

Problem plays of Shakespeare - a study of Julius Caesar Measurefor Measure Antony and Cleopatra.

Routledge and Kegan Paul - The Problem Plays of Shakespeare



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Antony admires Eros' courage and attempts to do the same, but only succeeds in wounding himself. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Enobarbus urges Antony to fight on land, where he has the advantage, instead of by sea, where the navy of Octavius is lighter, more mobile and better manned.

The Problem Plays of Shakespeare : A Study of Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure 9780415850179

Throughout the play, oppositions between Rome and Egypt, love and lust, and masculinity and femininity are emphasised, subverted, and commented on. The more recent influence of and studies have yielded readings of Shakespeare that typify the play as subversive, or challenging the status quo of Western imperialism.

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Texas University Studies in English.

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In this setting, the white Egyptians represented a graceful and ancient aristocracy—well groomed, elegantly poised, and doomed.

The Problem Plays of Shakespeare

His cold demeanour is representative of what the sixteenth century thought to be a side-effect of political genius. Conversely, Antony's focus is on valour and , and Antony views the political power of victory as a by-product of both.

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Modern editions divide the play into a conventional five-act structure but, as in most of his earlier plays, Shakespeare did not create these act divisions. Braunmüller and Michael Hattaway eds. In more recent years, critics have taken a closer look at previous readings of Antony and Cleopatra and have found several aspects overlooked.

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In fact, even the distinction between masculine and feminine is a purely Roman idea which the Egyptians largely ignore.

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Shakespeare critics argue that the metatheatrical references in Antony and Cleopatra seem to critique this trend and the presentation of Cleopatra as a sexually empowered individual supports their argument that Shakespeare seems to be questioning the oppression of female sexuality in London society. As a Roman man, Antony is expected to fulfill certain qualities pertaining to his Roman masculine power, especially in the war arena and in his duty as a soldier: Those his goodly eyes, That o'er the files and musters of the war Have glowed like plated mars, now bend, now turn The office and devotion of their view Upon a tawny front. Antony and Cleopatra can be read as a rewrite of Virgil's epic, with the sexual roles reversed and sometimes inverted.

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