persons in the fearful, final image of the dying gladiator, the revolutionary on the cross.

Studio press releases, souvenir programs, study guides, and press interviews did not attempt to pinpoint a specific ideological message for the film but stated noncommittally that its hero's "passion for human rights and dignity is an inspiration to this very day," and spoke of its plot line as a powerful demonstration of "man's eternal desire for freedom."[127] But the fight for "freedom against tyranny" was precisely the terminology President Truman had used to launch the Cold War in 1947, and it belonged to the rhetoric in which the historical blockbusters of the 1950s had been steeped. Picking up, therefore, on the film's narrative image as a depiction of the eternal fight for freedom, many writers in the popular press instated *Spartacus* as an historical film that did not further the cause of the Kremlin so much as hinder it:

> Although it deals with a revolt by slaves against the pagan Roman Empire, the desire for freedom from oppression that motivates Spartacus has its modern counterpart today in areas of the world that struggle under Communist tyranny, and it stands as a sharp reminder for all mankind that there can be no truly peaceful sleep whilst would-be conquering legions stand poised to suppress.[128]

In the right-wing press, Spartacus became refigured as a Cold War warrior fighting against the autocracy, atheism, and state control of the Soviet Union, and his aspirations were assimilated to the alternative, divinely blessed values of democratic America.[129]

4

Cleopatra: Spectacles of Seduction and Conquest

Competing Images

Under the headline "'Cleopatra' never had it so good," a journalist from the *New York Times* recounted a visit he had paid to the Cinecittà studios in Rome in January 1962. He had been sent to investigate rumors that the Twentieth-Century Fox studio was continuing to encounter difficulties in the production of its film *Cleopatra*. Instead, the writer claimed to have found an optimism which stemmed from "the feeling that a film of import is taking shape." On set, the director, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, described the importance and focal point of his new film as residing not so much in its impressive sets or in its imposing cast list as in its characterization of Cleopatra. She is to be depicted as "a vivid and many-sided personality, whom Mankiewicz calls 'a terribly exciting woman who nearly made it'" and her political climbing and intrigue is to be brought out in the "meat" of the film—the scenes of intimacy between Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, and Mark Antony, which Mankiewicz was then shooting.[1]

Some fifty years earlier, however, in November 1913, the newspaper *Giornale d'Italia* carried a significantly different account of the production of a silent film about Cleopatra, in which her "many-sided personality" scarcely figured. According to the Italian director Enrico Guazzoni, he chose to make *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* because

> no theme could better attract and move an artist than that which, through the figures of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, had so much weight over the destinies of the ancient world. It provided above all the opportunity to parade before the eyes of the spectator the most distinctive places of ancient Rome and ancient Egypt, which everyone has imprinted in their minds at their

school-desks, but has never seen, nor would have any way of really seeing, not even if they spent the treasures of Croesus. Next it offered the possibility of reconstructing landings and battles which have remained among the most memorable of those times, and which will be seen reproduced on the cinema screen not without trembling emotion. And, finally, the loves of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, besides being of themselves one of the most passionate subjects of history, lent themselves magnificently to the reconstruction of the life led at the sumptuous court of the Ptolemies, with scenes of intimacy full of fascination for their magnificence.[2]

For Guazzoni, what mattered was not so much the seductions instigated by a politically motivated and passionate queen, but the spectacle of Egypt—its magnificence and its conquest by Rome. In that respect, Guazzoni chose to promote an image for his film which showed a greater debt to the ancient, Roman sources on Cleopatra than that proposed by the later Hollywood publicity.

In different periods, cultures, and media, representations of the Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra VII and her relations to Rome have ceaselessly shifted in structure and meaning. Depictions of Cleopatra's encounters with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, her departure from the battle of Actium, her suicide and the subsequent triumph of Octavian, have taken on many, diverse forms by virtue of, for example, specific technologies for the representation of the queen and distinct cultural conditions for viewing gender, race, empire, and female power. At the time of the battle of Actium itself, in 31 B.C., Cleopatra had already become two competing sets of images designed to validate either her rule or her overthrow. To her Egyptian subjects, in honorific titles, inscriptions, coins, temple reliefs, religious ceremonial, public spectacle, and oracular writings, Cleopatra VII was a loving daughter of her country and its previous kings, a protective and fertile mother-figure, a goddess, a liberator, and a messiah. The Ptolemaic queen came to symbolize resistance to the aggression of the West. She embodied a vengeful Asia who would conquer Rome and, with that victory, unify East and West. She was to establish a glorious world kingdom and initiate a golden age of peace. To Cleopatra's Roman enemies, however, in the propaganda disseminated by Octavian before the battle of Actium, in the ritual of the subsequent triumph, in contemporary Roman poetry, and in later historiography, the Egyptian queen was a barbaric debauchee, a whore, and a drunkard, the mistress of eunuchs. She was the eastern enemy of Rome and the embodiment of an effeminate Asia. She was represented as having seduced one Roman into her eastern ways only to be deservedly overcome by another. In Roman narratives, Octavian became the defender of Rome

against the assaults of Egypt. He was the conqueror of Asia, and the founder of a new kingdom of peace and of Roman imperial rule.[3]

In the vicious propaganda campaign waged by Octavian before the battle of Actium, Cleopatra was constructed as an enticing but monstrous character who had lured Antony away from his proper Roman duties and thus endangered the welfare of the whole Roman state. That representation of the Egyptian queen and her Roman lover was then sustained and elaborated in the later histories of Plutarch and Cassius Dio. Plutarch's *Life of Antony* is a case study in the moral disintegration of its hero, whose love for Cleopatra is described as his life's "final and crowning evil."[4] The civil war between Octavian and Antony was restructured as a patriotic campaign to protect Italy from engulfment by an eastern queen who had already seduced, orientalized, and unmanned Mark Antony. Cleopatra became the embodiment of the quintessential adversary. In the twin discourses of ancient racism and sexism, she was marked as doubly Other—both Egyptian and Woman—and, therefore, doubly deserving of defeat by an Octavian who represented the restoration of the authority of Rome, the West, and the Male Principle. The narrative of Octavian's victory over the tyranny of Cleopatra, of Rome's triumph over Egypt, became a founding myth of western culture.[5] It is that myth of western victory over a feminized East which lies at the core of Enrico Guazzoni's silent film *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* (1913).

Shakespeare and Early Cinema

From antiquity, manifold representations of Cleopatra and her seductions have pervaded western culture in, for example, paintings, poetry, plays, operas, biographies, and historical novels, from tapestries to snuff boxes, from theatrical tragedies to music-hall sketches, from fancy-dress balls to cabaret acts.[6] But the title of Enrico Guazzoni's film, and its association with the Roman production house Cines, suggests at first that the primary source material for *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* was Shakespeare's canonical Roman play *Antony and Cleopatra*. In the early years of the film industry preceding the First World War, in the face of considerable hostility to the new medium, both European and American filmmakers transformed Shakespeare's plays into moving pictures as a means of demonstrating the significant contribution film could make to culture. The plays of Shakespeare were perceived as free source material of wide cultural circulation, familiar from numerous editions, school versions, theatrical productions, and even ephemera such as advertising. Both thrilling and culturally respectable, Shakespeare was powerfully attractive as source material for film production. Adaptations of his plays could be marketed not only as entertaining, but also as uplifting and educational. Such film adaptations selected the

most familiar phrases, scenes, and images from individual plays, constructed their mise-en-scène to accord with the Shakespearean iconography established by play productions, and trumpeted their capacity to substitute for Shakespearean dialogue the representation on screen of off-stage action—the transformation of verse into spectacle.[7] George Méliès neatly capped this defence of cinema in his last "Shakespeare" film of 1907, *Le Rêve de Shakespeare* or *La Mort de Jules César* (commonly entitled in English, *Shakespeare Writing Julius Caesar*).[8] There Shakespeare is himself the protagonist, unable to complete his script for Julius Caesar's murder until he is inspired by a dreamlike apparition of the conspiracy and assassination. Positioned like an early cinema spectator who watches the visual reconstruction of Roman history, the Shakespeare of Méliès is conveniently inspired to the production of high culture by the magic of moving images.

In November 1908, a month before the launch of its controversial *Julius Caesar*, the American Vitagraph Company released *Antony and Cleopatra*. The film was structured, packaged, and consumed as an adaptation of Shakespeare's play. The director, Charles Kent, had for some thirty years previously played Shakespearean roles on the American stage. The action, according to the research of the film historian Robert Hamilton Ball, consisted of about a quarter of the play condensed on screen into thirteen scenes. A favorable review (which Ball quotes from *Motion Picture World* of 7 November 1908) reads the Vitagraph film unequivocally as an attempt to transform Shakespeare into moving images:

> If Shakespeare could only realize the fate of the works he left behind, the modern use of them would cause his prophetic soul to weep. Just think of it! Antony and Cleopatra given in its entirety, with the vocal parts and other details of the regular production cut out, in less than twenty minutes! What a vast difference between the older presentation and that represented by the modernized form of amusement. But with all the condensation, the magnificence was retained, and I heard several in the audience say the film had created in them an appetite for more of the same kind. The Vitagraph company can take pride in the production.[9]

Like the Vitagraph Company, which continued its cycle of Shakespearean one-reelers with, for example, *King Lear* (1909) and *Twelfth Night* (1910), the Roman production house Cines had regularly released Shakespearean adaptations before the launch of the feature-length film *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* (1913). As the most prestigious film company of the time in Italy, Cines rivaled Pathé and Gaumont for distribution of its films in the European film market and for their exportation to the United States. It exploited the international cultural value, therefore, of a whole string of Shakespearean productions such as *Romeo and Juliet* (1908), *Hamlet* (1908), *Othello* (1909), *Macbeth* (1909), *A Winter's Tale* (1910), *All's Well That Ends Well* (1912), and *A Comedy of Errors* (1912).[10] Consequently, by 1913, Cines had established a whole program of Shakespearean films to which *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* might have been a predicted addition.

According to Ball, some of the publicity for the American and the British launch of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* packaged the film as Shakespearean,[11] yet when, for the Italian launch, Enrico Guazzoni described the merits of his production in the *Giornale d'Italia* (quoted above), the director demonstrated a greater interest in battles than passion, and in ancient places rather than tragic plot. According to Guazzoni (in the Italian press at any rate), the fidelity that needed to be secured was to ancient architecture and art rather than English literature:

> Every part of this reconstruction has been studied with the greatest scruple, on sites, in museums, in libraries. This research completed, a legion of artists and laborers from Cines patiently set to work reconstructing whole sections of cities, palaces, monuments, court-yards, halls, fountains, ponds, furniture, weapons and clothing, so that everything would be in keeping with the most absolute historical truth.[12]

Furthermore, the film text itself proves to be less grounded in the Shakespearean Cleopatra than in her refiguring within nineteenth-century, Orientalist discourses of empire.

Published around the beginning of the seventeenth century, Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* operates in a direct line of descent from Plutarch's *Life of Antony* (via Sir Thomas North's English rendition of the earlier French translation of Plutarch by Jacques Amyot). The play opens with a description of Antony as "The triple pillar of the world transformed / Into a strumpet's fool." Octavian's Rome, which Antony deserts, is depicted as a soldierly, asexual, masculine world. Cleopatra's Egypt, whose embrace Antony accepts, is depicted as a disorderly, passionate, and feminine world. But critics have observed how Shakespeare's representation of these contrasting domains is less censorious than that of Plutarch. Although the overall drive of the play may be towards a demonstration of the folly of passion, nevertheless, in the course of that demonstration, Octavia is colorless, Octavian ruthless, Antony great-hearted, and Cleopatra both captivating and majestic. Love is gifted with moments of sublimity, as Cleopatra recalls:

> Eternity was in our lips and eyes,
> Bliss in our brows' bent; none our parts so poor
> But was a race of heaven. [1.3][13]

Not only does the narrative of the film *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* bear little correspondence to the tragic plot of Shakespeare's play, but it also attempts to close down the kind of ambivalences that the drama manifests. Guazzoni's Cleopatra is visualized at the beginning of the film as a sinister enchantress (lit from below by the flames of a cauldron, she seeks out a love potion from an old witch around whom a snake slithers). At the close of the film, like the nineteenth-century killer-Cleopatras of Pietro Cossa, Victorien Sardou, or Rider Haggard, she has become a murderous sorceress (returning to the witch to obtain poisons which she proceeds to test out on her slaves).[14] The Roman Octavia, the touchstone of wifely virtue, is indignantly rebuffed by the mistress Cleopatra in a direct confrontation on Egyptian soil.[15] The romantic plot is shifted away from the figure of Cleopatra onto one of her innocent slave girls, who rescues Antony from a conspiracy of Egyptian courtiers only to be whipped and thrown to the crocodiles by a savagely jealous queen. Finally, the narrative closure of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* exceeds the limits of Shakespeare's play. While *Antony and Cleopatra* concludes with Caesar (Octavian) pitying the dead lovers and giving orders for his army to attend their funeral in Alexandria, the film continues on to Rome where the Italian audiences of 1913 could witness the Roman leader parading on horseback in triumph, accompanied by fasces and standard bearers, trophies of shields and spears, and a procession of the vanquished. The final shot is of Octavian high up beneath a statue of winged victory, standing and saluting the cheering crowds. On this concluding image is imposed the Latin words "AVE ROMA IMMORTALIS" (Hail, Rome the Eternal City).[16]

The Italian Imperial Project

Guazzoni's *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* evidently shifts away from the strategy of Shakespearean adaptation and attempts to contain Cleopatra within a narrative of Roman conquest. The film's historiographic mode is connected to a wider set of discourses which had taken on a great intensity in Italy in the period leading up to the First World War—namely discourses of empire. From the time of unification, Italy had been constructed as legitimate heir to ancient Rome. *Romanità* was called upon both to supply the new state with a national identity and to affirm the importance of that state in Europe.[17] In September 1911, Italy declared war on Turkey and invaded the Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (that is, modern Libya). A year later, when Turkey surrendered Libya, Italy at last could boast possession of a colony in north Africa. Before, during, and after the annexation of Libya, Rome and its ancient empire were appropriated by Italian imperialists as a validation of Italy's territorial expansion into Africa.

Thus Giovanni Pascoli, when advancing toward Ain Zara in Libya on 26 November 1911, was said to have proclaimed:

> O Tripoli, O Beronike, O Leptis Magna . . . you see again, after so many centuries, Doric columns and Roman legions! Look above you: even the eagles are there![18]

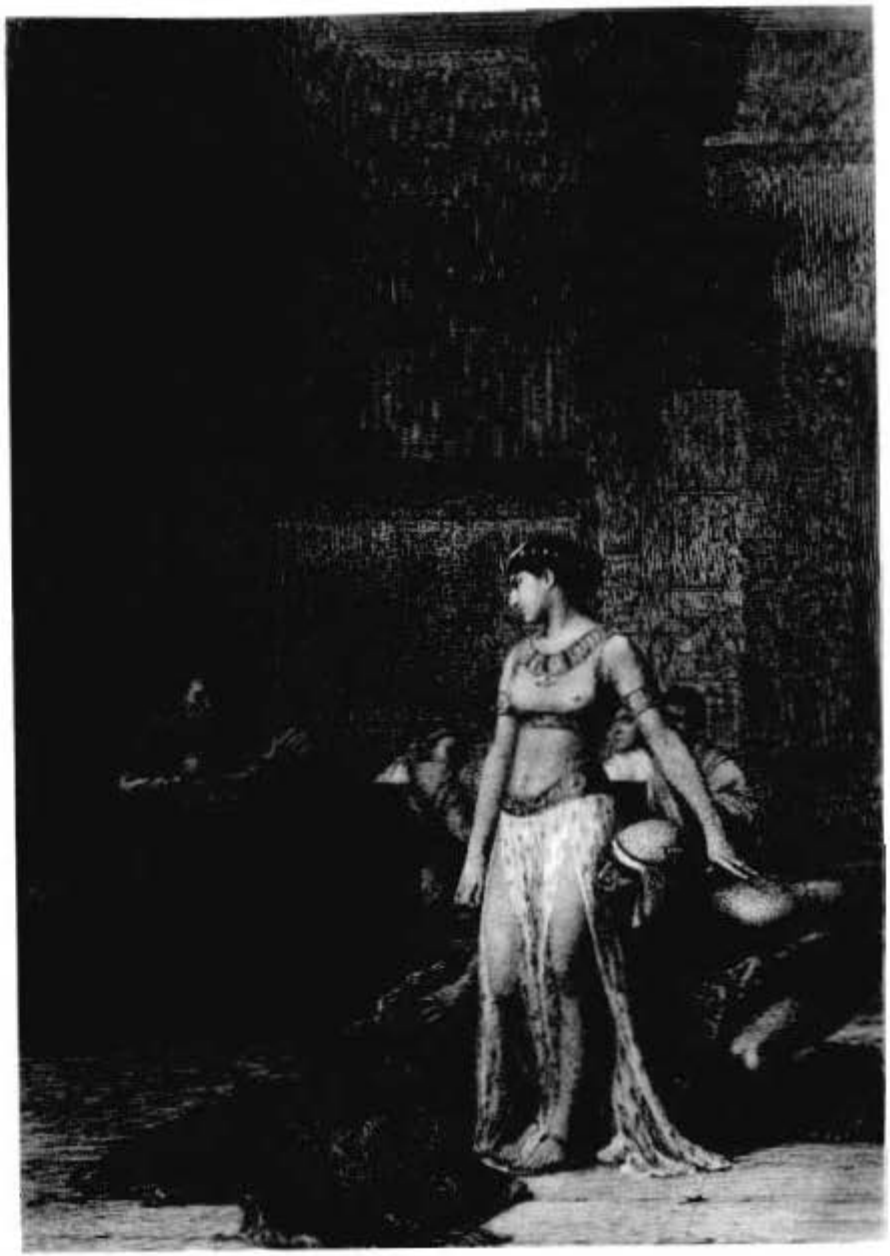
The discourse of historical continuity between the Roman conquests in Africa and the victory of the modern Italian state circulated widely, and the Italian film industry, with its already thriving reconstructions of Roman history, played a significant role in further disseminating this conception of a modern Italian empire arising out of the rediscovered traces of ancient Rome,[19] and the cinematic narration of Cleopatra's defeat became a uniquely appropriate vehicle for both the legitimation and the celebration of Italy as once again mistress of the Mediterranean.

Already in antiquity, the narration of Antony's supposed subjection to Cleopatra had been teleologically structured to lead to the just triumph of Rome over Egypt. But the cinematic representation of that triumph could also draw on the much more recent refiguring of Cleopatra and her kingdom within a nineteenth-century "colonialist imaginary."[20] As the western nations looked to occupy the fragmenting Ottoman empire, there was a significant series of adjustments to the Cleopatra narrative and an adscription to it of fresh currency. In her survey of western traditions for representing the Ptolemaic queen, Lucy Hughes-Hallett delineates the numerous ways in which Cleopatra was refigured in the nineteenth-century European imagination as an Orient inviting penetration.[21] A bronze medallion struck in 1826 to commemorate the completed publication of Baron Denon's influential *Description de l'Égypte* displays on the obverse the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt which had taken place in 1789. The Napoleonic campaign constituted a defining moment in the development of the discourse of Orientalism—the western mechanism (as Edward Said characterizes it) for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the East.[22] On the medallion, France is seen to take possession of an Ottoman province in the guise of a Roman general unveiling a bare-breasted Egyptian queen. She lies reclining passively on a crocodile, before a cluttered scene of pyramids, palm trees, and temple reliefs, gazing up at the conquering Roman—a Cleopatra on display before Julius Caesar, Mark Antony, or, most suitably, Octavian.[23] [illustration 4.1] Appropriated for orientalism, Cleopatra authorizes the articulation of the Orient as Woman, as separate from and subservient to the Occident. Feminized, the Orient can take on, under a gendered western gaze, a feminine allure and penetrability. The colonialist project is provided with an

4.1 France unveils Egypt, bronze medallion of 1826. [Courtesy of Peter A. Clayton.]

ancient and successful precedent, and geographical conquest of a land is naturalized as sexual possession of a woman's body.[24]

Late nineteenth-century orientalism generated "a systematic accumulation of human beings and territories" not just through their domination by western armies and administrations, but also through their visual reproduction within western culture.[25] From paintings and drawings to magic-lantern shows, dioramas, and panoramas, from photography on into the new medium of cinema itself, there was an explosion of images of the Orient. The spectacle of Egypt, particularly in France and Great Britain, became an extension of the colonialist project of mapping and photographing and classifying the country in order to claim ownership of it. Thus, in the 1840s, Britain opened up an overland trade route to India which crossed Egyptian soil. Shortly after, British audiences were treated to the spectacle of a panoramic trip up the river Nile provided for them in the comfort of the Egyptian Hall in London. Alexandria, Cairo, and Suez all appeared as moving images.[26] The mechanisms of nineteenth-century Orientalism transformed Cleopatra into a spectacle to be desired and possessed by watching Europe. In Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Cleopatra before Caesar* (1866), a crouching attendant unwraps a bare-breasted Cleopatra from her carpet for display before the discerning eyes of both Caesar and the painting's viewer. [illustration 4.2] In Lawrence Alma-Tadema's *Antony and Cleopatra* (1883), the queen appears in the foreground languidly awaiting possession by an approaching Antony. In both paintings, as on the earlier medallion, the visual accumulation of exotic clutter around the body of Cleopatra—the dark-complexioned attendants, the leopard skins and silks, the animal-



4.2 Gérôme's painting of *Cleopatra before Caesar* (1866). [Courtesy of the Mansell Collection.]

headed idols, the Pharaonic architecture and hieroglyphs—also operates as a western claim to ownership (through visual reproduction) of a mysterious and ancient Egypt.[27]

The new medium of film emerged during the height of Europe's imperial project between the late nineteenth-century and the beginning of the First World War.[28] The colonizing power of cinema, and the Cleopatra narrative in particular, does not appear to have escaped the Cines production house or the director Enrico Guazzoni. Cines was controlled by the Banco di Roma, which held a number of investments in North Africa. During the Libyan campaign of 1911–1912, the Italian production house released documentaries on Egypt along with footage of the Libyan war zone. The following year, its historical film *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* opened with actual shots of Pharaonic monuments borrowed from Cines documentaries such as *Paesaggi egiziani* and *Regno dei Faraoni*. The camera pans around the avenue of ram-headed lions (or *criosphinxes*) at Karnak, and roams over a series of temple ruins, statues, and a pyramid, before initiating the historical narrative proper with the disembarkation of Antony's Roman troops on Egyptian shores.[29] The film literally cannot escape a colonialist intertext. The documentary footage helps to authenticate the ensuing historical reconstruction but, positioned within a narrative of Roman conquest, the footage is itself authenticated as a display of Italian territorial possession. The historical film, and the narrative image of it promulgated in the Italian press by Guazzoni, also discloses what has been called colonialist cinema's "visual infatuation with Egypt's material abundance."[30] The director parades, and draws attention to the parade of, "the most distinctive places of ancient Rome and ancient Egypt." The painstaking labor involved in reconstructing "the sumptuous court of the Ptolemies" is emphasized both in the press and in the film's mise-en-scène, which is cluttered with reproductions of Egyptian architecture and artefacts. This reproduction of the Egyptian past suppresses the colonial conditions of the Libyan present, and the narration of Octavian's victory in Egypt invites the Italian spectator of 1913 on a visit to an Orient that has long since been won.

In *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, the narrative of Cleopatra's seduction of Antony is embedded within a spectacle of politically resonant landscapes, monuments, *and* troop movements. Parades of Roman troops appear on numerous occasions and for long sequences of the film. The skill and care with which Enrico Guazzoni attended to the scenography of warfare—the location shooting, artificial lighting, camera movement, and crowd control—were highly praised in reviews of the film, both in Italy and abroad. In *The Moving Picture World* of 10 January 1914, for example, James McQuade wrote:

> Superb scenes are the fall of Alexandria before Octavius, his triumphal entry afterwards at Rome; the landing of the Roman troops in Egypt by moonlight; the long and silent march to Alexandria. . . . What terrific scenes are shown on the lofty flight of steps leading up to the royal palace entrance, and on the Nile within the city! The carnage has all the show of blood and death. The Cines supernumeraries—and there are 3500 of them in the scene showing the fall of Alexandria—are really a marvellous force. Seldom, if ever, do they fail to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time; and this, it must be remembered, is largely due to able direction. . . . Those beautiful moonlight effects, taken in the eye of the sun, in the afternoon of a cloudy day, with a veiled lens, are so convincing and artistic that one must cry "bravo!". I refer to the scenes showing the landing of the Roman troops in Egypt and to the showing of the beginning of their march to Alexandria. One of these scenes is finely tinted, and gives the effect of an exquisite and gigantic land and sea view in water colors.[31]

The central segments of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, however, offer its audiences a lesson in how to read such beautifully crafted troop movements morally.

The moral disintegration of Antony, and his oriental entrapment, is marked externally by Amleto Novelli's costume changes in the course of the film, from commanding Roman soldier in military uniform, to romantic Roman civilian in a toga, to subservient "Egyptian" in Pharaonic headdress and robe. Cross-cutting neatly juxtaposes Antony's life of leisure and subservience at the savage, feminine Ptolemaic court with Octavian's life of authority at the just, masculine Senate House at Rome and Octavian's life of activity commanding the Roman troops on their way to war and victory. The message that Roman civilization is about to triumph over Egyptian barbarity is clearly signaled by the anachronistic presence on screen of a quotation from Virgil's *Aeneid*, seen engraved around the Senate wall high above the heads of the senators as they vote for war in Africa. In Virgil's famous definition of Rome's imperial mission, Aeneas is told

> but yours will be the rulership of nations,
> remember, Roman, these will be your arts:
> to teach the ways of peace to those you conquer,
> to spare defeated peoples, tame the proud.
> [*Aeneid* 6.851–3.][32]

The Roman conception of its civilizing mission was used as a constant cover in all the history of Italian expansionism, even at the official level of Italy's

ultimatum to Turkey in September 1911, when Italy was presented as providing Tripolitania and Cyrenaica with the *civiltà* which Turkey had denied them.[33] Significantly, in the Senate House sequence of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, only part of the last line of the Virgilian mission appears visible in the film frame (E SUBIECTIS ET DEBELLA). The injunction "to spare" is missing.

The closure of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, in order to keep the moral high ground for ancient Rome (and thus, by extension, for modern Italy), works to diminish any pathos or majesty which might accrue to the suicide of Cleopatra and the defeat of Egypt. In the final moments of Shakespeare's play, Charmian famously comments that her mistress' suicide was "Well done, and fitting for a princess," and Caesar, when he catches sight of her body, says of Cleopatra

> Bravest at the last,
> She levelled at our purposes and, being royal,
> Took her own way. [V.2]

As if in defiance of the Shakespearean tradition, the intertitle in *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* which follows on Octavian's discovery of Cleopatra's body declares "truly an inglorious ending for the last of the Ptolemies, the setting of Egypt's star salutes the dawn of Roman rule."[34] The final shot of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, in which Octavian's triumphant parade through Rome dissolves into a salutation to the "immortal" city, provides a further key to the political resonance of this film for the Italy of the 1910s. It also suggests why Italian audiences in 1913 might have viewed the troop movements of the film with a "trembling emotion" that was not generated purely by the aesthetic perfection of the military reconstructions. If Rome is eternal, then (in the historical film's terms) what endures for ever is a glorious military victory over the Orient. The cinematic language of justification for Octavian's conquest of Egypt, the necessity of saving Rome from oriental emasculation and depravity, can easily translate into a justification for and celebration of the more recent conquest of Libya. Italy's current imperial project here, as elsewhere, is sustained by an appeal to Roman origins and historical continuity: modern Italy is doing nothing less than carrying on Rome's civilizing mission.

The Oriental Seductions of Cinema

Marcantonio e Cleopatra was a huge commercial success, both in Italy and abroad. From the end of 1913 and during the course of 1914, it was distributed throughout Europe, the United States, Latin America, Russia, Asia, Africa, and Australia, often accompanied by grand premieres, huge quantities of publicity, and enthusiastic accolades.[35] While reviewers at the time of the film's release dwelt largely on the fine cinematography and careful historical reconstructions of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, a year or so later the film critic Vachel Lindsay drew attention to the imperialist ambition that underlies Guazzoni's display of ancient sites, oriental magnificence, and battles on African soil. According to Lindsay, Guazzoni's historical film "is equivalent to waving the Italian above the Egyptian flag, quite slowly for two hours."[36] It would be a mistake, however, to read *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* as unequivocally and unifocally imperialist in design. Italian reviewers and Enrico Guazzoni himself, when commenting on the film in the Italian press, focused explicitly on the film's artistic merits rather than its political ambitions. The film was largely discussed as an attempt to improve upon the cinematographic virtuosity of Guazzoni's earlier success in historical reconstruction, *Quo Vadis?* (1913).

Before the emergence of cinema, its ancestral forms (panoramas, dioramas, magic-lantern shows, and photography) were frequently utilized for the visual reproduction of Egypt within western culture. The material culture of Egypt, meanwhile, gained the status of a silent and mysterious spectacle as ancient tombs were excavated, interpreted, and exhibited throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. From the advent of cinema, its form and content were linked with the discursive constructs of Egyptology. The blackened enclosure of the silent cinema auditorium was assimilated to the dark depth of the Egyptian necropolis, and that assimilation was reinforced through the use of a pseudo-Egyptian architectural style in the construction of some of the new moving-picture palaces. Like a western traveler to the monuments of ancient Egypt, the cinema spectator entered a silent world which spoke through pictorial images akin to hieroglyphs, and saw a kind of immortality preserved on screen akin to the secrets of mummification. The constructs of Egyptology explained, legitimated, and conceptualized the new medium, lending cinema mystery, grandeur, history, and an artistic aura.[37] Reconstructions of ancient Egypt on screen, therefore, could acquire a self-reflexive status as celebrations of cinema's quasi-archaeological powers. With regard to *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*, the skillful reconstructions of ancient Egypt, and discussion of them in the press, drew attention to and celebrated the operations of Italian cinema, and arguably positioned the film's spectators not just as conquering Romans but also as Romans surrendering to the oriental splendors of film spectacle itself.

The film's representation of Cleopatra, moreover, does not consistently promote a narrative drive towards the just triumph of Octavian. At one point, for example, Cleopatra visualizes the coming Roman victory and

reels back in horror as she watches togaed crowds jeering a procession which includes herself and her bound Egyptian subjects. It is this vision of public humiliation that compels her to suicide. Thus, juxtaposed with the final scene of Octavian's victory parade at Rome, film spectators are offered, for at least a brief moment, Cleopatra's tragic point of view. Beyond the film text, the Italian actress who played the Egyptian queen (Gianna Terribili Gonzales) sometimes promoted *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* through personal appearances at screenings or in magazine interviews, since erotic display of the female body was not an insignificant attraction of the film.[39] [illustration 4.3] Her use as a promotional vehicle further restructured the cinematic Cleopatra into a pleasurably seductive but sadly tragic figure with whom the actress could then claim much sympathy. Both the Egypt reconstructed by Guazzoni, and the Cleopatra performed and disseminated by Terribili Gonzales, exceed the requirements of representational conquest.

In the particular case of Cleopatra, Roman history provided the film industry with a narrative of great cultural prestige, with a seemingly momentous justification for cinematic eroticism and the spectacle of the female body, and with a biography that could be appropriated to shape and enhance the public personae of some of cinema's earliest female stars. In 1914, in the same year that Gianna Terribili Gonzales expressed a passing sympathy with the figure of Cleopatra, the Fox film studio inititated a far more elaborate and sustained association with the queen and her kingdom for the actress Theodosia Goodman. Her public image was designed to introduce American audiences to a cinematic character which had been successfully launched a few years earlier by the Danish film industry, namely the dangerous yet alluring "vamp"—the modern woman of the 1910s who ruthlessly seduces men, draining them, in the process, of their will and their blood.[39] The vamp persona created for the actress (now renamed Theda Bara) was heavily invested in orientalist structures of meaning.

Nineteenth-century Orientalism was a discourse of desire as well as empire. It troped the relationship between West and East as one of sexual dominance, and represented the western soldier, explorer, or scholar as penetrating either inviting virginal landscape or resisting, libidinal Nature. The Orient, therefore, suggested sexual promise or threat.[40] Offering a ready-made gendered narrative of oriental temptation, seduction, and conquest, the Cleopatras of the nineteenth-century were often figured as capable of affording transcendent, terrifying sexual pleasures to their lovers. In an act of identification rather than possession, many would-be femmes fatales chose to enhance their own attractions by adopting some of those which had accrued to Cleopatra. Thus Sarah Bernhardt, who performed the role of Cleopatra in productions of Victorien Sardou's play, claimed that the snakes she used on stage in the death scene were live and kept in her house

4.3 Poster advertising Gianna Terribili Gonzales in *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* (1913). [From private collection of Vittorio Martinelli.]

adorned with jewels. She walked, it was said, a crocodile on a leash. In the 1910s, as the star system emerged and was exploited to market films, cinema appropriated and then elaborated the personae of nineteenth-century theatrical stars such as Bernhardt for a new kind of "diva."[41]

4.4 Poster advertising Theda Bara in *Cleopatra* (1917). [Photograph from private collection of Maria Wyke.]

From 1914, Theda Bara began to play film roles as a woman who uses a man sexually and then abandons him for her next victim. At the same time, the Fox studio wrapped Bara up in Orientalist publicity. Her name was hailed as an anagram of Arab death. Although the actress was the daughter of a Jewish tailor from Cincinnati, publicity releases from Fox claimed that she was born in Egypt and, as an infant, sucked the venom of serpents. While the actress lived with her parents, the Fox publicists generated a star image for Bara as a heartbreaker, a "torpedo of domesticity," whose dark and voluptuous beauty would bring "suffering and ruin to thousands of sturdy laborers and their families." She was photographed surrounded by skulls and snakes to advertise the film *A Fool There Was* (1914), and in a *Photoplay* article of September 1915 she was described as a "daughter of the sphinx." The culmination and apparent legitimation of this procedure, whereby a Hollywood studio articulated the vamp's aggressive eroticism in Orientalist terms, came with the release of *Cleopatra* in 1917. Directed by J. Gordon Edwards, the historical film was a vehicle for the display of Theda Bara's sensual exoticism. [illustration 4.4] The Fox publicity bureau (ostensibly reproducing the words of a fan) now identified Cleopatra as "the most famous vamp in history" and Theda Bara as her "reincarnation." On advertising posters, Bara's face was superimposed over that of a sphinx.[42]

Orientalism gave the Hollywood film industry an array of defensive mechanisms with which to assuage concerns about the modern woman of the 1910s: she is an age-old riddle, the "eternal feminine," as indecipherable as the sphinx.[43] The Cleopatra narrative, in particular, provided both an exotic setting within which to locate a tantalizing spectacle of transgressive female sexuality, and an inescapable closure which appeared safely to contain that sexuality. With this shift of emphasis from imperialism towards gender and sexuality, the Hollywood representation of Cleopatra became an account of a woman as much as a war, and its visual pleasures became the spectacle of erotic seductions as much as military maneuvers. Centering its narrative around the Egyptian queen, the Fox studio trebled the number of her seductions. Audiences of *Cleopatra* (1917) could witness not only the queen's sumptuous strategies for enticing Antony on board her barge at Cydnus, but also the unveiling of her physical charms before Julius Caesar in the palace at Alexandria, as well as her captivation of the Egyptian Pharon (a character inherited from an earlier *Cleopatra* released in 1913 by the Helen Gardner Picture Players). A review in *Motion Picture News* of 3 November 1917 imagines the thought-processes of a man on leaving the cinema where he has just seen Theda Bara's Cleopatra in action:

> His mind will drift back to the first half of the picture when Miss Bara wore a different costume in every episode. Different pieces of costume rather; or

better still different varieties of beads. His temperature will ascend with a jump when he recalls the easy way in which the siren captivated Caesar and Pharon and Antony. If he knows the picture business he may wonder about Pennsylvania and Chicago and other places with censor boards that have no appreciation for the female form in a state that so nearly approaches nudeness that only a few strings of beads stand in the way. He might suddenly realize that his mother back in Hohokus would shut her eyes once or twice for fear the beads might break or slip, but then—mother never did understand Egyptian history after all.

The Hollywood Cleopatras of subsequent eras did not continue to be shaped along the contours of an exotic and destructive vamp. With, for example, the further development of the Hollywood star system and the classical Hollywood style of film production, with the advent of the new technology of sound, with the rise of consumerism, and the increased entry of women into the public domain, the Hollywood Cleopatra came to be structured along the lines of a figure who lived inside rather than outside the borders of the United States. She was now glamorous rather than outlandish, to be watched, desired, consumed, and even identified with, rather than overwhelmingly defeated. And the excess and seductiveness of her spectacle-making now operated more readily as a self-reflexive metaphor for the excess and seductiveness of America's Orient within, that is, Hollywood itself.

The Mysteries of the New Woman

From the late 1910s and throughout the 1920s, Orientalism suffused the contemporary sexual comedies directed by Cecil B. DeMille. *Don't Change Your Husband* (1919) dealt with a bored wife who temporarily abandons the dissatisfactions of her marriage for the luxurious world of a gigolo. The artwork employed to promote the film included the image of a sphinx and a pyramid, and the title "The Eternal Feminine," in order to advertise a concern with the question of what the "New Woman" wanted. The perceived problem of female self-gratification was associated with the mystery and the antiquity of Egypt.[44]

"New Woman" was a term that circulated in America from the 1890s. Its coinage signaled a recognition of and debate about an evident shift away from the Victorian conception of a woman's sphere of operation as tied to the home and the family. From the 1890s on into the 1930s, there occurred a growth of labor mobility in the United States, a significant increase in the proportion of women in paid labor, and a dramatic rise in wealth and in the purchase of consumer goods such as cars, leisure activities, cosmetics, and

home furnishings. DeMille's sexual comedies of the silent era projected on screen the radical changes in family and sexual life that accompanied these developments, such as an increase in pre- and extra-marital sex, and in rates of divorce. By the 1920s, when American women had achieved general suffrage and were campaigning for legalized birth control and for an equal rights amendment to the constitution, DeMille was pioneering a fresh marital ethics for Hollywood cinema. DeMille's New Woman, on gaining access to the new middle-class life style of conspicuous consumption and secular hedonism, is, by the close of each film, safely restored to marriage as a fashion plate and passionate sexual playmate.[45] In several of these films, historical flashbacks, such as a Babylonian fantasy in *Male and Female* (1919) or a Roman orgy in *Manslaughter* (1922), provide both wish-fulfillment and warning. Scenes set in the ancient world give an opportunity for more ostentatious display than the contemporary ones into which they are inserted. Historical flashbacks also provide a suitably salutary lesson for the present, since the films imply that it is the sexual and material excess exhibited in these sequences which once led to the downfall of civilizations.[46]

When DeMille's *Cleopatra* was released in 1934, journalists frequently commented on the modernity and humor of its dialogue, as if the director had produced yet another sexual comedy about a modern woman, but this time set entirely in antiquity. A review in the *New York Times* of 17 August 1934 observed that

> When a gathering of Roman women are talking about Caesar, it is done in the modern fashion, with one of the fair ones remarking that "the wife always is the last to hear" of her husband's love affairs.

In the censorious judgment of *Variety* for 21 August 1934, the same Roman social gathering was played, ill-advisedly, "like a modern bridge night," and Claudette Colbert, in the role of Cleopatra, conducted herself like "a cross between a lady of the evening and a rough soubrette in a country melodrama." It was not only the colloquial dialogue of *Cleopatra* that appeared to elide any significant distinction between the social habits of the past and those of the American present. The film was a product of Paramount, a studio whose house style derived from its success in producing and distributing DeMille's contemporary romantic comedies throughout the 1920s. During the 1930s, Paramount became celebrated for its production of an array of elegant comedies, characterized by witty scripts and an opulent mise-en-scène.[47]

Director and dialogue, studio and casting all helped to mark *Cleopatra* (1934) as a comedy of modern manners in fancy dress. The casting policy

for the film, especially regarding the opening half where Warren William is seen playing Julius Caesar, connects the scenes in ancient Rome with contemporary life in New York. For the star images of both William and Colbert, by which audiences would have been attracted into the cinema to see *Cleopatra*, included their previous appearances on screen as members of urban America's smart set. William was already famous for taking on roles as a refined New Yorker, and Claudette Colbert had just played a sophisticated modern wife in the Academy Award–winning *It Happened One Night* (1934).[48]

Some of the promotional material which followed the release of *Cleopatra* even drew explicit attention to DeMille's cinematic modernization of the ancient Romans and Egyptians, and attempted to solicit from its young addressees a suitably prestigious justification for that process. Paramount set up a contest for college students and high-school seniors offering prizes, or "Cleopatra scholarships," of five hundred dollars each for the three essays which best responded to a range of questions the studio posed concerning the film director's treatment of history. Question 44 of the *Study Guide and Manual* (which Paramount published to launch the contest) asked:

> R. H. Case calls Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra" "an extraordinarily vivid presentment in Elizabethan terms of events and characters of the ancient world." Would it be fair to describe DeMille's "Cleopatra" as "an extraordinarily vivid presentment in *American* terms of events and characters of the ancient world?" Justify your answer.[49]

Although DeMille's *Cleopatra* was closely bound, both in its production and packaging, to the representation of contemporary American social mores, the Egyptian setting and the Cleopatra narrative were not arbitrary points of historical reference. Reviewers placed the film's visual style—its exhibition of spectacular historical reconstructions and opulent production values—in the tradition of DeMille's biblical epics *The Ten Commandments* (1923), *King of Kings* (1927), and *Sign of the Cross* (1932). Those biblical epics had been made in a climate of ever-increasing concern about the moral content and effects of Hollywood films. According to the Republican reformer Will Hays, at the time of his appointment by the majors in 1922 as an internal regulator of the film industry, films had to be made "giving the public all the sex it wants with compensating values for all those church and women groups." DeMille is regarded as having found a shrewd film formula to meet Hays' requirements during the 1920s, namely romantic triangles, spiced with liberal displays of sex and consumption, and diluted by the triumph of marriage at the film's close.[50] The early years of the Depression, however, witnessed a proliferation of films visualizing (and *talking* about) divorce, adultery, prostitution, crime, and violence, despite the installation in 1930 of a formal Production Code which stipulated that the Hollywood studios should promote the institutions of marriage and the home.[51] When DeMille released *Sign of the Cross* in 1932, he might have anticipated that he could display sex, nudity, arson, homosexuality, lesbianism, mass murder, and orgies relatively uncontentiously, for they were all clothed in religious history and all marked as pagan depravities, nobly scorned or endured by the heroine and (ultimately) the hero, who are seen in the closing moments of the film virtuously conjoined as they ascend into the blazing light of Christian salvation. But, however pious the film's conclusion, and despite its enormous box-office success, the spectacular sex and sadism of *Sign of the Cross* exacerbated the already intensifying debate over the morality of motion pictures.[52] *Cleopatra* was released in July 1934, just three months after the Catholic Church had launched its pressure group the Legion of Decency, which pledged millions of Catholics to boycott films judged immoral. In the same month as the release of *Cleopatra*, the film industry felt compelled to appoint a lay Catholic as head of a new Production Code Administration, with considerably greater powers to police the content of Hollywood films and to enforce adherence to the Code.[53] In the face of a more restrictive Production Code, the historicity of *Cleopatra* provided DeMille with a less objectionable formula than that of *Sign of the Cross* with which to attract spectators.

In *Sign of the Cross*, Claudette Colbert had played Poppaea, the sultry and sadistic wife of the emperor Nero, who attempts to seduce the Prefect of Rome and kill off the Christian girl for whom the Prefect rejects her. By the following year, the persona of another Paramount star might have appeared better to embody the sexual revolution of the last decade. In her film roles, Mae West played a raucously independent woman, who initiated seductions and outsmarted men. But by 1934 West's earlier films were taken out of circulation, and her new ones, such as *It Ain't No Sin*, were rigorously vetted, turning her character into a moderately bad girl on her way to redemption.[54] In such a charged climate, the Cleopatra narrative offered DeMille and the Paramount studio an opportunity to display yet again the sexually transgressive behavior of a woman now dressed in the dignity of magnificent historical necessity and illustrious literary precedent, and safely distanced in the past and the oriental elsewhere.[55] The seductions of Colbert/Cleopatra were now displayed in a milder and more indirect form than those of Colbert/Poppaea, and they received their proper punishment at the film's close. Encased in a secular narrative, they were also less likely to aggravate the powerful lobbying forces of organized American religion.

Cleopatra was thus a highly appropriate vehicle for the exploration, without considerable censure, of contemporary concerns about gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in 1930s America.

The constituents of the Cleopatra narrative were also highly resonant and expressive points of historical reference for the 1930s. Between the two World Wars, with the increasing entry of women into the public domain and an associated intensification of debates about women's roles, there was a significant increase in the number of western reassessments of the queen's reign. For, in Cleopatra's representations, an active female sexuality *and* political power were problematically combined.[56] An academic redefinition of Cleopatra had already begun in 1864, with the publication of a biography defending the queen by the German historian Adolf Stahr. His work was followed by a series of histories and novels which ridiculed the Roman portrait of a wicked seductress, such as Arthur Weigall's *The Life and Times of Cleopatra* (1914). Following Stahr, *The Life and Times* drew attention to Cleopatra's political vision of a pan-Hellenic empire subsuming East and West.[57] During the course of the 1930s, among an array of plays, novels, and biographies about the queen,[58] a corresponding reaction to these revisions surfaced with, for example, Oscar von Wertheimer's *Cleopatra—A Royal Voluptuary* (published in an English translation three years before the release of DeMille's film). Included in the preface to Wertheimer's biography was the remark that "we judge men by their achievements and women by the love they have inspired."[59]

Paramount's *Study Guide* for the college-age audiences of DeMille's *Cleopatra* clearly engages with this historical debate and comes down expressly in favor of Wertheimer's cruel voluptuary. In the studio's promotional literature, despite references to Shakespeare, Dryden, and Shaw as source material, Wertheimer's becomes the master text against which to test the veracity of DeMille's film adaptation. Contestants for the "Cleopatra scholarship" are encouraged to read Wertheimer before responding to the set questions, passages from *The Royal Voluptuary* are quoted (including criticism of Weigall), and several scenes or characterizations in the film are justified as carrying out Wertheimer's conception of events. Following the historical model offered by Wertheimer enables Paramount's *Study Guide* to describe Cleopatra's political policies as an example of the "unbridled ambition of women to attain power," and thus to articulate contemporary anxieties about public roles for women.[60]

The orientalist structures of meaning which refigured the representation of Cleopatra from the time of the Napoleonic campaigns in Egypt, and persisted into her cinematic depictions in the silent era of the early twentieth-century, also bolster the expression of contemporary social concerns in

DeMille's *Cleopatra*. The film's first image is of two stones drawn back like curtains to reveal the action behind them, its last image that of the stones drawn together to conceal the preceding spectacle. Cleopatra's story is thus framed both as spectacle and as penetration of the oriental mysteries of Woman, for the stones first open to reveal Cleopatra in a desert landscape tied to a monument covered in hieroglyphs and close on an image of the queen silent, remote and majestic in death, enthroned in the royal palace at Alexandria.[61]

Before *Cleopatra*, however, orientalism had already suffused DeMille's cinematic practice, as a means to mark out not just a new and troubling feminine identity, but also a new and troubling ethnic identity. In sectors of the American urban communities of the early twentieth-century, concern about the arrival of new immigrants from outside Europe was assimilated to concern about the increased public authority of women, since both were construed equally as threats to the existing social formation. Both "modern" women and new immigrants were often figured cinematically in orientalist terms. As the collective urban Other, they were set in an exotic mise-en-scène and characterized as having a taste for sybaritic luxury or depraved sex.[62] In the first part of DeMille's *Cleopatra*, the Egyptian queen seduces Julius Caesar in Alexandria and then comes to Rome, where Caesar is planning to divorce his wife Calpurnia, set himself up as king, and make Cleopatra his queen. Interlinked with wider discourses of gender and ethnicity, DeMille's representation of the oriental queen's arrival in Rome and her impact on the Romans had a special hold on urban American audiences of the 1930s, for the United States is a society where ethnic composition and immigration exist at the core of its historical and cultural formation.[63]

In the Roman sequences of DeMille's *Cleopatra*, at the dinner party (which *Variety* scathingly compares to "a modern bridge night"), the gossip concerns Julius Caesar's rumored divorce and his designs to convert the republic into a monarchy. During Cleopatra's ensuing triumphal procession through the streets of Rome, when the more familiar images of Julius Caesar's Roman soldiers and chariots, trumpets and magisterial *fasces* are swiftly supplanted by the bizarre music, black attendants, animal iconography, and canopied sedan of the enthroned queen, cinema audiences are offered the opportunity to identify with the Roman crowds on screen who have cheered their Roman leader but observe the arrival of his Egyptian mistress in bemused silence. In subsequent scenes, at the Roman baths and in the house of Julius Caesar, first the conspirators and then Mark Antony express volubly their anxieties about the malign influences now exerting themselves on Caesar and the city at large. Rome, they protest, cannot become an oriental city ruled by a frivolous queen. Julius Caesar, they com-

plain, has been domesticated and made ridiculous by a woman. In these film sequences, Rome is characterized as a republican, masculine world, where women are domesticated wives and only men have political authority. That world is perceived to be under threat from the tyrannical, feminine world of Egypt, where women are rulers of both the state and their menfolk.[64] The first half of DeMille's *Cleopatra* thus acts out an extreme version of a current fear that the social fabric of modern America is endangered.

The long-standing and widely disseminated practice of utilizing the virtues of the Roman republic to underscore the heroism of America's Founding Fathers[65] enhances the spectator's competence to read the film's appalled Romans as historical analogies for the old Anglo-aristocracy of America's cities now threatened by the arrival of an urban Other.[66] Set in antiquity, the urban Other is refigured as foreign, decadent, and dangerous, and any attempt to master the city as doomed to failure, since spectators already know that Cleopatra's stratagems will not succeed—Julius Caesar will be assassinated and the queen will be forced ignominously to leave the city. Historical analogy thus fosters an hyperbolic articulation of gender and ethnic conflicts in terms of the rescue of a city and a civilization from corruption.

The second half of DeMille's *Cleopatra* increases and then appears to remove the fears articulated in the first half concerning the challenge posed to traditional gender roles by the advent of the New Woman. The Marc Antony who, in the earlier Roman sequences, had bitterly protested that both Caesar and the Roman eagle had been tamed by a woman, and who had concluded the first half of the film with a declaration that he would take vengeance for Rome on the Egyptian, is himself vanquished by her. Through the use of DeMille's visual system of objective correlatives,[67] Antony is represented as engulfed and unmanned by a woman's body in the sequence where the Roman visits Cleopatra's barge at Tarsus. When Antony enters the feminine ship, he passes between a double line of women waving soft fans to reach within a Cleopatra who reclines before a vulvaic mass of plumes. On the way to being sexually possessed by the queen—a "gorgeous piece of cinematic euphemism" involving the rhythmic thrusting and retracting of her ship's banks of oars[68]—Antony loses all the emblems of his Roman virility, namely his soldier's helmet, his huge wolfhounds, and his upright stance.

The conservative narrative drive of DeMille's *Cleopatra* later restores Antony reassuringly to full manhood and Cleopatra to a very traditionally conceived femininity. When news reaches Antony in Alexandria that the Romans have declared war, he springs to attention again as an aggressive Roman general. At that precise moment, Cleopatra falls to her knees and, with the camera looking down on her, declares "I've seen a god come to life. I'm no longer a queen. I'm a woman."[69] Through dialogue, camera angle, and gesture, cinema spectators witness the empowerment of Antony and Cleopatra's submission to love. In the concluding sequences of the film, Cleopatra now works not in the interests of her country but of her man. The second half of DeMille's *Cleopatra* thus displays a minatory vision of the New Woman only to contain her eventually within the safe bounds of conventional romance.[70] Once again the message that social order could be disrupted by modern women's claims to political and sexual freedom is made more rhetorically pointed by the use of historical analogy. The lesson that New Women are dangerous but defeatable is lent an air of authority and venerability by its apparent antiquity.[71]

Off-screen Cleopatras

Filmic representations of Cleopatra cannot, nor would they want to, limit her significance to the espousal of imperialism or patriarchy. The cinematic tradition for depicting Cleopatra has often closed with the defeat of the oriental queen, but, at the same time, it has lingered lovingly over her attractions. Thus DeMille's *Cleopatra* (unlike Guazzoni's *Marcantonio e Cleopatra*) is framed as the story of the queen, not her Roman opponents. The characterization of Cleopatra through casting, dialogue and gesture, camera work and lighting, often invites audience identification with her.[72] In the barge sequence, for example, DeMille's "Rembrandt style" of film aesthetics provides highlighted close-ups of Cleopatra's face as we are made privy to a clever double bluff by which she entertainingly seduces a gruff and naive Antony.[73] At the end of the film, moreover, its diegetic world is left in suspended animation as DeMille's camera slowly recedes from the visually opulent image of a motionless Egyptian queen clothed in full Pharaonic costume, enthroned on high in the royal palace beneath a giant winged scarab. The closure of *Cleopatra* (1934) reveals an evident conflict between the film's narrative and stylistic codes. DeMille's distinctive visual style in this film, as in many of his earlier films, consists of furnishing rich details of glamorous costumes and decor, and in figuring the New Woman as herself a seductive spectacle, often through ritualistic moments of narrative stasis that permit voyeuristic access to her dressing or reclining in luxurious surroundings.[74] The historical film invites a gendered consumer gaze that visually appropriates the commodities showcased in the film and narcissistically apprehends the image of the woman on screen as an ideal of female beauty and of a consumer life style.[75]

Studies of American consumer culture have drawn attention to a progressive tightening of the bond between the institutions of Hollywood cinema and the department store through the second and third decades of the twen-

tieth century. The film frame came to function (in the famous phraseology of Charles Eckert) as a living display window occupied by marvelous mannequins. Hollywood films showcased fashions and furnishings to a consuming subject largely envisaged as female, since the film and retail industries were aware, in the 1920s and 1930s, that women were the primary motivators of cinema attendance and that they made between eighty and ninety percent of all purchases for family use.[76] The DeMille visual style, in both his comedies and his historical epics, is regarded as an exemplary model of the commodification of cinema and the solicitation of a consumer gaze.[77]

The Cleopatra narrative could very easily submit to such DeMille treatment. In her tradition, Cleopatra was already a supreme embodiment of Woman engineered as seductive spectacle. Essential topoi inherited from Roman-oriented sources include her exposure to Julius Caesar from inside a carpet and her self-presentation as Aphrodite/Isis to attract Antony's Dionysus/Osiris.[78] Such accounts of the queen provide historical justification for film sequences where a woman poses self-consciously for the admiration of a male, on-screen audience. [illustration 4.5] Furthermore, the oriental mise-en-scène required for the cinematic representation of Cleopatra had already been utilized as a retail strategy in department stores earlier in the century, and had gained a renewed modishness ever since the discovery of Tutankhaman's tomb in 1922, after which American and European markets were flooded for some years with a vast array of Egyptianizing designs.[79] Framed within a consumer gaze, Cleopatra and the Orient undergo a slippage in signification. By a metonymic process, they supply showcased products and those tied in offscreen with the sheen of a mysterious and venerable eroticism and luxury.[80] For the consuming spectator, mastery of the Orient involves not occupation but consumption.

In the 1930s, beyond the cinema screen, lay a massive apparatus to tie up commodities with particular films.[81] In cinema shops and other retail outlets, Colbert/Cleopatra was deployed to sell a range of products such as hats, cigarettes, shoes, and soap. Press books supplied by Paramount to theater managers suggested ways of exploiting tie-ins with department stores. One such studio press release, supplied to accompany the British exhibition of *Cleopatra*, noted:

> The opening of the autumn style season brings into prominence the new style accessories which definitely reflect the "Cleopatra" motif that is so prominent throughout all the season's fashions. All over England, leading stores are primed to exploit the new coiffeur jewellry, and other "Cleopatra" items, such as ladies' belts, compacts and cigarette cases, and costume jewellry which are being made by a cooperating manufacturer.[82]

4.5 Poster advertising Claudette Colbert in *Cleopatra* (1934). [Photograph from private collection of Maria Wyke.]

Women in the audiences of DeMille's historical film were thus encouraged to identify with the Cleopatra on screen and to carry over that identification into their lives outside the cinema through the purchase of Cleopatra gowns and other "style accessories."[83] Such identifications constituted a useful vehicle for socializing ethnically diverse spectators into "a more homogeneous nation of consumers."[84] To that end, the features of the actress chosen to play Cleopatra, Claudette Colbert, adhere more closely to dominant American conventions for female beauty than to those required of an orientalized urban Other. Both the film's diegesis and consumer retailing, however, marketed a traditionally conceived femininity for the queen and her spectators. The narrative resolution of DeMille's *Cleopatra* and the extra-cinematic consumer discourses that surrounded the film deny the queen any political authority. Any societal concerns the female spectator may have are deflected onto an intensified concern with her own body and the need to dress it and shape it in line with the demanding requirements of the oriental glamor of Hollywood.[85] The Roman conquests that consumers might make, thanks to the Cleopatra-style accessories they can buy, belong purely to the domain of

romance.[86] If cinema is a "technology of gender,"[87] film production and exhibition are not without their paradoxes and complexities. The narrative code, visual style, promotional literature, and marketing strategies associated with DeMille's *Cleopatra* do not necessarily offer a consistent lesson in gender politics for 1930s America. And, invited to read femininity as a mode of self-theatricalization, it was always open to viewers of the film to acknowledge thereby femininity's constructedness.[88]

Similarly, the infamous *Cleopatra* released in 1963 by 20th Century-Fox offers a heterogeneous set of appropriations of Roman history, a conflicting array of lessons in gender politics, and a range of different identifications as a result of the competing discourses of, for example, the film's diegesis and visual style, associated newspaper publicity, and studio press-releases and promotions. In the case of Fox's *Cleopatra*, even the diegesis itself is not a very stable entity. The film finally distributed by the studio in 1963 was a substantially cut version of that originally made by the director Joseph L. Mankiewicz. Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* appears to have been conceived as a response to DeMille's, one more suited to the social and political climate of the early 1960s. A souvenir program from the film's charity premiere in Los Angeles (held on 20 June 1963) opens with a quotation from the historian Arthur Weigall that highlights the *difference* between ancient and modern codes of behavior. In a later section on the history and legend of Cleopatra, the program declares:

> Modern scholarship has pieced together a reasonable interpretation of events that for 2000 years had captured the imaginations of playwrights, biographers, novelists. Considerably altered now is the popular exaggeration of her as "the temptress of the Nile." Beautiful and seductive, Cleopatra was, but she was also a hereditary ruler, a woman of rare spirit and courage, cosmopolitan and yet superstitious.[89]

As the film's historical master-text, Wertheimer's depiction of a royal voluptuary is jettisoned in favor of a return to Weigall's political visionary. In the climate of the early 1960s, Cleopatra could be depicted more comfortably as a woman of considerable political authority, and her vision of world unity troped opportunely in the rhetoric of the United Nations.

Fears for the effectiveness of the UN were constantly aired during the 1950s and early 1960s, as it failed to resolve the problems of an enduring colonialism and a continuing antagonism between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The election of President Kennedy in 1960 seemed, to some Americans, to hold out the hope of an end to the Cold War, but confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union continued unabated.[90] A

screenplay outline for Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* (dated 1961) attributes to the director a description of the queen as "an early-day Kennedy."[91] In surviving footage of a scene at Alexander's tomb, Cleopatra attempts to persuade Julius Caesar of the merits of Alexander's grand design—that there should arise "out of the patchwork of conquests, one world, and out of one world, one nation, one people on earth living in peace." The characterization of Cleopatra as "a kind of Eleanor Roosevelt captivated by the ideal of one-world unity"[92] was apparently woven tightly through the original film shot by Mankiewicz. Although this visionary Cleopatra reappears briefly in some of the studio's press releases and in premiere programs, little survives of a coherent political diegesis in the film which was finally exhibited in 1963.[93] Moreover, what little did survive was swamped by the film's blockbuster production values and by extra-cinematic publicity concerning the quality of the film's spectacle and the life style of its female star.

A mass of extra-cinematic discourses began to accumulate around Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* long before its release, as the film was in production on and off for almost two years. Shooting began in England in October 1961, and culminated in the loss of some five million dollars, a change of director, and a serious illness for its big-name star, Elizabeth Taylor. In September 1961, with a new director and a new one million–dollar contract negotiated for Taylor, shooting restarted in Italy. Having failed to meet a pressing studio deadline of June 1962 for completion, the film's producer was fired and the head of Fox resigned. Finally, under the authority of a new studio head, a considerably edited version of Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* was premiered in June 1963.[94] Throughout this period, 20th Century-Fox fed huge amounts of detail about the production process into magazines and newspapers which, from early 1962, also began to fill with rumors about an adulterous affair between two of the film's principals, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The *Motion Picture Herald* for 26 June 1963 thus claimed "never before in motion picture history, perhaps, has a film come to the public with a greater degree of expectancy than 'Cleopatra.'"

In the long and costly absence of a film on which to peg an advertising campaign, 20th Century-Fox solicited consumer interest during production through the star image of Taylor. Star images, such as Taylor's, had an important function in the economy of Hollywood in the 1950s and 1960s. The film star's persona entered into extracinematic circulation, in studio publicity and promotion, newspapers and magazines, in advertisements, on radio and television talk shows, then continued into the films themselves and subsequent commentary on them. Images of female stars, especially, were exploited by the studios and the associated retailing industries as a means of selling fashion and beauty products. Representations of the star's

supposed personality and life style were organized around themes of consumption, success, and sex. The star was also defined, paradoxically, as being both an extraordinary and an ordinary individual, so that she might become a model of beauty and consumption to be imitated, on a humbler scale, by readers of her image. Simultaneously, Hollywood studios structured the images of their stars in extra-cinematic texts as a vehicle for describing forthcoming films—as an invitiation to readers to enter the cinema where they might expect to see those images vividly enacted.[95]

An article in an edition of *Vogue* from 1962, accompanied by photographs of Elizabeth Taylor both dressed in historical character and in some "non-cinema coifs," defined the star's image in terms of a "new Cleopatra complex":

> Cleopatra, at the height of her fascination and power, sailed with Caesar to Rome where, the record shows, her potent, volatile charms turned the *vox pop* decidedly pettish. Her experience, in fact, was quite the reverse of Cleopatra Taylor's. . . . To *this* Cleopatra the Romans seem anything but hostile; their designers are plotting some not-too-broody Cleo clothes; the papers are full of Liz; and the Queen of the Nile coiffure can be felt at least as far north as Paris. . . . To all challenges, Miss Taylor presents an on-location manner that's disciplined and direct. Off-set she's as languid as a cheetah, relaxing, cat-like, at her Via Appia villa with her husband, three children, four dogs, two Siamese cats, sipping champagne by the pool, letting the world come to her—and it does.[96]

By means of an elision between the Egyptian queen and the Hollywood film star, Taylor inherits Cleopatra's commanding power, her immense celebrity, and her legendary life style. The champagne and the pool take on the fabulous quality of Cleopatra's banquets by virtue of being sited at a Roman villa. The langor of a cheetah and the pose of a cat recall the animal iconography of Pharaonic Egypt and hint at a feral sexuality to match that attributed to the oriental queen. Dissolving the boundaries between historical character and film star considerably enriches Taylor's star image and, by extension, the fashions she promotes, as well as soliciting interest in the elusive film where the "new Cleopatra," it may be assumed, will act out all the extravagance and excess of the old.

As rumors broke about Taylor's affair with Burton, however, the rhetoric of an identity between star and Egyptian queen was explored in other extra-cinematic texts without any attempt to promote Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* or its associated merchandising. On these occasions, a correspondence was observed not just between the fascination of the queen and the film star who was now playing her part, but also between their respective sexual relationships with their lovers. An article in *Show Business Illustrated* of 2 January 1962 noted parallels at length:

> MOVIE OF "CLEOPATRA" curious case of destiny at work. Film now underway again after series of appalling mishaps—e.g., near-death of Elizabeth Taylor, loss of $5,000,000. Why was unlucky project not abandoned altogether? Reason: Elizbeth Taylor fated to play Cleopatra. Parallels in life of two girls spooky . . . LIZ ALSO FOUND NEW REGENT. Also man whose wife was paragon of sunny domesticity. Eddie Fisher. Party boy like Antony. Left wife, married Liz . . . Both queens accused of stealing husband from nice wife. Liz replied: "What am I supposed to do, ask him to go back to her?" Cleopatra would have said the same. She and Liz are classic Other Woman. Can't help it. Metabolism.

Taylor, at the time when she was making *Cleopatra*, was already notorious for being seen to break up the marriage between Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds, whose star image was that of America's perfect young wife. The assimilation of the film star to her film character now provides an opportunity to equate Cleopatra's enticement of Antony from Octavia bathetically with Taylor's past affair.[97] But it also permits a hint at a fresh sexual scandal, for the article concludes by insinuating tantalizingly that there are yet more parallels to come:

> But does small voice of Cleopatra whisper to Liz at night across the centuries: "You really *can* rule the world. Get a barge! Roll yourself in an Oriental rug and have it sent to . . ." But who? MANY FASCINATING possibilities. But no concern of scholarly work. Stick to facts. Future will reveal them in own time. Notes put aside until then.

More explicit and detailed reports of the affair between Taylor and Burton then poured forth in the European and American press from early 1962. By the spring, 20th Century-Fox had become concerned whether such massive and persistent press interest would provide good box-office returns or encourage the American public instead to boycott the film on its eventual release.[98] Both the couple and the film set were besieged by the world's press. In a letter dated 7 June 1962 (which was published in 1963 in a collected edition entitled *The Cleopatra Papers*), the Fox publicist Nathan Weiss wrote to his colleague Jack Brodsky on just such a press visit to the film's Alexandria set outside Rome:

> After lunch there was a short but eloquent scene in which Antony divorces his wife after the fashion of the time—by proclaiming it three times to the multitudes. Partly because the writing is so overnight-contemporary, to coin a new period, there were regrettable connotations from the point of view of stirring up the press—regret that is from the puritan Fox viewpoint, but not damaging I suspect to the box office. It is, in just about every sense, a most peculiarly ambivalent production.[99]

Provided on set with such gloriously neat connections between Roman history and a modern sex scandal, the press continued to figure their accounts of the Taylor/Burton affair in the extravagant terms of a Cleopatran romance.[100]

Accounts of the production of Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* published by insiders after the film's release suggest that the extra-cinematic discourses of film star adultery infected the film-making process itself, both the overnight revisions of the script and, in particular, the performance of the female star. On 12 April 1962, the Vatican weekly *Osservatore della domenica* printed an open letter in which Elizabeth Taylor was attacked for making a mockery of the sanctity of marriage and threatened with a future of "erotic vagrancy."[101] In *My Life with Cleopatra* (1963), the producer Walter Wanger duplicated his notes on the subsequent day's shooting:

> Filmed one of the most dramatic scenes in the movie and one of the most dramatic real-life scenes I have ever witnessed. Again the parallel between the life of Cleopatra and the life of Elizabeth Taylor is incredible. The scene filmed in the Forum calls for Cleopatra to make her entrance into Rome sitting with Caesarion on top of a huge (more than thirty feet high) black Sphinx drawn by 300 gold-covered slaves. The entrance into Rome was Cleopatra's big gamble. If the Romans accepted her with an ovation, she had won Caesar. If they refused to accept her, she had lost him, and very possibly her life. There were almost 7,000 Roman extras milling about in front of the Forum. All of them presumably had read the Vatican criticism of Liz. Not only would these Roman extras be accepting Cleopatra, but they would also be expressing their personal acceptance of the woman who plays Cleopatra. . . . I saw the sense of relief flood through Liz's body as the slave girls, handmaidens, senators, guards, and thousands of others applauded her—personally.[102]

Wanger's description of filming (as well as Weiss's published letter) may have been a damage-limitation exercise, an attempt, after the events of 1962, to recoup for the benefit of the enormously costly film some of the world-

wide notoriety that had accrued to it. But the publication of the producer's diary, along with the letters of the Fox publicists, would have further encouraged contemporary spectators of *Cleopatra* to read its representation of ancient history and its characterization of the Egyptian queen as an extension of the extra-cinematic discourses on Taylor's marriages and adultery. Criticism of Taylor's performance in reviews of the film—her perceived "commonness" and inability to know "the difference between playing oneself in an Egyptian costume and playing Queen of Egypt"[103]—exposes the contradiction between the role of Cleopatra as it may have been originally conceived (political visionary) and the star performance of it (cruelly hounded Other Woman). Thus, the extra-cinematic development of Taylor's star image from legendary bon vivcur to legendary adulteress and her performance of that image in Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* overwhelmed any attempt by the film's diegesis to characterize the queen as a state leader dreaming of world empire.

Star images often "embody social values that are in some sense or other in crisis."[104] Discourses of stardom are littered with the exploration, in particular, of sexual behaviors. Elizabeth Taylor's star image as a modern-day Cleopatra and her performance of it in Mankiewicz's film became a useful reference point in the early 1960s for discussion of problems attached to the institutions of heterosexual monogamy. The Kinsey reports of 1948 and 1953 on the sexual behavior of males and females respectively had aroused enormous interest and debate in an era that idealized the family as a refuge against social change. The president of the Union Theological Seminary observed that current interest in Kinsey's work (including his revelations of persistent adultery among middle-class American women) was symptomatic of "a prevailing degradation in American morality approximating the worst decadence of the Roman era."[105] Moral panics about the fragility of conventional sexuality, about the success of *Playboy* and the introduction of the oral contraceptive, about increases in adultery and divorce, thus came to be troped in the language of Roman history.

Roman Spectators

Hollywood rarely acknowledges the discursive operations of the star system, that the star personality is a construct built up and expressed only through films and associated extra-cinematic texts, that the person and the image are two separable entities.[106] Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra*, however, appears to offer a glimpse of that duality, and in doing so sets up an identification between the Romans within the film who looks at Cleopatra and the spectators in the cinema who look at the screen. Near the beginning of the Cleopatra/Antony half of the film, during the sequence where Cleopatra

sumptuously entertains Antony on board her barge at Tarsus, she tantalizes the drunk Roman with a mock-Cleopatra, a scantily dressed and lascivious imitation, whom Antony grabs and passionately kisses only to turn and find that the real Cleopatra has left the shipboard banquet hall. Angrily, he abandons the fake queen and tracks down the real one to her boudoir. There he confronts Cleopatra directly, after having first slashed the diaphanous hangings that screen her from him. *Cleopatra* here hints self-consciously at the strategies of the Fox publicists and the press who, for many months before the release of the film, had been constructing the star image of "Cleopatra Taylor" for an avid readership. The dynamic between the characters on screen reproduces that between the film and its spectators. The play-acting on the barge suggests that there are two Taylors just as there are two Cleopatras, and that Antony's search for the real queen behind the gauzy curtain mirrors the spectator's search for the real Taylor behind the star image. *Cleopatra* shows us what Antony sees, first his blurred vision of the Cleopatra double, then, after the veil which fills the whole film frame is cut away, his direct uncluttered gaze on the sleeping queen. Thus Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* encourages its spectators to believe that their desirous looks, like that of Antony/Burton, will cut through to and finally take possession of the elusive star.

A similar scene also occurs in the Cleopatra/Julius Caesar half of the film. During an early sequence set in Alexandria, Cleopatra is shown fully clothed, seated on a plain bench, drinking from an unassuming cup, as she listens to a recitation of Catullan poetry. Realizing that Julius Caesar is on his way to her palace-chamber, she declares:

> We must not disappoint the mighty Caesar. The Romans tell fabulous tales of my bath, and my handmaidens, and my morals.

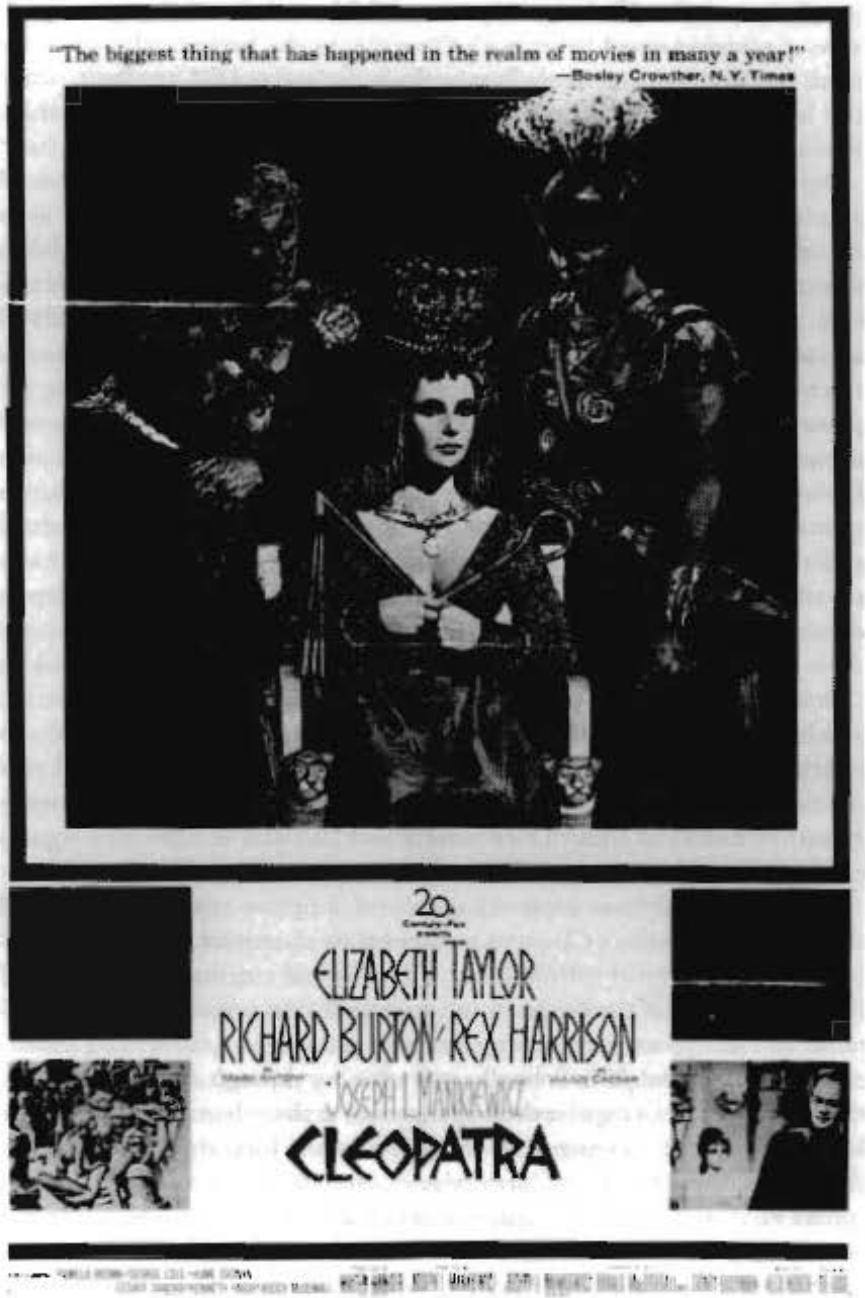
The queen then stages a titillating spectacle of herself for the benefit of Caesar's gaze, posing supine and sensuous on a couch, now naked but for a sparsely decorated, transparent covering, surrounded by handmaidens who dance, or fan their seductive mistress, or paint her finger- and toenails. The scene not only hints self-consciously at the discourses of stardom that have shaped the Taylor image, but also foregrounds the way female stars have been made to function in Hollywood cinema, including past cinematic Cleopatras. The "fabulous tales" the Romans tell signify the sensational accounts of Taylor's star life style off set (her poolside champagne, her eight-hundred-dollar-a-week hairdresser, her perpetual debauch with Burton)[107] as well as the Roman histories of an oriental whore. Attention is also drawn to Hollywood cinema's mechanisms for fetishizing and objectifying

its female stars for the desirous spectator.[108] We are offered the double pleasure of a sophisticated laugh with Cleopatra at the hackneyed, DeMillean tactic of "the bedroom scene," as well as the scopophilic act itself, when the body of Cleopatra/Taylor is viewed admiringly by the approaching Roman/camera.[109]

In the 1960s, at a time when a visit to the cinema had become only one of a number of possible leisure activities, a large number of Hollywood films exhibited such narrative self-consciousness about the artifices involved in film-making.[110] The historical epic had always been a genre in which cinema could display itself and its powers through showpiece moments of spectacle, such as (in the case of films reconstructing ancient history) chariot races, gladiatorial combat, triumphal processions, land and sea battles, the persecutions of Nero, or the seductions of Cleopatra.[111] The ancient world of such Hollywood films was, as Michael Wood has argued, "a huge, many-faceted metaphor for Hollywood itself" and, throughout the 1950s, the spectacularly reconstructed ancient world (with its lavish production values, and the visually enticing technology of Technicolor and widescreen) also signaled the hope of salvation for a film industry suffering from the depredations caused by the large-scale retirement of the American public into do-it-yourself pursuits and domestic television viewing.[112] Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra*, in particular, was widely discussed in its long pre-release period as a last ditch (and ultimately unsuccessful) attempt by a Hollywood studio to bring back audiences to the cinema following the by now outdated production techniques of the old studio system, and the generic codes of hugely expensive historical construction which had last won the industry significant commercial success in 1959 when MGM released *Ben-Hur*.[113]

Aided by the intense expectation generated by pre-release discussion of the film, Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* positioned its spectators as Romans waiting to see the oriental splendor that is Hollywood cinema itself. Details of the magnificence of the Forum scene were fed to the press long before spectators had an opportunity to judge its visual pleasures for themselves. At the moment when Cleopatra is finally seen arriving through a triumphal arch, the crowd on screen express their amazement at the oriental spectacle of the black, half-naked dancing girls, the emissions of brightly colored smoke, the scattered rose petals, the birds released from false pyramids, the massive sphinx float, and, finally, the queen and her son enthroned on high, dressed in cloth of gold. The reaction of the Roman crowd on screen to Cleopatra's spectacle attempts to solicit a similar reaction in contemporary spectators to Fox's long-awaited historical epic.

Two alluring features of Cleopatra for Hollywood cinema were her legendary reputation as a creator of fabulous and seductive spectacle and the



4.6 Poster advertising Elizabeth Taylor in *Cleopatra* (1963). [Photograph from private collection of Maria Wyke.]

long-standing association of her kingdom with the mysteries of moving-image projection. Through the representation of Cleopatra and the Orient both on screen and off (in film promotion, and in cinema architecture and foyer design), the Hollywood studios could proclaim cinema's own visual seductiveness to its awed "Roman" spectators. [illustration 4.6] But, given that the production of Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra* led to the financial ruin of the 20th Century-Fox studio and was ever after marked as having ushered in the end of the historical epic genre, it is perhaps unsurprising that one scene edited out of the exhibited version of the film shows the queen seducing Julius Caesar with a display of Egypt's extraordinary inventions, including the marvelous, moving images of a zoetrope.[114]

101. Cooper (1974) and (1991); Bourget (1985), 59–60. Cf. the review of the rereleased *Spartacus* in *The Independent on Sunday*, 27 October 1991.

102. Houston and Gillett (1963); Sklar (1975), 294–6; Wood (1975), 168; Hirsch (1978), 29; Smith (1989); Babington and Evans (1993), 4–8. Cf. chapter 2 above.

103. Cooper (1991), 27.

104. Bourget (1985), 57–8.

105. Solomon (1978), 34–8; Hirsch (1978), 98; Elley (1984), 109–12; Bourget (1985), 58–9; Babington and Evans (1993), 191–2.

106. See Sklar (1985), 65, and cf. *Film Daily* 7 October 1960.

107. Whitfield (1991), 100–26.

108. Cf. Smith (1989), 76, who notes in passing a similarity between the sequence in *Spartacus* where the gladiators break out of their imprisoning school and the traditional, heroic accounts of breaking out of the confines of the blacklist.

109. *Los Angeles Mirror*, 20 October 1960. Cf. *Variety*, 12 December 1960, on the protests of the American Legion against the film, and a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* of 15 January 1961 denouncing the distribution to schools of a photoplay study guide to *Spartacus*.

110. See Adam Mars-Jones's review of the rereleased *Spartacus* in *The Independent*, 1 November 1991.

111. Wittner (1978), 190–2 and 198–201; Whitfield (1991), 20–3.

112. Babington and Evans (1993), 224–6.

113. Shohat (1991b), 232–3. Cf. Babington and Evans (1993), 224–6.

114. See Alexander Walker's review of the rereleased *Spartacus* in *The Evening Standard*, 31 October 1991. Cf. Derek Elley in *The Independent*, 25 October 1991.

115. Douglas (1988), 277.

116. Cooper (1974), 30. Cf. Elley (1984), 109–12.

117. Cooper (1974), 30. Elley (1984), 111; Hunt (1993), 71–2 and 74–7. It was fully restored for the 1991 rerelease of *Spartacus*.

118. See especially Hunt (1993) and Hark (1993).

119. See Hark (1993), 161–2, who, in her analysis of gender operations in *Spartacus*, draws on and responds to Laura Mulvey's work on the cinematic *gaze*.

120. Hark (1993), 152–3.

121. Hark (1993), 159–68; Hunt (1993), 65. See also Riskind (1983) on the roles of John Wayne in the 1950s.

122. Hark (1993), 160–1, who refers to a review by David Denby of the rereleased film.

123. Smith (1989), 92–3; Cooper (1991), 18; Whitfield (1991), 218–9.

124. Hirsch (1978), 98.

125. See Wood (1975), 184–4.

126. See the review of Adams Mars-Jones in *The Independent*, 1 November 1991. Cf. Elley (1984); Solomon (1978), 37; Hirsch (1978), 98; Babington and Evans (1993), 194.

127. Smith (1989), 92–3.

128. *Variety*, 7 October 1960.

129. Cf. Babington and Evans (1993), 55–6.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Robert F. Hawkins, *New York Times*, 7 January 1962.

2. *Giornale d'Italia*, 4 November 1913. Quoted in Prolo (1951), 55.

3. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 21–143; Wyke (1992), 100–5; Hamer (1993), 1–23.

4. Plutarch, *Life of Antony* 25.1, and see Brenk (1992).

5. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 15–6 and 64–82; Wyke (1992), 106–12; Hamer (1993), xvi–xvii.

6. See especially Hughes-Hallett (1991) and Hamer (1993).

7. Pearson and Uricchio (1990).

8. For details of this film, and a survey of the silent era's film adaptations of Shakespeare, see Ball (1968).

9. Ball (1968), 47–8.

10. Ball (1968), 96. English titles and release dates are listed in Ball's index.

11. Ball (1968), 167.

12. *Giornale d'Italia*, 4 November 1913. Quoted in Prolo (1951), 55.

13. On Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* see, for example, Bloom (1990) and Hughes-Hallett (1991), 169–202. For its place among the other Roman plays, see Thomas (1989) and Martindale and Martindale (1990).

14. For the "killer-Cleopatra" of the nineteenth century, see Hughes-Hallett (1991), 252–311.

15. The motif is inherited from Dryden's *All for Love*, for which see Hughes-Hallett (1991), 212–4, and Martindale and Martindale (1990), 140–1.

16. The sequence of the triumph at Rome survives in the print at the Library of Congress but is missing from the print at the Cineteca archive—a clearly mutilated version with scarcely any intertitles. But, as if to elide the film's difference from Shakespeare's play, George Kleine's publicity for the American launch of *Marcantonio e Cleopatra* fails to conclude its plot summary with mention of the triumphal procession.

17. On Italy's use of the tradition of *romanità* in the period before the First World War, see chapter 2 above, and Cagnetta (1979), 15–33.

18. Quoted in Cagnetta (1979), 17. See also chapter 2 above.

19. Brunetta and Gili (1990), 9–13 and (1993), 160–77.

20. For discussion of the nineteenth-century "colonialist imaginary" and its structuring of film narratives, see esp. Shohat (1991a).

21. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 252–80.

22. Said (1985), 3. For the importance of the Napoleonic campaign see also Said (1985), 42–3 and 76–88.

23. Curl (1994), 132.

24. For the feminization of the Orient, more generally, see Said (1985), 188 and 206–8, and Shohat (1991a), 46–62.

25. Higashi (1994), 90, who extends Said's definition of orientalism to include its more theatrical forms. Cf. Stevens (1984) and Lant (1992), 96.

26. Lant (1992), 93–8. For the spectacle of Egypt generally, cf. Curl (1994), 187–206.

27. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 266–70.

28. Shohat (1991a), 45.

29. de Vincenti (1988), 25. The opening documentary sequence survives in the Cineteca print, but not in that of the Library of Congress.

30. Shohat (1991a), 49.

31. Quoted in Martinelli (1993), 42–5, along with a number of other reviews.

32. The translation is that of Mandelbaum (1981).

33. Cagnetta (1979), 22–5.

34. This intertitle, as well as the subsequent triumph in Rome, is missing from the Cineteca print of the film.

35. Ball (1968), 166.

36. Quoted in Ball (1968), 168, from *The Art of the Motion Picture* (New York, 1915).

37. Lant (1992) and Shohat (1991a), 49–51.

38. Prolo (1951), 56; Martinelli (1993), 46. On the eroticism of the Italian historical films of this period, see generally, Brunetta (1993), 169.

39. Renzi (1991), 121, and Lant (1992), 109.

40. Sand (1985), 188 and 309; Shohat (1991a), 46–62 and 69–70; Hughes-Hallett (1991), 93.

41. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 263 and 346–8; Renzi (1991), 121.

42. Ball (1968), 239; Hughes-Hallett (1991), 330–1 and 340; Lant (1992), 109–10. No print of *Cleopatra* (1917) survives, but its content is deduced from extant stills, contemporary publicity, and reviews.

43. Lant (1992), 109–10.

44. Higashi (1994), 151–2.

45. May (1980), 200–36; Higashi (1994), 4–5 and 87–9; Black (1994), 26–8; Christie (1991), 20.

46. May (1980), 212–3; Higashi (1994), 100; Black (1994), 28; Christie (1991), 20.

47. Elley (1984), 93; Izod (1988), 87–8.

48. Hamer (1993), 119–21.

49. See Paramount's *Study Guide and Manual* (1934), 16, and compare question 47.

50. See Hays quoted in May (1980), 204–5. Cf. Izod (1988), 69–70; Black (1994), 27–34.

51. Izod (1988), 105–6; Black (1994), 1 and 39–83.

52. Black (1994), 65–70. See also chapter 5 below.

53. Izod (1988), 106; Black (1994), 149–97.

54. Izod (1988), 107; Black (1994), 72–80 and 174.

55. On the formation of Hollywood's oriental elsewhere see Shohat (1991a), 68–70.

56. Hamer (1993), 109–10.

57. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 315–6.

58. Hamer (1993), 148 n. 19, provides a useful list.

59. Quoted in Hughes-Hallett (1991), 319–20.

60. See Paramount's *Study Guide and Manual* (1934), 15, question 34.

61. Cf. Hamer (1993), 124–6. Lant (1992), 91–3 and n. 19, argues that the film's frame constructs the spectator's experience, as in early lantern shows, in terms of entering an Egyptian necropolis.

62. Higashi (1994), 3 and 108.

63. For the importance of ethnicity and immigration in both American society and Hollywood cinema, see Shohat (1991b), esp. 217–8.

64. Cf. Elley (1984), 93.

65. See chapter 2 above.

66. Cf. Shohat (1991a), 48–52.

67. Christie (1991), 20. For "objective correlatives" as a mode of filmic characterization, see also Dyer (1979), 124–6.

68. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 363. See Hughes-Hallett (1991), 362–4, and Hamer (1993), 128–30, for a more detailed analysis of the barge sequence.

69. As translated from a version of the film dubbed into Italian for television broadcasting.

70. Cf. Babington and Evans (1993), 113, on the representation of Mary Magdalene and her submission to Christ in DeMille's *King of Kings* (1927).

71. Compare the use of the myth that Amazon women were once defeated by Athenian men in the comedy *The Warrior's Husband*, which was produced by an associate of DeMille, Jesse L. Lasky, and released the year before *Cleopatra*.

72. Cf. Hamer (1993), 117–8.

73. For DeMille's lighting techniques see May (1980), 221; Higashi (1994), 15.

74. Higashi (1994), esp. 142–78; May (1980), 200–36; Eckert (1978), 7; Allen (1980), 488–9.

75. For Hollywood cinema's solicitation of a consumer gaze, see Doane (1989).

76. Eckert (1978); Allen (1980); Doane (1989); Gaines (1989); Gaines and Herzog (1990); Stacey (1994), 176–223. Cf. chapter 2 above.

77. See n. 74 above.

78. For a more extensive list, see Hughes-Hallett (1991), 88–92 and 102–43.

79. Higashi (1994), 90–1; Curl (1994), 211–20.

80. On the "metonymic" process generally, see Doane (1989), 24–7.

81. See Eckert (1978), 11–7; Gaines (1989); Doane (1989), 25–7.

82. Entitled *Last Minute News and Exploitation*, a copy of the press release is accessible at the British Film Institute.

83. Hamer (1993), 118 and 121–2.

84. Allen (1980), 487.

85. Doane (1989), 25.

86. See Hamer (1993), 123–4 and 132–3. Compare Gaines (1989) on *Queen Christina* released in the previous year.

87. The term is that of de Lauretis (1987).

88. On readings of femininity as masquerade, see Gaines and Herzog (1990), 23–7; Thumim (1992), 161–2; Stacey (1994), 26.

89. From the USC Film Library production files.

90. Luard (1989), esp. 1–17 and 514–48.

91. See USC Film Library, 20th Century-Fox collection 5042.17.

92. Hirsch (1978), 101.

93. See Beuselink (1988).

94. Baxter (1972), 160–4; Solomon (1978), 45–6; Elley (1984), 92–5; Smith (1991), 44–6; Hughes-Hallett (1991), 355–9. See *Newsweek*, 25 March 1963, for a contemporary account of the film's misfortunes.

95. Dyer (1979); Ellis (1982), 91–108.

96. The *Vogue* article catalogued on microfiche in the Academy of Motion Pictures is dated only as 1962.

97. See also Hughes-Hallett (1991), 341–2.

98. See Brodsky and Weiss (1963), 64, for a letter written by Weiss from New York expressing anxiety about the press reports.

99. Brodsky and Weiss (1963), 117.

100. See Hughes-Hallett (1991), 348–50 and 357–60.

101. See Wanger and Hyams (1965), 146–7.

102. Wanger and Hyams (1963), 148–9.

103. *New York Times*, 23 June 1963.

104. Dyer (1979), 28.

105. Whitfield (1991), 184–7; Dyer (1979), 49 and 51–2; Biskind (1983), 250–333; Nadel (1993), 422. Cf. Dyer (1986) on the function of Marilyn Monroe's star image in 1950s discourses about sex.

106. Dyer (1979), 22–3.

107. For which see Hughes-Hallett (1991), 357–60.

108. Those mechanisms were first analyzed in terms of the fetishistic and voyeuristic look by Mulvey (1975).

109. Cf. Hughes-Hallett (1991), 343–4.

110. Thumin (1992), 40.

111. Neale (1983), 35. Cf. Wood (1975), 168–72 and dall'Asta (1992), 31.

112. Wood (1975), 173 and 166–77. Cf. Houston and Gillett (1963); Belton (1992), 185–210; Babington and Evans (1993), 6–8. See also chapter 2 above.

113. See, for example, the account of the film's production in *Newsweek*, 25 March 1963, and cf. Biskind (1983), 336–7.

114. See Beuselink (1988), 6–7, for details of the cut scene.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. This chapter is an emended and much expanded version of Wyke (1994).

2. A copy of the campaign book is available in the USC Film Library production files.

3. On the rhetoric of the film's opening voiceover, see also Babington and Evans (1993), 181–5.

4. d'Amico (1946), 119.

5. For Sienkiewicz's claimed sources see Giergielwicz (1968), 127–8, d'Amico (1946), 120; Lednicki (1960), 55.

6. Warmington (1969), 127; Wallace-Hadrill (1983), 131; Sordi (1983), 31–3. Thus Suetonius's description of Nero's measures against the Christians, *Life of Nero*, 16, occurs within his list of the emperor's more praiseworthy acts.

7. The translation is that of Grant (1979), 365–6. For Tacitus's polemical portrait of Nero as the canonical tyrant, see Griffin (1984), 15, and, more recently, Rubiés (1994), 35–40. In addition see Walter (1957), 268–9, for an extensive list of the huge numbers of tragedies, operas, ballets, and pantomimes that were produced on the subject of Nero's tyranny from the sixteenth century onwards.

8. For the legend of *Nero redivivus*, *Revelation*, and the myth of the Antichrist, see Walter (1957), 257–62; Lawrence (1978), 54; Gwyn (1991), 452–3; Jenks (1991), 240–53.

9. See, respectively, McGinn (1979), 22–3, and Lawrence (1978), 60–3.

10. Lawrence (1978), 60–3.

11. Renan (nd), 178–9. For Renan's *Origines*, see Wardman (1964), 134–8; Chadbourne (1968), 71–2; Walter (1957), 261; Jenks (1991), 252–3.

12. In a letter of 1901, cited in Lednicki (1960), 55.

13. Highet (1949), 462–4; Lednicki (1960), 55.

14. See Turner (forthcoming); Mayer (1994), 1–20; Babington and Evans (1993), 177–205.

15. Page references are to the Continental Classic edition of *Quo Vadis?* translated by C. J. Hogarth and published in Great Britain in 1989.

16. Sienkiewicz's account of Lygia's torment in the arena seems to be based on a passage in the first epistle of Clement, which refers to Christian women being executed while dressed as the mythical Dirce. See Wiedemann (1992), 87, and Renan (nd), 170–2.

17. For discussion of the limited historical evidence, see Sordi (1983), 23–37; Frend (1984), 109.

18. d'Amico (1946), 121–2.

19. de Rossi, *Underground Christian Rome* (1864–1877) and *Inscriptiones Christianae* (1861–1888); Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome* (1892) and, for example, collected letters to *The Athenaeum* in Cubberley (1988). See, more generally, Moatti (1993), 112–4; Barber (1990), 392.

20. See Marucchi's preface to the translation of *Quo Vadis?* by E. Salvadori. By 1923 the volume was already in its seventh edition.

21. Edmundson (1913), 47–51 and 118.

22. Edmundson (1913), 151–3.

23. Renan (nd), 305–6.

24. See d'Amico (1946), 125; Damiani (1946), 15–22; Highet (1949), 462–3; Giergielwicz (1968), 131; Hogarth in the preface to Sienkiewicz (1989), v–vii.

25. For the success of Sienkiewicz's novel and its wide cultural diffusion, see Begey (1946), 77–80; d'Amico (1946), 121–2; Robinson (1955), 24; Lednicki (1960), 11; Calendoli (1967), 69; Giergielwicz (1968), 145; Martinelli (1993), 182; Mayer (1994), 18.

26. Cary (1974), 6; Elley (1984), 124.

27. Lindgren (1963), 17; Farassino (1983), 29; Elley (1984), 124; Hay (1987), 11 and 168; de Vincenti (1988), 9–10; Brunetta (1991b), 14–15; Mayer (1984–5) and (1994), 90–5.

28. For Nero in the Italian dramatic tradition, see Walter (1957), 268–70; Bondanella (1987), 103–5 on Monteverdi; Croce (1914), 152–4 on Cossa. On the sources and style of Maggi's *Nerone*, see Calendoli (1967), 70–4; de Vincenti (1988), 12–4; Bernardini and Gili (1986), 188; Brunetta (1993), 156–7.

29. Compare, more generally, Staiger (1986), 97.

30. Paolella (1956), 163–6.

31. The edition was published in 1914 by Fratelli Treves. See also Bernardini (1982), 149.

32. According to Cary (1974), 7, and see also 102.

33. See the descriptions of Ackerman (1972), 44–5 and 68–9, respectively. For the enormous popularity of these paintings in both Europe and America, see also Vance (1984), 112–3.

34. For the term "movement-image," see Deleuze (1986). On the relationship between early historical films and the visual arts, see Costa (1991), 16 and 50; Dunant (1994).

35. Verdone (1963); Farassino (1983), 30–1; de Vincenti (1988), 14–5; dall'Asta (1992), 32–3.

36. Cary (1974), 7; Bernardini (1982), 150; Elley (1984), 124.

37. For other reviews of Guazzoni's *Quo Vadis?* see Turconi (1963), 48–9, and Martinelli (1993), 175–82.

38. Hay (1987), 168.

39. dall'Asta (1992), 25 and 28–9. Cf. Brunetta (1991a), 64–5; Dalle Vacche (1992), 36.

40. Renan (nd), 549. See also Wardman (1964), 102.

41. Springer (1987), 3, 8, and 66–74. Cf. chapter 2 above.

42. Webster (1960), 5–9; Jemolo (1960), 81–5.

43. Cammarota (1987), 15–16, argues for such a reading of the film.

44. Webster (1960), 5–9; Jemolo (1960), 134–5.

45. Forgacs (1990), 50.

46. Cf. de Vincenti (1988), 26.

47. Calendoli (1967), 95; Cary (1974), 6–7; Liehm (1984), 9; Bernardini (1982), 149–50; Martinelli (1983), 9; Elley (1984), 124; Martinelli (1993), 185.

48. Cagnetta (1979); Canfora (1980), 76–146; Bondanella (1987), 172–81; Braun (1990), 144–50; Visser (1992); Quartermaine (1995); Benton (1995); Fraquelli (1995).

49. On relations between Church and state in Fascist Italy, see Webster (1960), 57–106, and Jemolo (1960), 182–209.

50. See Elsaesser (1984) on the valorization of vision and the look in Weimar cinema. On *Quo Vadis?* (1924), cf. Gili (1985), 24–5; Gori (1988), 17–8; dall'Asta (1992), 30.

51. On the film see further Chiti and Quargnolo (1957), 30–4; Martinelli (1981), 186–9; dall'Asta (1992), 153 and 159–60.

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