# Antony and Cleopatra

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## Luogo (ambientazione)

Alexandria and Rome

## Anno di pubblicazione

1607 (performed)/1623 (First Folio)

## Epoca

Ptolemaic Egypt/Ancient Rome

## Soggetto (descrizione dell’opera e del luogo)

Antony and Cleopatra is a tragedy that follows the relationship between Mark Antony (one of the ruler of the Roman Republic after the death of Julius Caesar) and Cleopatra (queen of Egypt).

The entire opera is largely based on a transaltion of a Plutarch’s (an ancient greek philosopher) biografy of Mark Antony.

The tragedy is divided into five acts.

ACT I:

After the death of Julius Caesar, the Roman Empire is governed by a triumvirate made of Octavius Caesar, Mark Antony and Lepidus.

Mark Antony commands the eastern Mediterranean and lives in Egypt. He fell in love with Cleopatra. But when his wife, Fulvia, dies and there’s a rebellion made by Pompey against Octavius, Antony is forced to go to Rome.

ACT II:

In Rome, Antony and Caesar decide to seal their friendship with a political marriage between Antony and Octavia (Octavius’ sister). Enobarbus (a friend of Antony) doesn’t belive that Antony will leave Cleopatra and tells that to his Roman friends. The triumvirate make peace with Pompey, who invite them on a feast on his ship.

ACT III:

In Egypt Cleopatra receives the news of Antony's marriage and became jelous, but then she realises that Octavia isn’t a real romantic opponent. When Antony and Octavia arrive in Athens, they hear that Octavius has revoked his peace treaty, attacked Pompey and also betrayed the triumvirate agreement by imprisoning Lepidus to take all the power. Antony sends Octavia to Rome to try to make peace with his brother Caesar and he goes to Egypt to raise an army with Cleopatra. Caesar, angry for Antony's betrayal with Octavia, declares war on Antony and Cleopatra. Antony decides to fight at sea but during the battle, Cleopatra's ships leave the Roman fleet, so he is defeated.

ACT IV:

Antony chooses to fight Caesar on land but his army has lost faith in him. Enobarbus joins ocatvius army betraying Antony and leaving him saddened. At the battle, Cleopatra's men leave Antony, and for this reason Cleopatra takes refuge in her monument, fearing the rage of his partner. Antony thinks that she has betrayed him to Octavius, so she sends messengers to say that she is dead. Antony is destroyed by the news so he falls onto his sword because he wants to die. Cleopatra's messenger goes to inform him that she is still alive and finds him dying alone. He is bring to the monument and dies in Cleopatra's arms.

ACT V:

Cleopatra doesn’t want to be a prisoner of the Romans so she and her women commit suicide. Then Caesar discovers the body and orders that Antony and Cleopatra be buried together. After that he returns to Rome and becomes the first Emperor.

The story largely takes place in Alexandria, where Cleopatra lived. Unfortunately Cleopatra’s palace and many other monument of that time are now destroyed, underwater or no longer accessible. Alexandria is still a beautiful city to explore to try to imagine how were the things centuries ago.

Sources:

<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/shakespedia/shakespeares-plays/antony-and-cleopatra/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antony_and_Cleopatra>

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## Immagini (elenco)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FdvGXljOUOFKntgPiACiwu5pdaUdGvkB/view?usp=sharing> (A view of the modern city of Alexandria)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GeK_Y-IQGDrZmSY9JuC8ShyqK_zTH-SC/view?usp=sharing> (Bibliotheca Alexandrina, a commemoration of the ancient Library of Alexandria, destroyed by Julius Caesar)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_Q7Lgk1BiTN6hYeInmJcaZ0F1KXm54E1/view?usp=sharing> (Interior of Bibliotheca Alexandrina)

## Personaggi principali

* **Mark Antony** – triumvir of the Roman Republic
* **Octavius Caesar** – adopted son of Julius Caesar and future Emperor
* **Lepidus** – another triumvir
* **Cleopatra** – Queen of Egypt
* **Octavia** – Octavius' sister
* **Pompey** – rebel against the triumvirate
* **Enobarbus** – friend of Antony