by Marie-Lan Nguyen). Élizabeth David informs that the finding of this Breastplate is attributed to François Auguste Ferdinand Mariette in 1852 (David, “Ramesses II Breastplate: Department of Egyptian Antiquities: The New Kingdom [circa 1550 to circa 1069 BC]”). Its superb designing brings architectonics and iconography in a balance of harmony: Wadjet, under whose vigilance Lower Egypt was safe, and Nekhbet, under whose benevolence Upper Egypt was secure (Viaud 29) provide benediction under one pair of wings (David; Nguyen). Above we see a deity with avian body and the head of a ram, probably representing “Efu Ra” (see Viaud 11), thereby attaching solar prominence in the geometry of the language of jewellery (David; Nguyen). Rixens might have used this as a decorative attribute, but in the painting’s message, Cleopatra VII gets linked with the Pharaonic office of the authority of the “Two Lands” (Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt) (David; Nguyen).

Emile Prisse d’Avennes’s [Achille-Constant-Théodore-Émile Prisse d’Avennes] colourful plates in *Atlas of Egyptian Art* promised monumental contributions in Egyptology. Rixens possibly studied such reproductions, while adding a vulture motif on the side of the bed in his painting, which, in terms of minute feather-work and colour pattern, bears resemblance with the vulture backrest on a “block throne” belonging to Amenophis IV, which Prisse d’Avennes seems to have faithfully reproduced from a representation in Ra’mosi’s tomb, as discussed by Olaf E. Kaper (Prisse d’Avennes, *Thrones [Necropolis of Thebes–18th & 20th Dynasties]*; Prisse d’Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 151). The vulture motif on the bed along with the serpent motif on the curtain balance Cleopatra VII’s sovereignty over the Upper Egypt and the Lower Egypt in Rixens’s painting (for creature symbolisms, see Viaud 29).

It may be perceived that Cleopatra VII’s diadem along with the protection-assuring winged “Uraeus” (for mythological accounts, see Viaud 11) below the cushion on the

bedside (Rixens) convey the serpentine connection (in the suicidal act, or death) significantly. Contrary to the sources, Cleopatra VII here is not robed in her royal attire; there is a sense of abrupt intrusion of the Romans, the darkened, indistinct forms of whom appear spectral (Rixens). Charmian/Charmion is adjusting the diadem with serpent hood - the metallic clarity of the object seems to communicate to the viewers that the queen indeed took her life with the asp/cobra (Rixens). Cleopatra VII's white-complexioned body (a "Eurocentric" preference) is shown in an apparent three-quarter view, while Charmian/Charmion, unsettled by the Roman intrusion, turns left: her profiled face, possibly with a wig, distinctly imitates the one-sided faces in Egyptian reliefs and paintings (Rixens). Iras's lock of hair in Rixens's painting considerably resembles the "side-lock" of Prince Montuherkhepshef: it could be possible that Prisse d'Avennes's perception of the royal male position manifested by the ornamental band (as Olaf E. Kaper describes) (Prisse d'Avennes, *Portrait of Prince Montuherkhepshef [Son of Ramesses II (sic)–19th (sic) Dynasty]*; Prisse d'Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 125) was an inspiration behind Rixens's attention to the lock and the band, in application for a different gender, though.

#### *The Death of Cleopatra* (1892) by Reginald Arthur

In Reginald Arthur's *The Death of Cleopatra* the asp makes a direct contact with Cleopatra VII's breast. The eroticized body language is made prominent with slightly parting lips and clasping of the bed sheet with her left hand (Arthur). Arthur, as an English painter was perhaps offering a visual tribute to Shakespeare. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cleopatra VII ponders apprehensively the degrees of agony in suicide, while the fig-basket containing the "worm" is conveyed to her (Shakespeare 5.2.236–258, p. 128). She later seems to have developed a strange fondness for the suicidal agent, forming an affectionate bonding with the reptile to whose fangs she offers her breast, which constitutes a strange mixture of stimulation and fear (Shakespeare 5.2.270–315, pp. 129–130). Intriguing is the Clown's statement: "I wish you all joy of the worm" (Shakespeare 5.2.260, see also Shakespeare 5.2.279, pp. 128–129). Shakespeare's audience would have perceived the euphemism in the line, since worm could also connote the phallus (Williams 344–345).

#### *La Mort de Cléopâtre [The Death of Cleopatra]* (1899) by Louis-Marie Baader

Louis-Marie Baader's *La Mort de Cléopâtre [The Death of Cleopatra]* bears more appeal to architectonic studies as he seems to have innovatively depicted a balanced fusion of the Hellenic and Pharaonic styles which was so prominent in Ptolemaic Alexandria, which we also learn about in detail in Schiff's biography of Cleopatra VII. The lavishness dominates the space in Baader's painting having the essence of an elaborate stage; the chamber makes us perceive it not as a tomb but as a palace room. It is possible that the entering figure, dignified in Toga is Octavian himself (Baader). Schiff writes that Cleopatra VII's body did not respond to the poison-extrication efforts of the Lybian "psylli" following Octavian's instruction (284–285), which has to be kept in mind while locating the snake in Baader's painting in connection with Octavian's (?) entrance.

It is a puzzle why Baader includes the harp in the scene, for Cleopatra VII, as noted by Schiff (279–282) was certainly not in that relaxed state to contemplate/practice/enjoy

music. The possible connotation is the sculpted head attached to the harp, over which we notice the composite "pschent," representing the Pharaonic dual authority (for crown's significance, see Viaud 11, 32), linking the Ptolemaic Queen with the earlier Pharaonic symbols/figures of royalty (Baader). Baader's inspiration for the harp might have been Prisse d'Avennes's plate from *Atlas of Egyptian Art* (Prisse d'Avennes, *Harpers of Ramesses III [Thebes–20th Dynasty]*; Prisse d'Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 132). Olaf E. Kaper notes that Prisse d'Avennes painstakingly repeated the details of the instrument, carefully observing the original representation of it in "the Harpers' Tomb" (Ramesses III's burial space), even adding the blue coloured lotus motif and the minutely decorated collar in the base of the harp (Prisse d'Avennes, *Harpers of Ramesses III [Thebes–20th Dynasty]*; Prisse d'Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 132). What really intrigues us is the presence of the serpent close to the harp: like the true organic counterpart to the "Uraeus," it stands guard over Cleopatra VII and against any intrusion, having done the fatal deed (Baader). Another extended intertextual connection could be drawn with George Bernard Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*, in which the Queen instructs a court musician to provide her lessons in harp (which the "ancient Egyptians" [in this context, under the pre-Ptolemaic Pharaohs] musicians excelled at) but the musician reminds her that "the philosophy of Pythagorus" needs to be pursued preceding any practical exercise, which is a humorous yet true linking of Egyptian and Greek knowledge in the Ptolemaic context (Shaw 77–78; Act 4).

The Egyptological perspective projects another significant connection with the harp and the harpers which we may elaborate here. As Miriam Lichtheim observes, from the stelae-carvers' placements of the harp-players near the tables furnished with benefactions for the dead in the visual compositions commissioned by the elites, it is evident that the artists of the Middle Kingdom intended performances observed during funerals to be associated with the harpers (187–188). Lichtheim also cites Gaston Maspero, who referred to the socially communicative aspect of the musical compositions of the harp-players having their wisdom (on the transience of existence) provided both to the departed persons and their remaining (invited) relatives (Lichtheim 179). Applying Lichtheim's insight, the harp in Baader's painting does intensify the poignancy of death in connection with the ancient Egyptian worldview.

#### *The Death of Cleopatra* (1890) by John Maler Collier

In terms of richness of composition and careful observation of Egyptian artefacts, John Maler Collier's details match those of Rixens's. The architectonic space in Collier's *The Death of Cleopatra* has religious, funeral, royal essences all mixed together. A swiftly finished funeral monument for Cleopatra VII (as Schiff notes [269–270]) might not have housed such elaborate structures, at least in the death chamber, as envisioned in Collier's painting. Collier, has, in fact tried to combine the materials with the visual, linking the Ptolemaic Queen (highlighted in the midground) with the Pharaonic sculpture of Egypt (darkened, in the background) before Hellenic (and later Roman) intrusion in terms of legitimate authority over Egypt. This brings to our mind Charmian's/Charmion's final words as Cleopatra VII's diadem was being fixed by her: to the outburst by the Roman attendants questioning the appropriateness of the act on her sovereign's

part, her response was that “It is indeed most fine, and befitting the descendant of so many kings” (quoted in Schiff 285) (Schiff 285) that has been poignantly paraphrased/re-composed by Shakespeare in his *Antony and Cleopatra* through Charmian’s/Charmion’s words: “It is well done, and fitting for a princess / Descended of so many royal kings” (Shakespeare 5.2.326–327, p. 131).

Collier’s inclusion of the “Hathoric capital” could be interpreted from political propaganda, the Pharaonic veneration of the feminine, and the funerary role of the goddess: Kleiner notes that in the facade of Dendera Temple, Cleopatra VII is provided with the sistrum (auspiciously connected with Hathor as well as Isis [see Viaud 19, 23]); she thus brings the maternal goddesses together in the architectonic space (Kleiner 87). An observation of the “Hathoric capital” in Collier’s work establishes its resemblance with the “Hathoric capital” visually produced by Prisse d’Avennes in *Atlas of Egyptian Art* (Prisse d’Avennes, *Hathor Columns [18th Dynasty]* [sic]; Prisse d’Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 37). Olaf E. Kaper identifies the detail left by Prisse d’Avennes of the “Hathor column” as found in “Ptolemaic temple of Deir el-Medina”: the elevation has been neatly drawn, with minute flowers, floral buds and stalks in the base and hieroglyphic text in the body of the pillar (Prisse d’Avennes, *Hathor Columns [18th Dynasty]* [sic]; Prisse d’Avennes, *Atlas of Egyptian Art* 37). Probably the intricacy of Hathor’s wig appealed to Collier; it cannot be certified but assumed that Collier might have been acquainted with Prisse d’Avennes’s reproductions. Sheldon L. Gosline aptly notes the celebration of Hathoric energy in performances: auspicious communications with Hathor were perpetuated through art, through graceful dancing steps, and/or vocal and instrumental music, and her unabashed erotic exultation in appearing nude before her father Ra/Re was remembered devoutly, as accounted in the mythic text of the “Contentions of Horus and Seth” (37–38). Weaving the observations of Kleiner (87) and Gosline (37–38) with Collier’s composition one can interpret Cleopatra VII’s sexual intrepidity and independence.

A lion-shaped bed supports Cleopatra corpse in Collier’s painting, which reminds us of Schiff’s observation cited earlier (284–285). An interesting similarity is noticed between Collier’s painting of the bed and Osiris’s bed with leonine features, as seen in the Dendera relief (consult the cited entry of the photograph by A. Parrot, entitled *Bier of Osiris on the Roof.jpg/Relief in the Roof Areas of Dendera Temple, Showing the Bier of Osiris Flanked by Nephthys [Left] and Isis [Right]*). In Collier’s painting, she however rests her crook at her side visible to us and we can assume her flail is on the other side, unseen. In justification of the association with Osiris, I would refer to Griffiths who also makes an interesting link between the “double [U]raeus” and Osiris in textual examples from the Ptolemaic period: the god seemed to have presided over the “[U]raei,” used against the opponents of the deity “Horus of Behdet” (117). Indeed, the “winged [solar] disk” provided with the “double [U]raeus” as referred to by Griffiths (117) also appears iconographically on the side of the bed (upon which Cleopatra VII’s corpse lies) in Rixens’s painting we discussed earlier. As Sigrid Hodel-Hoernes accounts, the visual composition places a lion-shaped bed carrying the weight of the embalmed body of Sennedjem and placed under the watchful supervision of a priest impersonating Anubis, hiding his countenance in a mask having

the snout and ears of a jackal in a painting in Sennedjem’s tomb (250–251, Fig. 178; see also Hodel-Hoernes, Masked Priest and Sennedjem’s Mummy): by perspective we perceive that the bed has been neatly drawn with lion’s headrest(s) at the two sides of one end (though one leonine head is visible), and it is supported by stands shaped like lion’s paws, and the lion’s tail(s) curl up at the two sides of the other end of the bed (though a single tail is visible) (Hodel-Hoernes 250–251, Fig. 178; Hodel-Hoernes, Masked Priest and Sennedjem’s Mummy). Collier’s painted bed resembles such bed; he might have aptly made an obvious connection that the lion-styled bed served both the royal domestic, and funeral practices: so for the Pharaonic Queen, the Pharaonic lion-styled bed seems an apt platform upon which the suicide was committed, or her death occurred.

Christina Riggs notes that the sexual demarcation was featured in the connection between the dead person and the god/goddess in the religious visual representations with funeral content endorsed by the Roman as well as the Ptolemaic commissioners (96). Interestingly, in the Afterlife, Hathor involved herself in the absorbing reception of the departed women while Osiris exhibited his uniting benevolence towards the expired men (Riggs 96). If Riggs’s account were considered, Collier’s painting, along with its depictions of the “Hathoric capital” and Osiris’s bed, acquires a quintessential mortuary essence, assuring Cleopatra VII in the Afterlife the protectiveness of both Osiris and Hathor, and as we know from Viaud, both these two deities were sought in post-death stages: the individual of Afterlife was provided sustenance by Hathor, and he/she was decreed everlasting existence by Osiris (Viaud 16–17, 23, 25, 41).

#### *The Death of Cleopatra (1870) by Valentine Cameron Prinsep*

Valentine Cameron Prinsep in his painting *The Death of Cleopatra* positions Cleopatra VII (apparently dead), attired in Hellenic costume on a chair having its legs shaped like lion’s paws (Egyptian in style), thereby showcasing Ptolemaic material diversity. Charmian/Charmion (?) languishingly stands beside her and in the back we can see an exposed space resembling a “Peristyle Court” with reliefs reminiscent of Ptolemaic temples (for information regarding “Peristyle Court” and architectonic features, consult Richard H. Wilkinson’s *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*) (Prinsep): Prinsep probably had been acquainted with the elaborately produced elevations in the *Description de L’Égypte* (cited reference edited by Charles Coulston Gillispie and Michel Dewachter). Very interestingly, Cleopatra VII in Prinsep’s painting holds a rose. Linda [Kathleen] Iles in her very interesting article “Isis, Rose of the World: *Isis, Rosa Mundi*: Part I. Isis and the Rose in the Ancient World,” explores the connection between the cult of Isis and the rose, and mentions that the aroma sensed in “Kyphi” (inhaled for spiritually reaching the gods and the goddesses) had, as one of its properties, the oil of rose. Schiff informs that Cleopatra paid one “talent” (Ptolemaic Egyptian currency; abysmal sum in today’s currency for floral sake) to collect huge amount of roses to decorate the banquet given to Mark Antony (161–162). Combining Iles’s and Schiff’s information, the viewer could interpret the rose in Cleopatra VII’s hand as her connection to both her Divine Mother Isis and Roman husband Antony in Prinsep’s painting. Contrary to the tomb, we find Cleopatra VII in a temple court, thus the space in the background is purely ornamental in Prinsep’s artwork.

### Conclusion

The painters of the five artworks studied in this paper did value observing Egyptian artefacts, though professional Egyptology might not have influenced their perspectives. Their paintings thus connect Egyptology (which relies on practical site-based archaeology and proper classification) with “Egyptomania” (which provides liberty in iconic representations in the visual and verbal media) (see the scope of “Egyptomania” discussed by Brier in *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs*). Though not always iconographically authentic, each space in the compositions can help us place Cleopatra VII’s death/suicide in the Pharaonic and Ptolemaic contexts, inspiring studies in Egyptian material associations for the non-Egyptologists as well. “Egyptomania” through these visual imaginations and interpretations can spill out and extend many Egyptological concepts to other disciplines. Cleopatra VII should be extended further beyond her popular cultural role as just an erotic figure. Brier extensively has discussed how Ptolemaic, and especially Cleopatra VII’s interactions with Rome transpired the “classical” form of “Egyptomania” (19–41). Did “Egyptomania” not precede institutional Egyptology in Europe, though Egyptology verifies the facts? The paper’s contribution lies in identifying the visual nodes and modes in bridging academic Egyptology with literature and painting, through the inter-disciplinary zone of “Egyptomania,” focusing on the timeless Cleopatra VII – the final female Pharaoh.

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### Notes

This article is a development from a presentation entitled “Ancient Egyptian Objects and Architectonics in Paintings Depicting Cleopatra’s Suicide: Seven Case Studies” given in “CECE8 - VIIIth European Conference of Egyptologists. Egypt 2017: Perspectives of Research,” at The Faculty of Social and Human Sciences (FCSH) – Universidade NOVA de Lisboa on 29.06.2017. The Conference took place from 26.06.2017 to 01.07.2017. The abstract of this developed article is also edited differently from the abstract of the presented paper in the Conference (mentioned above); the original abstract was published in the *Book of Abstracts* the details of which are provided below:

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(Department of Ancient Egyptian and Near East Cultures, Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland) the published abstract (cited above) was modified for submission (along with the developed paper) for review in an Indian Journal.

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