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Politics of Desire: A Deleuzist Reading on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*

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Abstract: The present article intends to apply Deleuzist tenets on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Deleuze posits that an artwork is a desiring machine endowed with the basic components of becoming woman, becoming animal, nomadism, war machine as well as BwO (body without organs). Drawing upon them, this research aims to dissolve Rome-Egypt duality and its corresponding genderized subjectivity and racial bias. The major questions raised in the research include: First, how do the early modern biracial lovers, from contrasting geographical spaces, merge in parallelism, and to what effect? Second, to what extent is the course of desubjectification carried out? Third, what vantagepoint (in culturalists' parlance) is envisioned for the future polity? To answer these questions, the present study probes into Deleuzist theories to demonstrate the characters' decisiveness to transgress hegemonic codes and legitimate ideological power relations. These formulations align with Ovidian tradition of metamorphosis. Bodies in flux, reenact Shakespeare's lovers in perpetual passage both within and without until Rome and Egypt – summing up the white/nonwhite polarity – consolidate. The disruptive theories appropriated by the lovers drive them to the communion of the disadvantaged. The final egalitarian gesture would envision a future polity of inclusion, diversity and equity.

Keywords: Nomadism; Body without Organs (BwO); Becoming; Affect Theory; Habitat and Culture; Ovidian Metamorphosis.

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1. Introduction

Shakespeare wrote *Antony and Cleopatra* between late 1606 and 1608 as scholars conjure. The play is the last of his love tragedies: *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*. It can also be grouped as one of his Roman tragedies alongside *Coriolanus* and *Julius Ceasar*. Shakespeare was basically inspired by Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* which was translated by Thomas North in 1579. Having taken a mass of fascinating material in Plutarch's life of Mark Antony, Shakespeare focused on Antony's relationship with Cleopatra. The play portrays the contrasting cultures of Rome and Egypt; the militaristic, disciplined Rome is set against Egypt embodying sensuality and indulgence. This study serves to examine the play through Gilles Deleuze's tenets.

The application of Gilles Deleuze's theories on *Antony and Cleopatra* primarily enables this rereading to disclose the fallacy of humanistic illusion of autonomous, stable identity. In *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) Deleuze and Guattari identify three components of desiring machine as nomadic subject, body without organs and war machine (126). In *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993) Deleuze states that "in contrast to organic body, BwO is an intensive, anarchist body., not defined in wholeness, but in its becomings, as the power to affect (131). Besides, the post-Deleuzist Canadian thinker, Brian Massumi, through his influential 'affect theory' contributes to increase the possibility of nonhuman modes as he stretches life to its antilife level of creativity, play and freedom - the theory he points out in *What Animals Teach us about Politics* (2014). These formulations in turn, align with Ovidian tradition of metamorphosis. The chief questions raised in this essay are: First, how do the early modern biracial protagonists - from wo contrasting geographical spaces - dissolve in parallelism, and to what effect? Second, to what extent is the course of desubjectification carried out? Third, what vantagepoint for the future polity is envisioned in this study? To answer these questions the present study applies Deleuze's theories of desiring machine, production of becoming animal, nomad, and war machine to demonstrate the characters' unconscious separation from stable identities. These projects are fully explained in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1992). In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1995) Deleuze insists on the act of minorization of language opposed to the major, referential language as the key to great writing. The present study limits itself to the adoption of Deleuzist projects of becomings. His other theories concerning theology, immanence, architecture and cinema are excluded as they prove irrelevant to the objectives of this essay.

In the following pages, first, a number of previous readings of *Antony and Cleopatra* will be introduced. Afterwards, Deleuze's theories concerning this study will be reviewed in short. In analytical section, Deleuzist project of minority language, desiring machine – in constant production of nomad, woman, animal, war machine - will be appropriated by the protagonists and milieu in five interrelated sub-sections, namely, "Minority Language and Affect Theory", "Politics of Becoming Woman, Becoming Animal", "Egyptian Ecology: Politics of Inclusion and Pleasure", "Ovidian Metamorphosis and Deleuzist Becoming", "Politics of Body without Organs".

2. Literature Review

Throughout four centuries *Antony and Cleopatra* has received interpretations from myriad perspectives all over the world. The readers across the globe, with diverse cultural, ethnic identities, have responded to the play differently due to their various horizons of expectations. What follows is a brief account of the play's most recent receptions.

In "Cleopatra, a Gypsy:" Performing the Nomadic Subject in Shakespearean Alexandria, Rome and London" (2017) Keir Elam refers to the historical and cultural association of Gypsy during Tudor's reign. The reliance on the early modern English culture structures Cleopatra within a closed patriarchal framework– a rough analogue between gypsy and prostitute.

Scherer Abigail in "Celebrating Idleness: *Antony and Cleopatra* and Play Theory" (2010) discusses idleness as central to the play – the central position which supports the polemicists' insistence on closing of public theaters. He, then refers to Eugen Fink's 'theory of play' through which the lovers' interest in playfulness is construed an involuntary instrument transporting them to a world of pure imagination where - unmindful of the boundaries of real world - they can enjoy lasting pleasure.

Aspasia Vellissariou in "And Makes it Indistinct/ As Water in Water: The Melting Away of the Heroic Subject in *Antony and Cleopatra*" (2020), concentrates on the structural importance of water imagery. Following this, Antony is observed in a liquefying course as a symptom of his interiority. The author argues that the loss of heroic subject brings about the destruction of Rome. This erotic universe, the author agrees, built by heroism, is broken to pieces by hedonism.

Jonathan Patterson in "Greatness Going Off in Renaissance *Antony and Cleopatra* Tragedies" (2022) conceives of the Renaissance world as a period with profound urge to stratify society according to the notions of rank or standing. Commentators insist that

the great could only preserve their dignity through decorous conduct. In his study of the play, he argues that the noble lovers fall short of preserving their dignity as Antony's grandeur and Cleopatra's alluring charm are shown to be at odds with their clumsiness, lasciviousness and physical debility. In Patterson's historicist reading this might associate the decline of aristocracy. An overt accusation of noble lovers finishes the essay: "the sensuous warrior-statesman Mark Antony whose dalliances with the voluptuous Cleopatra, made civil war the price of personal pleasure".

The puzzling portrayal of Cleopatra is discussed in Kitamura Sae's "The Good, the Bad and the Beautiful: Women Writers' Difficult Relationships with the 'bad Woman' Character in *Antony and Cleopatra*" (2016). To make her argument clear, she draws on women writers in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Britain and their responses to Cleopatra as an original 'bad girl' of English literature. This paper demonstrates that female writers after Shakespeare were both fascinated and troubled by the playwright's seemingly evil yet exceptional heroine, "Sarah Fielding's *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia* insists on her dishonesty". Others refuse to present Cleopatra as evil: "Margaret Cavendish frames her as a political woman rather than a sexualized woman in *The Worlds Olio*. Manly frames her 'bad woman' heroine sympathetically by highlighting her suffering and rebellion in the face of male oppression". These contradictory responses reflect their shifting, unstable approaches to traditional gender norms in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British society.

Nevertheless, *Antony and Cleopatra* has not been studied in the vein of Deleuzist theories. This essay is the first research that serves to demonstrate the unsettling potential of desire in Shakespeare's royal subjects. Through the destabilizing strategies of 'war machine', 'nomadism' as well as BwO (body without organs) the couple are shown to be practitioners of destabilizing strategies of 'war machine', 'nomadism' as well as BwO (body without organs) to reaffirm the, anti-humanistic theory of fluid, decentered subjects.

3. Theoretical Framework

This essay investigates a Deleuzist study of Shakespeare's tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*. The theoretical plan incorporates a ternary scheme: body, language, space. The chief principles in Deleuzist formulation are flow and resistance; to execute this, he invents "desiring machine", to resist the 'social machine of codification whose function is to regulate and to set in place. The desiring machine converts the protagonists to

nomad, BwO (body without organs), woman, and animal to resist socio-political homogenizing force. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze contends “A BwO is an object of construction, a practice; it is what remains after you take everything away’ (151). On linguistic level, the ‘language of minority’ - extracted from the standard language of power accentuates the disruptive potential of linguistic minorization (*Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* 1995). Deleuzist politics of body and Ovidian metamorphosis coalesce to reaffirm the aptness of theoretical method.

This is how the exercise of Deleuze’s dissident strategies on state power manages to unsettle the propagation of the ideology of Absolutism. The very act of decentering subjectivity tends to challenge the belief that man has an inalterable, pregiven essence. As a poststructuralist, materialist thinker Deleuze recounts humanistic faith in essence. Likewise, Dollimore in *Radical Tragedy* (2004) argues for “the emergence in the Renaissance the conception of subjectivity legitimately identified in terms of a materialist perspective rather than one of essentialist humanism” (249).

4. Analysis

4.1. Anti- Representational, Minority Language

Antony and Cleopatra contains a sustained attempt to impose a structural antithesis between Rome and Egypt – the antithesis that at the outset is reinforced in contrasting spaces of West and East – Rome and Egypt. Following Jacobean thinking, Shakespeare seems to have enacted an erotic- military encounter between Rome and Egypt – encapsulating the white normatives against the nonwhite exotic indulgences. Philo’s admonitory comments invite the audience to see an action beyond the representational level; this initial act works like a machine of anti-representation. Following Deleuze ‘s anti-representational project, Tasmin Lorraine in “Living a Time out of Joint” (2003) argues that, “to confine ourselves to stable identities and chronological time is to stifle creative capacity to respond to life’s novelty”. Deleuze identifies artwork as a desiring machine - a pure production of multiplicity.

While social machine tends to generate codified, representational concepts, spaces and figures; the desiring machine of the author transgresses the limits of the familiar, the knowable, to create the unfamiliar, anti-representational work. As soon as Philo portrays how Antony’s heroism is squandered “to cool a gypsy’s lust”, the disparity of Antony/ gypsy comes to indicate the white male power contrasting the nonwhite, female demonic lure. The metaphorization of Jacobean cultural context can be translated to

Deleuzist method. That is, the ground of traditional representation is deterritorialized and the orderly, regular determination of perception is disrupted. "Deterritorialization" is an unsettling formula" (ATP158). For an idea, or a subject to be stabilized an act of 'territorialization' is required -which means to invest it with a fixed ground. In contrast, the artistic creation is a deterritorialization – as it works to separate subject from origin to undo its natural, given qualities. While social machine serves to produce unified, homogenous subjects, the Jacobean theatre fashions a tragic subject who is, as Philo says: "the triple pillar of the world transformed into a strumpet's fool" (1.1.12-13). The metaphoric compact image introduces a nomadic subject who experiences space not in totality, but in relations and intensities which are unable to be subjected to homogenizing orders of conscious awareness. In Deleuzist formula "nomad distributes himself in a smooth space... He is deterritorialization par excellence." (ATP 420). The Roman warrior experiences space less in coherence than in intensities of an indecorous love.

Nomadic signs echo in Antony's opening lines as textual affirmation of a subject that is constituted by multiplicities: "There is `beggary in the love that can be beckoned" (1.1.15). In other words, this space is filled with haecceities and events - It is a smooth space nomad inhabits. When in initial exchange with Cleopatra, Antony states: "Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth" (1.1.17) desiring machine undoes the realistic, representational space due to its inability to accommodate Antony's desire; thus, the representable earth and heaven are transgressed – why? Because the intensities of desire require a new heaven and a new earth. This would be compatible with Patton's remark in his article "Future Politics" (2003) emphasizing the invention of new concepts to refuse representation of how things are so as to "call for a new earth for a new people that do not exist yet". Besides, the invective attributed to Cleopatra is oxymoronic; she is, paradoxically identified with serpent, associating evil and Nile - the river into which the impure souls would plunge and rid themselves of contamination. It seems that Shakespeare's contrary imagery of dark lady sonnets is reiterated in a grotesque imagery - an implacable presence of semiotic difference.

The political overtones are implied as one recognizes the fragile pillars upon which power structures are founded. In a self-induced declaration, Antony strips himself of military honor and becomes a soldier, a servant. "Being a nomad – Branka Arsic explains in an article "Active Habits and Passive Events or Bartleby" (2003) - does not mean to move a lot; it means to be stationary while being traversed and changed by different degrees of intensities". When Caesar says: "This is the news: he fishes, drinks, and wastes/ The lamp of night in revel: is not more manlike/ Than Cleopatra, nor the queen

of Ptolemy/ More womanly than he..." (1.4.5-8). The absence of austerity in Antony's conduct would be an affirmation of nomadism. Even Caesar's remarks are obvious application of the practice of gender blending; Antony's masculinity, under the profound impact of emotions merges with Cleopatra's femaleness. The Roman discipline that Caesar seeks in Antony is dissolved in Egypt's promises of languorous pleasures. The former Antony - one who used to "drink the stale of horses, the roughest berry on the rudest hedge" (1.4.64-5) - metamorphoses to what Cleopatra envisions as she interrogates Charimen: "Or does he walk? Or is he on his horse? Oh, happy horse to bear the weight of Antony". This, I would say, is ample evidence of transformation. A man of State, a triumvir, is subjugated by Egyptian space of appetite. Shifting between contrasting poles is what Cleopatra investigates when she defines him as "divided disposition" following Alexas's report. Consequently, she posits Antony in the in-between space, belonging neither to grief nor to joy: "he was not sad" ... "he was not merry" (1.5.55-60). In this way, he duly becomes a "heavenly mingle". In Cleopatra's account Antony is depicted as an unknowable subject being neither this, nor that - wavering between grief and joy. Once again, he proves to be a field of singularities.

Language of figurality prevails as a stylistic trait that fits into "minority language" (K 35) that Deleuze upholds- "a particular use of language which stretches language to its third-world zones". Or, as far as this play is concerned, it stretches the lovers' language as well as that of those who comment about them, to the Egypt of language - the third-world zones of language. In this way, the unity of major language subsides and the continuous variations expand and cease the submission to social laws "to make language stutter, stammer, and to draw from it cries, shouts and pitches" (ATP 115). Shakespearean minority language serves to reverse the hierarchical degrees and brings about a carnivalesque by which, the epic persona is curtailed to a prey of effeminizing passion through which war in the battle field dwindles to verbal warfare and whims of passion. In Pompey's remarks: "Mark Antony in Egypt sits at dinner and will make/ No war without doors" (2.1.12-3) the act of minorization on Antony demonstrates the affects of Egyptian space - the site of desire on an Imperial subject. This is the very desiring machine Deleuze would favor as the sign of great writing; it is the writing force that smooths and nomadizes.

The political and cultural interrogations echoed in *Antony and Cleopatra* appear to be compatible with desiring machine for 'the future', for 'the people to come'. Paul Patton in "Future Politics" (2003) proclaims, "The bearers of the new world are dispersed and carried away by the shock of multiplicity". For Deleuze, writing is a machine of desire to

undo the stable authorities and to invest identities with ceaseless power of variation and transformation. This anticipatory scheme is in concurrence with “affect theory” Brian Massumi puts forward, and more recently Mario Digangi expounds in “Affective Entanglements and Alternative Histories” (2017). For Massumi, the affect theorist, “affect is pure sociality; it is a force of transindividual relationality and change”. At this point, I would argue that, the early modern character -who is already a selfless nomad - is capable to be configured by affect theory through which political agency and social ongoing change are conceivable. Back to the text, Pompey illustrates a hedonistic Antony who is bewitched by the affects of Egypt,

He dreams; I know they are in Rome together
Looking for Antony. But all the charms of love
Salt Cleopatra, soften thy wan'd lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts.
Keep his brain fuming! Epicurean cooks
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite
That Sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
Even till a L ethe'd dullness! (2.1.20-20-30)

Here, the reiteration of appetite, feast, salt and sleep hyperbolizes the hazards of excessive sensuality that threaten a ruler's decorous disposition. The linguistic maneuver has also potential to display an affective entanglement between a monarch and intensities of passion emanated from Egypt. In Massumi's words, “the affective entanglement among aristocrats and commoners, as well as among monarchs and subjects, constitute events through which participants can generate political knowledge and make an impact on the world” (*ATEMT* 46). Therefore, the affective, emotional dialogue between Rome and Egypt, metaphorically between duty and love, gives the observer a clue that affects - far from being personal and private - prove to be social, relational and ultimately political. Pompey's imaginary scene would redirect us to Massumi. For him, bodily experience and the material world bring about a ‘sock of thought’, that is, “a sensory jolt not leading to truth, but thrusting us into an unconscious mode of critical inquiry” (*Shakespeare's Theatre of Judgment* 59). The fiction of sensory pleasure situates Pompey in an emotionally grounded, yet critically -oriented mode of judgment.

In the Rome of Antony, the subjects are expected to adhere to conventional notions of identifiable bodies as Alan Rodolph argues, “this taxonomic strategy is done in the interest of good administration (*Deleuze and Space* 116). Roman preoccupations with

foreign invasion and succession compel Antony to go through two unsuccessful marriages in a vain attempt to configure a unified identity. To do this, Cartesian mindset serves to construct a consciousness, a rationality that is posited in a far distance from body. In a cold language of calculation, he talks to Octavia: "I haven't kept my square, but that to come/Shall all be done by the rule good night, dear lady" (2.3.7-8). The dissociation of mind and body that aims at the erasure of body, enables him to perform a theatrical show of manliness – as Rome's masculine world would celebrate. It is clear that Antony's respectful behavior is barely suggestive of more feelings for his wife than Caesar's affection for his sister; thus, he stages a pageant of classical decorum to uphold Roman orthodoxies.

4.2. Politics of Becoming Woman, Becoming Animal

The version of Antony who is a servant to Roman ideology transforms to a theater of resistance; theatrical heroism subsides as nomadic signs emerge. It seems that, the playwright himself is spell bound; he is unable to resist the seduction of his own awe-inspiring creation and is carried away by the exotic other that attracts and repels at the same time. In Enobarbus lengthy speech the play shifts from classical milieu to the uniqueness of Cleopatra's enigmatic beauty,

Age cannot wither her nor custom stale
Her infinite variety: other women cloy
Where most she satisfies; for vilest things
Become themselves in her
that the holy priests
Bless her when She is riggish. (2.3.246-52)

Cleopatra comes to be a quintessential desire for which even priests volunteer to transgress Christian ideology. The exceptional characteristics she is endowed with, introduces her as a suitable candidate for "becoming woman" formula Deleuze suggests. This woman is, in fact a philosophical process prescribed for the future of the world; "she is not desire of this woman here as an object situated in the world, but as the unsituated plenitude of being (qtd in, Faulkner). The most crucial difference she enacts is an interminable renewal that defies time and space. while the male generates friendship, the becoming woman gives birth to love. Borrowing from Proust, Deleuze differentiates friendship and love. Friends are in full agreement on ideas, things and words; their relationship is voluntary and contingent. Thus, he claims: "a friend is not enough for us

to approach the truth. But woman can offer us more than friendship. Woman opens up the possibility of love [...] I am the lover; I am art more than philosophy" (*PS* 101). What motivates Deleuze to put love prior to friendship is the good will and accord as essential material to bring men together in the possible world. Love, in contrast, does violence to good will, accord and actual world; through violence it disturbs accord to generate a deeper accord. That's why Cleopatra as Enobarbus delineates, has potential to introduce an innovative concept of woman,

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made,
It beggar'd all description
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did. (2.2.203-218)

Here I want to emphasize the central position Cleopatra occupies in the chaotic space of affects – the becoming woman energies she exerts culminates in flames of fire in Mediterranean Sea. "The smooth space is occupied by intensities, wind, noise, forces. The sea is a smooth space par excellence" (*ATP* 528). The quoted lines capture this smooth space that metamorphoses and eventually follows becoming woman course. The figurative language [minority language] seems to function as a linguistic counterpart for the becoming woman project. This pageant of linguistic overstatement stretches Roman space of striation to the Egyptian smooth space of fertility and fluidity. The mobile images of the ship, the love-sick, howling wind, the cupid-like boys surrounding Cleopatra, are parts of the desiring machine to destabilize and to undo Roman striation. Shakespeare's desiring machine operates on the smooth space of water – and speeds up woman becoming course to spread love in all directions. Under the sway of her attraction, we feel, how official language of striation subsides. The polylingualism he practices in language uncovers the points of non-culture toward which language escapes.

The acknowledgement of exotic power is reenacted in Agrippa's words: "She made great Caesar lay his sword to bed/ He ploughed her, and she cropped" (2.3.239-240). Cleopatra, is shown to have unmanned Caesar as his military power surrenders to a

fruitful sexual appetite. In Rosalie L. Colie's perspective: "The play's language bursts with energy and vigor." (*Modern Critical Interpretations: Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra* 57) Cleopatra's imperatives: "Give me some music- music, moody food/ of us that trade in love" (2.5.1-2) reaffirms her participation in the project of becoming woman. The realms of music and song- the aesthetic planes without pre-given designations – appear to give rise to a feminine discourse of sensuality. Her body is an Egypt, an ever-equivocal, secret language. It seems that, the rocky course of becoming woman instead of swords, ironically requires music - as if only through the sonic affects of music is she able to become a woman.

At the same time, the excess of Cleopatra's becoming woman metamorphoses Antony to a fish as she cries: "Aha! You're caught" (2.5.14). Antony's transformation to fish is also loaded with sensuality. The night of cross-dressing and laughter can be construed as a parody of gendered subjectivity,

That time,--O times!--
I laugh'd him out of patience; and that night
I laugh'd him into patience; and next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan. (2.5.18-22)

These lines demonstrate a hilarious crossdressing practice by means of which, Shakespeare becomes a 'minor' playwright, one who configures 'minor' characters. "To minorize means to reduce - to impose a minorizing treatment in order to extricate becomings from history, lives from culture, thoughts from doctrine" (*Deleuze Reader* 208). In this manner, drink, fun and pleasure provide appropriate means to the biracial lovers to pass from one to the other. Egyptianization of Antony parallels Cleopatra's Romanized gesture to bespeak theatricality of gender, class, and hierarchy.

In Antony's exchange with Lepidus Cleopatra becomes an animal – another becoming program that contributes to anti-humanist theories of current critical methods: "You've strange serpents there. ... Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun. So is your crocodile" (2.7.26-7). Cleopatra fits into the theory of becoming animal while her becoming woman has already been displayed. Deleuze posits that, "becoming is always 'between' or 'among': a woman between women, a woman within a woman, or an animal among others" (CC 2). Cleopatra's transformation to serpent can be construed as an athletic event. As Deleuze argues: "all writing involves an athleticism exercised in flight, in the excess of imagination, [...] an athlete in bed" (CC4). The

Jacobean dramatist, I would say, proves to be writing for minor people who cry: "I am bastard, beast, a negro of an inferior race" (CC7). Like Melville identifying Captain Ahab with a whale, Kafka identifying Gregor with an insect, Shakespeare deems Cleopatra and serpent paired. The animal becoming can be understood to be a refutation of the anthropocentric world centered on human; it also follows Massumi's formula of 'animal politics' where he studies language and consciousness as capacities monopolized by humans - capacities that animals, he agrees, are endowed with too. The concepts of play, sympathy and creativity minorized in scientific studies are key concepts in Massumi's animal politics where animals' potentials turn out to be ways out of humanity (*What Animals Teach us about Politics* 68). The recurrence of becoming animal shows the proliferation of selves in a woman who is paradoxically positioned as the Queen, yet shifts in a continuous flow of becomings. In the following lines, Antony is explaining the course of Cleopatra's becoming animal,

Antony: It is shaped, sir, like itself; and it is as broad
as it hath breadth: it is just so high as it is,
Tis a strange serpent.
Tis so. And the tears of it are wet. (2.7.43-47).

The nonhuman qualities given to Cleopatra is a chance to move beyond the anthropocentric world. And the entrance of animals is an escape from a world that is intelligible through language. There, the play suggests, exist nonhuman organisms which - with no dependency on language - are able to coexist and communicate emotions and affects. In a recurrent woman/animal analogy Cleopatra is likened to serpent and crocodile. One may infer, in current critical methods this identification is a merger to introduce a sort of connectivity between humans and other forms of life. Joseph Campana in his article: "Crocodile's Tears: Affective Fallacies Old and New" (2017) construes the intensity of enthusiasm of the animal body under the impact of Massumi's emphatic attention to animal's affects. For him humans and animals share certain qualities and exist on a continuum. We may figure out that it is in different ways the recuperation of Deleuze and Guattari's "becoming animal" trajectory. Once one chooses to start the courses of: becoming animal, one in fact, embarks on undoing human as a recognizable form, a definable concept. What follows is an encounter with formless intensities, flows of affects as new means of defining life

The crocodile's tears in the history of proverbs are suggestive of hypocrisy and guile. In Antony's conviction Cleopatra is as false as crocodile's tears; her love, he agrees, is barely more than a performance of false sentience. That is, he attributes the treacherous nature of the beast to his beloved. In "Crocodile's Tears, Affective Fallacies Old and New"

(2017) Joseph Campara argues that “crocodile is Judas who weeps when it is too late, and after the betraying of Christ and before he went and hanged himself”. The link between Cleopatra and crocodile is solidified in a figurative discourse wherein Antony presents her as a perpetrator of deceitful love and guile.

4.3. Egyptian Ecology: Politics of pleasure and inclusion

The subordination of women to male authority, the subservience of non-white to the white, dismantles Cleopatra of her royal position. The exotic woman rules Egypt, the land prepared to be the arena of racial practices to enact how body natural and body politic would coincide. Between 1606-1608 there was an increasing interest in Egyptian ecology among European scholars. They realized that the habitat and population are closely intertwined. So far, we have seen how the play has dramatized cross-cultural conflicts. The identification of Egyptians with gypsies is accentuated when the play opens with Philo’s remark on Antony’s duty:” to fan gypsy’s lust”. In the Roman officer’s reductive remark Egyptians are gypsies signifying pure idleness and lust with no traces of ethics. Nevertheless, far from imposition of disciplinary methods on Egyptians, the interaction of Romans with Egyptian gypsies brings about a transformation in Romans who grow increasingly infatuated with the mysteries of the habitat and gypsies. Antony’s surrender to the gypsy’s seductions keeps him from concentration on military duties of conquest. Thus, he loses his previous austerity and control at sea fight. This is acutely echoed in Scabus’ words bemoaning Romans’ defeat,

The greater cantle of the world is lost
With very ignorance; we have kiss'd away
Kingdoms and provinces (3.10. 6-8)

Here Antony seems to have substituted military duty with the gypsy’s affects. Unable to endure separation, instead of fighting at sea he transforms to a bird in a rapid flight to Cleopatra,

She once being loof'd,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard,
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her:
I never saw an action of such shame;
(3.10.18-21)

As a bird, he experiences liberatory effects of alteration and mobility on a smooth space. while Romans stand for busyness, Egyptians stand for idleness. Antony’s flight in

the midst of sea fight demonstrates -on political level - the inability of Roman civilization to withstand the magic of gypsies. Antony acknowledges his defeat as he admits his renouncement of authority: “you did know / how much you were my conqueror, and that/ my sword, made weak by my affection, would obey it on all cause” (3.11.65-68). The play has represented the cross-cultural practice in the unavoidable sexual appeal of a Roman ruler for a member of gypsy community. Geraldo U. DeSousa in “Habitat, Race and Culture in *Antony and Cleopatra*” (1999) refers to the sixteenth century, English translation of *Famous history of Herodotus* – where Herodotus proclaims that, “Egyptian identity is an inversion identity”. Therefore, the historically determined male/female gender positionings are reversed in Egypt. Egyptian women work out, trade and drink in taverns, while men stay indoors. Following this trend of thought Antony is made to perform a reversed role in a dense metaphoric language; therefore, metonymizing Egypt, he capitulates to the effeminizing power of East,

Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by the strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after: o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me. (3.11.55-60)

Cleopatra, on the other hand, if required, does not hesitate to perform a masculine role,

Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' the war,
And, as the president of my kingdom, will
Appear there for a man. Speak not against it:
I will not stay behind (3.7.15-20)

Furthermore, Herodotus claims that physical space and identity of inhabitants are intertwined. So, Egypt as an in-between land (between Asia and Libya) is a land of wilderness whose existence is highly dependent on the river Nile. The source of life and fertility is the annual flood of Nile. Therefore, Egyptology developed in nineteenth century realizes that Egyptians - perhaps due to the fertility of their habitat – are well-known for hospitality and abundance. This cultural feature is enacted as an alien, a non-Roman habit, to which Antony gets accustomed as he distances from Roman ideals. Ceasar who, unlike Antony, signifies self-denial seems to echo Phillip Stubbes, a Renaissance Puritan pamphleteer whose *The Anatomy of Abuses* (1583) reflects denunciation of immoral habits such as consumption of foods, drinks and pleasure of sex.

Evidently, Roman hostility with Egyptian hospitality runs through the play as characters keep castigating Antony for his indulgence in feasting, and lassitude. Fantacizing Antony's wanton time with Cleopatra, Pompey foresees that in "their stirring" there is no possibility "to pluck the n'er-lust-wearied Antony from the lap of Egypt's widow" (2.2.38-40).

While for Caesar and Roman officers, politics and pleasure are contrasting, Antony's immersion in Egyptian hospitality enables him to bring them together in a symbiotic relationship. The convergence of pleasure and politic in Shakespeare's hero works to dramatize a cross-cultural signification. Hence, he comes to realize that pleasure far from destruction of politics has potential to develop a new mode of politics – a material policy of inclusion and transformation in which human organism and bodily appetites are not denigrated,

I will be treble-sinew'd, hearted, breathed,
And fight maliciously: for when mine hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests; but now I'll set my teeth,
And send to darkness all that stop me. Come,
Let's have one other gaudy night: call to me
All my sad captains; fill our bowls once more;
Let's mock the midnight bell. (3.13.179-186)

4.4. Ovidian Metamorphosis and Deleuzist Becoming

The impact of Ovidian tradition in the expansive erotic overtones and the recurrent transformations shows the traces of *Metamorphosis* stories. Importantly, Ovid refuses to pursue Virgilian certainties of epic; following his precursor, Shakespeare embraces transformation, and in particular, bodily changes. In Ovid's stories bodies are in flux - far from being cemented in solid figures, they pass into and within each other. Accordingly, the classical Ovid and the postmodernist Deleuze converge through their common fascination with transmutation and fluidity of bodies. Here, the playwright is decisive to transform the solidity of national hero to a divine figure, whose love story ends up in dissolution of aristocratic pride when he is shown as a Christ figure who announces his readiness to "bathe my dying honor in the blood" (4.3.6). The sense of brotherhood with the soldiers is accentuated as -invoking a Christ-like grace, peace and equity - he invites his followers to supper. The discrepancy between Christ and soldier – connoting peace and war - leads to a problematic division within Antony. Even the

military self he affirms invites soldiers “to burn this night with torches” is unstable and indefinite in immediate negation: “Let’s to supper, come / And drown consideration”. The interplay between military and divinity – the back and forth move from one to the other- works to stress the malleability of identity. Hence, the soldier- Christ compound would metaphorically highlight the Ovid – Deleuze compound directed to a reiterated penchant for metamorphosis,

Ho, ho, ho!!
My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense;
For I spake to you for your comfort; did desire you
To burn this night with torches: know, my hearts,
Let’s to supper, come,
And drown consideration. (4.2.37-45)

The Renaissance poets’ indebtedness to Ovid is often explained as allusiveness and reiteration. Here Ovid’s interest in the clashes between political and romantic is replicated, however, the preference is given to the erotic politics. Ovid’s stories draw on mythical, historical figures, however, they are devoid of Virgilian certitudes of epic formula. The importance Virgil attaches to the political, confronts the insistence on the erotic appetites. In similar manner, Shakespeare’s protagonists enact figures who have knowingly built a type of politics based on pleasure,

Like holy Phoebus’ car. Give me thy hand:
Through Alexandria make a jolly march;
Trumpeters,
With brazen din blast you the city’s ear;
Make mingle with rattling tabourines;
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach. (4.8.30-40)

Here the sonic disturbances suspend sense to reaffirm the vocality of minority language. For Deleuze, “this is a political action that counters controls of standard language and sets nonstandard variables at play within the language” (Bogue 98). The politics grounded in pleasure refuses to speak the major language that imposes order. So, pleasure and desire transgress the boundaries of constants to generate a post-signifying (minority) regime of signs. The invocation of Apollo [god of light] in Antony’s amorous discourse shows a parade of love and cosmic celebration. The ‘new heaven and new earth’ - that were initially required to estimate his exceptional love – reemerges. Also,

onomatopoeia invests the scene with a dense sonic atmosphere with the deafening impact on the city's ear. The theatre of Apollo (hand in hand with Cleopatra) feasting with his soldiers is seized in intimate harmony with cosmic forces. Hospitality appropriated from Egyptian culture enables Antony to display a politics whose power rests not on a focal point; rather, it is distributed equally among all, and enjoyed by all. The strength of this pluralistic politics which is built on pleasure and spread over multiple directions stretches out to heavens and eventually gains cosmic affirmation.

Nevertheless, Apollo dissolves in Antony's subsequent transformation to a typically Renaissance masochistic lover. The false news of Cleopatra's betrayal drastically denigrates her majestic image,

All is lost;
This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me!
Betray'd I am:
O this false soul of Egypt! this grave charm,--
Whose eye beck'd forth my wars, and call'd them home;
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,--
Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.
What, Eros, Eros!(4.12.1025)

The catalogue of invectives attached to Cleopatra, seems to reiterate the image of dark lady of sonnets - the corrupt woman is a source of defilement and conspiracy. There is, I think, a discrepancy between Antony's claim of cultural superiority and the very fragility of Roman civilized culture. The irony lies in the Roman- Egyptian encounters; that is, once the superior culture encounters the inferior it fails to withstand its magic. Gypsy, an offspring of foul Egypt, wins the battle of hearts. In fact, the courtly love convention conceives love and war as interconnected issues. The core of Antony's empire lies in the gypsy's sexual body, for which he is prepared to devote all as he announced earlier: "Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch/ of the ranged Empire Fall! Here is my space... (1.1.34-5). We can see, how Antony's body far from being integrated is a disruptive site of contestation – an unsettling space in which legitimate authority opposes the forbidden desire for an illegitimate other. Ovidian transformation recurs as Apollonian god of light transmutes to Hercules. This shows that the early modern poets and play wrights were fascinated with mythical figures,

Antony - The shirt of Nessus is upon me: teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage:

Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' the moon;
And with those hands, that grasp'd the heaviest club,
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die:
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot; she dies for't. Eros, ho! (4.12.43-50)

The invocation of Hercules as an Ovidian model comes to restore Antony's forsaken masculinity. In Valerie Traub's remark "Any comprehensive account of the impulses and effects of Ovidianism needs to account for its fascination with the erotics of cruelty" (*Ovid and Renaissance Body* 262). Moreover, the traces of madness become obvious as Antony displays similarities with Charlus' madness – a protagonist in Proust's *In search of lost life*. Charlus initially emerges as the master of *logos* – in full control of intelligible words in an organized language. However, *Logos* is run through by the force of anger; it is, then replaced by a different order, *Pathos*- the signs of violence and madness (*PS* 127).

Ovidian eroticism has two contrasting faces: boundary - breaking/ subversive versus masculinist/ containing. The latter, I would say, is exercised on Antony's body to demonstrate that the Renaissance *imitatio* of Ovidianism is highly ambiguous. The splitting of Antony to contrasting selves that is grounded in subversion – containment duality, seems to merge with Deleuze and Guattari who write that the act of deterritorialization is a subversive act that separates an individual, an idea, a language from its pre-given territory – resulting in the production of groundless multiplicities. Yet, lapse of time leads to irresistible reterritorialization. Thus, the territorialized ideas are unable to remain the same, as territorializing agents are unavoidable forces that show up to unify the multiplicities. During three acts Antony carries deterritorialization with the highest degree as he pursues lines of flight and nomadism.

After all, what are the definitions of sexualities in early modern period following Ovid? Antony's perpetual transformation to opposing identities uncovers the self-contradictory characteristics they inherit from Ovid. The masculine figure comes to the fore, and draws on the patriarchal gender politics of mastery to display decisiveness at revenge and mutilation. The politics of mastery succeeds to undo Cleopatra's transgressive, erotic attractions - which have so far defined the talkative, playful queen. The theatre of death seems to be the only resolution: "Mardian go tell him I have slain myself" (4.13.7). Lori Humphrey Newcomb proclaims, that "there is a distinction between two Ovidian impulses - to 'monumentalize' (to shape and fix texts, to contain women in immobility) and to 'spectacularize' (to embrace collaboration and

proliferation, to celebrate the changefulness of the human body, even the female body” (*Ovid and Renaissance Body* 264). The theatre of death Cleopatra stages seems to concur with monumentalizing impulse Newcomb detects in Ovidian erotic stories. She has apprehensively figured out that, what is most required is a transformation to a dead object – lifeless and malleable.

Antony’s body draws attention to the Ovidian impulse Newcomb explains as ‘spectacularization.’ This contrary impulse is propelled when Antony receives the false news of Cleopatra’s death. The former erotics of cruelty and revenge which he was determined to impinge on her, switches to a masochistic, erotics of self-dismemberment,

The seven-fold shield of Ajax cannot keep
The battery from my heart. O, cleave, my sides!
No more a soldier: bruised pieces, go;
You have been nobly borne. From me awhile.
I will o’ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for my pardon,
Eros!--I come, my queen!--Eros!--Stay for me:
Where souls do couch on flowers, we’ll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze:
Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops,
And all the haunt be ours. Come, Eros, Eros! (4.14.38-53)

In the above, Antony identifies with Ajax [the Trojan hero] who was driven mad and killed himself. The erotics of self- destruction gives voice to a lamenting fragmented body. It is, the termination of soldiery that initiates the process of dismemberment. The body politic - whose integration depends on Cleopatra’s body natural – collapses. Commanding Eros to stab him he fictionalizes their afterlife reunion, as they pass Virgil’s lovers (Aeneas and Dido). Shakespeare’s lovers, however, undo Dido’s sorrow in their joyful meeting that provokes ghosts’ astonishment. Ramie Targoff agrees that: “In his Roman plays, Shakespeare had the opportunity to imagine things in a world remarkably different from his own, and in the case of the lovers’ suicides, he seems to have embraced these differences without any adjustment or accommodation to the culture in which he lived” (*Posthumous Love* 128).

The power Antony gains from metamorphosis is to be understood as an egalitarian potential to experience new horizons, to learn from Eros:

Thrice nobler than myself,

Thou teachest me, O valient Eros what
I should and thou couldst not My queen and Eros
Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record.
Thy master dies thy scholar (4.14.95-6).

Eros, Antony's soldier, becomes his teacher as he runs on his sword instead of helping him in suicide. The nomad produces a war machine that stands opposed to a man of State. Antony's war machine distributes human rights based on merit. Unlike the rigid hierarchical system man of State upholds, war machine reversed the master/ soldier polarity – and invests a soldier with pedagogical potential of a scholar. In political terms, the picture envisions a future polity of inclusion and equity.

The wounds Antony inflicts on his body natural stretch out to the body politic. His torn apart heart is a metonymy- suggesting that Roman empire is torn to pieces as it suffers a severe loss - loss of the heart of sovereignty. The Elizabethan world order, Tillyard expounds, is centered on the figure of a monarch - known as a divine agent. Antony's insane self- stabbing -from the perspective of Jacobean thinking - is a violation of cosmic order expected to be ruled by wisdom and rationality. The epithets Cleopatra lists in her grieving lines: 'crown of the earth', 'garland of the war', 'soldier's pole'- are pronouncements of Antony's pivotal role in military and political context. Yet, Caesar's reaction to his death: 'The breaking of so great a thing should make/ A greater crack...' (5.1.14-5) is loaded with punitive consequence. This would, possibly endow him with immense influence as Antony's indulgent conduct seems to induce the greater crack. Keith Linley aptly points out that: "The disorders and disharmonies upsetting roles and expectations stems from Antony's dereliction of duty, giving rise to disruptions that act as enveloping emblematic metaphors of a world turned upside down" (*Antony and Cleopatra in Context: Politics of Passion* 17).

4.5. The Politics of Body without Organs (BwO)

For Cleopatra, the world emptied of Antony is but a 'dull world', a 'sty'- a spatial void to follow the lines of flight from the grim mortality. The invitation of death gives her a levelling power to rank herself on equal terms with 'beggars and babes' similar to Antony's soldier becoming his scholar. The decisiveness shown in: 'this mortal house I'll ruin' as well as 'I'll eat no meat, I'll not drink' has other-worldly association. The raunchy sexuality and the indulgent appetite for food fade away. Instead, there seems to flow the

affects of BwO (body without organs). The voluntary separation from bodily needs detaches her from the concept of body as an organism – this organism endows body organs with an orderly structure, which Deleuze likens to a body politic governed by a single, autocratic ruler. This amounts not to a sort of hostility to organs. The enemy is organization that is given the agency to impose order upon us. “All love must be a material dismantling of organism; this must pass through becoming woman’ (AO 276).

The body ruled by organization invokes integrity which guarantees stable selfhood. To get rid of this, we must strip ourselves of organs, to become naked and light enough to follow lines of flight (which are the lines of creation). “To make it, one must desire. You cannot desire without making one” (ATP 149). Cleopatra’s renunciation of bodily demands, frees her from the constraints prescribed for her body. The transformation to BwO is the prelude to unite with the nomadic Antony whose uncurbed desire generates a war machine; Man of state is a man of reason, Deleuze puts; he upholds rules to discipline individuals, to set things in proper place. On the contrary, ‘war machine’ is driven to violence and self-destruction. It opposes order and regulations; this, in turn begets a chaotic environment that ends up in self-destructive affects. “There is a fundamental incompatibility between war machine and the State, the chaotic tendencies of the one always threatening to disrupt the order of the other” (ATP 354). Antony’s war machine culminates in his self-arranged scene of death, “Not Caesar’s valor hath o’erthrown Anthony/ But Antony’s hath triumphed on itself” (4.15.15-6). The interaction of war machine and nomadism in Antony is ensued from the operation of BwO in Cleopatra,

Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud
Lay me stark naked, and let the water-flies
Blow me into abhorring! rather make
My country's high pyramids my gibbet,
And hang me up in chains (5.2.54-61)

The hyperbolic language reflects the tension between excess and restraint. The public trial she envisions is a theatrical display of punishment; the heroine punished for the excess of pleasure, recoils to pay for the price of transgression. What she performs is an involuntary involvement in the course of BwO - which is not a concept to be defined, but a process to follow; it is a field of becomings, an intensive field of affects. The antagonism

to the organized body constructs the anti-organism repertoire to uncover her potential to undo the solidified ego; that is, it, appears to yoke Egyptian queen and Nilus' flies together. The river Nilus so far praised as a source of fertility for people – under the impact of the intensities BwO emits – turns into a torturing machine of disease-bearing flies. Prepared to pay for transgression, Shakespeare's BwO extends itself across Egypt. The smooth space of Egypt is a space of flux, metamorphosis, and becoming opposed to the striated space of Rome which is stable and demarcated. The BwO, seems likely to empower Cleopatra to set up the tableau of her execution. The retribution imagined proves inescapable as the prevailing cultural context is undeniably religious – and this is what Keith Linley acutely contends 'the normality of family life with Cleopatra is hardly visible, but is an offence to Roman ethics and custom' - "Images of Disorder: The Religious Context" (2015). The masochistic pain she inflicts on her body can be construed as a recurrence of BwO – the cancellation of the concept of 'unified body as organism',

To an asp, which she applies to her breast
With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie: poor venomous fool
Be angry, and dispatch. O, couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass
Unpolicied!
Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep? (5.2.300-306)

To elaborate on the final union with serpent, I would turn back to the epithet attached to Cleopatra: 'serpent of old Nile'. The recurrent ternary scheme of Cleopatra – Nile - serpent must have been motivated by the commanding attitudes in early modern England concerning Egypt. The Nile is Cleopatra – both are erratic and prone to excess. In another article, "O'erflowing the Measure: Restraint and Excess" (2015) Keith Linley pays particular attention to the river Nile: "The bringer of life and death as Nile is, it is also a source of other dangers – crocodiles, serpents and dangerous flies". It becomes clear why Shakespeare has comprised a triangular bond between the Egyptian woman, Nile and nonhuman creatures.

The evil associations attached to her, mobilize the tragic machine as the couple continue in their reveling. I conjecture that, the Christian accounts of temptation in genesis must have inspired Shakespeare to imbue Cleopatra with satanic temptation – and thus 'the serpent of old Nile' would highlight her prowess as a temptress. The

religious mindset of Jacobean audience, therefore, expects that such a careless pair ought to face the price of their misgovernment of passions.

Although for Jacobean audience they deserve the final disaster meted out to them, the current scholarship offers an alternative reading on the role of passions in the formation or/and deformation of political agency. Drawing on Deleuze and Massumi, we can observe how animal becoming, child becoming repertoires are performed on Shakespeare's BwO. Cleopatra becomes one with the asps; even the oneness furthers when she becomes a baby fed by the mortal / maternal asps. The inversion of the motherly role is carried out when we learn that, it is the asps' poisoning act that enacts the maternal role as they feed her and put her to eternal sleep. The invocation of poison, the fatal food, is what BwO performs to revoke life emptied of Antony. Massumi posits, 'The pre-rationality of affect goes beyond known parameters' (*Affect Theory and Early Modern Texts* 133). The blood kinship with animals empowers Cleopatra to configure a pure body of affects to escape from the human, repetitive pattern to the intensity of animal body, the animal antilife freedom. Similarly, the operation of war machine in nomadic Antony, forces the strict Rome of the play to capitulate to the Egypt of pleasure where polity and pleasure are likely to coalesce - to promise a future polity of inclusion, diversity and equity.

5. Conclusion

It is often said that *Antony and Cleopatra* is about 'love', but in this essay I have drawn a more careful distinction between the love which the State considers legitimate and that which it does not. Throughout, the good legitimate love which serves ideological purposes is nonexistent. The reason is that the early modern play focusses on biracial lovers from contrasting geographical locations - Rome/ Egypt. The undoing of legitimate love formula is propelled when Deleuzist desiring machine starts the process of nomadic production. While the Absolutist power disapproves of the characters' illegitimate love, Antony and Cleopatra demonstrate the fallacy of unified identity through their persistent appropriation of nomadism, war machine and BwO.

In the eyes of Ceasar, the epitome of legitimate Roman power, Cleopatra ruling the smooth space of Egypt, is rebuked for her indulgence in pleasure and sensuality. However, following Deleuzist postulates Egypt becomes a space of variation - in contrast to the hierarchical space of Rome. Thereby, she exercises a theatrical performance of becoming woman, becoming animal as well as BwO. The manifest dependency of Roman

State upon its best fighter, Antony, discloses political instability, while the fluidity of bodies and anti-humanistic urge to decenter subjects converge to strip the royal couple from their legitimate identities. These disquieting methods convert Antony (the quintessential heroic ideal) to a nomad. At the same time, the Queen participates in becoming woman, becoming animal program. Through Massumi's emphasis on 'sociality' and 'relationality' of affects, political unrest ensues in the Rome of *Antony and Cleopatra*.

The generation of war machine in Antony reinforces his decisiveness to give priority to illegitimate desire for a nonwhite. Ovidian metamorphosis tradition aligns with BwO and becoming animal formulas to separate Cleopatra from Egyptian culture of sensuality. In close association with 'babes and beggars' the appetite for pleasure fades away. The final union with the asp would reacknowledge the completion of becoming animal in the body without organs. This is done to unite with the war machine whose separation from State power identifies him with a Christ figure at supper with soldiers; one who, later calls a soldier his master. Close to the end of the play, there is a wistful gesture toward what we may regard a communal society. The participation of beggars, soldiers and babes in their final feast, is set against the blandness of State power. The politics of desire, unimpressed by privilege, succeeds to conjure up a future polity grounded in inclusion, diversity and equity.

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