

BECOMING KLEOPATRA: PTOLEMAIC ROYAL MARRIAGE, INCEST, AND THE
PATH TO FEMALE RULE

by
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PREFACE

This dissertation resulted from a combination of opportune discoveries and stubborn passion. After earning my Master's and taking a five year break to teach, I decided it was finally time to go back to school and get my PhD. Serendipitously, my husband was transferred to Houston, the home of several major universities with PhD programs in history. I knew I wanted to continue working in ancient history, focusing on Egypt, but the previous years had shown me that the Pharaonic Period, which I had focused on for my Master's, was overflowing with great scholars. So, I came to the University of Houston, knowing I wanted to work with Dr. Frank Holt in ancient history, but still unsure of my topic.

After taking several courses with Dr. Holt and learning of the issues that surrounded the Hellenistic Period, the forgotten period of ancient history, I knew I had found an area that inspired me and needed more scholarly focus. I slowly discovered that Hellenistic Egypt, even more so than the Hellenistic period in general, has been systemically isolated by historians: it is neither considered the purview of Classicists and Greek Historians, nor is it regarded as true Egyptology. Then, in the process of working on papers for Dr. Holt's seminars, I slowly began reading the works of Dr. Elizabeth Carney (Clemson University). In several of her articles she emphasized the need for a comparative, overarching study of Ptolemaic queenship. It was like she was speaking directly to me, and I knew I had finally found my topic.

As it turns out, Ptolemaic queenship is a monumental subject (this, perhaps, being the reason it has thus remained un-tackled), but it is one I have become increasingly passionate about. Not only do I feel these women deserve to have their stories told, but as this dissertation progressed, I discovered previous scholarship has relegated them to many

stereotypes and *topoi* that, for just about every other area of history, have been overturned as misogynistic or overly simplistic. But, for Hellenistic queens, they are still repeated without question. As I became increasingly frustrated with the state of research on Ptolemaic Egypt, I realized that the fact that these stereotypes persist in Hellenistic scholarship is an indicator of the need for more thorough analysis and the application of modern research methodology.

Additionally, both in researching for my dissertation and in attending conferences, I have regularly faced the above-mentioned dichotomy that Ptolemaic Egypt is neither Greek history nor Egyptology, which has also restricted the scholarship on the subject. Prior Greek scholars have attempted to examine Ptolemaic topics vis à vis only the Greek influences on the period, and the Egyptologists similarly examine them through a lens of Egyptian traditions, causing both to fail to realize that Hellenistic Egypt is only truly understandable if the double cultural milieu of the period is taken into account. Thus, I feel it will become my life's work as a historian: 1) to make accurate information about these women easier to navigate for future scholars, 2) to change the way Classicists and Egyptologists view Hellenistic Egypt, and 3) to prove that the period should be considered both Greek and Egyptian history, rather than an outlier to either field.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Now, as I sit down to write acknowledgements, I am surprised to find it is one of the most difficult pages to start. There are so many people who have help or inspired me along this long road to my PhD. I do not want to forget anyone, but since I tend to be long-winded, as all my professors have acknowledged and as this monolith of a dissertation demonstrates, I will try to keep it succinct.

First and foremost, I must thank Dr. Frank Holt, the chair of my dissertation committee. I will forever be grateful for his patience and excellent advice. His passion for good methodology has unquestionably made me a better historian, and I will never be able to thank him enough for that. Next, I want to thank Dr. Elizabeth Carney, the inspiration for my dissertation topic, who kindly agreed to be on my committee, even with her own hectic schedule. Her comments and suggestions have improved this dissertation in innumerable ways. Dr. Behr, who is always an encouraging ray of sunshine, and Dr. Neumann, who was one of the earliest faculty members at UH to encourage my interest in numismatics: thank you both for being on my committee. You both have a passion for helping your students succeed that I hope I can emulate in my own future interactions with students. In general, I am appreciative to all the excellent faculty at UH with whom I have taken courses or interacted over these years. I must specifically single out Dr. Kelly Hopkins, the Graduate Program Assistant Director and my favorite Teaching Assistant assignment. Her guidance in dealing with the bureaucratic side of graduate work and funding was invaluable.

I must also express my deepest gratitude to the University of Houston College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee. Thank you for choosing my application and allowing me a full, unimpeded year of writing and focusing

on this dissertation. And thank you to the History Graduate Committee for their monetary support of my research, via the Murray Miller Fund, that has allowed me to travel to international conferences and research destinations. I finally made it to Egypt!

For the numismatic portions of this dissertation, I owe sincere thanks to Dr. Thomas Faucher and the American Numismatic Society's Eric P. Newman Graduate Seminar in Numismatics. Dr. Faucher provided me with one-on-one training in numismatic methodology and further inspired my love of Hellenistic Egypt. The ANS's Eric P. Newman Graduate Seminar was an invaluable experience that will forever frame my numismatic research.

On the more personal side of acknowledgements, I value all the friends and colleagues I have connected with at UH, at conferences, and beyond, who make the rigorousness of academia bearable. I have the deepest appreciation for all those who acted as sounding boards and commenters and allowed me to develop my scholarly thoughts by providing an ear to listen to my ramblings. My most heartfelt thanks go to Lauren Erwin, who took the time to proof-read the final draft of this work in its entirety and helped catch all the little mistakes that my tired eyes began to skip over after hundreds of read throughs. I am grateful for the support of colleagues, who have kept me sane during the writing process, Matthew and Gary, and my best friends, who are always there to listen, Kristi and Jessica. And, of course, thank you to my family: to my parents, my sister, and my Grammy, thank you for encouraging me all these years to follow my dreams. To my husband, my partner in life, I could not have done this without your love, support, and encouragement. To the family I married into, thank you for always being so interested in what I do. I am a lucky gal.

Tara L. Sewell-Lasater
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ABSTRACT

BECOMING KLEOPATRA: PTOLEMAIC ROYAL MARRIAGE, INCEST, AND THE PATH TO FEMALE RULE

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This dissertation provides the first overarching and comparative study of Hellenistic Egyptian queens, from the origins of the dynasty to the final ruler, Kleopatra VII. It explores the ways in which the Ptolemies developed a practice of royal incest, which was supplemented by the institution of a dynastic cult, during the reigns of the first three pharaohs of the dynasty. Their consorts and the later queens of the dynasty, who have been largely overlooked in the history of the Hellenistic world, used their position as one half of the deified, ruling couple to gain increasing access to power, culminating in several instances of co-rule, regency, and female sole-rule, the most notable being Kleopatra VII. While the pharaohs of the dynasty have been comprehensively studied, the queens are neglected and relegated to the academic trope of the “powerless woman,” one which this study disproves by verifying that these queens did, in fact, act with ruling interests. This dissertation overturns the antiquated interpretations of these queens, which characterized them as either good (obedient/docile) or bad (ambitious/conniving), that have persisted into modern scholarship, much to the detriment of both the legacies of these women and ancient history in general. Overall, this dissertation will provide both a rehabilitation of the reputations of these queens and the first informed and comprehensive overview of their ability to gain and wield public power. It will, ideally, also provide a methodology for similar studies that could be conducted on royal women elsewhere in the ancient world.

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In Egypt the story is different. At the beginning of the Lagid rule in that country the king had all the authority in his hands as absolute and sole ruler; after ten generations it is a woman who has that power.

Grace Harriet Macurdy
*Hellenistic Queens: A Study of Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic
Egypt, 1932.*

INTRODUCTION: KLEOPATRA THE ODDITY?

Her own beauty, so we are told, was not of that incomparable kind which instantly captivates the beholder. But the charm of her presence was irresistible, and there was an attraction in her person and her talk, together with a peculiar force of character which pervaded her every word and action, and laid all who associated with her under its spell. It was a delight merely to hear the sound of her voice, with which, like an instrument of many strings, she could pass from one language to another...In fact, she is said to have become familiar with the speech of many other peoples besides, although the rulers of Egypt before her had never even troubled to learn the Egyptian language... (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 27)

Due to the exceptional surviving accounts, like the excerpt above, Kleopatra VII is one of the most famous historical monarchs, and, unquestionably, the most recognized Ptolemaic queen. Stories of the opulence of her court, including the anecdote of her swallowing a pearl to win a bet against Antony (Plin. *HN* 9.58), and the drama surrounding her death by snake venom (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 86; Str. 17.1.10; Suet. *Aug.* 17; Flor. 2.21.10-11; Cass. Dio 51.13), allowed the memory of this famous (or infamous) queen to survive 2000 years into the modern world. As the best-known Ptolemaic queen, her legacy, which was detrimentally shaped by Roman propaganda, is often the only point of reference for Hellenistic Egypt. For many non-specialists, she suddenly appears and as quickly vanishes from the world stage. The exceptionalism with which she is often portrayed should raise a red flag for any historian and lead them to ask some key questions, such as: How accurate are these stories of her life? What made the power she wielded possible? Was it her Egyptian heritage or her Macedonian heritage? That she was Kleopatra, the seventh of that name in Egypt, is often overlooked, but it is a fact which should reflect the long process that culminated in her rule.

While Kleopatra was a fascinating figure, her preceding queens were equally interesting. In the more spectacular narratives, Berenike II is described as eating dinner with a tamed lion at her side (Ael., *NA*, 5.39), and Arsinoe III rode into battle with her husband (Polyb., 5.84.1). The queens of the second and first centuries BCE were able to carve out a public and political space for themselves, which ultimately culminated in instances of female regency, co-rule, and sole-rule, including Kleopatra II, Kleopatra Berenike III, and Berenike IV, all of whom ruled Egypt solely, even if for a short duration, prior to Kleopatra VII. These queens were extraordinary women who made the power that Kleopatra wielded possible, and as such, they deserve to have their stories told as well. Those stories should be framed with them not merely as the wives of their husbands, however, but as active queens who held a unique place within history as some of the few politically active women in the ancient world.

In the field of ancient history, the Hellenistic Period is one of the least well-researched areas. It overlaps with the material studied by Classicists, Greek historians, and Roman scholars, but it is often considered an outlier to those fields. Hellenistic Egypt, even more so, is neither considered the purview of Classicists and Greek Historians, nor is it regarded as true Egyptology. For Romanists, the Ptolemies are only of interest regarding Kleopatra's brief liaisons with Caesar and Mark Antony, which furthers both the misguided notion of her exceptionalism and the stereotype of her as a foreign temptress, a concept first put forth by the Romans themselves.

Furthermore, while gender studies has recently seen an upsurge in popularity in many fields of historical research, studies on the Hellenistic period through a gender lens are rare, and there are few modern scholars who have produced monographs on the topic (see *Historiography* section below). Within the subfield of Hellenistic gender studies, queenship

in Ptolemaic Egypt and the power-roles open to royal women has been neglected also, and several Hellenistic historians, including Elizabeth Carney and Martina Minas-Nerpel, have noted the need for a comprehensive overview of Ptolemaic queenship.¹ As a result of the previous inattention, most current Hellenistic Egyptian histories focus on the Ptolemaic kings up to the point of Kleopatra VII, and she is then presented as an oddity, a queen who ruled as a king. What is left out of this narrative are the nine queens who came before Kleopatra VII, who were able to use their position as one-half of the ruling unit to steadily build up female power over generations of marriage and incest.

More problematically, when Ptolemaic queens are included in general Hellenistic or Ptolemaic histories, they are mentioned in one of two ways. First, they are often named perfunctorily, as the wives of ruling monarchs, with little or no additional analysis provided for their lives or actions. In this way, the entire period is presented as being driven by the royal men of the period, with the royal women relegated to the position of figure-head consort, the traditional view of a queen whose sole purpose was to stand by her husband and bear children. Secondly, if a royal woman is singled out, it is usually because of perceived bad behavior. The ancient literary sources about these women fit them into categories or *topoi* in which active women were depicted as being bad and submissive women were presented as proper and good. Although many historians have previously identified the biases of ancient authors in regard to the actions of kings, their descriptions of the queens are still often repeated without question. This means that many incorrect stereotypes and characterizations of Ptolemaic queens have persisted into modern scholarship.

¹ See, for example, Martina Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” in *Ägypten zwischen innerem Zwist und äußerem Druck: die Zeit Ptolemaios VI. bis VIII*, Andrea Jördens and Joachim Friedrich Quack, eds. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 60.

Historiography

This specific issue stems directly from the way these women were depicted in the ancient sources. The ancient sources themselves can be split into two types: primary sources, authored by writers who lived at the Ptolemaic court, and non-primary ancient sources, written by authors, usually Roman chroniclers, who lived well after the events they described. Both types of sources have strengths and detriments.

The writings of the Ptolemaic scholars and court poets are an invaluable resource because they provide direct insight into the activities of the Ptolemaic court. Several of these men, including Posidippos, Theokritos, Kallimachos, and Eratosthenes, produced works that focused primarily on the early queens of the dynasty, which provide a reliable record of these women's specific actions and abilities. The court poetry, however, has two issues when used as a source for the Ptolemaic period. First, it must be acknowledged that these men were patronized by the figures they wrote about, both kings and queens, so their writings are unquestionably influenced by aspects of propaganda and aggrandizement.² Second, because of changing court mechanics (see Part I, chapter 2.3), court poetry was only produced in honor of the early monarchs of the dynasty, which restricts its use as a source primarily to the third century BCE.

For the Ptolemaic kings and queens of the second and first centuries BCE, historians rely on the writings of later ancient authors, who usually lived during the Roman empire or shortly after, including Pausanias, Strabo, Josephus, Plutarch, Justin, and Porphyry. These sources have the advantage of being written within a hundred to a few hundred years of the events they describe, but their authors were still well-removed from the events themselves

² See, for example, the analysis of Kallimachos' *Coma Berenices* in Part II, chapter 6.2.

and received the information they recorded from now non-extant primary sources or retellings, which often resulted in errors and/or exaggerations as the information was recopied and transmitted over generations. Justin’s *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* is a good example of this phenomenon.³

Most significantly, many of the Roman writers interpreted the events of the Ptolemaic period through the lens of their own patriarchal cultural norms and sought to fit the actions of Ptolemaic queens, which they often saw as excessively public and un-womanly, within those norms. Accordingly, Coskun and McAuley have observed that in much of the ancient literature, queens who were politically active were depicted as “evil queens,” the anti-models of “good-royal wives,” and those considered “good queens” remained in the shadows acting only as the mothers of the heirs of the dynasties.⁴ For instance, Berenike II was depicted as the “paragon of the ‘good wife’,” especially when compared to her mother, the purportedly conniving and adulterous Apama (see Part II, chapter 6).⁵ As will be shown in Part III, the early Kleopatras, especially the first queens that held publicly wielded power in their own right, including Kleopatra II and III, are regularly described as audacious and overreaching by both the ancient and modern sources. Kleopatra VII’s reputation as a “whore queen” (Prop. 3.11; Luc., *Phar.* 10.360) is another perfect example of this trend.

³ Pompeius Trogus lived during the first century BCE and wrote a *Philippic History*, which is now only preserved in the epitome compiled by Justin. The work provides a valuable record of Ptolemaic history, but it is widely acknowledged by modern scholars that Justin made many errors and took many liberties with the material.

⁴ Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, “The Study of Seleukid Royal Women: An Introduction,” in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 18-19. They are making this point in reference to Seleukid queens, but it applies to Ptolemaic queens as well.

⁵ Alex McAuley, “Princess & Tigress: Apama of Kyrene,” in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 187-188.

The characterizations of these women as either “evil” or “good” queens subsequently influenced much of the early scholarship on these women, as the opinions of the ancients were carried into the writings of the scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Early modern scholars who wrote major Ptolemaic histories, such as Mahaffy, Bouché-Leclerq, and Bevan, were dismissive of the contributions of Ptolemaic queens and overly judgmental of their morality, a common bias of their day which must be acknowledged when using these sources.⁶ The overviews these authors provided for the Kleopatras is an especially problematic point that will be further addressed in Part III. The core issue with these turn-of-the-century scholarly works is that many modern scholars, especially those writing large monographs on the Ptolemaic period in general, have accepted the characterizations that were first put forth by the ancients and then repeated by the early moderns.

The categorizations of queens as either “good” and “proper” or “audacious” and “scheming” were then repeated in the most recent seminal works on the Ptolemaic period, such as the monographs of Fraser, Hölbl, and Hazzard.⁷ That does not preclude the use of these sources, but it is an issue that historians should be aware of when looking specifically

⁶ J. P. Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (London: Methuen & Co, 1899); Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*; Edwyn Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy: A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., Publishers, 1968 reprint). Specific examples of these authors’ biased analyses of several Ptolemaic queens will be presented in Parts II and III.

⁷ P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972); Gunther Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London: Routledge, 2001); R. A. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy: Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). Hazzard, for example, is one of the most critical modern authors in his discussion concerning the possible real power wielded by queens. His work is useful because of its thorough use of sources, especially papyri, but he is often overly dismissive of queens, almost aggressively so. Therefore, his conclusions are often only cited throughout this work as an example of a contrasting opinion or in reference to the primary sources he cites. For additional analysis of his issues regarding gender studies, see Maria Nilsson, “The Crown of Arsinoë II. The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority,” (Dissertation, University of Gothenburg, 2010), 45-46.

at Ptolemaic queens and utilizing sources that were written with a focus on the kings.⁸ That both ancient and Victorian characterizations of ancient female figures have survived into modern scholarship at all is a wider issue that is slowly being addressed by feminist historians. For Ptolemaic queens specifically, reevaluations of the history focusing on the powerful women of the dynasty began in the 1930s and important articles, chapters, and monographs reassessing the early Ptolemaic queens, most notably Arsinoë II and Berenike II, followed. The Kleopatras, however, are still mired in the stereotypes of the past, an issue this dissertation will address in Part III.

Grace Macurdy set the stage for a new view of Ptolemaic queens in her monumental 1932 work, *Hellenistic Queens: A Study of Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt*. This work is historiographically important in that it was the first attempt to rehabilitate the reputations of these women from the wickedness and excess they had been characterized by in the ancient sources and her fellow early modern historians. Yet even Macurdy, as a female scholar, was influenced by the biases of her day, which impacted her analysis of the queens.⁹ Of Hellenistic queens overall, she argued that “the power of Hellenistic queens is often represented as much greater than it actually ever was except among the later Ptolemies, and exaggerated statements are made which are based on the occasional appearance of a woman in war or in politics, rather than on a consideration of the

⁸ Bielman-Sánchez, for example, has recently pointed out that both male and female ancient figures were subject to these ancient *topoi*, but the characterizations of the kings have been met with more scholastic skepticism; whereas, the caricatured portraits of the queens are often accepted without question. Anne Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Égypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” *EuGeStA* 7 (2017), 85, *passim*.

⁹ A good example of her biases is presented in her analysis of Kleopatra I’s use of eunuchs, when she says “the queen-mother found that eunuchs and slaves were easier for her to deal with and more amenable to her orders than men of distinction and rank were.” Grace Harriet Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens: A Study of Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1932), 148. See also, Part III, chapter 9, note 113.

real status of the queens.”¹⁰ While she questioned the real power of Hellenistic queens in general, Macurdy also endeavored to set the Ptolemaic queens apart from the queens of the other Hellenistic kingdoms by noting that “in Egypt the story is different. At the beginning of the Lagid rule in that country the king had all the authority in his hands as absolute and sole ruler; after ten generations it is a woman who has that power,” a transition termed the “Emancipation of the Queens.”¹¹ Macurdy was the first to attempt to expose the realities of what it meant to hold power as a Hellenistic queen, but she also acknowledged that within that exceptional subset the Ptolemaic queens were idiosyncratic.

Continuing in the footsteps of Macurdy, Sarah B. Pomeroy was the first historian to attempt a basic definition of the roles available to Ptolemaic queens in her 1984 work, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*. She argued that queens, since they had no public office, could only act in private roles that were defined by the personalities of each woman, usually religious, domestic, and occasionally by going to war alongside their husbands.¹² From her work, a consensus developed that Hellenistic queens could hold religious or cultic positions through which they could gain influence, but they had little opportunity to hold real political power, such as the ability to command events and take an active role in the rulership of their kingdom.

The work of Elizabeth Carney is also vital to the analysis of queenly roles and power. Carney is one of the most prolific authors on Hellenistic queens, beginning in the late 1980s and continuing into current scholarship. While she focuses more often on Macedonian royal

¹⁰ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 232.

¹¹ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 230; 229.

¹² Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt: From Alexander to Cleopatra* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 11-12. Both Macurdy and Pomeroy’s arguments are also summarized by Ivana Savallilestrade, “Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche,” in *Historie: Studie offerti dagli Allievi Giuseppe Nenci in occasione del suo settantesimo compleanno*, Salvatore Alessandri, ed. (Congedo: Galatina LE, 1994), 415-416.

women, Carney has also written about Ptolemaic queens, including producing the only English monograph on Arsinoë II.¹³ Her work provides a thorough overview of the methods by which Hellenistic royal women gained access to power over time, beginning with the women in Alexander the Great's life, continuing through the Diadochic period with women like Phila, wife of Demetrios Poliorketes, and extending into the individual Hellenistic kingdoms (See Part I, chapter 1.2). She is one of the key historians that first gave agency to these queens and explored them as if they were not just the wives of their husbands, but as women with intentions and purposes of their own.¹⁴

In 1994, Ivana Savalli-Lestrade, building on the conclusions of Pomeroy and echoing many of the points made by Carney, endeavored to expand the roles available to queens as both private and public. She argued that the public role of queens could include the use of the title *basilissa* and royal insignia, inclusion in formulas of greeting, thanksgiving, and prayer, and being deified as part of the dynastic cult.¹⁵ She further maintained, similarly to both Macurdy and Pomeroy, that, depending on the personality of each queen, they could act in the areas of diplomacy, justice, and the economic-social sphere. She concluded her analysis by advocating that, while the queen had a public role as the insurer of dynastic continuance and promoter of stability, her power was fleeting and conditionally based on that of her

¹³ See, Elizabeth D. Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000); Elizabeth D. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹⁴ See, for example, Elizabeth D. Carney, "Women and *Basileia*: Legitimacy and Female Political Action in Macedonia," *The Classical Journal* 90, No. 4 (1995): 367-391. Carney is the main historian in English; Longega, who wrote in Italian, is a similar historian who initially highlighted the agency of queens. See, Gabriella Longega, *Arsinoe II* (Rome: Università degli Studi di Padova, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di Storia Antica, 1968).

¹⁵ Savalli-Lestrade, "Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche," 419-420: "Tra i privilegi possiamo elencare: l'uso protocollare del titolo di βασιλισσα ed il rivestimento di insegne reali (diadema, porpora, etc.), l'inclusione nelle formule ufficiali di salute, di ringraziamento e di preghiera rivolte da città l'essere fatta oggetto di culto, a livello centrale (culti dinastici) ed a livello locale (culti municipali)."

husband.¹⁶ Anne Bielman-Sánchez agreed with Savalli-Lestrade’s conclusions and applied some of her methodology to the Seleukid and Attalid queens, before subsequently focusing on the later Ptolemaic queens.¹⁷ In her works on the Kleopatras, Bielman-Sánchez argues that the first Lagid queens were in a subordinate position to that of their husbands and were not officially associated with their decisions and changes to this arrangement arrived only with Kleopatra I and II.¹⁸ While I will disagree with some of Bielman-Sánchez’s conclusions, her work on the Kleopatras is fundamentally important to the study of Ptolemaic queenship and will be regularly referenced, especially in Part III.

On the one hand, the works of these scholars, especially Carney, Savalli-Lestrade, and Bielman-Sánchez, have provided a solid foundation for further analysis of Hellenistic queenship. On the other, the limited attention to Ptolemaic queenship, in its being analyzed in-depth by only a few scholars, has led to wide, unquestioning acceptance of the conclusions of Savalli-Lestrade and Bielman-Sánchez, that a queen’s power was dependent on that of her husband. The primacy of this theory has meant that Hellenistic queens are still often only analyzed as subordinates to their husbands’ actions, rather than as acting in conjunction with

¹⁶ Savalli-Lestrade, “Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche,” 432: “In queste condizioni, il potere della βασίλισσα, assolutamente avventizio, non poteva non essere ancora più labile di quello del βασιλεύς.” This conclusion is also echoed in her later article, “La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l’époque hellénistique,” 62. See also, Jim Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” in *When Men were Men: Masculinity, power and identity in Classical Antiquity*, Lin Foxhall and John Salmon, eds. (London: Routledge, 1998), n.104. Roy expresses that this “summary underestimates the ability of some queens to pursue a personal career...”

¹⁷ See, Anne Bielman-Sánchez, “Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides,” in *L’Orient méditerranéen de la mort d’Alexandre aux campagnes de Pompé: Cités et royaumes à l’époque hellénistique*, F. Prost, ed. (Paris: Rennes, 2015).

¹⁸ Anne Bielman-Sánchez and Giuseppina Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” in *Femmes influentes dans le monde hellénistique et à Rome: IIIe siècle av. J.-C. - Ier siècle apr. J.-C.*, Anne Bielman, Isabelle Cogitore, and Anne Kolb, eds. (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2016), 158. “Toutefois, durant les règnes des premiers Lagides (de l’avènement de Ptolémée I à la mort de Ptolémée V, soit entre 304 et 180), les reines avaient une position subordonnée à celle de leur époux et n’étaient pas - ou rarement - associées officiellement aux décisions prises par le roi. Des changements décisifs interviennent grâce à deux souveraines: Cléopâtre I et sa fille Cléopâtre II, entre 180 et 115.”

their royal counterparts or with their own initiative. That Ptolemaic queens are continually seen as only wives and mothers, rather than as sovereign queens who often ruled along-side or, in the case of the later Kleopatras, with greater power than their husbands and sons, could be another reason so many of the ancient stereotypes concerning these women survive into modern scholarship. The issues with Savalli-Lestrade and Bielman-Sánchez's theory will be further scrutinized in Parts II and III.

Methodology

We must address the three major issues outlined above: 1) Ptolemaic Egypt being seen as an outlier of both Greek and Egyptian history, 2) the need to explore Ptolemaic Egypt through a gender lens, and 3) the importance of both exposing the biases of the ancient authors and re-analyzing the actions of these women on their own merits. To do so, a specific, overarching study of Hellenistic Egyptian queens, from the origins of the dynasty to the final ruler, Kleopatra VII, is much-needed.

This dissertation proposes to do just that. It will provide the first in-depth and comparative study of Hellenistic Egyptian queens, from the origins of the dynasty to the final ruler, Kleopatra VII. In order to achieve this goal, this dissertation is organized into three parts. Part I details the background of the study, connecting the Ptolemies to both their Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian roots, by examining the traditions that carried into Ptolemaic Egypt from the Pharaonic Period and the Macedonian conquest. It also traces the early developments of Ptolemaic legitimization methods under the first three rulers of the dynasty. The main focus of the work, however, is how Ptolemaic Queens, beginning with Arsinoë II, were able to work within the legitimizing devices established by their husbands to steadily accumulate ruling power.

Thus, Part II provides an overview of the first five queens of the dynasty, exploring the ways they worked within their roles and alongside their husbands to increase the power available to queens, from generation to generation. Although these initial queens were restricted in the public actions they could undertake by the gender norms of their day, they produced perceptions of power that would allow the later queens of the dynasty to act on the power they had been depicted with but were unable to act upon. Part III carries on in the same vein, exploring the final queens of the dynasty, culminating in Kleopatra VII. These queens were able to build on the perceptions of power established by the initial five queens of the dynasty in order to acquire aspects of true, publicly-wielded and acknowledged power, including becoming the first queen-regent (Kleopatra I), the first spousal co-ruler (Kleopatra II), and the first queens-regnant (Kleopatra II and Kleopatra Berenike III).

In examining each woman in turn, this work also strives to overturn the antiquated interpretations of these queens, which characterized them as either good or bad, based on the perceived dichotomies of obedient vs. conniving or docile vs. ambitious that have persisted into modern scholarship, much to the detriment of both the legacies of these women and ancient history in general. This work will act as a general sourcebook, detailing all the avenues of research that are available to study these queens and demonstrating change over time. It is important to understand that, while literary sources are important, they must be analyzed in conjunction with the material sources in order to learn about these women. This serves two purposes. First, only by comparing what is written in the literary sources to the remaining material evidence do the possible biases of the ancient authors become clear. The material remains can shed light on the agency of these women in ways that are purposefully suppressed in the writings of ancient authors. The literary sources also counterbalance the

material sources, such as the coins and monumental depictions, which were produced with propagandistic purposes to glorify the monarchs and dynasty. Second, the Ptolemies themselves developed from and cultivated a double cultural heritage, both Greek and Egyptian, so, in order to fully learn about them, both types of sources must be utilized. Using only Greek and Roman literary sources provides half of the picture of Ptolemaic rulership, just as utilizing only Egyptian papyri and monumental carvings and inscriptions would also provide half of the needed information. The Ptolemies were both Greek and Egyptian, so they must be studied as such. On the whole, *quellenforschung* is imperative when studying Ptolemaic queenship because analyzing all the sources together allows the historian to find the common thread of truth that can provide the best indication of how these women truly lived and ruled.

As a result, methodologically, this study utilized every currently available and accessible type of source, both the Greek and Egyptian, literary and material, to explore the lives of these queens. Many types of primary sources will be presented throughout, such as Greek and Demotic papyri; Greek, Demotic, and Hieroglyphic inscriptions; monumental temple depictions; and coinage imagery and iconography. The numismatic evidence is particularly elucidating, since Hellenistic Egypt was the vanguard of female coinage production, and the steady accumulation of female power was depicted on the coinage of the dynasty. The coins that are referenced are now widely available to view both in print and online, and specific coin images can be easily looked up on the new *ANS Ptolemaic Coins Online* database. Similarly, many of the monumental carvings referenced herein are accompanied by citations to available images in print or online, and for the few carvings for which no modern image was available the author has provided her own photographs taken

during research trips to Egypt and Europe (see, for example, Figs. 4.1, 4.2). Finally, many of the papyri referenced throughout are available online via Papyri.info; most of the papyri listed on the site do not include translations, however, so the author has provided her own translations where necessary (see also Appendix C). The work also makes extensive use of secondary ancient literature, including a variety of Greek and Roman writers who preserved accounts of Ptolemaic history. Since these ancient authors often wrote with certain biases or goals in mind, especially concerning women, those aspects are pointed out where applicable.

Overall, this dissertation will provide both a rehabilitation of the reputations of these queens and the first informed and comprehensive overview of their ability to gain and wield public power. It will also provide a methodology for similar studies that could be conducted on royal women elsewhere in the ancient world.

Terminology

With those goals in mind, it is also important to define some key vocabulary that will be used when referring to these women throughout this work and to present an interpretive model. As argued by Bielman-Sánchez, the term “queen” is modernly only given to the living spouse of a king. In the Hellenistic world, however, the title *basilissa* (βασίλισσα), which is often translated as queen, could be given to the successive wives of the king, the wife or wives of the heir, as well as the sisters and daughters of the king or previous kings (what would now be considered or called princesses), all regardless of marital chronology, hierarchical standing, age, or any aspects of power or position held by these women.¹⁹

¹⁹ Bielman-Sánchez, “Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides,” 43: “En définitive, les sources grecques lorsqu’elles emploient le terme de « reine », l’attribuent à des épouses royales, à des veuves royales ou à des filles de rois, sans tenir compte ni de la primauté chronologique de l’union matrimoniale, ni des fonctions ou des pouvoirs réels détenus par ces femmes, ni des critères hiérarchiques ou d’âge.”

Prior arguments have been made that the title *basilissa* was given to Ptolemaic queens who ruled on their own.²⁰ Yet, the term was first used during the period of the Diadochic Wars, and it was later used by the Ptolemies to describe a royal wife, royal daughter, female regent, or female king.²¹ Since both Berenike I and Berenike Parthenos, the daughter of Ptolemy III and Berenike II who died as a young child, were listed as *basilissai*, the term was certainly not used exclusively by women who ruled independently.²² Instead, the term *basilissa*, when used on its own, is better translated as “royal woman.”²³

As exemplified by the confusion surrounding the term *basilissa*, previous examinations of Ptolemaic queenship have been hampered by both the ever-changing definition of what constitutes queenly power and the ongoing scholarly debate concerning the extent to which these queens had access to that power. The first goal of this dissertation, accordingly, is to propose clearer categories for discussing queenly power, as seen in Table 1. Since the Ptolemies themselves used the term generally, *basilissa* will herein also be used as a generic term equated to royal woman, most often queens who acted as one half of a ruling couple, since they are the focus of this work. To indicate the varying levels of power

²⁰ See, Agnieszka Fulinska, “Iconography of the Ptolemaic Queens on Coins: Greek Style, Egyptian Ideas?” *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 14 (2010): 86.

²¹ For the first usage of this title by Phila, wife of Demetrios Poliorketes, see Part I, chapter 1.2, note 34. On the varied use of the term by the Ptolemies see, Elizabeth D. Carney, “What’s in a Name? The Emergence of a Title for Royal Women in the Hellenistic Period,” in *Women’s History and Ancient History*, Sarah B. Pomeroy, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 157.

²² Berenike I was named *basilissa* on *OGIS* 14; Berenike Parthenos was called *basilissa* “from birth” according to Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 108. Also see *OGIS* 256, 1.47. Philotera, sister of Ptolemy II, was named *basilissa* on *OGIS* 35.

²³ Carney, “What’s in a Name? The Emergence of a Title for Royal Women in the Hellenistic Period,” 156, 161; Elizabeth D. Carney, “The First *basilissa*: Phila, daughter of Antipater and wife of Demetrius Poliorcetes,” in *New Directions in the Study of Women in Antiquity*, Georgia Tsouvala and Ronnie Ancona, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Forthcoming 2020); Ivana Savalli-Lestrade, “Les adieux à la βασίλισσα, Mise en scène en intrigue de la mort des femmes royales dan le monde hellénistique,” *Chiron* 45 (2015): 189, esp. n. 7, 8.

held by these women as the Ptolemaic dynasty progressed, *basilissa* will be hyphenated with several clarifying terms, as shown in Table 1:

Queenly Terminology (in increasing order of power)		
Term	Definition	Examples
Queen, princess, <i>basilissa</i>	General terms for any royal woman, regardless of power	All
<i>Basilissa</i> -consort	Married to the king, little to moderate political influence/power	Berenike I, Arsinoë I, Arsinoë II, Berenike II, Kleopatra IV, Kleopatra Selene I
<i>Basilissa</i> -regent	Ruling power, as guardian to a male heir. This is depicted as a joint rule, where the queen is the dominant partner	Kleopatra I
Co-ruler	Ruling power equal to or greater than that of a male spouse or relation (usually an adult son)	Kleopatra II, Kleopatra III, Kleopatra Berenike III
<i>Basilissa</i> -regnant	Sole rule or female as the dominant ruling authority	Kleopatra II, Kleopatra Berenike III, Berenike IV, Kleopatra VII

Table 1- Queenly Terminology

Basilissa-consort is another basic term, but it has a marital connotation. In this work, *basilissa*-consort will be used exclusively for queens who were married to the reigning king and held either little political power or influence, such as Berenike I and Arsinoë I, or moderate power and influence, such as Arsinoë II and Berenike II, but were not acknowledged as holding official power in administrative documentation (see Appendix C).

There are three terms which will be used to indicate a queen who held forms of governing power and who was acknowledged as doing so in the governing dating protocols (see Appendix C). *Basilissa*-regent will indicate a Ptolemaic woman who ruled with the power equal to a king as the guardian of a minor heir. Kleopatra I, for instance, exercised a regency for her young son, Ptolemy VI. In the Greek and Demotic papyri from the period their rule was described as a joint-rule, but Kleopatra's name always preceded that of her

son, demonstrating that she was the dominant partner of the royal tandem (see Part III, chapter 8). So, this position is similar to that of co-ruler, with the added clarifier that it is usually exercised between a queen and a minor heir. Co-ruler will be used to refer to a queen who ruled jointly and of equal standing to her male counterpart, usually her brother-husband, such as the reign of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, or her adult offspring, such as the reign of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX and X, respectively.²⁴

Ideally, in a co-ruling situation, the figures would have equal power, but, as in most relationships, there was always a member of the co-rulerships that was the dominant partner. For example, in the co-rulership of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, Ptolemy VIII was the dominant co-ruler. Conversely, in the co-rulership of Kleopatra III with her sons, she was the dominant co-ruler, and, it seems, she did not dispense with her sons because she needed them to fulfill the religious iconography of the pharaoh (see Part III, chapter 10). The dominant partner in each of the Ptolemaic co-rulerships is usually identified by being listed in the first position of the dating protocol, although there are exceptions to this rule, as will be further explored in the individual chapters (see also, Appendices A and C).

Finally, *basilissa*-regnant will be the term used to describe queens who ruled alone or as the foremost power in the ruling couple, such as Kleopatra II, Berenike IV, and, of course, Kleopatra VII. Kleopatra II, for example, ruled solely during the civil war period (131/0-127; see Part III, chapter 9). Berenike IV also ruled Egypt solely as *basilissa*-regnant. Kleopatra VII, alternately, co-ruled successively with both of her brother-husbands, Ptolemy XIII and XIV, and then with her son, Ptolemy Caesarion, but she was, unquestionably, the sole decision-making power in the relationship, with her husbands and son being in a similar

²⁴ The verbs associated with this term will be co-rule or joint-rule.

position to the earlier *basilissa*-consorts of the dynasty. Accordingly, she is categorized as a *basilissa*-regnant and co-ruler. Kleopatra III was also very close to this level of power. There were, however, certain concessions that she had to make to her co-ruling sons (see Part III, chapter 10), so she has been categorized as a co-ruler.

For each of the queens' categorizations, see Appendix A. For the co-ruling couples listed in the appendix, the dominant co-ruler is listed first, with the junior co-ruler listed second. A queen's categorization could also change over the course of her rulership, such as Kleopatra I, who began her tenure as a *basilissa*-consort but progressed into a *basilissa*-regent. This appendix provides a snapshot view of the overarching argument of this work, that Ptolemaic queens were able to steadily gain ruling interest over generations of marriage and incest. That change over time is demonstrated by the steady transition of queens from *basilissai*-consorts to dominant co-rulers and *basilissai*-regnants.

Several types of evidence were used to determine which queens were assigned each *basilissa*-term, such as monumental depictions, contemporary titles in inscriptions, and papyri, both Greek and Egyptian, when possible. Each type of evidence will be explored in greater detail in the chapters dedicated to each specific queen. For example, Part III on the Kleopatras, will analyze the Demotic and Greek papyri for the queens who ruled jointly with their husbands, to demonstrate that they were given titles and monumentally depicted as equal to their husbands in pharaonic duties.

Just as there were varying degrees of power for queens, there were also variable forms of power for the kings as well, particularly once the balance of power began to shift in the late Ptolemaic period and the queens began taking on more ruling responsibility. For each

of the terms used above for queens, a male version is also applicable, as depicted in the comparative Table 2:

Kingly Terminology (in increasing order of power)		
Term	Definition	Examples
King/pharaoh/ <i>basileus</i>	General term for any ruling male, regardless of power	All
King/ <i>basileus</i> - consort	Married to <i>basilissa</i> -regnant, little political power	Ptolemy XIII, Ptolemy XIV
Minor- king/pharaoh/ <i>basileus</i>	Under the protection of a <i>basilissa</i> -regent; subordinate to her in power	Ptolemy VI
Co-ruler	Ruling power equal to or less than that of their female co-ruler, needed iconographically	Ptolemy VIII, Ptolemy IX, Ptolemy X
King/pharaoh/ <i>basileus</i> - regnant	Sole rule or male as dominant ruling power	Ptolemy I, Ptolemy II, Ptolemy III, Ptolemy XII

Table 2- Kingly Terminology

Table 1 and 2 have equivalent titles for male and female roles of rulership, with one exception: there is not necessarily an equivalent of *basilissa*-regent for male rulers, since it was common practice for the male heir to serve under his father's guidance when young. Rather, that position in the chart of male terminology is for the minor-king/pharaoh, who would be under the guidance of the *basilissa*-regent in the event of the early/unexpected death of the *basileus*-pharaoh. The minor-king/pharaoh was subordinate to the *basilissa*-regent in power during the period of her regency, and he was usually listed after the *basilissa*-regent in papyri and dating formulae, as with Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI.

PART I: IMPACTING PTOLEMAIC POLICY: THE TRANSMISSION OF TRADITIONS AND THE UTILITY OF INCEST

1. [Ptolemaic Inheritance of Pharaonic and Macedonian Traditions](#)
 - 1.1. [The ancient roots of female power: Pharaonic Egypt](#)
 - 1.2. [The role of women in transition: Macedonia and the Successors](#)
2. [Ptolemaic Monarchy, Policies, and Governance](#)
 - 2.1. [Ptolemaic monarchy](#)
 - 2.2. [Ptolemaic policies](#)
 - 2.3. [Ptolemaic governance](#)
3. [Ptolemaic Cult, Royal Marriage, and the Practice of Incest](#)
 - 3.1. [The Ptolemaic cult](#)
 - 3.2. [Ptolemy I](#)
 - 3.3. [Ptolemy II](#)
 - 3.4. [Ptolemy III](#)
 - 3.5. [Ptolemy IV](#)

[CONCLUDING POINTS: THE PATH TO FEMALE RULE](#)

In order to understand how Ptolemaic queens were able to gain ruling power it is important to first understand the centuries old cultures out of which the Ptolemaic kingdom emerged and the traditions, both Pharaonic and Macedonian, that influenced the way the Ptolemies established policy and governed. Accordingly, Part I will be sectioned into three chapters. Chapter 1 first explores the traditions that carried over into Ptolemaic Egypt from the Pharaonic period, specifically the customs and beliefs that allowed women to hold a unique place in Egyptian society. The second part of the chapter looks at the traditions that entered into Ptolemaic Egypt from the Greco-Macedonian heritage of the Ptolemies, especially the expectations of Greco-Macedonian royalty and the development of titles and legitimizing devices for royal women. This analysis is key to understanding the actions that were available to the early Ptolemaic queens that will be examined in Part II.

Just as the queens were impacted by both their Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian heritages, so too were the kings. Accordingly, chapter 2 examines the combination of those Egyptian and Greek traditions into the monarchy of the Ptolemaic kingdom to demonstrate

that the roles of both king and queen were shaped by a cultural hybridity. Here again, many of the policies the early Ptolemaic kings chose to adapt would impact the ability of their queens to act publicly. For example, the policy of royal love that will be examined in this chapter, will set the stage for later queens to become one-half of the dynastic imagery. This chapter concludes by exploring some of the realities of governing Egypt and emphasizes that both kings and queens had to navigate those realities. Chapter 3 surveys the development of the Ptolemaic dynasty under the first four Ptolemaic kings and both the royal cult and practice of incest they instituted. These two policies of royal cult and incest would come to define the Ptolemaic monarchy and are thus important concepts that provide the foundation for the arguments presented in Parts II and III.

[1. Ptolemaic inheritance of Pharaonic and Macedonian Traditions](#)

[1.1 The ancient roots of female power: Pharaonic Egypt](#)

Ancient Egyptian society was patriarchal. Unlike other civilizations contemporary to ancient Egypt, however, Egyptian women were seen as an essential complement to the male life and equal to men under the law. According to Egyptian letters, tax records, legal documents, and art work, Egyptian women could act independently of their male relations, own property, and run their own businesses.¹ Women could inherit land from family or purchase it through business deals in which they represented themselves, and women could also represent themselves in court cases as plaintiff, defendant, or as a witness, without the need of a male guardian and (ideally) of equal standing to a male petitioner.² Ancient

¹ Catharine H. Roehrig, “Women’s Work: Some Occupations of nonroyal women as depicted in Ancient Egyptian Art” in *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Anne K. Capel and Glenn E. Markoe (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996), 13.

² Gay Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993), 136, 141; Elizabeth Froom, “Social Structure and Daily Life: Pharaonic,” in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, Alan B. Lloyd, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2010), 473. See also, P.W. Pestman, *Marriage and Matrimonial Property in Ancient*

Egyptian women also may have had the right to be guardians of their minor children, a legal standing that would have an important impact for the later Ptolemaic queen who became *basilissa*-regent.³

Elite women held the most privileged position in society and, in addition to the rights held by common women, were able to be active within the Egyptian royal court by holding priestess positions. Several royal women, including Hatshepsut and Tausret, were able to rule as Pharaoh. While these female pharaohs were the exception, rather than the norm, elite and royal women owned their own estates, in line with the rights of women throughout Egyptian society, and employed male bureaucrats in their service. Queens were thus able to gain a measure of economic independence and potentially create a circle of loyal male officials who could act in their interests.⁴

The ability of Egyptian queens to own property and govern it themselves stemmed from Egyptian law and the belief in the complementarity of the positions of king and queen, that one position could not exist without the other. The reason women were generally seen as an equal under the law and the essential complement to the male life derived from the Egyptian belief in Ma'at (*M3't*). For the Egyptians, Ma'at was multi-faceted. She was sometimes depicted in anthropomorphic form as a winged goddess with an ostrich feather atop her head. She was also an integral part of the weighing of the heart ceremony, described in Chapter 125 of the *Book of Going Forth by Day (The Book of the Dead)*, and was shown

Egypt (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 162-164. Frood observes that children could inherit from both their father and mother, if their mother was a property owner, and that there were several circumstances in which daughters could inherit property. Here it should also be pointed out, as Robins does in her conclusion to chapter seven, that while records indicate that women handled business deals, owned property, and could be active in courts, the records that have survived exemplify the exceptional cases, and we cannot know, realistically, how evenly or with what biases laws were applied when all bureaucratic positions were held by elite males.

³ See Part III, chapter 8 on Kleopatra I. Anne Bielman-Sánchez and Giuseppina Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” *Studi ellenistici* 29 (2015), 157, n. 59.

⁴ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 42.

as the ostrich feather against which the heart was weighed.⁵ She might also be shown as a small figure atop the scales to ensure the fairness of the trial overall.⁶ In non-visual form, she personified the ethical forces of justice, truth, and cosmic order/balance, and, as such, Ma'at is often translated as “what is right/just.”⁷ She was the divine harmony of the universe, which ensured the daily rising and setting of the sun, successful inundations, and the subsequent fertility of the land, but she was also tied to a concept of personal behavior that dictated every Egyptian should speak truthfully, deal fairly with others, and remain obedient/loyal to parents, spouses, and the king.⁸ Thus, she was also associated with the nonrepresentational form of the constant struggle between good/balance (Ma'at) and bad/chaos (Isfet).⁹ According to this belief, bad things occurred when Ma'at was out of alignment. For example, on the macro scale, the Ma'at of Egypt overall was maintained by the presence of the pharaoh on the Horus throne and by the pharaoh upholding the principles of Ma'at through just rule and proper worship of the gods.¹⁰ Since the queen was the companion to the king, the maintenance of Ma'at was also dependent upon her actions as his supporter and partner. This is an important distinction that would carry into the Ptolemaic period and have a defining role in the development of Ptolemaic queenship, as will be explored further in Part II.

⁵ Robert A. Armour, *Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2001), 135; Donald B. Redford, *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 191.

⁶ For an example of Ma'at on top of the scales, see the *Book of the Dead* Papyrus of Hunefer (Hw-nfr) and, for Ma'at as the feather, see the *Book of the Dead* Papyrus of Ani, British Museum (EA9901,3 and EA10470,3).

⁷ Armour, *Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt*, 133.

⁸ Redford, *The Ancient Gods Speak*, 189.

⁹ Redford, *The Ancient Gods Speak*, 189. See also, Harry Smith, “Ma'et and Isfet,” *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* 5 (1994): 67.

¹⁰ Redford, *The Ancient Gods Speak*, 189. See also, Joyce Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis: Women of Ancient Egypt* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 209.

This maintenance of the Ma'at of Egypt extended to the people as well, in that part of their responsibility for personal behavior was to remain loyal to and obey the king, queen, and their governmental servants. Additionally, there were many microcosms of Ma'at represented by everyday life where the family and household were the core of social structure. Within the home, for instance, balance was kept through a healthy and happy relationship between wife and husband and parents and children. Froot notes six basic kinship terms that were used to describe family relationships: “father (*it*), mother (*mwt*), son (*s3*), daughter (*s3t*), brother (*sn*) and sister (*snt*). Additional terms describe affinal (non-blood) kin relationships, notably husband (*h3y*) and wife (*hmt*).”¹¹ The terms brother (*sn*) and sister (*snt*) were used in love poetry from the New Kingdom period to describe lovers or husbands and wives, and that usage would carry into the Hellenistic period where many of the queens were described as the sister and wives (*snt* and *hmt*) of their royal husbands (see Parts II and III). With this emphasis on familial relationships, the wife was considered the supporting companion to the husband who would bring balance to his life, stability to his home, and children to carry on his name.

Accordingly, the purpose of marriages in ancient Egypt was to produce children to carry on a family name. Tyldesley argues that “The Egyptians, far more than any other past civilization, have passed on to us, through their paintings, their statues, and above all, their lyric love songs, their satisfied contentment with the romance of marriage. To marry a wife and beget many children may have been the duty of every right-thinking Egyptian male, but it was a duty which was very much welcomed.”¹² Rather than simply being an economic

¹¹ Froot, “Social Structure and Daily Life: Pharaonic,” 471-472.

¹² Tyldesley, *Daughters of Isis*, 46. See also, Pestman, *Marriage and Matrimonial Property in Ancient Egypt*, 3, n. 2.

arrangement, as ancient marriage is often described, Egyptian marriages were more about creating a solid and productive family unit. While Egyptian marriages did have the economic facets of creating family alliances and protecting property, they were ultimately about producing legitimate children. Frood notes the importance of both the parent-child relationship and the nuclear family, which was demonstrated by regular depictions of family units on the monumental scale and in tomb offerings as a method of emphasizing legitimacy and continuity.¹³

This held true for royal marriages as well. Although the “heiress theory” has been invalidated, Egyptian kings most often married royal females.¹⁴ Royal females were important figures, as the mothers of future monarchs and insurers of dynastic stability. This concept of royal women as child bearers and insurers of dynastic stability is another facet that would be transmitted to the Hellenistic period and define Ptolemaic queenship. Additionally, royal mothers were venerated by their sons, and royal daughters could secure royal power and dynastic continuance via marriages both within the royal family and to members of the high-ranking Egyptian elite.¹⁵ Robins points out that royal women were in a unique position because they had access to the king, and a strong-willed mother or wife might be able to alternately influence the pharaoh, aid with rulership, or even rule through the pharaoh.¹⁶ All three of these actions can be exemplified by the women of the Eighteenth

¹³ Frood, “Social Structure and Daily Life: Pharaonic,” 472.

¹⁴ The “heiress theory” was prevalent in Egyptian scholarship during the early 1900s. It argued that the right to Pharaonic kingship passed through marriage with a royal princess. This theory was first questioned and refuted by Gay Robins in the 1980s. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 26-27. See also, Gay Robins, “A Critical Examination of the Theory That the Right to the Throne of Ancient Egypt Passed through the Female Line in the 18th Dynasty,” *GM* 62 (1983): 67-77; Betsy M. Bryan, “In Women Good and Bad Fortune are on Earth: Status and Roles of Women in Egyptian Culture,” in *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*, Anne K. Capel and Glenn E. Markoe, eds. (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996): 26.

¹⁵ Bryan, “In Women Good and Bad Fortune are on Earth,” 37.

¹⁶ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 20, 38.

and Nineteenth Dynasties of the New Kingdom, such as Ahhotep, Ahmose-Nefertari, and, of course, Hatshepsut. Most importantly, queen-mothers and principal-wives shared in the divinity of their husbands, as shown by the queenly insignia of the vulture headdress (often including double feather plums and cow-horns), and scenes of the divine birth of the king, in which the queen-mother directly communicated with the gods without the intercession of the pharaoh.¹⁷ While the king's mother and king's principal wife were not always, in reality, the same person during the Pharaonic period, the ideology that developed around this royal woman, which conceptualized the queen-mother and principal wife as one figure, would be perpetuated through the Pharaonic dynasties and survive into the Hellenistic period.

Thus, the queen was important in several ways. Her divinity bolstered that of the king and ensured the maintenance of Ma'at. In her role as child-bearer, she produced future heirs for the throne, and her person became an important ideological concept through the idea of the unity of the queen-mother and principal wife. All of these concepts would be transmitted to the Hellenistic period and incorporated in the ideology of the Ptolemaic queen.

[1.2 The role of women in transition: Macedonia and the Successors](#)

The roles available to women during the Hellenistic period in Egypt emerged out of an assimilation of the Egyptian traditions with the Greco-Macedonian. Macedonia was the kingdom to the north of the Greek *poleis* that by the fourth century BCE was consolidated under the rule of Philip II of the Macedonian Argead Dynasty. It shared much of the Greek culture and traditions, including some the customs surrounding the roles and duties of women. Accordingly, the Greek customs that passed into the Hellenistic world were modified in the Greco-Macedonian kingdom during the Late Classical Period.

¹⁷ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 25, 41.

There is, however, a problem in determining which Greek traditions were adopted by the Macedonians and which were not. For the past 40 years, general scholarship on Greek women emphasized the concept of seclusion, and the consensus was that in Classical Athens society was strictly patriarchal, with women restricted to the *oikos* (here, the physical house).¹⁸ It was believed that seclusion was considered proper conduct for Athenian women, and support for this theory came from sources such as Thucydides, who wrote: “Your reputation is glorious if you do not prove inferior to your own nature and if there is the least possible talk about you among men, whether in praise or blame” (Thuc. 2.45.2). In this passage from Pericles’ Funeral Oration, Thucydides is arguing that the most respectable woman is a somewhat invisible woman; she is expected to do her duties so well that she is not noticed either for good behavior or bad. In this concept, women were permitted to leave the house to attend religious duties and mourning, but, overall, seclusion was seen as proper conduct and a form of protection for them.¹⁹ Women were expected to be silent support for their husbands; the women bore the heirs, raised the children, and managed their husband’s home, so that their husband could be a proper and contributing member of society.

Yet, there are two problems with this theory of seclusion. First, due to the survival bias of documentation from the Classical period, sources describing the practice survive almost exclusively from Athens, and the extent to which seclusion was practiced in other Greek city-states is uncertain. In Sparta, for example, it was certainly not a viable practice. Second, the evidence used to support the idea of seclusion concerns the propertied classes

¹⁸ For a good analysis of the scholarship on seclusion, see Joan Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 3-4. See also, Elaine Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 79-80, 103; Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1995), 79-84.

¹⁹ Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 79-80, 103; Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, 79-81.

and was highly idealized by Greek writers, including Xenophon, Plato, and Thucydides.²⁰

New archaeological evidence is demonstrating that Greek women, even in Athens, were much more active than previously believed, especially in the areas of mourning, religious duties, and general household economics.²¹ Ultimately, for women of the lower classes who had to work and help support their homes, seclusion was not a realistic practice that could be implemented across society.

The second issue with the concept of seclusion, especially as it relates to possible transmission into the Hellenistic world, is the extent to which it was adopted by the Macedonians. As with the Greek *poleis*, seclusion could perhaps have been implemented in Macedonia among the elite, but here there are similar problems of making a concrete determination. The Macedonians had kept their *basileus* when many of the Greek city-states had overthrown theirs by the end of the Archaic period. This meant that the Macedonians had a ruling royal clan that was absent in the *poleis* of Classical Greece, with the exception of Sparta. Unfortunately, little evidence survives about women in early Macedonia to either confirm or deny their possible use of seclusion. A story told by Herodotus (5.18-20) of the court of Amyntas seems to indicate that royal women were secluded, but this story, as with much of Herodotus, has been challenged by historians.²² In any case, by the fourth century

²⁰ Additional sources used to defend the idea of seclusion include vase painting, tomb sculpture, epitaphs, laws and courtroom speeches delivered in reference to family disputes, and portrayals of family life in comedy and tragedy. All of these types of sources were produced by men for use by men, so the accuracy of the “daily life” depicted is questionable. Comedies and Tragedies, for example, were all written by men, performed by male actors, and financed by male officials. Thus, they show a view of women through the eyes of men and with the additional distortions of being written in either the heroic past or with exaggerations aimed at producing comedic relief.

²¹ Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess*, 281.

²² Walter D. Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons: Female Masculinity and Courage in Ancient Greek and Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 189. Carney also evaluates some of the archaeological evidence related to possible Macedonian seclusion, but, as she notes, the evidence is inconclusive. Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 27-28, 263 n.108.

BCE, strict seclusion for royal women was not practiced. By this point, rather than being confined to the *oikos*, the physical house, Macedonian royal women could represent their *oikos*, their family name or household, by acting in a supporting role for their male family members.²³ This was a more public role than was available to women in the *poleis*, perhaps more similar to the Greek culture of the Archaic period represented by outspoken Homeric women like Penelope and Arete, rather than the 5th century norms, but the same connotation of household and support was present.²⁴

Thus, it was with Philip II, and the female members of his family, that the roles open to elite women would evolve within the concept of the *oikos*. Carney argues that the role of women in the Argead Dynasty impacted the way the roles of Hellenistic women would develop, and the position of women in the Argead Dynasty was part of the royal and dynastic image created by Philip II. Under Philip, Argead women were able to “achieve new prominence” and play a more public role, even though they held no official office.²⁵ For instance, Philip’s mother, Eurydike, was able to advocate for the succession of her son after his father’s death. She earned *kleos*, or renown, through her piety and patronage of Greek women and Greek-style education.²⁶ Unlike women of Classical Athens, who were expected to be invisible, Eurydike’s *kleos* was a mark of achievement that advanced the position of her son. She was still acting within the role of support, by advocating for her son and bringing

²³ Elizabeth D. Carney, “Oikos Keeping: Women and Monarchy in the Macedonian Tradition,” in *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, Sharon L. James and Sheila Dillon, eds. (Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 304.

²⁴ For analysis of the Homeric pattern as the model of behavior for royal Macedonian women, see Elizabeth D. Carney, “Foreign Influence and the Changing Role of Royal Macedonian Women,” in *Ancient Macedonia: papers read at the fifth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10-15 1989*, Erhard Grzybek, ed. (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1993), 316.

²⁵ Elizabeth D. Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” in *Creating a Hellenistic World*, Andrew Erskine and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, eds. (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 197.

²⁶ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 197.

renown to her family name, but her actions also meant that royal women could become public symbols of domesticity and education that benefited their offspring. Both the emphases on female public euergetism and education would carry into the Ptolemaic period.

Furthermore, Philip used the images of Eurydike, his wife Olympias, and his daughter Kleopatra, both physically in his Philippeion and ideologically, to create an image of dynastic stability.²⁷ Just as the role of Pharaonic Egyptian and Classical Greek women was to bear children, so too was this the duty of Argead royal women, and it was a duty that created dynastic stability when healthy male heirs were birthed. As noted by Strootman, “*Basileia* (monarchy) was a family affair,” and in Macedonia, to maintain the stability of the dynasty, *basileia* could be inherited by a direct female descendant, such as a king’s daughter, rather than a distant male relative, and conferred on her husband.²⁸ This is why so many of the later Diadochs strove to arrange marriages to Philip’s daughter, Kleopatra (Diod. Sic. 20.37.4), through whom the dynastic royal titles and power of Philip could be transmitted. The tradition had an important impact on Ptolemaic Egypt as well, since Ptolemaic queens could use their inheritance of *basileia* to take increasing control of public power when male heirs were either minors or unavailable (see Part III). In addition to the Macedonian inheritance traditions, Bielman-Sánchez reasons that Eurydike, who was related to the monarchs of

²⁷ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 198. See also, Uta Kron, “Priesthoods, Dedications and Euergetism: What Part Did Religion Play in the Political and Social Status of Greek Women?” in *Religion and power in the ancient Greek world: proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1993*, Pontus Hellström and Brita Alroth, eds. (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1996), 168.

For an in-depth analysis of the Philippeion and the statues therein, see Elizabeth D. Carney, “The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women,” *Classical Philology* 95 (2000): 21-43.

²⁸ Rolf Strootman, “‘The Heroic Company of my Forebears’: The Ancestor Galleries of Antiochos I of Kommagene at Nemrut Dağı and the Role of Royal Women in the Transmission of Hellenistic Kingship,” in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 219, n. 32. In making this claim, he cites Carney, “The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women,” 4-8. See also, Alexander Meeus, “Kleopatra and the Diadochoi,” in *Faces of Hellenism: Studies in the History of the Eastern Mediterranean (4th Century B.C.-5th Century A.D.)*, Peter Van Nuffelen, ed. (Leuven: Peeters), 70, *passim*.

Illyria, and Olympias, who had connections to the royal family of Epirus, drew strength from their familial backgrounds, as Illyria and Epirus granted more rights, both publicly and domestically, to women.²⁹

Successive Argead women were then able to work within this power structure that Philip and Eurydike had created as a form of stability and use it to become increasingly politically active. Just as Eurydike had advocated for the succession of Philip, Olympias supported the succession of her son, Alexander, after Philip's death. She gathered about her a network of clients and agents through which she could act on behalf of her son. For example, she was the first Macedonian royal woman to make official dedications at Olympia to advertise "the wealth, piety, and military success of her family."³⁰ Religious responsibility was one of the spheres open to women in Classical Greece, so this was an easy transition to make, and it would continue to be one of the main areas in which royal Ptolemaic women could act as well. In the political sphere, Olympias and her daughter Kleopatra made donations of grain in times of scarcity (*SEG* 4.2), and this practice of female euergetism is another tradition that would be adopted by the Ptolemaic queens. Olympias and Kleopatra were also both literate, educated, and active in their dynasty's affairs.³¹ These women maintained correspondence with the leading men of the period and used their education and political acumen to navigate the treacherous terrain of dynastic infighting after Philip and

²⁹ Anne Bielman-Sánchez, "Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides," in *L'Orient méditerranéen de la mort d'Alexandre aux campagnes de Pompé: Cités et royaumes à l'époque hellénistique*, F. Prost, ed. (Paris: Rennes, 2015), 44. See also, Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 40-46; Carney, "Foreign Influence and the Changing Role of Royal Macedonian Women," 322; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 194-195; John Whitehorne, *Cleopatras* (London: Routledge, 1994), 59.

³⁰ Carney, "Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period," 198.

³¹ Kyra L. Nourse, "Women and the Early Development of Royal Power in the Hellenistic East" (Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2002), 10. See also, Carney, "Foreign Influence and the Changing Role of Royal Macedonian Women," 314-315.

Alexander's deaths.³² Education for royal women, which would allow them to engage in the politics of their age, was a final influence that would continue into Ptolemaic Egypt.

With the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE, the roles open to women transitioned even further as each of the successor states became embroiled in inter- and intra-dynastic infighting. Olympias and Adea-Eurydike, for example, are two well-known Macedonian queens who participated in the battles of succession immediately following the death of Alexander.³³ While not every royal woman was as active as these two, they are a good, if exceptional, example of the ways these early Hellenistic elite women could act in the interest of their husbands and sons. Subsequently, the activity of royal females within these dynastic disputes led to the creation of a female title, *basilissa*. This title was first used by Phila, the wife of Demetrios Poliorketes, in 305 BCE.³⁴ It came into use at the same time that Demetrios took on the title of *basileus* (Plut. *Vit. Dem.* 18.1-2; Diod. Sic. 20.53.2-4), so the adoption of the female title was directly related to the male title as a way of defining both royal positions, that of king and consort.³⁵ However, since *basilissa* was thereafter used to describe a royal wife, royal daughter, female regent, or female king, “the title institutionalized the public role of royal women to a greater degree than previously, but left the nature of that role undefined and extremely variable across dynasties and even individual

³² Nourse, “Women and the Early Development of Royal Power in the Hellenistic East” 11; Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 28-29; Carney, “Foreign Influence and the Changing Role of Royal Macedonian Women,” 314.

³³ Olympias and Adea-Eurydike are often credited with leading armies into battle, but it is uncertain whether they led the armies themselves or were present as symbolic leaders. See, Elizabeth D. Carney, “Women and War,” in *A Companion to Greek Warfare*, Waldemar Heckel, ed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Forthcoming 2025).

³⁴ Phila named *basilissa* on SIG 333.6-7.

³⁵ Carney, “What’s in a Name? The Emergence of a Title for Royal Women in the Hellenistic Period,” 157. See also, Savalli-Lestrade, “Les adieux à la βασίλισσα, Mise en scène en intrigue de la mort des femmes royales dans le monde hellénistique,” 189 and n. 7-8.

reigns.”³⁶ While this title did not give royal women an official office, it did give them recognition. The title was subsequently used by several of the Ptolemaic royal women, including Berenike I and II.³⁷

The appearance of the title *basilissa* was an important step in a series of developments that would allow Hellenistic royal women to be used as methods of legitimization within their burgeoning dynasties. First, as mentioned above, the use of the male title *basileus* among the Diadochi by 305 BCE (Plut. *Vit. Dem.* 18.1-2; Diod. Sic. 20.53.2-4) led to the creation of the female title, *basilissa*. The creation of a public position for the queen, would lead to the wearing of diadems for royal women and their appearance on coins.³⁸ Prior to that, Kassander, who had married Thessalonike, another daughter of Philip II, in 316 BCE, would name a city after her (Strab. 7, frag. 21.1) as part of his attempt to legitimize his control of Macedonia.³⁹ The practice of eponymous city-founding originated with Philip II, was continued and emphasized by Alexander, and became a “characteristically royal act” for the Diadochi.⁴⁰ Consequently, naming cities for royal women would become a popular tradition throughout the Hellenistic world as a way to “elevate the dynasty by elevating all its members,” and the early Ptolemies would name at least six new cities after the Arsinoës and Berenikes of their dynasty.⁴¹

³⁶ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 202.

³⁷ Berenike I named *basilissa* on *OGIS* 14, and for Berenike II, the title is used on her coinage, as will be further discussed in Part II, chapter 6.

³⁸ Carney, “What’s in a Name? The Emergence of a Title for Royal Women in the Hellenistic Period,” 162.

³⁹ A Roman era statue base (IG X 2.1 277) found in the city, which is now housed in the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki (<https://www.amth.gr/en/exhibitions/permanent-exhibitions/thessaloniki-metropolis-macedonia>), mentions Thessalonike and titles her *basilissa*. See, Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 208-209.

⁴⁰ Elizabeth D. Carney, “Eponymous Women. Royal Women and City Names,” *Ancient History Bulletin* 2 (1988): 134.

⁴¹ Carney remarks that the first city was named after Thessalonike shortly after 316, and by 301 it was a general and accepted custom. Carney, “What’s in a Name? The Emergence of a Title for Royal Women in the Hellenistic Period,” 160; Carney, “Eponymous Women. Royal Women and City Names,” 139. See also, Bielman-Sánchez, “Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides,” 52; Getzel M. Cohen,

Royal women were also used as legitimators via alliance marriages, as shown by the marriage of Thessalonike to Kassander and the marriage of Adea-Eurydike to Philip III Arrhidaeus. This tradition would continue throughout the Hellenistic period and be a major driving force behind the marriages of the early Ptolemies, as will be discussed further in chapter 3 and Part II. Finally, royal cults and deifications would be used as a definitive factor of legitimization. The act of creating royal cults aimed to present an image of gods-given favor, so the creation of cults for the Diadochs was logically part of their various plans to establish themselves as the successors of Alexander the Great. As the wives and daughters of these men were then included in their burgeoning dynastic propagandas, individual female cults were created by 305 BCE.⁴² While individual cults were established throughout the Hellenistic kingdoms, the paired royal cult was unique to the Ptolemies. When the cult revolved around the royal couple it required deification for both the male ruler and his consort, which for the Ptolemies was complementary to the Egyptian concept of Ma'at. Thus, deification of the king and queen, as a ruling unit, would be used by the Ptolemies as a method of presenting an image of both stability and godly favor.

The use of royal women as a device for legitimization within the Successor dynasties, however, would be the very aspect that allowed Ptolemaic women to grow in power. Although the royal women were initially utilized by the royal men of the dynasties, their position as legitimizers gave these women a recognition, a public role, through which they could act. The growing importance and power of women within the royal couple ideal also

The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2006), 308.

⁴² Carney argues that the first cult dedicated to a royal woman was for Phila, sometime between 307 and 305 BCE. Carney, "The First *basilissa*: Phila, daughter of Antipater and wife of Demetrius Poliorcetes" (Forthcoming). See also, Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 218, n. 78; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," 31-32, ns. 53 and 54.

led to a decrease in the practice of polygamy, and, while a reduced number of available male heirs can be observed cross-dynastically in the Hellenistic world at this time, the resulting emphasis placed on the Ptolemaic royal couple was unique to the Ptolemies. Whereas Philip II, Alexander, and many of the Diadochi would practice polygamy as a way of solidifying their rule and territories, under the successors of the Diadochi, the Epigoni, the practice would wane as infighting among the heirs lessened the number of both royal males and females. Carney posits that the advent of a female title may have contributed to this decline.⁴³ Bielman-Sánchez takes the point a step further by contending that the numerical disparity between male and female members of the ruling family provided royal women with an opportunity to assert public authority and gain parcels of power.⁴⁴ While she is making a general statement about the Hellenistic world as a whole, in Ptolemaic Egypt specifically, polygamy was replaced with endogamy and incest, in which there were fewer royal women, but those few held greater power as a result of the unique ruling couple ideal.

⁴³ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 203. See also, Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 117-118.

⁴⁴ Bielman-Sánchez, “Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides,” 44: “la disparité numérique entre membres masculins et membres féminins de la famille régnante a fourni à des femmes l’occasion de s’affirmer publiquement et de conquérir des parcelles de pouvoir.”

2. Ptolemaic Monarchy, Policies, and Governance

The ways in which Ptolemaic royal women could act within society were thus derived from the combining of Pharaonic Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian practices, what Penrose terms a “Greco-Egyptian cultural hybridity.”⁴⁵ While these influences ultimately allowed these queens to gain increasing levels of power, as will be discussed in greater detail in Part II, they originally survived into the Ptolemaic Dynasty because of the way the early Ptolemaic kings established the policies that would create their new kingdom. For instance, the idea of stability through the royal couple and the maintenance of Ma’at against Isfet was upheld as an important part of Ptolemaic monarchy by the first and second Ptolemies, and the continued emphasis on stability through the maintenance of Ma’at ensured that the Ptolemies, both male and female, would retain the religious duties associated with the positions of pharaoh and his consort.

Consequently, not only was the position of Ptolemaic queen impacted by the inheritance of customs from both the Egyptian and Macedonian traditions, but so too was the position of *basileus*-pharaoh. Hölbl argues that Alexander and the early Ptolemies strove to assimilate and restore the ideology of Egyptian kingship in order to use it for their own legitimizing purposes. Manning agreed with that assertion when he contended that “Ptolemaic action was informed by the Egyptian past.”⁴⁶ Since Egypt had such a long historical standing, the Ptolemies had to work within established ancient institutional structures; specifically, they had to show they were working within the Egyptian cultic rites to maintain Ma’at.⁴⁷ In addition to the Egyptian traditions, however, Ptolemy I brought with

⁴⁵ Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 185.

⁴⁶ J. G. Manning, *The Last Pharaohs: Egypt Under the Ptolemies, 305-30 BC* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 18.

⁴⁷ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 19; Gunther Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London: Routledge, 2001), 77. See also, Jan Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes,” in *Das ptolemaïsche*

him Greek settlers who had Greco-Macedonian cultural expectations that they presumed their new king would embody. Thus, in establishing the role of *basileus*-pharaoh, the early Ptolemies navigated both their Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian heritages, and the aspects of each that they chose to keep, adapt, and/or emphasize would impact both Ptolemaic kingship and queenship.

2.1 Ptolemaic monarchy

Accordingly, and similarly to the way Ptolemaic royal women's roles were determined by a combining of pre-existing traditions, so too did Ptolemaic royal males need to adopt and adapt customs from both the Egyptian and Macedonian heritages out of which their rulership emerged. In the Egyptian sphere, the Ptolemies presented themselves as the inheritors of Pharaonic kingship, which allowed them to adopt Egyptian imagery of divine kingship, but also necessitated that they participate in the Egyptian religious traditions. The Egyptian concepts of kinship were then combined with the Macedonian-Greek ideals of *basileus* to produce the Ptolemaic *basileus*-pharaoh.

In keeping with Egyptian tradition, the early Ptolemies strove to depict themselves as the rightful successors of the Pharaonic period, rather than as foreign conquerors. Alexander and the Ptolemies chose Memphis for the seat of their religious activities, specifically cultic and later coronation events, which associated them with the Old Kingdom and native founding figures, like King Menes.⁴⁸ In doing so, they showed their reverence for important Egyptian gods, such as Ptah and Apis, which disassociated them with the image of hostile

Agypten, H. von Maehler and V. M. Stocka, eds. (Mainz am Rhein: Akten des Internationalen Symposions, 1978), 246.

⁴⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 77-78. Alexandria became the political and cultural center of the dynasty, but Memphis retained cultic and religious significance throughout the Ptolemaic period.

foreign rulers, as the Achaemenids had been characterized.⁴⁹ Whereas Cambyses and Artaxerxes III were loathed for killing the Apis bull (Hdt. 3.10-16; 3.27-37; 3.64-66), Alexander and the Ptolemies were careful to show their reverence for the sacred animal via sacrificial rites (Arr. *Anab.* 3.1.4).⁵⁰ The Ptolemies also used ideology to associate the Persians with the previously expunged Hyksos, which allowed them to depict themselves similarly to the New Kingdom pharaohs as powerful military figures and the restorers of proper ritual, temples, and stolen cultic statues.⁵¹ Koenen, for example, posits that the Ptolemies, emulating Alexander, strove to win the loyalty of the Egyptians by adopting their familiar concepts of kingship, both in the sense of divine rulership and the pharaoh's religious duties.⁵²

Moreover, the Alexander Romance, part of which described Nectanebo II as Alexander's father, was a piece of Ptolemaic propaganda that attempted to depict both Alexander and the Ptolemies as the legitimate successors of the native Egyptian line of kings.⁵³ This is further supported by sculptures of the early Ptolemies in the Egyptian style, which are almost indistinguishable from those of the Thirtieth Dynasty, especially Nectanebo I and II. Ashton proposes that Ptolemaic sculptors continued to use either very similar or the same portrait models for the Egyptian representations of their rulers as had been used in the

⁴⁹ The Achaemenids ruled Egypt during the periods of 525-404 and 343-332 BCE. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 77-78; Stefan Pfeiffer, "The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt," in *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, Paul McKechnie and Philippe Guillaume, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 389.

⁵⁰ For an example for the Ptolemies, see the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56), which proclaimed special care for the animal cults, especially that of Apis. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 107.

⁵¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 81. See also, note 56, below.

⁵² Ludwig Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," in *Images and Ideologies: Self-Definition in the Hellenistic World*, A. Bulloch, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 81.

⁵³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 79; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 60. Stories were also produced to claim Ptolemy I was a son of Philip II (Paus. 1.6.2) and half-brother to Alexander in order to connect him to the Argead. See Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 12, 14; Daniel Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death: The Hellenistic Dynasties* (London: Duckworth with The Classical Press of Wales, 1999), 67-68.

Thirtieth Dynasty in order to present continuity between the old and new ruling houses.⁵⁴ In connecting themselves with the last native rulers of Egypt, the Ptolemies strove to continue the tradition of divine kingship, since the divine ancestry of the Pharaoh had a long history, which both Alexander and the Ptolemies wanted to use for their benefit.⁵⁵ They were adept at picking and choosing which traditions to keep and utilize from both the Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian traditions.

These political associations, however, also meant that the Ptolemaic pharaohs had to take up traditional pharaonic religious duties, such as building and maintaining temples and upholding the cults of the various Egyptian deities. If they wanted to take the divine aspects of the position of pharaoh onto themselves, they had to satisfy the requirements that came with that divinity. Ptolemy I, for example, issued the Satrap Stele (CG 22263) in which he was shown restoring the temple of Buto and returning the temple's holy books and cult statues that had been removed by the Persians during the Achaemenid rule of Egypt.⁵⁶ Similarly, Ptolemy II fulfilled his pharaonic religious duties by visiting important sanctuaries and restoring or rebuilding damaged temples.⁵⁷ The Mendes Stele (CG 22181) depicts another of these events in which Ptolemy II personally made dedications to the ram god of

⁵⁴ Sally-Ann Ashton, "The Ptolemaic Royal Image and the Egyptian Tradition," in *Never had the like Occurred: Egypt's View of its Past*, John Tait, ed. (London: UCL Press, 2003), 213, 215.

⁵⁵ Angelos Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Andrew Erskine, ed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2005), 434-435.

⁵⁶ Sabine Müller, "The Female Element in the Political Self-Fashioning of the Diadochoi: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus and their Iranian Wives," in *After Alexander: The Time of the Diadochi*, Victor Troncoso and Edward Anson, eds. (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 204. See also, Boyo G. Ockinga, "The Satrap Stele of Ptolemy: A Reassessment," in *Ptolemy I and the Transformation of Egypt, 404-282 BCE*, Paul McKechnie and Jennifer A. Cromwell, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 166-198. The Pithom Stele (CG 22183) of Ptolemy II and the Adulis Decree (OGIS 54) and Canopus Decree (OGIS 56) of Ptolemy III similarly state that they returned additional sacred items removed by the Persians.

⁵⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 84. See also, Ashton, "The Ptolemaic Royal Image and the Egyptian Tradition," 216; Martina Minas-Nerpel, "Pharaoh and Temple Building in the Fourth Century BCE," in *Ptolemy I and the Transformation of Egypt, 404-282 BCE*, Paul McKechnie and Jennifer A. Cromwell, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 122.

Mendes and made arrangements for the completion of his temple. Many of the succeeding Ptolemies would issue similar decrees that upheld traditional Pharaonic religious imagery (see, for example, Appendix F). Chaniotis further argues that, although most of the Ptolemies took on Greek epithets, their titles, such as Soter, Euergetes, Epiphanes, etc., used many of the same religious terms as Egyptian titularies and would have been easily identifiable to the native population.⁵⁸ Thus, their kingly epithets, which seem purely Greek on the surface, are another example of the ways the Ptolemies adapted Egyptian religious customs.

Not only were the Ptolemies seeking to work within the traditional religious duties of the Egyptian pharaoh, but they combined those aspects with the Greco-Macedonian ideals of *basileus*. Alexander, rather than taking on Persian titles, such as “king of kings,” instead opted for the Greek *basileus*, and the Ptolemies followed suit, becoming both Greek *basileus* and Egyptian pharaoh in Egypt. Goyette argues that Ptolemy I and II did not want to interfere with Egyptian social and religious customs, as doing so would hinder their political competence and the economic efficiency of the country, but, at the same time, they had to keep the Greek portion of the population happy by upholding Greek concepts of authority and bureaucracy.⁵⁹ While the pharaonic duties were mostly religious, the Greek ideals of *basileus* were based on ancient Greek kingship, knowledge of which survives in fourth century Greek philosophy, including Aristotle’s *Politica* and Plato’s *Leges* and *Politica*: the Greek *basileus* was a savior, liberator, protector, patron of the arts and learning, and producer of fertility and affluence.⁶⁰ This was expressed by the Ptolemies in their acts of euergetism,

⁵⁸ Chaniotis, “The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers,” 437, 439. See also, Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 96; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 79-80. For an extensive analysis of the various epithets and their traditions in both Greek and Egyptian heritage, see Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 61-65.

⁵⁹ Michael Goyette, “Ptolemy II Philadelphus and the Dionysiac Model of Political Authority,” *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 2 (2010), 2.

⁶⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 91.

including gifts to cities and benefactions to temples, and their efforts to make Alexandria a center of learning.

It is important to point out that the Greek ideals of *basileus* that entered into Egypt were also influenced by the Macedonian tradition, in much the same way as roles available to women were. And here, again similarly to the issues with the sources available on royal women in Macedonia, described above, most of the evidence on Macedonian kingship, prior to Philip II, is vague, non-Macedonian, and written well after Alexander the Great's death.⁶¹ King points out that, while Macedonian kingship was mentioned by Aristotle and Plato, it is impossible to determine if, for example, Aristotle's time at the Macedonian court influenced his philosophy on kingship or if his philosophy influenced the way Philip and Alexander ruled.⁶²

Either way, by the time of Philip II, it is clear that Macedonian kings, similarly to the traditional concept of pharaoh, were responsible for some religious rites, administered the highest levels of justice, and personally led the army in battle.⁶³ Thus, these were the aspects that transitioned to the Ptolemaic *basileus*-pharaoh. He became the head priest of the kingdom, the chief justice, and the commander of the military. While these features of Macedonian kingship were all relatively straight-forward and could be easily adopted into the concept of the Ptolemaic *basileus*-pharaoh, there were other aspects of Macedonian kingship that were not as easily adaptable.

⁶¹ For a good overview of the sources on Macedonian Kingship, see Carol J. King, "Macedonian Kingship and Other Political Institutions," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington, eds. (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2010), 373-372.

⁶² King, "Macedonian Kingship and Other Political Institutions," 380.

⁶³ King, "Macedonian Kingship and Other Political Institutions," 379, 380; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 3.

For instance, although the Argead kingship was hereditary, there were no clear rules of succession, so dynastic stability and inheritance could be contentious because of royal polygamy.⁶⁴ This could be one of the main reasons the Ptolemies, especially Ptolemy II, quickly developed policies that would promote dynastic continuance and stability, including ending the practice of polygamy, and discontinued traditions that put the king's person in danger, such as personally leading the army. Furthermore, the later Argeads, specifically Philip II and Alexander the Great, hinted towards a concept of royal divinization. The Argeads drew their royal line from Heracles and Zeus, which established a divine ancestry and, through that association, a divine right to rule.⁶⁵ Neither Philip nor Alexander implemented an official cult, as would be done in Ptolemaic Egypt, and instead only hinted at their divine rulership. The Ptolemies then had to decide how they would emulate Alexander in this way without being perceived as attempting to surpass such a monumental figure (see chapter 3.1).

2.2 Ptolemaic policies

Thus, the Ptolemies had to adapt their concept of Greco-Macedonian kingship to maintain their own Macedonian traditions, while also considering the expectations of their Greek and Egyptian subjects. Accordingly, they instituted several new policies that would ease the transition into their rulership and facilitate the creation of the *basileus*-pharaoh role in a way that was acceptable to both the Greek and Egyptian populations over which they ruled. The dynastic cult and practice of incest are, of course, the two major policies the initial Ptolemies instituted, and, as such, the next chapter is dedicated to specifically analyzing how

⁶⁴ King, "Macedonian Kingship and Other Political Institutions," 376, 377; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 3.

⁶⁵ King, "Macedonian Kingship and Other Political Institutions," 376; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 3; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 29.

those practices were instituted, their early development, and the challenges that came with implementing each. Here a few of the less publicized, but still important, policies will be briefly highlighted, especially those that directly impacted both the king and queen.

Many of the Greco-Macedonian ideals of kingship were already complementary to the Egyptian, specifically the role of the king as religious figure, military leader, judiciary, and divinely sanctioned ruler. For the Greek subjects, Koenen argues that the court poets, such as Theokritos and Kallimachos, were able to present many of those Egyptian and Macedonian concepts of kingship within the frame of Greek myth and tradition.⁶⁶ Court poetry is a good example of the ways Greco-Macedonian and Egyptian customs were hybridized and how some of the concepts of rulership that were integral to the Macedonian ruling elite, but which might not have been as acceptable to the Greek population they ruled, such as divine kingship, were made palatable to the Ptolemies' Greek subjects. For example, the *Lock of Berenike* by Kallimachos is clearly written based on the Classical Greek tradition, but it deals with the Ptolemaic *basileus*-pharaoh's divine kingship that was unquestionably incorporated from the Egyptian and Macedonian traditions.⁶⁷

Another hybridization of the Egyptian and Greek traditions that became a key part of Ptolemaic ideology was the idea of royal love. In both the Greek and Egyptian tradition, love between a mother and father produced successful children, so having love between the royal

⁶⁶ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 81-84. Here he uses the example of Kallimachos' *Hymn to Delos*. See also, Goyette, "Ptolemy II Philadelphus and the Dionysiac Model of Political Authority," 1. Goyette quotes Tarn, who argued that while the Greco-Macedonians "were 'accustomed to despotic rule,' they did not typically equate their kings with gods." While Tarn is now outdated, he is important to this debate historiographically. For an in-depth analysis of divine kingship as presented by Kallimachos, see Iiro Laukola, "Macedonian Kings, Egyptian Pharaohs: The Ptolemaic Family in the Encomiastic Poems of Callimachus," (Dissertation, University of Helsinki, 2016), esp. chpt. 3.

⁶⁷ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 90. See also, Dee L. Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 141, No. 2 (2011), 229-246; Kathryn Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," *The American Journal of Philology* 133, No. 3 (1992), 373-385. For additional analysis of the poem, see also Part II, chapter 6.

couple would ensure the birth of legitimate successors.⁶⁸ Accordingly, the Ptolemaic couples were depicted publicly as being a happily married and loving couple. For example, according to Theokritos of Berenike I, “never yet has any wife so pleased her husband as Ptolemy loved his wife and, in truth, in turn she loved him even more” (Theoc. *Id.* 17.38-40).⁶⁹ Theokritos also said of Arsinoë II, “no better wife embraces her bridegroom in their chamber, loving deeply her brother and husband” (Theoc. *Id.* 17.128-30).⁷⁰ Berenike II was correspondingly depicted as loving her brother-husband, Ptolemy III, in the *Coma Berenices*, written by Kallimachos.⁷¹ Through court poetry, this concept of royal love could be publicized to the Greek-speaking and elite portions of the population.

The concept of royal love was also emphasized in the Egyptian style monuments produced by the Ptolemies. For instance, Arsinoë II was depicted as “sweet in love, beautiful in appearance, fills the palace with her beauty, loved by the ram, the keeper of the ram, sister and daughter of the king, great wife of the king, loved by him, queen of both countries: Arsinoe” on the Mendes Stele (CG 22181).⁷² The ideal of love and legitimacy was also accentuated in scenes where the living royal couples were shown receiving their power from the deceased royal couples, their ancestors, such as the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186) and the Euergetes Gate at Karnak.⁷³ Even the titular epithets used by the Ptolemies throughout

⁶⁸ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 62; Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 112, 119; Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 363.

⁶⁹ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 62; Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 365. See also, Charlotte Wikander, “Religion, Political Power and Gender- The Building of Cult-Image,” in *Religion and power in the ancient Greek world: proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1993*, Pontus Hellström and Brita Alroth, eds. (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1996), 187; Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 112, 119.

⁷⁰ Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 367.

⁷¹ For more analysis of this poem, see Part II, chapter 6.

⁷² Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 62; Wikander, “Religion, Political Power and Gender- The Building of Cult-Image,” 187; Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 45, fig. 15.

⁷³ On these scenes of ancestor worship, see notes 189, 190, below, and Part II, chapter 6. See Fig. 1 for the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn.

the dynasty reinforce the idea of love, either familial or to the gods, such as Philadelphos (Sibling-loving), Philopator (Father-loving), Philometor (Mother-loving), etc. The Ptolemies were also one of the only Hellenistic kingdoms to use the word *basileis* (rulers) to refer to the royal couple, instead of just *basileus* and *basilissa* used individually.⁷⁴

Scholars debate why this concept of royal love was adopted and adapted by the Ptolemies. Gutzwiller convincingly asserts that the image of shared affection was an important policy to establish early on in order to deal with some initial issues of dynastic conflict, specifically to excuse the displacement of Ptolemy I's children by Eurydike with those by Berenike I and to justify the incest of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II (see chapter 3.3).⁷⁵ While the concept seems to have been implemented with a specific purpose, over time, the ideal of royal love became a regular part of the dynastic propaganda. Whether or not the various Ptolemaic royal couples were in actual love with each other, the public proclamation of royal love became an important ideology they depicted as a way of ensuring dynastic stability through the birthing of legitimate children and the maintenance of Ma'at. This is important because it established the queen as one half of the dynastic imagery and provided her with an authority to act publicly.

The queens thus participated in upholding both the Greco-Macedonian and Egyptian ideals of kinship as well. They were able to publicly act in supporting political and religious

⁷⁴ Ivana Savalli-Lestrade, "La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l'époque hellénistique," in *Les femmes antiques entre sphère privée et sphère publique*, Regula Frei-Stolba, Anne Bielman, and Olivier Bianchi, eds. (Bern: P. Lang, 2003), 62. This word is also used in Posidippus' Epigram 88 to refer to Ptolemy I, Ptolemy II, and Berenike I as rulers. See also, Carney, "Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period," 216; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 29-30. It should be noted that the use of *basileis* has not survived in any of the other Hellenistic kingdoms, which does not necessarily mean they did not use it at all, but rather may be an issue of what has survived in the archaeological record. However, even with that issue of survival bias, the documented use of the term by the Ptolemies evidences the emphasis they placed on the idea of the ruling couple, whether or not it was also used in other kingdoms.

⁷⁵ Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 367. For more on the contention between the Eurydikean and Berenikean line of Ptolemy I's children, see chapter 3.3.

roles, and the four legitimizing devices described in chapter 1 became important aspects of Ptolemaic marriage and monarchy.⁷⁶ The Ptolemaic queens used the title *basilissa*, they wore diadems and were represented on coins, they had at least six cities named for them, they made legitimizing marriage alliances, and became important parts of the royal cults. Specific examples of each of these factors for individual Ptolemaic queens will be provided throughout Parts II and III.

Additionally, these women could help maintain the monarchy through their own acts of euergetism and religious benefaction. Since an aspect of legitimization had developed around the duties of these women, they were shown in monumental art and inscriptions as part of the “public presentation of the monarchy.”⁷⁷ For example, Arsinoë II is shown on the Mendes Stele (CG 22181) sacrificing along with her husband, and, although the piece was produced after her death, it shows the importance of her queenly duties. Through sacrificial offerings she helped maintain Ma’at, as part of the royal duty to keep the gods appeased, and she also represented the benefaction expected of the Greco-Macedonian king and queen. Similarly, the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) of Ptolemy III and Berenike II references the euergetism of the royal couple by noting “His Majesty and his sister and wife had cared in their hearts, which glowed for the inhabitants of the temples and the natives of Egypt in its entire extent, who were very much distressed and bent down.” This shows the unity of the royal pair, their effort to uphold the Greco-Macedonian tradition of euergetism, and their maintenance of Ma’at through their care for the people of Egypt. Thus, by instituting a policy of royal love and emphasizing the unity of the royal couple, the preservation and success of

⁷⁶ The four ways royal women were used as legitimizing devices include: the appearance of the title *basilissa*, eponymous city founding, alliance marriages, and deification. See pgs. 33-34, above.

⁷⁷ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 203.

the kingdom came to depend on not only the actions of the king, but also the actions of the queen.

2.3 Ptolemaic governance

As the Ptolemaic monarchy came to be defined by the royal unit, this meant that not only did the queen have to take part in the maintenance of the kingdom, but she was also restricted by the same realities of rulership that governed the position of king. Thus, in addition to the religious and political policies instituted by the Ptolemies, it is imperative to briefly address what it meant to rule in Egypt during the Ptolemaic period. Although Ptolemaic Egypt was an authoritarian monarchy, this term is often used too generously. As pointed out by Manning, ancient states were complicated, and it is important to acknowledge the constraints they faced. Although the pharaoh was ideologically an absolute ruler, he was, in reality, one person in a complex, deep-rooted, and powerful bureaucratic network that put limits on the power he could wield.⁷⁸

The Ptolemies needed the wealth of Egypt to maintain their position, and the first Ptolemies realized that taking advantage of the bureaucracy and infrastructure already in place would allow the country to continue running efficiently, while also allowing them to profit. Thus, while the pharaoh was at the top of the social hierarchy and was backed by a religious ideology that made him necessary to the well-being of the state, his real power was limited by whether or not the bureaucracy followed his orders.⁷⁹ The effectiveness of a pharaoh's rule depended on both his strength of will and the political relationships he

⁷⁸ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 32.

⁷⁹ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 33-34. See also, Alan B. Lloyd, "From Satrapy to Hellenistic Kingdom: The Case of Egypt," in *Creating a Hellenistic World*, Andrew Erskine and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, eds. (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 94.

established.⁸⁰ The Ptolemies were in an especially precarious situation, as foreign rulers, who, in their monumental depictions, attempted to depict themselves as if they were not, and who were dependent upon the goodwill of the priestly class to reinforce their legitimacy. The pharaoh's claim to absolute authority was also based on the Egyptian religious ideology and cult practice. While there was no constitutional opposition to his rule, as in modern states, he was still dependent upon the loyalty of the priestly class and, particularly, of the local elites, who controlled agricultural production, religious practice, local tax collection, and the implementation of the legal system.⁸¹

In order to manage all these relationships, the early Ptolemies utilized *philoï*, or “friends” of the king. These were men who were deeply loyal to the ruler, who was often also their benefactor, and they could staff high ranking governing positions and help the king see to the successful and efficient running of his kingdom. Fraser notes that these men administered the empire as the king's “personal nominees, without rank (except the semi-formal ‘friend of the king’) and title, but with his full authority.”⁸² Fraser and Wong also both identify an important transition that occurred by the end of the third century BCE. While the first three Ptolemies relied fairly exclusively on their *philoï* networks, by the reign of Ptolemy IV ministers from powerful, established Alexandrian families, often descendants of the early *philoï* who had earned prestige through service to one or more kings, held increasing power in the Ptolemaic administration.⁸³ Some of these early ministers were considered *philoï* of the king, but, over time, Ptolemaic kings relied less on traditional *philoï*,

⁸⁰ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 45.

⁸¹ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 57, 66. See also, Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 39; Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 128.

⁸² Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 105.

⁸³ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 104-105; Julia K. W. Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” (Master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1998), 12.

and their relationship of friendship and benefaction, and, instead, utilized these ministers, who inherited their prestige and power from powerful family lineages and alliances.⁸⁴ These powerful Alexandrian families, and the ministers who came from them, could hold significant administrative power, and they could use that power to either bolster the king's rule or to act against him or members of the royal family. Sosibios and Agathokles, ministers of Ptolemy IV (see Part II, chapter 7), are the first important examples of this trend, and the ministers who rose to prominence after them, Tlepolemos, Aristomenes, and Polykrates (see Part III, chapter 8), gained power through good relationships with Sosibios and Agathokles, rather than the king.⁸⁵

Prior to Fraser and Wong, Bevan also noted this transition, and he explained that with Ptolemy V the shift from reliance on the old style of *philoï* was acknowledged in the Egyptian court by the implementation of a hierarchical set of titular orders, an aulic hierarchy. The king could choose to grant, as a personal dignity, the titles of “Kinsmen” (συγγενεῖς), “Commanders of the Bodyguard” (ἀρχισωματοφύλακες), “First Friends” (πρῶτοι φίλοι), “Friends” (φίλοι), and “Successors” (διάδοχοι- someone who could eventually become a *philoï*). Under Ptolemy VIII this hierarchy would expand to seven ranks with the position of those “Honorably associated with the Kinsmen” (ὀμότιμοι τοῖς συγγενέσιν) added between Kinsmen and Commanders, and those “Honorably associated with the First Friends” (οἱ ἰσότιμοι τοῖς πρῶτοις φίλοις) added between First Friends and

⁸⁴ Wong also notes that some of the most prominent families can be traced by the families and individual members that held the eponymous priesthoods at Alexandria. Although, she also admits that occasionally, men were able to rise to high positions without using ancestors to gain access to priesthood and ministerial positions, including, for example, Sosibios and Aristomenes. Sosibios' children did, however, hold important positions, thanks to his influence, even after his murder. Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 17-18.

⁸⁵ Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 26-27, 30.

Friends.⁸⁶ As can be seen from the titles themselves, the newly implemented ranks had a hierarchical nature to them, similar in a way to the later Roman *cursus honorum*, where members of the Ptolemaic court could move from one rank to the next based on their familial connections, the power they accumulated via governmental service, and by gaining the favor of the king. Fraser observes that when the new hierarchy was first implemented there was a strict equation between rank and office where the highest ranking civic officials, including the dioecetai and epistrategoï, were Kinsmen, the mid-level administrators, such as the strategoi of the nomes, were Commanders of the Bodyguard and First Friends, and the lower military and administrative officials were Friends and Successors.⁸⁷ Although the word *philoï* was still utilized as a title in the new aulic hierarchy, the men who served as *philoï* under the later Ptolemies were different from the *philoï* of the first four Ptolemies, specifically because their rise to prominence could be based on factors outside of gaining favor with the king. Although the title was granted by the king, it seems, as Wong points out, that these men came to the attention of the king via familial connections and service with other powerful bureaucrats, rather than being personal or true friends of the king, as the original *philoï* had been.

In addition to navigating court politics, the military also played an important part in the pharaoh's effectiveness. The Ptolemies, as both Egyptian pharaohs and Macedonian kings, were the head of governance, military leadership, and religious activity. In the Macedonian tradition, the kings personally led the armies. Lloyd, for example, quotes the author of the *Suda* who wrote that "it is neither descent nor legitimacy which gives

⁸⁶ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 277-278; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 102-103.

⁸⁷ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 103.

monarchies to men, but the ability to command an army and to handle affairs competently.”⁸⁸ The Ptolemies, beginning with Ptolemy II, no longer personally led the troops into battle and, instead, relied on commanders they appointed to generalships, usually from their network of courtiers.⁸⁹ Although court poets, such as Kallimachos and Theokritos still strove to depict Ptolemy II as a skilled military leader, Ptolemaic military success depended more on the loyalty the king could cultivate with his *philoï* and soldiers. To encourage loyalty among the soldiery, the first three Ptolemies relied on Macedonian and Greek troops who were willing to emigrate to Egypt in return for a *kleroi* (a plot of agricultural land) as part of their service. The retired military members formed a large portion of the Greek population the Ptolemies would govern, and they were kept happy by their grants of land and social standing above the native Egyptians.

During the early third century, these plots of land reverted to the king at the *kleroi*-holder’s death, but, over time, the *kleroi* became hereditary pieces of land.⁹⁰ This eventually caused a problem of recruitment as soldiers lost the incentive to join the army. At the same time, native Egyptians could act as auxiliaries, but were not permitted to fight in the army proper (Diod. Sic. 19.80.4). By the reign of Ptolemy IV, as the influx of Macedonian and Greek troops waned, he allowed native Egyptian *machimoi* (μάχιμοι, usually translated generally as “warriors,” but also used to specifically reference the class of native-Egyptian soldiers) to be trained in Macedonian style combat and arms in order to counter the Seleukid

⁸⁸ Lloyd, “From Satrapy to Hellenistic Kingdom: The Case of Egypt,” 92. See also, Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 111.

⁸⁹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 106.

⁹⁰ Glenn R. Bugh, “Hellenistic Military Developments,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Glenn Bugh, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 269. It should be briefly pointed out here that this is a development similar to what was described above for court bureaucratic positions. Just as the early *philoï* were dependent upon the king’s favor and benefaction, so too were military servicemen. As powerful families became established and both influence and land became hereditary, however, there was a shift in loyalty that the Ptolemies had to figure out how to maneuver.

forces during the Fourth Syria War (Polyb. 5.65.9, 82.6, 85.9).⁹¹ After this point, although the *machimoi* remained the lowest level of the military hierarchy, the Ptolemies had to keep both the Macedonian-Greek military members and native *machimoi* happy, which they would struggle with for the rest of the dynasty (some examples of this will be provided in Part III. See also Appendix A for the dates of various rebellions).

The military was so important to monarchic success because they were the main instrument of monarchic power and promulgators of cult worship. Accordingly, the monarch had to keep the military happy because they were the enforcers of Ptolemaic policy. Garrisons were founded throughout Ptolemaic territory, which maintained the Ptolemaic claim to cities and lands, and allowed the soldiers to enforce decrees and laws issued by the administrative center. Chaniotis argues that in cities throughout Ptolemaic territory the commander of the garrison and his soldiers acted as conveyors of dynastic ideology by participating in the royal cult and publicly making dedications in honor of the king and members of the royal house.⁹² These actions may or may not have been directed by the administration, but, in either case, the founding of cultic buildings and the worship of the Ptolemaic coupled deities by the soldiers presented the divine kinship of the *basileus*-pharaoh and his *basilissa*-consort to the local public and made the royal couple a reality to people who were otherwise far removed from the administrative center.⁹³

Thus, the pharaoh walked a fine line between pursuing relationships with the elite and appeasing the military, while also not being intimidated or overruled by those they relied on

⁹¹ Lloyd, "From Satrapy to Hellenistic Kingdom: The Case of Egypt," 95-96; Bugh, "Hellenistic Military Developments," 279; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 130.

⁹² Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 441. See also, Pfeiffer, "The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt," 401.

⁹³ Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 441.

for advice and help in governing. Some pharaohs succeeded at this and effectively held the mantle of head of state, such as Ptolemy I, II, and III. Others, including Ptolemy IV, who was heavily influenced by his advisors, Sosibios and Agathokles, and his mistress, Agathokleia (Athen. 13.577A), failed to achieve this balance (see Part II, chapter 7). Polybios, who describes Ptolemy IV as a weak and lazy king, relates that the governance of the kingdom and all preparations for the Fourth Syrian War were left to Ptolemy's advisors (Polyb. 5.34, 63). Not only could a weaker king be overawed by his advisors, but a strong-willed queen could also command great influence.

Ptolemaic queens were brought into the equation of authoritarian power when they were included as one half of the divine kingship and legitimization. The Ptolemies were skillful in their utilization of the thousands of years of Egyptian "literary production, myth, and image designed to support legitimate rule by a family" and, as argued above, they emphasized the concept of Ma'at, which legitimized the pharaoh and his queen as the balancers of chaos (Isfet).⁹⁴ The inclusion of the queen as part of the ruling authority also made the queen a necessary participant in that balance. As one half of the balancing act, however, she faced the same restraints as any male pharaoh, in the need to cultivate relationships in both the court, among the local elite, and through her ability to command troops.⁹⁵

In cultivating relationships in the court, Ptolemaic queens were able to gather networks of male courtiers to help them actualize their ambitions. As mentioned in chapter 1, this ability carried over into the Ptolemaic kingdom from both the Egyptian and Macedonian traditions. During the Pharaonic period women were able to own land, acquire wealth, and

⁹⁴ Manning, *The Last Pharaohs*, 63.

⁹⁵ Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 186-7.

have more freedoms under the law. Furthermore, similarly to the Pharaonic royal women who retained bureaucrats to manage their property, Macedonian royal women could also maintain networks of loyal *philoï*.⁹⁶ This practice carried into the Diadochic period as well, with women like Olympias, Kleopatra, and Phila, who maintained correspondence with the powerful men of the period, as also described in chapter 1.⁹⁷ During the Wars of the Diadochi, as royal women became dynastic legitimators, they could even protect besieged cities with mercenary troops, due to the wealth they commanded.⁹⁸

This trend continued into the Ptolemaic period, during which many of the Ptolemaic queens cultivated networks of courtiers and were wealthy in their own rights. They owned lands and slaves and earned revenue from a variety of businesses. Arsinoë II, for instance, earned revenue from the fish in Lake Moeris, and Kleopatra II was able to transport royal grain via the ships she owned.⁹⁹ Yet, just as royal men had to balance these relationships, so too did the royal women. Arsinoë, for example, when she was queen of Macedon as the wife of Lysimachos, had a failed *philia* (friendship) with Philetaeros of Pergamon, and because of this failed friendship, when Lysimachos died, Philetaeros defected to Seleukos (Strab. 13.4.1; Paus. 1.10.4-5).¹⁰⁰ The queens also had to navigate the changing court mechanics, as the position of *philoï* transitioned from one based on friendship to an official court position. Arsinoë III would meet her death at the hands of her brother-husband's advisors (see Part II, chapter 7), and her successor queen, Kleopatra I, would learn from Arsinoë's example and

⁹⁶ Nourse argues that Argead royal women maintained relationships and correspondence with leading *hetairoi*. Nourse, "Women and the Early Development of Royal Power in the Hellenistic East" 11.

⁹⁷ See note 32, above. Also, Carney posits that Phila maintained an entourage or court of her own to carry out her administrative and ambassadorial duties. Carney, "The First *basilissa*: Phila, daughter of Antipater and wife of Demetrius Poliorcetes," (Forthcoming).

⁹⁸ Carney, "Women and War," (Forthcoming).

⁹⁹ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 14-15.

¹⁰⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 45.

successfully navigate the changing court mechanics to gain an unprecedented level of power as *basilissa*-regent to her young son (see Part III, chapter 8).

The important factor here, then, is that these women administered and used their assets as they saw fit and to bolster their positions, as will be shown when each of the queens are examined in detail in Parts II and III. These queens did not have to rely solely on the support of their spouses, but through their own wealth and the networks of *philoï* they competently cultivated, they had the means to pursue their own ambitions.¹⁰¹ These were skills at which several of the later queens, especially the Kleopatras, who will be examined in Part III, were adept. Just as their husbands had to navigate the realities of rulership, as queens gained increasing amounts of power, they too had to be aware of, cultivate, and maintain relationships within the court, military, and local elites.

¹⁰¹ Savalli-Lestrade, “Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche,” 426; Savalli-Lestrade, “La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l’époque hellénistique,” 63-64. In “La place des reines” Savalli-Lestrade argues that there were three groups of *philoï*: Those who were *philoï* only to the king, those that were common to both the king and queen, and those that were the *philoï* of the queen, usually because she brought them with her to the court.

3. Ptolemaic Cult, Royal Marriage, and the Practice of Incest

As the previous sections have demonstrated, the position of Ptolemaic *basilissa* emerged out of a combining of Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian concepts of rulership that were adopted and adapted by the early kings of the dynasty. As stated in chapter 2.2, the most impactful of those new policies was the decision to implement both a dynastic cult and the marital practice of incest as defining features of the dynasty. The ways these strategies were instituted unavoidably incorporated the queen as one-half of the image of Ptolemaic monarchy. Consequently, before progressing to the queens themselves, the dynastic cult and the ideology of royal incest that were advanced by Ptolemy I, II, and III (and to some extent, Ptolemy IV) must first be analyzed.

Although the Successors initiated the Hellenistic kingdoms, it was their sons who would establish most dynastic institutions, since they claimed the right to rule via the inheritance of the power their fathers had claimed through their military and political exploits.¹⁰² Accordingly, while Ptolemy I is important for being the founding figure of the dynasty and implementing the first aspects of what would become the royal cult, his son, Ptolemy II, instituted the main changes that would solidify the dynastic cult and establish incest as a defining factor of Ptolemaic monarchy. Ptolemy II and III put new policies in place that ended polygamy and replaced it with an official practice of incest, both real, in the case of Ptolemy II, and symbolic, in the case of Ptolemy III.¹⁰³ Ptolemy IV subsequently made the final additions to the dynastic cult that would solidify the Ptolemaic line of deification, and he was also the first Ptolemy to bear children with his full-blooded sister. In

¹⁰² Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 15.

¹⁰³ There may have been a brief resumption of polygamy under Ptolemy VIII, during which time he was married to his sister and niece, Kleopatra II and III, respectively. Their marriage arrangement is debated, however, and it will be analyzed in greater detail in Part III, chapter 9, were I argue against the resumption of polygamy.

order to understand how this practice of incest was implemented and how it corresponded to the establishment of the Ptolemaic royal cult, a brief definition of “royal cult” must be offered, and then, an overview of the marriages and cult building activities of the first four Ptolemies is necessary.

[3.1 The Ptolemaic cult](#)

Prior to the mid-1970s, it was thought that the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty was restricted to Alexandria, had little impact on the native people in the *chora* (the countryside, including rural towns and villages), and was limited to deceased members of the Ptolemaic royal family.¹⁰⁴ The emergence of new documentation and research in the late 70s, spearheaded by historians like Quaegebeur, called for a reevaluation of the Ptolemaic cult. This reexamination then allowed for a much wider definition of the royal cult and an acknowledgment that it was multi-faceted, with both Greek and Egyptian branches.

The Greek portion of the dynastic cult developed around the eponymous priesthood of Alexander the Great, which was instituted by Ptolemy I around or after 290 BCE, and it would come to encompass the priest of Alexander, as founder of the city, the deceased kings with their wives, the current living monarchs, and the priestesses of the individual queens, such as the *kanephoros* of Arsinoë II and the *athlophoros* of Berenike II.¹⁰⁵ This connection of the ruler cult with the priesthood of Alexander was an important step in spreading the cult among the people because in Greek and Demotic records the Alexander priest, along with all

¹⁰⁴ Jan Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” *Ancient Society* 20 (1989), 93-94. See also, Helmut Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer* (Berlin: Mann, 1975), 139. Kyrieleis argued “Für die Chora scheint er (sc. der Herrscherkult) ohne Bedeutung gewesen zu sei.”

¹⁰⁵ On the establishment of the priesthood of Alexander, see note 121, below. Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 94; Jan Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” in *Cleopatra’s Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies*, R. S. Bianchi, ed. (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1988), 42. See also Part II, chapters 5, note 86, and 6, note 183, on the priestesshoods of Arsinoë II and Berenike II.

his associated epithets of the royal couples, had to be recorded as part of the dating protocol on official documents (see Appendix C).¹⁰⁶ Additionally, as Fraser notes, the dynastic cult was the “particular preserve of the royal family,” and they chose who was added to or subtracted from the eponymous formula, who served as priests and priestesses, and, by the second century, took over the priesthoods themselves.¹⁰⁷ This is a basic outline of the Greek branch of the dynastic cult, the addition of each ruling unit to the Alexander priest’s eponymous formula will be explored in greater detail below.

An Egyptian version of the ruler cult developed alongside the Greek branch, in which the Ptolemies were worshiped in Egyptian temples throughout the country, with the same epithets as in the Greek cult, as *synnaoi theoi* (σύνναοι θεοί) or “temple-sharing gods.” Although, in this Egyptian version of the ruler cult, Alexander was left out of the listing.¹⁰⁸ Rather than attempting to replace the older, indigenous religious practices of Egypt, the new dynastic cult instituted by the Ptolemies was placed beside the traditional cults in temples and new festivals were modelled on the old, which may be one of the key reasons the new cults were accepted and popularized.¹⁰⁹ For instance, papyri documents show that in at least forty

¹⁰⁶ Pfeiffer, “The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 398; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 216. See also note 168, below.

¹⁰⁷ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 226; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 286-287. For examples of figures removed, see Appendix D. Kleopatra II Philometor Soteira was removed at the end of the civil war between herself and Ptolemy VIII. For Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra III, who took over the Alexander priest positions in 116/115 and 105/4 respectively, see Part III, chapter 10.

¹⁰⁸ Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 95; Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 42; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 54-55. Koenen notes that Alexander was included in the Greek branch of cult because the Ptolemaic couples were *synnaoi* of the deified Alexander, so he had to be left out of the Egyptian cult because in that worship the Ptolemaic deified couples were *synnaoi* of the Egyptian deities.

¹⁰⁹ Stefano G. Caneva, “Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism: Festivals, Administration, and Ideology,” *Kernos* 25 (2012), 76. See also, Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 71. It should be noted that the Ptolemaieia may be an exception to this point. The Ptolemaieia, instituted by Ptolemy II, was based on the Classical Greek-style procession. See, Wikander, “Religion, Political Power and Gender- The Building of Cult-Image,” 184.

four locations the cult of Arsinoë II was added to established Egyptian temples.¹¹⁰ In these temples, a priest of the goddess was added along with a *synnaos thea* (σύνναος θεά, “temple-sharing goddess”) statue of Arsinoë, and the request to add these statues was issued by Ptolemy II in the Mendes Stele (CG 22181).¹¹¹ Caneva also mentions the importance of the cooperation between the administrative center and the local priests in this instance. Ptolemy could declare that statues of his queen be added to the temples, but it was up to the local priests to see that his request was fulfilled and to ensure the worship of the newly deified queen.¹¹² As mentioned in chapter 2.3, cooperation between the administrative center and local elites was necessary for the implementation and success of dynastic policies.

Thanks to the cooperation of the local priests, it was the association of the new *Thea Philadelphos* cult with the pre-existing cults that enabled its popularity and initial survivability because it provided the people with a type of worship with which they were already familiar. Ptolemy also reallocated the *apomoira*, a tax on vineyard and garden land, to support the new cult in both Greek and Egyptian temples. While this tax had previously been paid directly to the temples, now it was incorporated into the collection of state taxes and redistributed to the temples that housed the Arsinoë cult (and later the *Theoi Adelphoi* cult of which she was part), but Koenen contends the priests could likely use a portion of the tax for support of cult activities overall, both Greek and Egyptian, which must have been a

¹¹⁰ Caneva, “Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism,” 87. Here Caneva is citing papyri statistics presented by Quaegebeur in his 1998 article: “Documents égyptiens anciens et nouveaux relatifs à Arsinoé Philadelphie.” See also, Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes,” 250.

¹¹¹ For further analysis of the establishment of the cult of Arsinoë as the *Thea Philadelphos*, see Part II, chapter 5. Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 43. Quaegebeur translates the stele as saying: “His Majesty decreed that her statue be set up in all the temples. This pleased their priests, for they were aware of her noble attitude toward the gods and of her excellent deeds to the benefit of all the people... Her name was proclaimed as the beloved of the ram, the goddess Philadelphos, Arsinoe.”

¹¹² Stefano G. Caneva, “Ruler Cults in Practice: Sacrifices and Libations for Arsinoe *Philadelphos*, from Alexandria and Beyond,” in *Divinizzazione, culto del sovrano e apoteosi: Tra Antichità e Medioevo*, T. Gnoli and F. Muccioli, eds. (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2014), 90.

further enticement to introduce the Greek cults into the Egyptian temples.¹¹³ Most of the Ptolemaic couples were, over time, worshiped as *synnaoi theoi* either before and/or after their deaths.

These cults were not only maintained at the official level, but they also entered into the lives of the people as well, both Greek and Egyptian, as shown by the use of “King’s Oaths.” For example, an oath preserved on a papyrus from Elephantine (*P.Eleph.* 23) reads:

“I swear by King Ptolemy, son of King Ptolemy and Arsinoe, the sibling gods, and by Queen Berenike, the sister and consort of the king, and by the sibling gods and the savior gods, by their ancestors and by Isis and Serapis.”¹¹⁴

The development and inclusion within the eponymous cultic listings of these various priesthoods mentioned in this oath will be explored in greater detail below. In general, the use of the King’s Oath illustrates that the worship of the Ptolemies expanded well beyond the administrative center in Alexandria and impacted the lives of the common people, especially soldiers, as explained in chapter 2.3. That the people were willing to acknowledge the divinity of the *basileus*-pharaoh and his *basilissa*-consort as early as the reign of the second Ptolemy demonstrates the success with which the royal cult was implemented.

Most importantly, the institution of the dynastic cult became a key facet of Ptolemaic propaganda and marriage, a factor that becomes apparent when the marriages and cultic building activities of the early Ptolemies are examined in turn.

¹¹³ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 67-69.

¹¹⁴ Pfeiffer, “The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 395-396. See also, Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 51-52; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 91. Koenen and Lorber explain that these oaths were a continuation of Egyptian practice adapted to the new ruler cult. Previously Pharaonic oaths were sworn on the name of the king, but Ptolemy II adapted the practice so that the oaths were sworn on the name of the king, his wife, and their parents. As the royal cult developed further over the generations, the list of royal, deified ancestors would also be added, see Appendix C.

3.2 Ptolemy I

The founding Ptolemy engaged in the polygamy that was common in both Argead Macedonia and the Diadochic period, and he was married three, or perhaps four, times (see Appendix B). During his service as a general of Alexander, Ptolemy was involved with a *hetaera*, named Thaïs (Athen. 13.576D-E). It is unclear if they were married, and she was never depicted as his queen, once he became king of Egypt, nor her children as his heirs.¹¹⁵ Ptolemy was married to Artakama, a Persian noblewoman, at the Susa mass wedding in 324 BCE (Arr. *Anab.* 7.4.6; Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 70.3), but he may have divorced or repudiated her soon after Alexander's death.¹¹⁶ Ptolemy's next marriage (ca. 322-320 BCE) was to Eurydike, daughter of Antipater (Paus. 1.6.8; App. *Syr.* 62.30), and it is unclear if either Thaïs or Artakama were alive, still at court, or deceased when this marriage took place.

Ptolemy I's final marriage was to Berenike, the great-niece of Antipater and cousin of Eurydike. He met Berenike when she came to act as a lady-in-waiting to Eurydike (Paus. 1.6.8), and he married her sometime between 319-315 BCE, while also married to her cousin. By 287 BCE (or 285/4 BCE), Eurydike withdrew to Miletus in a type of exile after Ptolemy I chose the children of Berenike as his heirs, possibly at the urging of Berenike.¹¹⁷ As noted by

¹¹⁵ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 13. Pomeroy points out that some scholars argue they did marry, since Ptolemy gave his son by Thaïs his family name, Lagos, but other historians argue she was just a concubine. See also, Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 69; Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Marriage and Divorce of Ptolemy I and Eurydice: An Excursion in Early-Hellenistic Marital Practices," *Chronique d'Égypte* 90 (2015): 155. Carney argues Ptolemy I's sons by Thaïs may have been his heirs for a time, until the male children by his less notorious wives reached adulthood. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 18-19.

¹¹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 14; Müller, "The Female Element in the Political Self-Fashioning of the Diadochoi," 204, 205. See also, Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 69; Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Susa Marriages: A Historiographical Note," *Ancient Society* 44 (2014): 25, 30-32. Ogden and van Oppen de Ruiter both observe that repudiation is often assumed, rather than confirmed by evidence. Ogden and van Oppen de Ruiter, and Müller all posit that Artakama may have lived out her life quietly at Ptolemy's court. But, repudiation seems more likely, as also emphasized by Müller: Ptolemy I strove to depict himself as different than the Persian rulers of Egypt (see at note 49, above) and having a Persian wife would have been a liability.

¹¹⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 24; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 72. See also, Van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Marriage and Divorce of Ptolemy I and Eurydice," 158, 160-164. Van Oppen de Ruiter places the split between Ptolemy I and Eurydike in 285/4 BCE, when Ptolemy II was appointed as joint-ruler

van Oppen de Ruiters, however, the impetus for Ptolemy's marriages was multifaceted, including the need to acquire political advantage and foster diplomatic ties, while status and personal attraction may have also contributed.¹¹⁸ Consequently, it was his last wife, Berenike I, who was his favorite, and her son would inherit Ptolemy I's throne (see Part II, chapter 4.1).

As the founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty, Ptolemy I played an important role in establishing Ptolemaic policy, as he was the first Ptolemy to take both the titles *basileus* and pharaoh. An important policy he helped initiate was the early concept of chosen succession. As mentioned in chapter 2.1, in the Macedonian tradition there were no mechanics for succession, other than that kingship was hereditary, so succession issues could become quite convoluted and contentious due to the regular practice of polygamy. Polygamy was also practiced by most of the Diadochi, so many of them, including Ptolemy I, Antigonos I, and Seleukos I, decided late in life to make their chosen heirs co-rulers, as Ptolemy I did with Ptolemy II in 285/4 BCE. In this act, they invented co-rulership as a way of attempting to ensure dynastic continuance and stability and to limit the familial infighting that had plagued the Argead dynasty.¹¹⁹ Although Ptolemy attempted to solve future inheritance problems by instituting chosen succession, his heir would still be plagued by challenges to his legitimacy that would lead Ptolemy II to establish further policies that emphasized legitimacy and single succession.

Ptolemy I initiated many of the building blocks that his son would later use to solidify Ptolemaic dynastic ideology. For example, Ptolemy I included his favored wife, Berenike I,

with his father. He seeks to disprove the theory the Ptolemy I divorced Eurydike and posits that she may never have left court for an extended period (168).

¹¹⁸ Van Oppen de Ruiters, "The Marriage and Divorce of Ptolemy I and Eurydice," 159.

¹¹⁹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 42.

in the royal image he created. She was given the title the *basilissa* by 299 BCE, and Ptolemy named several cities after her.¹²⁰ Her image, as the *basilissa*-consort chosen by Ptolemy I and as the founding mother of the dynasty, would then be used by her son in promoting the new dynastic imagery (see Part II, chapter 4.1). Most importantly, Ptolemy I introduced the cult of Alexander the Great, perhaps around 290 or 285/4 BCE, with an eponymous priesthood, which encouraged the worship of Alexander's body at his tomb in Alexandria.¹²¹

To emphasize this cult, Ptolemy minted coins with a bust of Alexander on the obverse that assimilated him with aspects of Zeus-Ammon, which also recalled Alexander's trip to the oracle at Siwah (Arr. *Anab.* 3.3.1-4.5).¹²² This act of assimilation associated Alexander with the Pharaonic custom of being represented with the horns of Ammon, which connected the king to the powerful god Amun-Re, a tradition that had its roots in the New Kingdom period.¹²³ By 299, Ptolemy I was depicted on his own coins wearing the aegis of Zeus, so the use of Zeus-Ammon imagery and Pharaonic tradition allowed Ptolemy to connect the divinity of Alexander to both himself, as pharaoh, and the dynasty he would create.¹²⁴ The

¹²⁰ Berenike I named *basilissa* on *OGIS* 14. Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 13-14; Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Marriage of Ptolemy I and Berenice I," *Ancient Society* 41 (2011), 87; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 70. For city naming, see Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa*, 308. On Berenike I, see also, Part II, chapter 4.1.

¹²¹ According to Pausanias, Ptolemy stole Alexander's body as it was *en route* to Macedonia and brought it to Memphis (Paus. 1.6.3). Ptolemy II later moved the body to Alexandria (Paus. 1.7.1). For the institution of the eponymous priest of Alexander, see Fraser, who dates the earliest papyrus evidence of the cult to 285/4 BCE. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 215-216. Hölbl dates the Alexander priest to 290 BCE. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288. This was the first step in the establishment of what would become the Ptolemaic royal cult, see notes 105, 106, above.

¹²² For an example of this coin type, see R. A. Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors* (Toronto: Kirk & Bentley, 1995), 23-24, Fig. 36; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 25, 46-48, Figs. 1.1, 1.2.

¹²³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 93; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 50-51, 60. See also, Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 43.

¹²⁴ For an example of Ptolemy I's coins, see Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 1-2, 24-25, Fig. 1, Fig. 2, Fig. 38. Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 28-29, 55-57, Fig. 1.5. The coin type Sv. 111, for instance, depicts Ptolemy I on the obverse, wearing a diadem and the aegis of Zeus, and the reverse presents Alexander, holding a thunder bolt (another connection to Zeus) and driving a quadriga of elephants, perhaps referencing both his and Ptolemy's exploits in India.

deification of Alexander and Ptolemy's connection to it, although he did not yet deify himself, provided the basis for what would eventually become the Ptolemaic royal cult, or the *hiera oikia* ("sacred household").

3.3 Ptolemy II

Ptolemy I was succeeded by his son born of Berenike I, Ptolemy II. His first marriage was to Arsinoë I, daughter of Lysimachus, probably around the time Ptolemy became joint ruler with his father in 285/4 BCE (see Part II, chapter 4.2).¹²⁵ His second marriage was to Arsinoë II, his full sister (see Appendix B; Part II, chapter 5).¹²⁶ Ptolemy II may have married Arsinoë II while still married to Arsinoë I, probably sometime between 276-272 BCE, but Arsinoë I was exiled from court, sometime between 281-272 BCE, for allegedly plotting against Ptolemy (Schol. Theoc. 17.128).¹²⁷ Rather than executing her for her accused treachery, the imposed exile acted as a divorce of types, which allowed Ptolemy to keep Arsinoë I's children as his heirs (Schol. Theoc. 17.128; Paus. 1.7.3).¹²⁸

With Arsinoë I removed from court, the marriage to Arsinoë II could take on new political importance. First, since Arsinoë II had been married to Lysimachus, another of the Diadochi and King of Thrace and Macedon, in her first marriage, Ptolemy may have intended

¹²⁵ Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoë I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," *Chronique d'Égypte* 89 (2014): 163; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 36. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 67.

¹²⁶ Ogden also notes that Ptolemy had at least 11 mistresses, none of whom bore him children. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 74. Ptolemy's mistresses are also described by Athenaeus (Athen. 13.576E-F).

¹²⁷ The timeline of these events is unclear. Van Oppen de Ruiter argues Arsinoë II returned to her brother's court sometime between 279-277 BCE, so Arsinoë I was exiled at some point between the return of Arsinoë II and her marriage to Ptolemy II, 277-274 BCE. Van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoë I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," 164-5. Carney, on the other hand, argues that Arsinoë could have returned to Egypt between 279-275, the marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II took place between 275-272, and that Arsinoë I's banishment likely took place sometime before the marriage, allowing Ptolemy II to live as a bachelor for some years before his marriage to his sister. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 66, 69, 70. This event will be addressed in greater detail in Part II, chapter 5.

¹²⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 70.

to use his marriage to her as a way of legitimizing his claim to some of the territory held by Lysimachus in the Aegean and Asia Minor.¹²⁹ Secondly, and more significantly, the incestuous nature of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II's marriage was emblematic in purpose and would set a precedent for the rest of the dynasty. While it was mentioned throughout chapter 1 that the typical purpose of marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt and prior periods was to produce heirs, Arsinoë II's marriage to Ptolemy II occurred when she was about 40 years old, near the end of her childbearing years, and Ptolemy II already had heirs from his previous wife, which Arsinoë II adopted as her own in act of propaganda meant to bolster the stability of the dynasty (Schol. Theoc. 17.128).¹³⁰ Rather than marrying to produce additional children, Ptolemy II was making a conscious effort to institute the practice of incest into his dynasty. The key question is: why would he do that?

A common misconception is that the practice of incestuous marriage was instituted by Ptolemy II in order to gain favor with his Egyptian subjects.¹³¹ This theory is derived from

¹²⁹ Mairi Gkikaki, "The Royal Sibling Marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II- Incestuous and Yet Holy," *Hephaistos* 31 (2014): 113. Gkikaki is referencing a theory proposed by Droysen in his *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, 3.265. This theory is also mentioned in: Auguste Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1903), 160.

See also, Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy: Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda*, 87. Hazzard notes that this theory has been disputed and argues that marriage would have been a dubious way of gaining control of cities. Cities were often granted via marriage and controlled by queens, so his offhand rejection of the theory is questionable as well. This is a theory that needs additional exploration elsewhere.

¹³⁰ Sheila L. Ager, "The Power of Excess: Royal Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," *Anthropologica* 48, no. 2 (2006): 172; Charlotte Wikander, "Dynasty: The Environment of Hellenistic Monarchs," in *Ancient History Matters: Studies Presented to J. E. Skydsgaard*, eds. K. Ascani et al. (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2002): 187; Bielman-Sánchez, "Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides," 47: Le lien unissant le roi à son épouse la reine titulaire- mère du ou des héritier(s)- était important pour la stabilité de la dynastie et relevait de la propaganda royale." While Bielman-Sánchez is arguing this in reference to the Seleukids, the same holds true for the Ptolemies. For an analysis of Arsinoë's child-bearing potential see, Elizabeth D. Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," *Parola del Passato* 237 (1987): 424-425, especially n. 11.

¹³¹ Debates surrounding whether or not incestuous royal marriage was practiced in Pharaonic times abound. Some authors argue that it was: see, Jaroslav Černý, "Consanguineous Marriages in Pharaonic Egypt," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 40 (1954): 23; Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 423; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 71; Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 26-27; Kostas Buraselis, "The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage: A Case of Dynastic

literary sources, such as Pausanias, who said that “This Ptolemy fell in love with Arsinoë, his full sister, and married her, violating herein Macedonian custom, but following that of his Egyptian subjects” (1.7.1). The idea that they married for love has long been overturned, since, as described in chapter 2.2, the public proclamation of royal love was dynastic propaganda. The impression that the marriage was conducted to appease Ptolemy’s Egyptian subjects can be refuted as well. As noted by Carney,

Philadelphos chose to marry his sister because it was helpful to him to do so. If in doing so he duplicated frequent Pharaonic practice, that too happened only because he found the duplication useful: a desire to imitate Pharaonic tradition did not necessarily compel him to marry his full sister. In fact, he and other Ptolemies were selective about the use of Pharaonic tradition...They did not blindly imitate the Pharaohs.¹³²

The Ptolemies would not have angered their Greek subjects, who filled the highest ranks of bureaucracy and were the basis of recruitment for the Ptolemaic military, without good reason, and gaining the favor of the native Egyptians was not a good enough reason. This point, however, brings up a second misunderstanding: the idea that this marriage angered the Greek portions of the Ptolemaic population.

Acculturation?” in *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, Paul McKechnie and Philippe Guillaume, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 296-297.

Others argue that it was not or question the evidence: see, Buraselis, “The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage,” 294, n. 14; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 112; Brent D. Shaw, “Explaining Incest: Brother-Sister Marriage in Graeco-Roman Egypt.” *Man* 27 (1992): 283.

However, since the “heiress theory” has been disproven it has become clear that while incest was practiced at times in the different Pharaonic dynasties, it was not an officially instituted policy. For the heiress theory, see note 14, above. It is also clear that incestuous marriage was a royal prerogative when it was practiced, and it was not common among the lower-classes in either the Pharaonic or Ptolemaic periods. See, Cérny, “Consanguineous Marriages in Pharaonic Egypt,” 23-24, 29; Carney, “The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 421-422; Pestman, *Marriage and Matrimonial Property in Ancient Egypt*, 3-4.

¹³² Carney, “The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 433. For a brief historiography of the debate on incest being adopted from the Egyptian custom, see Buraselis, “The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage,” 295-296.

It has regularly been argued that, for Ptolemy's Greek population, the idea of incest was a cultural taboo.¹³³ While the Greeks did not have a word that translates as "incest," the terms used to describe incestuous acts, such as *anagnos sunousia* (impure intercourse), seem to indicate their misgivings for the practice.¹³⁴ Ager argues that the reason the Greeks considered incest unacceptable was because it represented a loss of self-control and was equated with, what Plato called, immoral pleasures and desires.¹³⁵ A possible repugnance for incest is also demonstrated by the popular Classical Greek play by Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*. The horror Oedipus and Jocasta both feel when they discover they have committed incest provides a window into Greek opinions of the practice (Soph. *OT* 1237-1284). While sexual activity among the immediate family was seen as an immoral act that could lead to further loss of self-control, marriages among first cousins, between uncles and nieces, and half-siblings of the same father were not frowned upon.¹³⁶ Thus, marriages between dynasties, which often were between first cousins, were not disparaged by the Greeks, but, perhaps, full sibling marriages were?

In contrast, Carney points out that the reason many historians have assumed the Greek population was repulsed by this marriage was because of the stories surrounding the death of Sotades. All the theories of Greek repugnance have been based on this one anecdote: Sotades, after joking publicly that Ptolemy had "put his prick into an unholy hole," was executed (Plut. *Mor.* 11a; Athen. 621A). Carney conversely argues that he may have been put

¹³³ See, for example, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* 36; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 16; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 79.

¹³⁴ Sheila L. Ager, "Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 125 (2005): 166, n. 3.

¹³⁵ Ager, "The Power of Excess," 166. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 71.

¹³⁶ Ager, "The Power of Excess," 167.

to death for repeatedly speaking out of turn, not just because of this one incident.¹³⁷ Rather, because of a misinterpretation by Greek historians, it seems most Greeks believed Egyptians commonly married their siblings, so here again, Ptolemy seems to have been picking traditions to utilize in his favor, even if incorrectly interpreted.¹³⁸ Consequently, the Greco-Macedonian portion of the population may not have been as repulsed as previously thought, and any immediate disapproval of the marriage was slowly won over with time and the success of the dynastic cult Ptolemy II concurrently implemented.

Another reason, perhaps, that historians have assumed the Greeks were appalled by the marriage is because incest, in general, is usually considered taboo due to the genetic consequences it can produce, including deformation and mental degeneration. As Ager contends, however, many scholars have used Ptolemaic inbreeding as an excuse to judge, what they see as, the moral failings of the Ptolemies, especially Kleopatra VII. The idea that the Ptolemies fell to degeneration or corruption within their dynasty (usually described as beginning with the failings of Ptolemy IV) has been a long-standing stereotype that many current Ptolemaic historians are fighting against.¹³⁹ This issue is also symptomatic of the

¹³⁷ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 73-74. Carney also references another passage by Plutarch (236e-f), which has been used to argue that the Greeks were critical of Ptolemy and Arsinoë's marriage. She rightly points out that it was Plutarch, who lived centuries after the event, not the rhapsode he was quoting, that was critical of the marriage.

¹³⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 74. For specific examples of the Greek belief that the brother-sister marriage was common among Egyptians see, Buraselis, "The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage," 293. Ogden also points out that a similar account of Achaemenid incestuous marriage was recorded by Herodotus, so the Greek world's general perception could have been that incest was practiced by the major ancient empires. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 126.

¹³⁹ Ager, "The Power of Excess," 172; Ager, "Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 27-28; Anne Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" *Lectora* 18 (2012), 60-61; Christelle Fischer-Bovet, "A Challenge to the Concept of Decline for Understanding Hellenistic Egypt: From Polybius to the Twenty-First Century," *Topoi. Orient – Occident* 20 (2016): 209-237. In this same vein, Rowlandson and Takahashi rejected the term incest, because of the unavoidable moral baggage it entails, in favor of the term "Brother-Sister Marriage." Jane Rowlandson and Ryosuke Takahashi, "Brother-Sister Marriage and Inheritance Strategies in Greco-Roman Egypt," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 99 (2009), 106.

problems surrounding scholarship on Ptolemaic queens in general, as was mentioned in the introduction of this work, that the biases and moral judgments of ancient writers are often reproduced by modern scholars without question. For example, in response to Grant, who argued that because of her inbreeding Kleopatra VII had a lack of morality that allowed her to murder her brothers and sisters, Ager quipped that “it is probably fairly safe to dismiss this vision of a Kleopatra genetically driven to familial murder, presumably as a result of the concentrated build-up of morally (rather than mortally) lethal recessive alleles in her system.”¹⁴⁰

Nevertheless, the idea that inbreeding has a scientific guarantee to cause corruption persists. Ogden, for example, argued that the Ptolemies suffered from “depressed fertility, enhanced mortality, and a number of genetic disorders.”¹⁴¹ Ager disproves Ogden’s theory by pointing out that the Ptolemaic dynasty was often more fertile than other Hellenistic dynasties, and there was often a problem of too many heirs, rather than not enough.¹⁴² The idea that inbreeding had genetic consequences that impacted the dynasty is unfounded. More to the point, genetic concerns, a field of science that would not develop for another 2000 years, would not have been a consideration for the Greco-Macedonian Ptolemaic population. Rather, assuming the Greek population disapproved of incest just because it is widely considered taboo in modern Western culture, is anachronistic.

¹⁴⁰ Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 172. See also, Ager, “Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 9-10. Here Ager cites the extensive study by Scheidel (1996) on the Roman Egyptian population to show that there is very little evidence that inbreeding causes immediate (or even long term) deformity or mental degeneration.

¹⁴¹ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 97-99; Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 172.

¹⁴² Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 172. She notes that Kleopatra III, herself a product of incest, bore five children to her uncle, each of which went on to bear multiple children of their own, some also in incestuous unions. See Appendix B. See also, Ager, “Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 12.

Thus far, it has been concluded that Ptolemy II did not marry his sister because he was trying to appease his Egyptian subjects, but rather he was selectively using Egyptian traditions to his benefit. Furthermore, the brother-sister marriage they established probably did not offend the Greek portion of the population as much as previously assumed, but that still does not answer why they engaged in such a union?

To Ptolemy's Egyptian subjects, even though incest was not practiced among the common population, incestuous marriage among royalty could be equated to the relationship between Isis and Osiris. In the Egyptian tradition, Isis represented the throne, the literal seat of power that she was often depicted wearing on her head, and she was the stability behind her husband, the pharaoh, just as the royal and common wife alike were the supporting figure to their husbands. The marriage of Isis and Osiris maintained the Ma'at of the kingdom, and the temporal rulers, in their emulation of these two deities, did likewise. The Egyptian subjects of the Ptolemies would have seen their adoption of sibling marriage, and royal sibling love, as acceptable in its maintenance of Ma'at.

For their Greek population, conversely, while Hera and Zeus had participated in a sibling marriage, for humans to do so would be to “suggest that incestuous royals were more than human, that they were raised to the plane of divinity.”¹⁴³ This aspect of raising humans to the plane of divinity, rather than the sexual act itself, could be the main reason the Greeks had some disdain for this type of marriage, but it is exactly the reason the Ptolemies adopted the practice of incest, even if that meant the possibility of, for a time, alienating their Greek subjects. Rather than adopting this form of marriage to gain favor with his Egyptian subjects,

¹⁴³ Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 174.

Ptolemy was selectively using a Pharaonic tradition to ensure the unity of the dynasty and avoid rivalries for power and to further the connection of burgeoning dynasty to the divine.¹⁴⁴

Accordingly, there were two main purposes to his decision to marry his full sister, one political and one religious. The first reason concerns the unity of the dynasty and possible rivalries. As first suggested by Burstein, Ptolemy II need to confirm the legitimacy of the Berenikean line of Ptolemy I's offspring over the Eurydikean line (see Appendix B) in order to solidify the dynasty around himself as the chosen heir of his father.¹⁴⁵ Ptolemy I, as described in chapter 3.2, was married at least three, perhaps four, times, and he had children with his final two wives, Eurydike and Berenike. By some rights of succession, it should have been the children of Eurydike, Ptolemy I's more senior wife, who inherited Ptolemy I's throne, but Ptolemy I had attempted to institute the concept of chosen succession, which allowed him to choose the son of his final wife as his heir.

Nevertheless, Ptolemy II was faced with several challenges from his half-brothers early in his reign. Although in the tradition of Macedonian kingship there were no clear policies for succession, it seems that the court and several of Ptolemy I's powerful *philoï* expected Ptolemy Keraunos to be his father's heir as the eldest of Eurydike's children (Diog. Laert. 5.79).¹⁴⁶ Keraunos, who had departed Egypt when Ptolemy II was declared heir in 285/4 BCE (App. Syr. 10.62; Nepos 21.3), was removed as a claimant to the throne when he was killed by the Gauls in 279 BCE (Just. *Epit.* 24.3.10 and 24.5.5-6; Diod. Sic. 22.3.2).

¹⁴⁴ A. M. Vérilhac and Claude Vial, *Le Mariage Grec: Du VI^e Siècle av. J.-C. à l'époque d'Auguste* (Paris: De Boccard, 1998), 95. Here again, it should be noted, that although the level to which the ancient pharaohs practiced incest is debated, what matters is that the Ptolemies thought it was a common practice they could use to their benefit. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 74.

¹⁴⁵ Stanley Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," in *Philip II, Alexander the Great, and the Macedonian Heritage*, eds. W. Lindsay Adams and Eugene N. Borza (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982): 212.

¹⁴⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 22-23.

Ptolemy put two more of Eurydike's sons to death, an unnamed son and Argaeus, after they both conspired against him (Paus. 1.7.1), and he later faced another rebellion in Kyrene led by his half-brother Magas (Paus. 1.7.1).

Thus, it seems, Ptolemy's purpose in marrying Arsinoë was to unify the royal family during his own rule as being born of the Berenikean line of Ptolemy I's children, and he may have hoped to provide his successors with the means to ensure their own lines of succession as well, by limiting the lines of offspring to one royal brother-sister couple. Burstein contends that this goal was evidenced by Ptolemy II's various public declarations of family solidarity, such as introducing the cult of the *Theoi Soteres*, deifying Arsinoë as *Philadelphos*, and placing similar honors on their only full sister, Philotera.¹⁴⁷ The dynastic strife caused by the infighting between Ptolemy I's two lines of offspring was the backdrop against which both Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II grew up, so Ptolemy, rather than elevating only himself to divinity, sought to divinize his entire family line.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, replacing the practice of polygamy, which had caused so many succession problems for the Diadochi, with

¹⁴⁷ Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," 211-212. See also, Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 87-90. Hazzard specifically disagrees with Burstein's theory by pointing out, first, if dynastic solidarity was Ptolemy II's goal, he would not have married Ptolemy III to Berenike II, his cousin, instead of to Berenike, his sister. This point is refuted below, see pg. 83, and Part II, chapter 6. Second, he argues that Ptolemy II would not have followed his father's example in raising a younger son over "his legitimate heirs, Ptolemy and Lysimachos." This second part of Hazzard's argument is unconvincing and somewhat incorrect, however, since he based it on outdated sources (Tarn and Macurdy). His argument is based on a modern conception of inheritance where the oldest son was automatically considered the heir, which, as described above, was not the case for the Argeads or Diadochi. Furthermore, it is now clear that Lysimachos, son of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë I, was younger than Ptolemy III. The debate surrounding Ptolemy "the son" still rages, but it is clear that he was originally Ptolemy II's heir, who was removed probably for participating in a rebellion. Although Hazzard does not convincingly refute Burstein's argument, he contends that the reason for their marriage was that Ptolemy II was following the example of Zeus and Hera. Ptolemy's reasoning for marrying Arsinoë II, was unquestionably multifaceted; so, since there are convincing points and detractions to both Burstein's and Hazzard's arguments, they should both be mentioned. It is unlikely that a desire to reduce dynastic infighting would not have entered into Ptolemy II's reasoning, so I agree and build on Burstein's argument here. Hazzard's argument for Zeus and Hera also has merit and will be covered in greater detail below. For Ptolemy "the son," see Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy 'the Son'"; Matthew L. Skuse, "Coregency in the Reign of Ptolemy II: Findings from the Mendes Stela," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 103 (2017): 89-101.

¹⁴⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 4-5. See also, Wikander, "Dynasty: The Environment of Hellenistic Monarchs," 187.

one of “extreme endogamy” could remove succession concerns and allow for a similarly resolute focus on dynastic stability.¹⁴⁹

This emphasis on dynastic stability is also supported by the naming practices of the dynasty. Ptolemy I, II, and all their successors, decided to name their sons after the founder of the dynasty, Ptolemy I, rather than after Ptolemy I’s father, Lagos, in accordance with Argead tradition.¹⁵⁰ This speaks to the determination of the early Ptolemies that a Ptolemy would always hold the throne, and it may even be another example of the way Ptolemy I and II used Egyptian tradition to their advantage. The Pharaonic tradition emphasized the cosmic role of the pharaoh, as defender of Ma’at, and the avenger of his father, the previous pharaoh, all of which symbolically recreated the story of Horus, Osiris, and Set.¹⁵¹ In this cyclical act of revenge, the pharaoh was continually reborn, his rule justified, and Ma’at maintained for the good of the kingdom. The naming practice of the male members of the dynasty echoed that symbolic rebirth and the passing of power from Osiris to Horus/father to son.¹⁵²

Furthermore, the queens were part of this cyclicity as well, not only because they were responsible for one-half of the kingdom’s Ma’at, but also because, much like the king, they were part of the mythological story in which Osiris was finally reborn through the efforts of his sister, wife, and queen, Isis. While the son played the important role of avenger, the queen, specifically a sister-queen in the myth, had the power to reform and reanimate Osiris after his dismemberment by Seth.¹⁵³ The outcome of the story would be impossible

¹⁴⁹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 76-77.

¹⁵⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 77.

¹⁵¹ Ager, “Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 22.

¹⁵² Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 77.

¹⁵³ Redford, *The Ancient Gods Speak*, 169-70. For a full analysis of the story, see Armour, *Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt*, 54-69. Armour also notes the story of Isis and Osiris survives in many versions from the Egyptian period, the most notable being the Pyramid Texts, but the most complete version that survives was written by Plutarch (Plut. *Mor.* 351c-384c).

without the actions of Isis, so the queen's connection to Isis, beginning with Arsinoë II and gaining importance under the initial Kleopatras, will be explored further, in Parts II and III. Furthermore, Carney and Ager argue that the emphasis on this naming practice and myth further supported the Ptolemaic use of incest. On the one hand, the sister of the king was the most appropriate marriage partner as she was a female version of the king.¹⁵⁴ On the other, the incestuous marriage and close genetic make-up of the royal sibling pair also fulfilled the concept of the current ruling pair as the reincarnation of the previous ruling couple, further emphasizing the hereditary power transference and stability of the dynasty. Here it is also important to briefly note that, similarly to the name Ptolemy, the name Kleopatra would be repeated for powerful queens of the dynasty by the second and first centuries BCE. This was perhaps a result of growing power among these queens and a desire to create a female dynastic name of similar strength and connotation as Ptolemy was for the males, but this theory will be examined further in Part III.

Secondly, in conjunction with his new marriage and naming practice, Ptolemy II was also attempting to establish religious policy for his dynasty. Scholars such as Carney and Gkikaki have commented that the adoption of incestuous marriage occurred at the same time that Ptolemy II was establishing the dynastic cult.¹⁵⁵ As explained above, a main part of the legitimization policy of Ptolemy I and II was to associate the Ptolemies with the cult of

¹⁵⁴ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 77; Ager, "Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 18. Carney posits that "Full sisters are as close as one can come to female versions of kings, mirror images but for gender." And, Ager contends that "Ptolemaic rulers would have increasingly concentrated their own genetic material, generation by generation, eventually creating a situation where the king would come close to 'cloning' himself."

¹⁵⁵ Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 430-431; Gkikaki, "The Royal Sibling Marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II," 114. See Gkikaki for brief historiography of the various theories surrounding Ptolemaic incestuous marriage, 113-114. See also, Buraselis, "The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage," 291-302; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 94-98; Sabine Müller, *Das hellenistische Königspaar in der medialen Repräsentation: Ptolemaios II. und Arsinoë II* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, cop. 2009), 262-266.

Alexander the Great and to create their own dynastic cult that would provide further religious and political legitimacy to subsequent reigns by raising the royal family to the plane of divinity. Incestuous marriage was thus a means by which dynastic propaganda and religious policy could be conveyed by indicating the apotheosis of the royal siblings/marital pair.¹⁵⁶ Ager further argues that, “royalty, through participation in an act evocative of chaos and disorder, may deliberately summon forth calamity, only to overcome it and restore the order necessary for the community to continue. In effect, royal incest fights fire with fire, or rather, chaos with chaos.”¹⁵⁷ It seems the Ptolemies were taking the idea of Ma’at one step further by creating a form of chaos in their inbreeding, which they could then overcome through the stability of their dynasty and the deification of its members.

This concept was echoed in the proclamations issued by Ptolemy II. Gkikaki contends that the Pithom Stele (CG 22183), Mendes Stele (CG 22181), and *Idyll 17* by Theokritos emphasize the piety and euergetism of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II, and the texts frame those acts within their new brother-sister marriage.¹⁵⁸ These proclamations, which equate the marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II to that of Zeus and Hera, were likely a way for Ptolemy to further the association of their rule with divinity, while also attempting to win back some of the favor of his Greek subjects.¹⁵⁹ The same association could then be made with Isis and Osiris for the Egyptian subjects. Accordingly, Ptolemy II, in skillfully choosing

¹⁵⁶ Gkikaki, “The Royal Sibling Marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II,” 114. See also, Branko van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis,” Dissertation (The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2007), 219.

¹⁵⁷ Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 176. See also, Ager, “Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 20-21.

¹⁵⁸ Gkikaki, “The Royal Sibling Marriage of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II,” 115.

¹⁵⁹ Buraselis, “The Problem of Ptolemaic Sibling Marriage,” 291-292. For additional arguments on the connection of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II to Zeus and Hera, see Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 89-93; Shaw, “Explaining Incest: Brother-Sister Marriage in Graeco-Roman Egypt,” 283; Goyette, “Ptolemy II Philadelphus and the Dionysiac Model of Political Authority,” 5.

which traditions to adopt and emphasize, could allude to both his and Arsinoë's Greek and Egyptian divine monarchy.

In addition to these two main reasons, there were several additional advantages that further supported Ptolemy's decision to engage in an incestuous marriage. As the dynastic infighting continued between the descendants of the Diadochi and Epigoni throughout the Hellenistic period, the exogamous marriages between the dynasties, including the marriage of Berenike Syra to Antiochos II and Kleopatra I of the Seleukids to Ptolemy V, gave the competing kingdoms an excuse to interfere in each other's politics (see Appendices A and B).¹⁶⁰ The first exogamous marriage, the nuptials of Berenike II and Ptolemy III, was conducted with a specific purpose in mind: bringing Kyrene back under Ptolemaic control (see Part II, chapter 6). The second exogamous marriage into the Ptolemaic family, that of Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V, was only arranged when there was no living Ptolemaic daughter available at the end of the Fifth Syrian War (see Part III, chapter 8). This arrangement, however, allowed Antiochos III to interfere in Egyptian politics, and Kleopatra I's death was also used as a contributing factor by Seleukos IV for his invasion of Egypt during the Sixth Syrian War.¹⁶¹ The marriage of Berenike Syra to Antiochos II had given Ptolemy III the same opportunity to invade Syria years earlier during the Third Syrian War, but this marriage, and Berenike Syra's murder, show another drawback of exogamous marriages. Many of the women who were married exogamously ended up murdered, like Berenike Syra, who was killed by Laodike after the death of Antiochos II.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Ager, "Familiarity Breeds," 19; Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 434.

¹⁶¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143. See Part III, chapters 8 and 9 for a more thorough analysis of these two events.

¹⁶² Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 438. Here again, see Part II, chapter 6 for more information on Berenike Syra's murder.

While the consequences of these exogamous unions would not become clear until after the death of Ptolemy II, the various inter-dynastic marriages and murders which occurred during the wars of the Diadochi provided ample proof of similar patterns by the time of Ptolemy II. And Ptolemy's own decision to marry his son to Berenike II and send his daughter, Berenike Syra, to the Seleukid kingdom, where she was murdered, could have reinforced this idea for later Ptolemies.¹⁶³ Thus, it was clear, if Ptolemaic royal women remained in Egypt and married within the family, they could not be murdered at foreign courts or used as bargaining chips by outside forces.¹⁶⁴ For the male Ptolemies, marrying their sisters, rather than outside princesses, disallowed the opportunity of foreign interference. Kleopatra I was the last foreign princess that married into the Ptolemaic royal family; all subsequent matches would be between Ptolemaic family members, usually brothers and sisters, or niece and uncle in some cases (see Appendix B; Berenike IV's marriages are the only other exception to this pattern, for reasons discussed in chapter 11.3).

The implementation of a policy of incest by Ptolemy II, when viewed with the purpose of both unifying the dynastic inheritance and associating the dynasty with the gods, sheds additional light on his intentions in concurrently establishing the royal cult. The association of the Ptolemaic dynasty with the cult of Alexander, which had been established by Ptolemy I, was continued by Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II. Although Ptolemy I and Berenike I had received cultic honors as *Soteres* from the League of Islanders and the city of Ptolemais

¹⁶³ See further analysis of this issue below, on pg. 83, and in Part II, chapter 6.

¹⁶⁴ Two additional notes should be made concerning this point. First, while keeping Ptolemaic royal women within the Ptolemaic court prevented them from being murdered at a foreign court, it did not always prevent them from being murdered by family members at home, as the murder of Berenike II and Arsinoë III exemplify. Second, by the late second century, when there was a surplus of Ptolemaic daughters, several did marry into the Seleukid kingdom, perhaps in an attempt to emulate the success of Kleopatra I. Some of them, including Kleopatra Thea, daughter of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, gained great power, but almost all of them met untimely ends as well (including Kleopatra IV, Tryphaina, and Kleopatra Selene I; see Appendix B and Part III, chapter 12). Overall, this was a fairly lethal period, at least for royalty.

during their lifetime, Ptolemy II officially deified his father and mother in 280 BCE, both individually and also jointly, as the *Theoi Soteres* (See Appendix D).¹⁶⁵ According to Theokritos, Ptolemy established a temple to his deified parents in Alexandria, complete with chryselephantine statues of the pair, to which offerings of fattened oxen were regularly made (Theoc. *Id.* 17). He also founded the Ptolemaieia in 279/8 BCE, which was a festival of games, banquets, and processions meant to celebrate the Ptolemaic dynasty and establish them as Alexander's heirs in Egypt (Athen. 5.196A-203B); although, Ptolemy II did not yet add the *Theoi Soteres* to the Alexander priest's eponymous formula.¹⁶⁶

Ptolemy then used his incestuous marriage to associate himself and his sister with the gods, and he furthered the connection to both the Greek pantheon and the burgeoning royal cult by naming himself and his sister the *Theoi Adelphoi* or Sibling-Loving Gods, sometime in 272/271 BCE (*P.Hib.* 2.199).¹⁶⁷ The cult of the living royal couple was added to the title

¹⁶⁵ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 50-51; Goyette, "Ptolemy II Philadelphus and the Dionysiac Model of Political Authority," 2. See also, Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 440. According to Chaniotis, Ptolemy I was first given the title of Soter in a decree by the League of Islanders, *IG* 12.7.506. He argues that all dynastic cults were established by *poleis*, not living monarchs, so they could not have been used as legitimizing devices (439). While Ptolemy I was given the title by the League, it was Ptolemy II who officially deified the royal couple, Ptolemy I and Berenike I, as the *Theoi Soteres* in a state administered cult. So, although the initial granting of a cultic honors was done at the level of *poleis*, I would argue that Ptolemy II, as a living monarch, did in fact use Ptolemy I's deification as a legitimizing factor in building the Ptolemaic dynastic cult. And further, the fact that Ptolemy I and Berenike I were first deified by the grateful people of the League of Islanders should not be used as evidence against the ability to use the cult for legitimization purposes, but rather this would have lent additional weight to the cult's use as a legitimizing device and to Ptolemy II's decision to incorporate it as an officially administered cult. See also Carney, who argued that "In Egypt the Ptolemies, rather than simply receive cult worship from Greek cities, began to generate their own..." Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 219. Finally, although Ptolemy I and Berenike I were deified around 280, the epiklesis Soter, was first used in an official capacity on the jugate coinage of Ptolemy II in 261/260. Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 92.

¹⁶⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 94; Goyette, "Ptolemy II Philadelphus and the Dionysiac Model of Political Authority," 7; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 217-218. See also, Wikander, "Religion, Political Power and Gender- The Building of Cult-Image," 184-185. Fraser suggests that Ptolemy II did not add the *Theoi Soteres* to the Alexander cult title, perhaps, at Ptolemy I's own request. Ptolemy I, as a contemporary of Alexander, may not have felt the founder of the city should be overshadowed by "minor luminaries." He would not be added to the Alexander priest's eponymous formula until the reign of Ptolemy IV, see note 195, below, and Appendix C.

¹⁶⁷ Pfeiffer, "The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt," 398; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 97, n. 104; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 51, n. 61. See also, Hans Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," in *Egypt and the*

of the priest of Alexander to cement the chain of deification, and, as previously emphasized, this was an important piece of propaganda for the new royal cult as the connection of the Sibling-Loving Gods with Alexander meant that their names were repeated as part of the dating protocols on all Demotic and Greek documents (see Appendix C).¹⁶⁸

The deified couple were presented as a loving pair, in-line with Pharaonic tradition, and the first priest of the cult, Kallikrates, erected statues of the pair in Olympia across from the statues of Zeus and Hera, connecting them with the Greek tradition as well.¹⁶⁹ The deification of the *Theoi Adelphoi* was a concerted effort by Ptolemy II, and perhaps by Arsinoë II as well, to further establish the royal cult as the center of power in Egypt and to base that power on the royal couple as a unit (even after Arsinoë's death).¹⁷⁰ Then, both Arsinoë II, as the *Thea Philadelphos*, and the royal couple, as the *Theoi Adelphoi* were also included in the Egyptian cult as *synnaoi theoi*, setting the framework for the Egyptian branch of the royal cult (see chapter 3.1).

Most importantly, by organizing the royal cult around the deified royal married couple, Ptolemy II established the precedent that all royal couples would follow, in that royal deification was predicated on the divinity of both the king and queen. Roy explains that the change from the polygamy of the Argead Dynasty to the monogamy of the Hellenistic kings

Hellenistic World: Proceedings of the International Colloquium Leuven, 24-26 May 1982, E. van't Dack and P. van Dessel, eds. (Leuven: Peeters, 1983), 113.

¹⁶⁸ Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 430; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 51-52; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 95, 110; Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 437 Hölbl and Chaniotis both note that each of the ruling couples were added to the priest of Alexander's title (Soter, Euergetes, Philadelphos, Philopator, Philometor, Epiphanes, etc), greatly expanding it over time and continuing the line of deification with each couple. See also, Pfeiffer, "The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt," 398. See note 106, above.

¹⁶⁹ *OGIS* 26, 27. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 79, 97.

¹⁷⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 97, 100. See also, Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 118. Arsinoë's role in the deification process will be explored further in Part II, chapter 5 as well.

meant that the “monogamous king had to redefine his own identity in relation to that of his single queen.”¹⁷¹ While Ptolemy was, perhaps, married to both Arsinoë I and II at this time, and was therefore polygamous, he ideologically and cultically proclaimed Arsinoë II as his queen-consort. He based his public image on the two of them as a royal and divine unit. This is a pattern the succeeding Ptolemies would follow as polygamy was replaced with monogamy.¹⁷²

To publicize the new cult of the *Theoi Adelfhoi* and to emphasize the burgeoning dynastic divinity, Ptolemy II minted coins that depicted a jugate bust of himself and Arsinoë II on the obverse and Ptolemy I and Berenike I on the reverse.¹⁷³ Similarly to the way Ptolemy I had used the image of Alexander the Great on his coins, Ptolemy II used these jugate coins, at least among the elite who had access to precious metal coins, to popularize the idea of the *Theoi Soteres* and the *Theoi Adelfhoi* by both emphasizing the dynastic continuity and depicting an image of the current royal couple descending from the gods, who were represented by the previous deified ruling couple.¹⁷⁴ Lorber argues that Ptolemy II’s reforms to the gold coinage, including the implementation of the new, larger denominations of the *mnaieion* and *pentekontadrachmon*, were directly connected to the establishing and subsequent promoting of the royal cult. She states that the reforms “purposes were to express *tryphe* (the kingly display of wealth), to advertise the developing dynastic cult, and to

¹⁷¹ Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 118.

¹⁷² See note 103, above. Ptolemy VIII may be the exception to this pattern, if he was married to Kleopatra II and III concurrently, a theory I argue against in chapter 9. Also, “monogamy” indicates officially recognized marriages to wives and queens. Although the Ptolemies married monogamously, most were not monoamorous, as they kept mistresses. Thus, the key point is that for their official propaganda, they were monogamous, and chose to keep mistresses, rather than marrying multiple women as Ptolemy I had, in order to publicly put forth this concept of legitimacy and stability.

¹⁷³ On the iconography and denominations of this coinage, see Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 106, n. 477.

¹⁷⁴ Agnieszka Fulinska, “Iconography of the Ptolemaic Queens on Coins: Greek Style, Egyptian Ideas?” *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 14 (2010): 75.

associate ruler worship with gold.”¹⁷⁵ In this way, Ptolemy II connected his coins and cult to the Greek tradition, but the coins also demonstrated the Egyptian belief system.

In the Egyptian tradition, royal authority and divinity was transmitted via the royal *ka*. The scribes of the Pharaonic period had produced King’s lists, which demonstrated that the royal *ka*, which originated with the gods, was passed through the generations of pharaohs, culminating in the reigning king and providing him with the authority and gods-granted right to rule.¹⁷⁶ Ptolemy II, it seems, was duplicating that tradition on these coins by depicting his and his queen’s connection to their ancestors, the *Theoi Soteres*, and their inheritance of ruling authority. As with many of the Egyptian practices that the Ptolemies adopted, however, Ptolemy II adapted this one, allowing for the continuance of recognized tradition while also creating a new form of that imagery for his burgeoning dynasty. He connected his dynasty to the gods through their relationship with Alexander the Great, and, instead of listing only the kings, royal authority was transmitted through the royal couple. This would be continued by his son, Ptolemy III, who would repeat this imagery on the monumental scale (see chapter 3.4).

Accordingly, these jugate coins further highlighted the role of the queen in the maintenance and stability of Ma’at. Jugate coins had been issued previously in the Hellenistic period, but these were the first to be issued with a male and female head.¹⁷⁷ The image of the queen being slightly behind the king in her supporting role was a common motif in Egyptian Pharaonic art, and one that had been used by both Ptolemy I and II in their monumental depictions in the Egyptian style. These coins also represent the Pharaonic ideology of the

¹⁷⁵ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 106.

¹⁷⁶ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 57, n. 76; Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 96, n. 18; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 122.

¹⁷⁷ Fulinska, “Iconography of the Ptolemaic Queens on Coins,” 76.

queen-mother and principal wife as one figure (see Chapter 1.1). Ptolemy, it seems, was perpetuating that tradition and the role of the queen as the birther of legitimate heirs and insurer of dynastic stability, by depicting his mother and sister-wife almost identically.¹⁷⁸ Consequently, these coins presented an opportunity to produce an image of both dynastic continuity and the maintenance of Ma'at in a way that was Greek and Egyptian. With these coins, Ptolemy II was firmly establishing the position of the royal cult and emphasizing dynastic stability, but he was also solidifying the importance of the queen as the partner and support of the king within that cult and its iconography.

[3.4 Ptolemy III](#)

The efforts to maintain dynastic stability and firmly establish the royal cult were continued by Ptolemy II's successor, Ptolemy III. Unlike his father and grandfather, Ptolemy III was only married once. Ptolemy III married Berenike II, his cousin, but throughout their reign they were referred to as brother and sister.¹⁷⁹ Ptolemy III had a biological sister, however, Berenike Syra (see Appendix B). This seems to contradict the arguments put forth in the previous chapter, that Ptolemy II was striving to promote dynastic stability by establishing the dynastic cult and instituting the practice of royal incest. Ptolemy II's arranging a marriage between his son and a cousin, rather than between his son and daughter, raises the question: if Ptolemy II was so interested in ensuring dynastic continuity and stability, why did he marry his son to Berenike II, rather than his sister, Berenike Syra? This

¹⁷⁸ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 122.

¹⁷⁹ Berenike is named Ptolemy III's sister in the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) and in additional inscriptions, including *OGIS* 60, 61, 65. See Part II, chapter 6 for a more detailed examination of Berenike as ἀδελφή καὶ γυνή (sister and wife) of Ptolemy III. Also see chapter 6 for an in-depth analysis of the date of their marriage.

was one of the main points raised by Hazzard to argue against the theory that Ptolemy II's marriage to Arsinoë II was done with the purpose of promoting dynastic stability.¹⁸⁰

The marriage of Ptolemy II's son to his cousin, it can be argued, was another piece of Ptolemy II's skillful manipulation of policy. Ptolemy II sent his eldest daughter to the Seleukid kingdom in c. 252 BCE, as an alliance marriage to establish peace after the Second Syrian War.¹⁸¹ This decision was multi-faceted and, contrary to Hazzard, it fits in well with the other policies he instituted in an effort to create dynastic stability. First, it conformed with the alliance building of the Diadochi and Epigoni, since using daughters for alliance marriages was still common practice this early in the Hellenistic period. Second, Ptolemy II needed to create an alliance at the end of the 250s in the wake of the Second Syrian War, and his daughter was available to use in this way because his son and heir was not yet in a position to marry and would not be for some time yet.¹⁸² Rather than reserving his daughter for a marriage that would not occur for many years, Ptolemy II could use her to form a needed alliance with the Seleukids and later marry his son to his cousin, which would solve another alliance issue closer to home.¹⁸³ In marrying his son to Berenike, daughter of Magas, Ptolemy II and III were able to bring Kyrene back into Egypt's territorial holdings and eliminate an area of familial strife, as a rebellion by Magas, Ptolemy II's half-brother, had challenged Ptolemy II's early rule (Paus. 1.7.1; see chapter 3.3).

¹⁸⁰ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 87-90. See note 147, above.

¹⁸¹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice Phernophorus."

¹⁸² The reason Ptolemy III could not yet be married was because of another policy Ptolemy II was putting into place. As I will argue in Part II, chapter 6 (see pgs. 141-143 in that chapter), Ptolemaic heirs, beginning with Ptolemy III and continuing throughout the dynasty, did not get married until they ascended to the throne. This was done in an effort to prevent dynastic infighting, a policy which fits well with the arguments made in chapter 3.3 concerning Ptolemy's policy-building goals.

¹⁸³ The only drawback to this plan was, in sending Berenike Syra to the Seleukid kingdom, her death instigated another war, the Third Syrian War. This war was ultimately advantageous for the Ptolemies, however, as Ptolemy III and Berenike II were able to use it in establishing their propaganda (see chapter 6), and as mentioned above on pg. 76, it allowed Ptolemy III to interfere in Seleukid politics.

Finally, in styling Berenike II as Ptolemy III's symbolic sister in state propaganda once they married, Ptolemy III could retain the connotations of incest, of unifying the dynasty and associating it with the gods, that Ptolemy II had established in his own marriage, even without Ptolemy III being married to his biological sister. Ultimately, the marriage of Ptolemy III and Berenike II would firmly establish the place of incest within the Ptolemaic royal dynasty. For the one other exogamous marriage of the dynasty, that of Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I, the marriage of Ptolemy III and Berenike II set the precedent of symbolic incest. The emphasis placed on incestuous marriage, even symbolically, then ensured actual incestuous marriages would be arranged when possible. The naming of the queen as sister to the king, even when she was his cousin or niece, would become standard practice among the Ptolemies after Ptolemy III.

As Ptolemy III's compliance with his father's marital policies demonstrates, he endeavored to follow in his father's footsteps in solidifying the dynasty. This is also evident in his efforts to continue building the royal cult. Just as Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II were incorporated into the Alexander cult in 272/1 as the *Theoi Adelphoi*, Ptolemy III and Berenike II were also added during the Third Syrian War (246-241 BCE).¹⁸⁴ They took the title *Theoi Euergetai*, or Benefactor Gods, and from 243 BCE were worshiped as such while they were both alive (see Appendix D). Hölbl reasons that they needed a title of "ideological significance" because Ptolemy III's return to Egypt during the Third Syrian War was occasioned by the first uprisings of native Egyptians under Ptolemaic rule.¹⁸⁵ The uprisings

¹⁸⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 95; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 52-53. Koenen gives the date of Ptolemy III's fifth regnal year, sometime in 243-242 BCE.

¹⁸⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 49. See also, Dee L. Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 121. See Part II, chapter 6 for a more in-depth examination of the adoption of the *Theoi Euergetai* title, the Third Syrian War, the famine of 245.

were caused by a series of unusually high floods, which detrimentally impacted the grain harvest. Ptolemy and Berenike imported grain, at high cost, to end the rebellions, and this act reinforced their adoption of the *Euergetai* epithet. When the Egyptian priests gathered in Canopus in 238 BCE, they produced the Decree of Canopus (*OGIS* 56) that proclaimed the *Theoi Euergetai* as *synnaoi theoi* of the Egyptian gods and added the epithets of the *Euergetai*, *Adelphoi*, and *Soteres* to Egyptian priests' titles throughout the kingdom.¹⁸⁶ Although the official Greek dynastic cult of Alexandria and the Egyptian style worship of the ruler cult in the Egyptian temples were separate, they followed a similar patterns and fulfilled similar functions of deification and propaganda.

Additionally, their position as Benefactor Gods associated Ptolemy and Berenike with the pharaoh's religious and economic functions of bringing fertility to the land and ensuring plenty for their people. The deification and worship of the royal couple, while both still alive, was one of the last important steps in fully establishing the royal cult, and, consequently, all the succeeding Ptolemies would be worshiped as living, coupled deities. Ptolemy III and Berenike II continued the practice of worshiping their predecessors, and they established dynastic worship as both a pharaonic and familial duty. Whereas Ptolemy II had featured dynastic continuity on his coinage, Ptolemy III resumed the practice of depicting scenes of ancestor worship on monumental temple reliefs, which had been common during the New Kingdom.

¹⁸⁶ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 53. Here Koenen notes that "in the course of history the ancestors of the royal couple were added and the list grew just as the title of the priest of Alexander kept growing." See also, Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 99. Quaegebeur indicates that from Ptolemy III on, the royal couples were incorporated into the Egyptian cult during their lifetime. Also, it is likely this the Canopus Decree reinforced the creation of the *Euergetai* as *synnaoi* and they were first inducted into the Egyptian branch of the ruler cult as early as 243 BCE by the Alexandria Decree. See Part II, chapter 6, note 263.

As described in chapter 3.3, during the Pharaonic period, scribes had produced King's lists which demonstrated the divinity of the pharaohs.¹⁸⁷ Ptolemy II had adapted this practice, emphasizing the divinity of the *basileus*-pharaoh and his *basilissa*-consort. Similarly, scenes of power inheritance or power transference, where the current pharaoh was shown inheriting his power from his predecessor and ancestors, can be traced back to the New Kingdom, but during these earlier times the queen rarely accompanied the pharaoh, except in ritual offering scenes. Likewise, surviving temple scenes from the Late Period do not include the wives of pharaohs, such as Nectanebo, at all, but on Ptolemaic temples, such as Dendara, Edfu, Kom Ombo, and Philae, the king is almost always accompanied by his queen.¹⁸⁸ This is because of the efforts of Ptolemy III, who produced monumental scenes in which divine, hereditary power was passed from the line of deceased royal couples, often going back to the foundational pair of either the *Theoi Adelphoi* or *Soteres*, to the current ruling pair.¹⁸⁹ For example, the arch of the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186) depicts the reigning couple, Ptolemy III and Berenike II, followed by their ancestors the Gods Adelphoi and Soteres.¹⁹⁰

While depictions of monumental ancestor worship had originated in the New Kingdom, Ptolemy III was able to adapt the practice and use it to legitimize his rule and promote the image of dynastic succession, another aspect that would continue throughout the Ptolemaic period.¹⁹¹ The living royal couple being depicted as inheriting power from the

¹⁸⁷ See note 176, above.

¹⁸⁸ Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Egyptiennes," 246.

¹⁸⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110. See also, Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 96; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Egyptiennes," 254, 257; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 135.

¹⁹⁰ Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Egyptiennes," 247, Fig. C; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 133; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110. These scenes will be examined in greater detail in Part II, chapter 6; see Fig. 1.

¹⁹¹ Succeeding Ptolemies would also produce scenes of power transference, including Ptolemy IV, Ptolemy VI, and Ptolemy VIII. Later, when the list of ancestral *synnaoi* became too long to depict in relief, the Ptolemies

deceased royal couples, their ancestors, was an important piece of legitimizing propaganda. Similar to the efforts of Ptolemy II on his coinage, including Berenike II in this monumental declaration of legitimacy and authority made her a necessary facet of the divinity of the royal couple and established that their power was inherited together from the proceeding pair.

[3.5 Ptolemy IV](#)

Ptolemy III was succeeded by his son, Ptolemy IV, in 222 BCE. Ptolemy IV was a young man at the time of his ascension, and he was deeply influenced by his advisors Sosibios and Agathokles (see Part II, chapter 7). According to Polybios, Sosibios convinced Ptolemy IV to have most of the other living members of his family murdered, including his uncle, Lysimachos, his brother, Magas, and his mother, Berenike II (Polyb. 5.34.1, 5.36.1, 15.25.1-2). Sosibios otherwise helped Ptolemy IV maintain Ptolemaic policy. Within a year of his ascension, Ptolemy IV married his biological sister, Arsinoë III, and they continued to uphold the Ptolemaic practices established by their predecessors.

Soon after their marriage, Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III were incorporated into Egyptian ruler cult as the *Theoi Philopatores* (Father-loving Gods), when the titles of the Theban priests were extended to the priests of Amun, the Gods Adelphoi, the Gods Euergetai, and the Gods Philopatores.¹⁹² The highlight of Ptolemy IV's reign was the victory at the Battle of Raphia in 217 BCE. In winning this victory, Ptolemy IV was upholding the role of warrior and protector that were legitimizing facets in both the Pharaonic and Greek traditions.¹⁹³ After Raphia, Ptolemy IV made large benefactions to the priests and temples,

utilized ancestor lines, lists of the names of the royal couples, similar to the earlier King's lists, but including both the kings and queens. These are referenced throughout Part III, but see also, Part II, chapter 7, note 322.

¹⁹² Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 54; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 168.

¹⁹³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 165. On Arsinoë III's significant role in this victory, see Part II, chapter 7.

and, in return, the priesthoods issued the Raphia Decree (CG 31088/50048), which bestowed cultic honors on the couple as the *Theoi Philopatores* and officially incorporated them into the Alexandrian Greek cult in addition to the Egyptian in 216 BCE (see Appendix D).

Koenen points out that the Philopatores were incorporated into the Egyptian ruler worship before the Greek, which he describes as peculiar, since the previous couple-cults had been adopted in the Greek first and then the Egyptian, but this serves to emphasize both how fully integrated the ruler cult was by the reign of the fourth Ptolemy and the great success and popularity of the earlier cults, especially that of Arsinoë II.¹⁹⁴

Ptolemy IV also fully solidified the dynastic cult in two ways. Not only were he and his sister-wife worshiped as a living ruling couple, following the pattern of Ptolemy III and Berenike II, but he also added the *Theoi Soteres*, the founding Ptolemaic couple, to the list of the Alexander priest in 215/4.¹⁹⁵ Although the cult of the *Theoi Soteres* was established by Ptolemy II, it had, until Ptolemy IV, remained an individually worshiped cult. By joining it to the other ruler cults and adding the epithet to the title of the priest of Alexander, all the Ptolemaic couples appeared in line from beginning to current rule (see Appendix C).¹⁹⁶ Thus, all the Ptolemaic couples who ruled after Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III were able to trace a cultic line of succession from Ptolemy I and Berenike I to their own rule.

Simultaneously, he established a second eponymous priesthood at Ptolemais in the Thebaid, after which official documents used in Upper Egypt would have a dating formula

¹⁹⁴ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 54. See also, Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaiques et Traditions Egyptiennes,” 257.

¹⁹⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 169-170; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 218.

¹⁹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 95. See also, Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 54; Chaniotis, “The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers,” 437. Chaniotis, for example, points out that the Rosetta Stone (OGIS 90) issued by Ptolemy V reads: “during the priesthood of Aetos, son of Aetos, priest of Alexander and the Saviour Gods and the Brother-Sister Gods and the Benefactor Gods and the Father-loving Gods and the Manifest and Beneficent Gods.”

similar to the administrative center.¹⁹⁷ The only difference between the two was that the Ptolemais cult left out Alexander and began instead with Ptolemy I, as the founder of the city. Fraser indicates that Ptolemy IV's purpose in establishing a secondary eponymous dynastic cult may have been to bring additional attention to the achievements of his family line, since Ptolemy I was the founder of the city.¹⁹⁸ As has been previously mentioned, bringing *kleos*, or renown, to the family name was an important method of legitimization. Emphasizing the legitimacy and power of the dynasty may have been important for Ptolemy IV to combat the growing power of the Alexandrian elite families and his advisors, since, as mentioned in chapter 2.3, this was a period during which the court mechanics were transitioning. It also served to emphasize Ptolemaic legitimacy in the Thebaid, an area of growing native discontent, which would erupt in a native uprising about nine years later (Thebaid Rebellion, 206-186 BCE). On the whole, Ptolemy IV did not go to great lengths to emphasize the role of his queen, for reasons that will be explored in Part II, chapter 7, but he did institute the final changes to the dynastic cult, which is why his actions provide a good concluding point for this chapter.

¹⁹⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 170, 171; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 219. Fraser also notes that, since the Alexandria protocols were used throughout Egypt, most of the Thebaid documents included both sets of eponymous formulae.

¹⁹⁸ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 220.

Concluding Points: The Path to Female Rule

This overview of Ptolemaic marriage, from its ancient influences, through its origins in the period of the Argeads and Diadochi, and culminating with the development and implementation of Ptolemaic policy under the first four Ptolemies, has been presented with select goals in mind.

First, it was important to clarify the influences on Hellenistic Egypt from earlier periods, since the Ptolemaic kingdom did not develop in a cultural vacuum, but rather flourished in a country with a rich history. Consequently, the position of royal Ptolemaic women was derived from a combining of Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian traditions. From the Egyptian tradition, Ptolemaic women gained the rights to own property and manage their own affairs, but they were also expected to fulfill the roles of child-bearers and helpmeet to their husbands. From the Greco-Macedonian tradition, Ptolemaic women inherited the same expectations of being child-bearers and supporters of their spouses, but they were also used for the legitimizing purposes of strengthening their *oikos* by engaging in public religious and supporting duties. A brief, clarifying summary of all these influences is helpful here and will provide a point of reference when these influences are referenced throughout this work:

From the Pharaonic tradition, Ptolemaic royal women retained:

- The concept of the divinity of the monarchs
- The concept of Ma'at that required the king and queen be a complementary, loving pair
- The need to uphold that Ma'at through good rulership and religious duties
- The unity of the queen-mother and principal-wife, who was also the bearer of legitimate children that would create stability for the dynasty.
- The right to own and manage property, which was aided by a network of male bureaucrats.

From the Argead/Diadochic traditions, Ptolemaic royal women retained:

- The ability for royal women to represent the interests of their family and gain renown (*kleos*) through good acts.
- The creation of dynastic stability through the bearing of legitimate children
- The ability to participate in religious duties and euergetism that was expected of Greco-Macedonian royalty.
- A Greek-style education that allowed these women to understand and participate in the politics of their day
- The collection of a network of *philoï*
- Use as dynastic legitimators, which gave them access to the title *basilissa*, wearing diadems, appearance on coins, eponymous city naming, and alliance marriages.

Many of these influences carried into the Ptolemaic period through the policies put into place by the early Ptolemies in building their new kingdom, as demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3. Ptolemaic royal women came to be used as dynastic legitimators through actions such as alliance marriages and deification as part of the royal cult, but this role as legitimizing device gave them a public visibility and authority through which they could act and slowly accumulate power. Additionally, the institutionalization of the royal cult by the first four Ptolemies not only emphasized the male power, legitimacy, and succession of the dynasty, but it also incorporated their wives into that imagery. The inclusion of incest as a dynastic policy, in both the aspects of actual incestuous marriages and the usage of the symbolic title “sister” in the few exogamous marriages, allowed these royal women to gain political power and led to an increasing pattern of co-rule.

A second objective of Part I was to explain the purpose of Ptolemaic marriage, the role incest played in those marriages, and how the adoption of incest led to increased power for Ptolemaic royal women. As has been shown, the ultimate aim of Ptolemaic marriage was to produce a stable dynasty. Accordingly, incest was used by the Ptolemies to produce

dynastic stability and to institute a dynastic cult in which the ruling couple was deified. Consequently, the importance of royal women was further entrenched as the first four Ptolemies established their dynastic policy. Ptolemy I founded the dynasty and established the basis of the dynastic cult, which was based on his association with the divinity of Alexander the Great. Ptolemy II would continue developing the legitimization scheme of the dynasty by implementing a practice of incest as a method of associating the Ptolemies with the gods and reinforcing the dynastic cult. Ptolemy III established the precedent of deification while the monarchs were a living couple, and he implemented the worship of preceding sovereigns. Finally, Ptolemy IV provided an unbroken line of divinity from Alexander and Ptolemy I to the current ruling couple by integrating the *Theoi Soteres* into the dynastic cult.

As the dynastic cult was strengthened from generation to generation, so too was the royal female's position within both that cult and the monarchy. The women of the dynasty, as both the daughters of the king and wives of the king, had a double title of investiture that made them the equal of the pharaoh in a way that was not possible for women entering into the Ptolemaic royal family from another Hellenistic kingdom.¹⁹⁹ Robins confirms that royal daughters were potential queens, who by also later holding the positions of king's consort and king's mother, could create a triad that echoed the divine triad of Hathor, an association that bolstered both the queen and king's perceived divinity.²⁰⁰ For the Ptolemies, marrying the king to his closest blood-sister would impede the dilution of the royal line and allow for

¹⁹⁹ Bielman-Sánchez, "Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides," 50. While royal daughters were preferable as marriage partners to royal heirs, the Ptolemies dealt with the issue of exogamous marriages, in the two instances that marriages of this type were contracted (Berenike II and Kleopatra I), by having the previous royal couple adopt the foreign bride and by naming her as her husbands "sister and wife" in royal propaganda. This issue will be explored further in chapter 6 on Berenike II and chapter 8 on Kleopatra I.

²⁰⁰ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 37.

the transmission of divinity from both mother and father. Thus, by the death of Ptolemy III, the practice of incest had become completely entrenched in the Ptolemaic system, and of the Ptolemies who ruled after Ptolemy III, with the exception of Ptolemy V, all married either their blood sister or niece, each of whom actively ruled with their husband, son, or uncle (see Appendices A and B).

As the system of incest grew and as the throne came to be defined by the royal couple as a pair, women were able to become increasingly active in ruling. Accordingly, basing the legitimacy of the dynasty and royal cult on the royal couple provided a basis from which Ptolemaic royal women could also gather their own personal power. As summarized by Carney, “Pairing in cult and in marriage led ultimately to pairing in rule.”²⁰¹ Succeeding queens each, in turn, built upon that foundation and were able to take on both public and political roles in which they were increasingly recognized as one-half of the ruling monarchic body. Over time, this allowed them to take on official positions, including as *basilissai*-regents and spousal co-rulers, all of which culminated in the literal sole-rule of Kleopatra II, Kleopatra Berenike III, Berenike IV, and Kleopatra VII.

²⁰¹ Carney, “Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period,” 208.

PART II: PTOLEMAIC VANGUARDS OF QUEENLY POLITICAL POWER: ARSINOË II, BERENIKE II, AND ARSINOË III

4. [Berenike I and Arsinoë I: The First *Basilissai*-Consorts](#)
 - 4.1. [Berenike I](#)
 - 4.2. [Arsinoë I](#)
5. [Arsinoë II: The Foundational Queen](#)
6. [Berenike II: The Efficient but Overshadowed Queen](#)
 - 6.1. [Berenike's early life and scholastic debates](#)
 - 6.2. [Berenike II as *basilissa*-consort to Ptolemy II](#)
7. [Arsinoë III: The Heiress to a Murder](#)

[CONCLUDING POINTS: REGULARIZING CO-RULE](#)

This Part continues from the foundations laid in Part I and focuses specifically on Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and Arsinoë III, under whom occurred the initial building of power for generations of Ptolemaic queens. It will be sectioned into four chapters. Chapter 4 briefly looks at Berenike I and Arsinoë I, as the initial *basilissa*-consorts of the dynasty and wives to the first two *basileus*-pharaohs. Chapter 5 examines the unprecedented influence of Arsinoë II, chapter 6 sheds new light on Berenike II, and finally, chapter 7 highlights what is known about Arsinoë III.

The early Ptolemaic queens unquestionably developed their roles of power within the dynastic structures established by their husbands. The organization of the Ptolemaic dynastic cult and the unique role incest played in both the marriages and deification of the Ptolemies, however, allowed these women to continually build a power base that was not always dependent upon their husbands and permitted them to gain ruling power over time. It is necessary, then, to provide an overview of this development of power among the queens, specifically Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and Arsinoë III, in order to show how they were able to work within the bounds expected of them and, from generation to generation, gain increasing autonomy.

The idea that women could hold political power has not always been accepted, however, as demonstrated by the historiography of Ptolemaic queenship in the Introduction. The most widely accepted theory of Hellenistic queenship, that of Savalli-Lestrade and Bielman-Sánchez, which argues that a queen's power was dependent on that of her husband, is somewhat accurate for the early Ptolemaic period, but the reality was more nuanced than they indicate.¹ As Bielman-Sánchez concedes, the theory cannot apply to the queens of the second and first centuries BCE, at which time Ptolemaic queens were able to carve out a public and political space for themselves, which ultimately culminated in instances of female regency, co-rule, and sole-rule. As Macurdy rightly pointed out so long ago, the Ptolemaic queens gradually achieved an "equality in power," and while she correctly placed that equality with Kleopatra II, the roots of that achievement were planted much earlier and paved the way for even greater accumulated power by later queens.² It has yet to be acknowledged, however, that the ability of these later Ptolemaic queens to acquire political power, was a direct result of the efforts of the earliest queens of the dynasty.

Arsinoë II and Berenike II were able to produce a perception of power and equality in rulership that the later queens of the dynasty would emulate. While these queens did not co-rule or sole-rule, as later queens would, their contributions to the growing female power of the dynasty should not be underestimated. The religious duties and assimilations they undertook, the ways they were described in inscriptions and monumentally depicted, and the titles they were presented with all created the patterns of queenship that would provide the model for the later co-rulerships of the dynasty. These were not shadow queens, who were

¹ Savalli-Lestrade, "Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche," 432; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 158. See also, Introduction, Historiography section, pgs. 9-11, esp. notes 16, 18.

² Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 232.

simply secondary reflections of the actions undertaken by their husbands.³ Instead, they acted in conjunction with their male counterparts, often behind the scenes during this early period since they were not yet acknowledged as co-rulers, to establish the policies of the dynasty and the role of an active, jointly-ruling queen. Accordingly, while these early queens did develop their power roles within the structures established by their husbands, they also had a hand in the development of those structures, as the partners and advisors to their spouses. Exploring the patterns of queenship these early *basilissai* established will not only shed light on their often unacknowledged contributions to the building of the dynasty, but it also sets the stage for the later queens, who will be explored in Part III, that were able to build on the precedents set by these earlier queens to gain equality in power.

In addition to providing evidence in support of the overarching argument of this work, each chapter will also present sub-arguments relative to each specific queen. The scholarship on Arsinoë II and Berenike II, for instance, is fraught with scholarly debates concerning the lives of these two queens. The respective chapters on these women will provide some historiography on the various debates that surround their lives and actions, and, when possible, offer a convincing solution. In the chapter on Berenike II, I argue that the joint divinity of the Euergetai was originally predicated on Berenike's individual divinity, vis-à-vis her assimilation with various well-established goddesses. I also propose that she had a hand in determining the propaganda of the Euergetai via the message disseminated in the *Coma Berenices* and on the coinage that would bear her image. In the final chapter, I will also demonstrate that a *damnatio memoriae* was carried out against Arsinoë III.

³ As mentioned in the Introduction, Historiography section, Ptolemaic queens are often only included in scholarship as the subordinates of their husbands and are assumed to have acted with little initiative of their own.

4. Berenike I and Arsinoë I: The First *Basilissai*-Consorts

Before looking at Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and Arsinoë III as the builders of power, a few words must be said about the earlier *basilissai*-consorts, Berenike I and Arsinoë I. As the initial Ptolemaic *basilissai*-consorts, these two queens were the most restricted in their roles as wife of the king, especially since their husbands were the two most active kings in establishing the policies that would shape the burgeoning dynasty. Although both of these women were used by their husbands in building dynastic propaganda, they still set important precedents for their successor queens.

4.1 Berenike I

Berenike I, although the last wife of Ptolemy I, was his favored spouse. She was given the title *basilissa* by 299 BCE (*OGIS* 14) and was described by Plutarch as being “the most powerful of Ptolemy’s wives” (Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* 4).⁴ Gutzwiller even argues that theirs was a love match, since Ptolemy married her, a woman with three children by another man, without prearrangement from her male relatives, and he chose her children over Eurydike’s as his heirs.⁵ As Ptolemy’s favored queen, Berenike was a public figure. For example, she accompanied Ptolemy I on his expedition to Greece in 309/308 BCE.⁶ She was also the first Ptolemaic woman to win a chariot racing Olympic victory (Posid. *AB* 78, 88).⁷ Carney argues that breeding and racing horses was a path to power (Isoc. 16.33), which could bring

⁴ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 13-14; van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Marriage of Ptolemy I and Berenice I,” 87; Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 119; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 70.

⁵ Eurydike was Ptolemy I’s first wife as satrap and then king of Egypt, see Part I, chapter 3.2. Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 365. See also, van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Marriage and Divorce of Ptolemy I and Eurydice,” 159; van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Marriage of Ptolemy I and Berenice I,” 85-86; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 21-22.

⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 24.

⁷ Chris Bennett, “Arsinoë and Berenice at the Olympics.” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 154 (2005): 92.

fame and honor to the victor's family.⁸ Earning *kleos* via victorious participation in the games was considered an acceptable public activity for women, and it was an achievement that later Ptolemaic royal women of the second century would emulate. The acknowledgement of public actions by the queen meant that the king's official image was "thus defined in public not by effacing his queen but by using her as an equally prominent feminine counterpart."⁹ The presentation of the queen accompanying the king throughout the kingdom, as an object of marital love that produced legitimate children, and as someone who brought renown to the family name would become the norm for succeeding Ptolemaic queens.

Berenike I was also the first Ptolemaic queen to have a lifetime cult in association with Aphrodite, as a patroness of married love (Theoc. *Id.* 17.40-44).¹⁰ Several earlier Hellenistic royal women had already been assimilated to Aphrodite, beginning with Phila, wife of Demetrios Poliorketes, as early as 306/305 BCE.¹¹ Berenike's assimilation to this goddess was important, not only because it connected Ptolemaic queenship with a newly significant, wider Hellenistic religious tradition, but also because this assimilation would have vital significance for later Ptolemaic queens, beginning with Arsinoë II (see chapter 5, below), as the royal couples developed the propaganda by which they would promote their own personal divinity. Berenike was also deified after her death (Theoc. *Id.* 15.106-109 and

⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 27-28. See also Bennett on the importance of Panhellenic victories, Bennett, "Arsinoë and Berenice at the Olympics," 93.

⁹ Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 119.

¹⁰ Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," 33; Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 219, n. 82; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 365; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 66; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 103.

¹¹ Carney, "The First *basilissa*: Phila, daughter of Antipater and wife of Demetrius Poliorketes" (Forthcoming). See also, Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 218, n. 78; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," 31-32, n. 53, 54.

17.45-52). As the first Ptolemaic queen to be granted (post-mortem) divinity, she was commemorated in court poetry for her piety towards the gods, her benevolence towards and patronage of her subjects, and her devotion to her husband, the king.¹²

Berenike's image was subsequently used by both her husband and son in establishing the new dynastic cult. For instance, she was the only woman prominently featured in Ptolemy II's great procession for the first Ptolemaieia (Athen. 5.202D, 203B), where she was displayed as the dutiful wife of Ptolemy I and mother of Ptolemy II.¹³ He also dedicated a temple to her, the Berenikeion (Athen. 5.202D). Berenike I became an important figure in the monumental depictions of later pharaohs, beginning with Ptolemy III, in scenes of ancestral worship where the current living couple was shown worshipping or receiving power from the Sibling and Saviors Gods.¹⁴ Thus, she was the first Ptolemaic queen used to present the ideal of the dutiful, supportive, and family oriented *basilissa*-consort.

The few surviving sources that describe Berenike I provide a glimpse into the life of a queen that set the standard for her successors, and, although she was not Ptolemy I's first or only wife, she was presented later as the founding queen of the dynasty. While she was not granted the titles that later queens would be (see Appendix E), her significance was acknowledged by important men of the day, such as Pyrrhus (Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* 4), and her influence on her husband can be inferred from his choosing of her son as his heir. Additionally, Berenike I set the stage as the ideal queen who was educated, participated in queenly euergetism, and ensured dynastic stability through birthing heirs for the throne. She

¹² Caneva, "Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism," 94.

¹³ Wikander, "Religion, Political Power and Gender- The Building of Cult-Image," 185.

¹⁴ Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes," 247, Fig. C; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 133. Also see, Part I, chapter 3.4, note 189 and chapter 6.2, below.

connected Ptolemaic Egypt to wider Hellenistic religious practices and established a religious model for the Ptolemaic queen being assimilated to Aphrodite. She was heralded as being “among the wisest of women” (Theoc. *Id.* 17.34-35), and she used that wisdom in the service of her husband and family.

All these honors she received, however, were granted by her male relations, most after her death, and thus did not confer any exercisable power on her. Nevertheless, by using Berenike as a key figure in the propaganda of the dynasty, her male relations, including her son and grandson, provided Berenike with a public role, even if post-mortem, which brought her to the fore of Ptolemaic imagery and created a public platform from which her successor queens could draw inspiration and slowly build power. While the male Ptolemies’ purpose for using her image in dynastic propaganda and religious scenes of power transference was to provide stability and religious justification for the dynasty overall, it had the (perhaps) unintentional side effect of providing a perceived precedent for the public activity of Ptolemaic queens.

[4.2 Arsinoë I](#)

While Berenike I became an influential queen of the dynasty, her immediate successor, Arsinoë I, is one of the Ptolemaic queens about whom the least is known. Arsinoë I’s marriage to Ptolemy II was a political one designed by their fathers to confirm the friendly relations between Ptolemy I and Lysimachos against Seleukos I. Accordingly, she is the perfect example of an early Hellenistic woman who became queen via a political marriage and was used as a legitimization device, in that her relation to a powerful

Hellenistic man, her father Lysimachos, provided an alliance and power-through-association to her new husband.¹⁵

After the deaths of Ptolemy I, Lysimachos, and Seleukos by 281 BCE, however, Arsinoë I would have seen her position at court declining, perhaps even before Arsinoë II, Ptolemy II's sister and soon-to-be second wife, returned to Alexandria.¹⁶ Though the timeline of when Arsinoë II returned to Egypt (see next chapter) and when Arsinoë I began to lose favor is unclear, it was during the period between 281 BCE and perhaps before Ptolemy II's marriage to Arsinoë II, sometime between 276-272 BCE, that Ptolemy found Arsinoë I guilty of plotting against him, had her two *philoï*, Amyntas and Chrysippos, executed, and exiled Arsinoë to Coptos (Schol. Theoc. 17.128).¹⁷

Although Arsinoë II is often depicted as the great spider that organized the exile of her competitor queen, the decision was likely Ptolemy II's.¹⁸ That Arsinoë II has been continually blamed for Arsinoë I's fall from favor is another legacy of the ancient and early modern authors who used the *topos* of female rivalry to characterize queens as good (Arsinoë I) vs. bad (Arsinoë II) that has carried into modern scholarship, as proposed in the Introduction. Arsinoë II not have been at court long enough to have gained that amount of influence, and the decision to remove a wife who was not as politically useful, in favor of a wife that would better serve his dynastic propaganda building, was more characteristic of

¹⁵ Van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoe I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," 162; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 67.

¹⁶ Van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoe I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," 163; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 68.

¹⁷ On Arsinoë II's return to Egypt and marriage to Ptolemy II, see note 52, below. Carney contends that Arsinoë I's exile probably occurred before Arsinoë II returned to Egypt, and that Ptolemy could have spent a number of years as a bachelor before his marriage to his sister. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 69, 70. Bennett posits that her exile occurred in 274/273. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe I."

¹⁸ For examples of Arsinoë II being depicted as a scheming new wife, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 36; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 74.

Ptolemy II's policy decisions, as shown in Part I, chapter 3.3.¹⁹ Ptolemy's marriage to Arsinoë I was a construct of the era of the Successors, and it thus became obsolete once all the men involved in that power struggle were dead. A marriage to his newly widowed sister, however, could provide Ptolemy with more evocative propagandistic benefits (as described in Part I, chapter 3.3 and explored further in chapter 5, below).

Even as an exiled wife, however, Arsinoë I held the honor of being the birth mother of Ptolemy II's heirs. Ogden argues that she may have held great authority throughout the Thebaid during her exile, as shown by a demotic inscription (CG 70031) which denotes her as the "chief royal wife of the king."²⁰ Conversely, Quaegebeur and van Oppen de Ruiter contend that the inscription should rather be interpreted as describing Arsinoë II.²¹ While Ogden's theory describes Arsinoë's banishment as a "retirement," van Oppen de Ruiter emphasizes that it was truly a repudiation, banishment, and divorce, even if the exiled queen lived comfortably.²² Her repudiation and divorce then allowed Arsinoë II to adopt Ptolemy II's children as their heirs, which removed the stigma of having a traitorous mother. This would set an important precedent for the dynasty in which the current *basilissa*-consort could adopt the children of a previous marriage, allowing them to be depicted as the heirs of the current ruling couple.²³

¹⁹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 70; Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 427. See also, Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 85-86.

²⁰ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 74. He derives this argument from earlier scholars, including Petrie, Mahaffy, Macurdy, Bevan, etc. See, Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 75; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 110-111; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 59, 64, n.1.

²¹ Jan Quaegebeur, "Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoë II divinisée," *BIFAO* 69 (1971), 215, no. 47; van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoe I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," 170-171. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 70; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe I, "Arsinoe II."

²² van Oppen de Ruiter, "Notes on Arsinoe I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen," 172.

²³ For example, this would happen for Berenike II, see chapter 6, and the children of Ptolemy IX and X, see chapter 11.

Arsinoë I embodied some of the burgeoning key traits of a Ptolemaic queen, in that she was, for a time, a politically useful wife and the bearer of legitimate children that would ensure the continuance of the dynasty, but she was ultimately ousted in favor of a more useful wife, Arsinoë II. Arsinoë I was, unfortunately, relegated to the position of a historical shadow, and no images or inscriptions, other than the contested Coptos inscription, survive that would allow a clearer understanding of the influence she may have wielded at the time, either before or after her banishment.

5. Arsinoë II: The Foundational Queen

While Arsinoë I is a shadowy figure, an abundance of material survives for her succeeding queen, Arsinoë II. Arsinoë II was queen of Egypt for at least three years, with a probable reign of five to seven years (c. 275-268 BCE), and during that time, however long it was, she was able to use her role as *basilissa*-consort to great effect.²⁴ Ptolemy's reasons for deciding to participate in an incestuous marriage were extensively analyzed in Part I, chapter 3.3, and it is clear the marriage was beneficial to him in that it helped solidify his plans for dynastic stability and royal deification. The marriage was equally beneficial to Arsinoë II, however. She was able to regain prominence and power as queen of Egypt, and, rather than ending her days as a dowager queen of Macedon and mother to murdered heirs, she instead resumed prestige in her position as *basilissa*-consort and (adoptive) mother of the Ptolemaic heirs.²⁵

An important concern that must briefly be addressed, then, is the role Arsinoë played in the decision to engage in an incestuous marriage to Ptolemy II. The marriage to Arsinoë II was initiated by Ptolemy as part of his propaganda for the dynasty, and, while the decision was ultimately his, Arsinoë II must have consented and could still have played a role in the initial planning. Since Arsinoë was previously married to her half-brother, Ptolemy Keraunos, marrying a sibling was a concept with which she must have previously wrestled, and the initial idea for the marriage could have been presented by her to Ptolemy II, since she

²⁴ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 70, 104. Arsinoë married Ptolemy sometime between the period of 276-273/2 BCE and died sometime between 270-268 BCE. At maximum she was queen for eight years, and at minimum, three years. If the most probable date for her marriage is 275 BCE, with death in 268 BCE, that provides a reign of seven years.

²⁵ As will be further explained below, Arsinoë II was married twice before her marriage to Ptolemy II. Her second husband, Ptolemy Keraunos, murdered two of her sons by her first husband, Lysimachos.

was well aware of the consolidating factors such an arrangement would provide.²⁶ Arsinoë's possible encouragement of Ptolemy brings up an additional question: how much influence did Arsinoë have on her brother-husband? This has long been a source of contention among historians, with Macurdy and Pomeroy arguing that she had great influence over him, Burstein contending that she did not, and other historians further speculating that she was a scheming harpy, as mentioned in chapter 4.2.²⁷

In 1903, Bouché-Leclerq was one of the earliest historians to ponder the characteristics of Arsinoë, asking whether she was a spoiled, voluptuous woman or an ambitious queen who desired to rule in the land in which she grew up.²⁸ He concluded that Ptolemy and Arsinoë's incestuous marriage was a matter of politics and, perhaps, attraction, either at Arsinoë's instigation or from mutual desire.²⁹ Ten years later, Tarn agreed with Bouché-Leclerq, and took it a step further, insisting that "doubtless the idea of marriage with her easy-going brother came from her, and not from him."³⁰ Shortly after these two scholars, Bevan more firmly stated that "foreign policy was drawn by the firm hand of Arsinoë Philadelphus."³¹ While he refrained from commenting on the sexuality of their union, with this statement he resolutely established the idea of Arsinoë as the political influencer and Ptolemy as the easily overruled younger brother. Macurdy followed soon after Bevan, and, in

²⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 80-81. See also, Carney, "The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt," 426; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 18; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 77.

²⁷ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 111-130; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 17-19; Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," 197-212; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 36; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 74. See also, note 18, above.

²⁸ Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 161-162.

²⁹ Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 161, esp. n. 4. "On revient, en fin de compte, sur l'attraction personnelle, soit ascendant d'une "femme démoniaque" (Gercke), soit conformité d'humeur entre deux êtres intrigants et coluptueux, réciproquement indulgents pour leurs vices (Holm, Mahaffy), soit besoin chez Philadelphie d'avoir un auxiliaire énergique agissant pour lui (Koehler, Wilcken)."

³⁰ W. W. Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1913), 262.

³¹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 60-61.

her work, she similarly argued for a firm authority held by Arsinoë over her weaker brother. She maintained that Arsinoë both formed the plan for the incestuous marriage and directed the government afterwards because she was “absolutely a managing woman... who had inherited from her father far more of his strong character” and that Ptolemy was “invalidish and slothful.”³²

In more recent scholarship, historians like Longega and Pomeroy echoed Macurdy’s theory of Arsinoë as the politically astute and influencing older sister, with Ptolemy as the weak and pleasure-loving younger brother.³³ Scholars, such as Quaegebeur and Hauben, strove to support this claim by analyzing sources from the period. Quaegebeur, for example, argued that Arsinoë’s use of the cartouche name *nsw bitj* (King of Upper and Lower Egypt) and the title *s3t-Imn* (Daughter of Amun) indicate that she was a true co-ruler to Ptolemy II.³⁴ Hauben further contended that the evidence presented by Quaegebeur, and additional evidence from the cult of Arsinoë-Aphrodite, the Chremonides Decree, and a passage in the *Coma Berenices*, prove that Arsinoë exercised sovereign power and was active in Ptolemaic politics.³⁵ Nilsson, most recently, has also used a reevaluation of Egyptian imagery and titles to argue that Arsinoë was a co-ruler to Ptolemy.³⁶ Arsinoë’s titles, her involvement in foreign policy as represented by the Chremonides Decree, and her cultic associations will be reevaluated further below.

³² Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 118.

³³ Gabriella Longega, *Arsinoë II, passim*; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 17-18. For a thorough overview of arguments in favor of Arsinoë as the power behind the throne, see Burstein, “Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View,” 204-205.

³⁴ Quaegebeur, “Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoë II divinisée,” 205, 208-209. The title of *nsw bitj* will be addressed in greater detail below.

³⁵ Hauben, “Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l’Égypte,” 110, 127. See also, Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas*, 313, where he argued that “the Cremonidean War was Arsinoë’s war.”

³⁶ Nilsson, “The Crown of Arsinoë II. The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority,” 405.

The first major challenges to the theory of Arsinoë as the real power behind the throne came from the historians Will, Burstein, and Hazzard.³⁷ Burstein, for example, argued that the impetus for entering into an incestuous marriage has often been placed with Arsinoë because the benefits of the union were much greater for her, but he rightly points out that all the ancient sources indicate the decision was Ptolemy's (Schol. Theoc. 17.128; Paus. 1.7.1; *P. Haun* 6, F. 3, ll. 2-3).³⁸ Hazzard further argued that the two-decade long separation between the two siblings would have had the effect of dispelling any influence Arsinoë might have had over her brother and that the incestuous marriage was planned by Ptolemy as a way to associate his rule and dynasty with the gods, specifically Zeus and Hera.³⁹ This portion of Hazzard's argument is convincing, and, as described in Part I, chapter 3.3, an attempt to associate his rule with the gods, both Greek and Egyptian, must have entered into Ptolemy's decision to marry his sister. The next part of Hazzard's argument, however, is not as conclusive. He paints a picture of Ptolemy as a mastermind of policy, with Arsinoë being a willing, yet uninfluential, participant in the arrangement. He even further posits that Arsinoë was, instead, controlled by Ptolemy and relegates theories of her supposed power to "feminists," who were "loath to reject their image of Arsinoë as a tigress queen."⁴⁰ He provides seven supporting reasons as evidence that Arsinoë held no power, including her lack of persuasiveness and "poor political judgement," and concludes that Ptolemy had a political plan for every honor bestowed upon his sister-wife.⁴¹ Yet, Hazzard contradicts his own argument by noting that Ptolemy allowed Arsinoë to be granted the title *nsw bitj*, without

³⁷ Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," 205, n. 42. Burstein's note 42 lists examples of prior arguments against Arsinoë as the queen who dominated Ptolemy II, including that of Edouard Will.

³⁸ Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," 210, n. 65.

³⁹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 84, 90-93.

⁴⁰ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 96.

⁴¹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 97-99.

fully grasping “the import of the title.”⁴² It is damaging to his argument to first state that Ptolemy was a political mastermind, but then indicate he would not have understood the importance of such a long-standing title (or not, at least, have had advisors that would apprise him of the import). While Ptolemy was unquestionably a politically astute king, his shrewdness should not negate the role Arsinoë played. Rather, this should be seen as a union of two well-equipped ruling figures.

The characterization of active queens as audacious and scheming is a legacy of the ancient sources. Many of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century historians, especially those just surveyed, thus followed in this same vein when describing Arsinoë II. Then, perhaps in an effort to redeem her character, subsequent scholars sought to transform her “scheming” into active wielding of power. Many of these assessments either described her as the *de facto* ruler of the kingdom, thus relegating her brother-husband to a position of weak, overruled figurehead, or attributed to her a position of true co-rulership that was not possible for her to hold at this point (for reasons that will be explained below). This then created a backlash from other historians seeking to rehabilitate Ptolemy II’s reputation, who attempted to strip Arsinoë of any power or influence. Consequently, Burstein was correct in stating that a reassessment of Arsinoë’s power needed to be undertaken, but that reassessment should not go to the opposite extreme and strip her of any impact. Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II’s relationship was not a symmetric one in which any power gained by her reduced the power available to him, or vice versa. More to the point, Arsinoë’s influence on her brother should not be overestimated, but neither should it be underestimated, and any argument concerning their shared power should not be based on reductive arguments that are dependent on a

⁴² Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 98.

concept of their relationship as a zero-sum game. Ptolemy II was an effective king, maker of policy, and determiner of his own actions, but it is naive to think that Arsinoë, who by the time she returned to Egypt was an experienced and active dowager queen, would not have had even a small say in matters both prior to, and especially after, her final marriage. She was decidedly not the power “behind the throne,” as earlier theories stated, but neither was she controlled by her brother-husband.

Most recently, Carney has provided a middle-ground in this debate, showing that, while Ptolemy was the main royal decision maker, Arsinoë’s hand can be seen lightly guiding, instead of overtly influencing, many of his decision.⁴³ She was a queen who, by the time of her third marriage, knew her role well, and she must have realized she could gain more working in conjunction with her brother-husband, rather than trying to rule through him. Mori and Carney, for example, propose that Apollonius’ depiction of Arete in his *Argonautica* was an allusion to Arsinoë. In this depiction, Arete is shown influencing her husband behind the scenes, where they could make joint decisions in private.⁴⁴ This arrangement would enable Arsinoë to have her say, while also allowing Ptolemy II to appear as the main decision maker in public. The allusion to their private cooperation in court poetry, however, may also demonstrate that it was a recognized arrangement within the court, since Ptolemy II’s efforts would establish Ptolemaic royal power as being paired.

With the major controversy of her life addressed, it is important to provide a brief overview of Arsinoë’s actions as a three-time *basilissa*-consort, first, to garner a clear understanding of the woman she was when she arrived back in Egypt, and, second, to provide

⁴³ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 80, 94. See also, Carney, “The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 427-428.

⁴⁴ Anatole Mori, “Personal Favor and Public Influence: Arete: Arsinoë II, and the *Argonautica*,” *Oral Tradition* 16, no. 1 (2001), 85, 88-89, 91, *passim*; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 105, n. 198.

insight into the extraordinary example she would set for her subsequent queens as one-half of the public face of the Ptolemaic monarchy.

Even before becoming queen of Egypt, Arsinoë was queen of Macedonia. Her marriage to Lysimachos is another example of a Hellenistic daughter being used in an alliance marriage, but Arsinoë soon held an important public role as part of the public face of her first husband's dynasty. As an active queen who had been granted several cities by her husband, Arsinoë controlled a vast amount of wealth, which she used to undertake traditional acts of female euergetism. For example, although architectural dedications by women were rare, Arsinoë funded the largest round building in the Greek world, the rotunda in Samothrace.⁴⁵ After her first husband died in 281 BCE, she commanded and paid the troops that remained loyal to her in an effort to claim the throne for her sons by Lysimachos.⁴⁶ Her similarity in these endeavors to Eurydike, mother of Philip II, and Olympias, mother of Alexander the Great, who both advocated for the succession of their sons, is clear (see Part I, chapter 1.2).

During this period of turmoil, not only did she make use of her great wealth, but Arsinoë also used her *philoï*, partisans she had cultivated during her period as queen of Macedon, to her advantage. For example, after Keraunos proposed, Arsinoë sent her courtier Dion to ascertain her half-brother's intentions (Just. *Epit.* 24.2.7).⁴⁷ Arsinoë would ultimately make a poor choice, however, when she agreed to marry her half-brother, who in 280 BCE murdered two of her sons by Lysimachos (Just. *Epit.* 24.3). Nevertheless, the fact that she

⁴⁵ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 38-39, n. 36; Burstein, "Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View," 199, n. 8. There is some debate on whether this monument was built during Arsinoë's marriage to Lysimachos or Ptolemy. See Carney's n. 36 for additional sources, and also, Kron, "Priesthoods, Dedications and Euergetism," 171.

⁴⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 52, 89; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 16.

⁴⁷ Savalli-Lestrade, "Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche," 430; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 51.

was able to choose to marry him and expected to be his only wife (Just. *Epit.* 24.2.8-10), shows the individual power she wielded. Carney proposes that the reason she may have stayed in Cassandria after Lysimachos' death and then agreed to marry Keraunos, rather than immediately returning to her brother Ptolemy II in Egypt, was out of a hope to secure the kingship for her sons, to help the young men in their rulership, and to retain her position as a high-ranking queen.⁴⁸ These are the actions of a politically-astute and ambitious woman, even if the eventual outcome of the union was not in her favor.

Arsinoë returned to Egypt after her brief marriage to Keraunos and the subsequent death of her sons, sometime between the period of 279-275 BCE, and she married Ptolemy II sometime between 276-272 BCE, perhaps in 275 BCE.⁴⁹ Once queen of Egypt, she quickly became a popular figure among the Alexandrians, the immigrant portions of the population, and the general Egyptian inhabitants of her new kingdom, not only because of her patronage and piety, but also because of her position as a “displaced person” whose trials and tribulations would have been fodder for the common gossip-mill.⁵⁰ As *basilissa*-consort to Ptolemy II, Arsinoë was primarily able to act within the role that had been set for women during the Pharaonic Egyptian and Greco-Macedonian periods, in the areas of the arts and religion. Pomeroy posits that Arsinoë received a similar education to her brother, and, as an educated and wealthy Hellenistic woman, she was able to patronize poets at her court, such as Theokritos.⁵¹ Arsinoë was able to pay patronage expenses herself, since she earned her own income, and Theokritos describes the festival to Aphrodite and Adonis that she

⁴⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 56. See also, Hauben, “Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte,” 107-108. Hauben notes that Arsinoë returned to Egypt in a political climate of uncertainty and expansion, but that she was a woman of “le caractère excessivement ambitieux.”

⁴⁹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 63, 66, 70; Van Oppen de Ruyter, “Notes on Arsinoë I: A Study of a Shadowy Queen,” 164-5.

⁵⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 88.

⁵¹ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 20. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 17, 103.

sponsored and financed for the people of Alexandria (Theoc. *Id.* 15.22 and 106-111). This festival, which was presented as an act of piety and gift to the people of Alexandria by Arsinoë, had the supplemental purpose of promoting affection for and loyalty to the royal couple and dynasty, which would have been important since this was around the same time Ptolemy II was instituting the dynastic cult.

More importantly, her financing of the festival may have had the effect of beginning to normalize Ptolemaic queenly power for the Greek portion of the population, who would still have found a woman wielding individual power in public inappropriate.⁵² While the women of the Diadochic period had set the precedent for women acting publicly, it was always in support of their family name (see Part I, chapter 1.2). Arsinoë's actions here are similar in that they fit into a traditional role of female euergetism and piety that would bring *kleos* to her family, but she is credited with financing the festival on her own, an act of piety on a larger scale that was usually only performed by men. Furthermore, although the festival was open to both men and women, it catered more to women, and allowed Arsinoë to begin her association as a patron of women through acts like awarding a prize for a singing competition (Theoc. *Id.* 15.95-99). Much like her mother Berenike, Arsinoë also participated in horse-racing, and, according to Posidippos, she won three Olympic quadriga victories (Posid. AB 78). These acts of patronage and victory were also a means by which Arsinoë added to the *kleos* of her family, since, as Bennett emphasizes, victories in Panhellenic games

⁵² Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 100-101. It should be noted that there is some debate surrounding whether Arsinoë paid expenses herself (p. 101, n. 159) and whether Ptolemy II, Arsinoë II, or both patronized the court poets (p. 103). As Carney points out at the end of chapter 5, at times it is “difficult to distinguish Arsinoë's actions and role from those of her brother because the royal pair was so thoroughly integrated into a joint image of monarchy” (104). Whether Arsinoë, Ptolemy, or both paid the expenses and patronized the poets, the important point is that the public image of her doing these actions was being presented.

were not just sporting events, but public acts by which royalty could demonstrate the legitimacy and power of their dynasty.⁵³

In addition to the arts, Arsinoë was active religiously within Egypt, and she was well-known for her euergetism and piety. Burstein, for example, suggests that Arsinoë exercised influence similar to that attested to for contemporary queens of the neighboring dynasties, such as Laodike, who was honored by Teos and Iasos, since Arsinoë was given the title “the great benefactor” on the base of one of her Egyptian statues from Thebes.⁵⁴ Social and religious benefaction was an important responsibility for Ptolemaic queens because these actions not only showed the queen’s- and through her, also the king’s- care for her subjects, but it echoed the household maintenance of Ma’at on the macro, royal scale. The royal couple acted as a unit to maintain the wellbeing of their realm, similar to the non-royal household where the husband and wife worked in concert to maintain their home (see Part I, chapter 1.1).

In accordance with the Egyptian and Macedonian traditions, Arsinoë supported her husband, and she was present at important ceremonies, both political and religious. In the political sphere, the Pithom Stele (CG 22183) describes a royal visit to the Egyptian borders during which Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II travelled to Heroonpolis/Pithom in order to inspect the border defenses, conduct irrigation repairs, and see to the return of statues taken by the Persians.⁵⁵ This visit, and Arsinoë’s presence in the public duties described on the stele, shows how the public image of the Ptolemaic monarchy was becoming centered on the royal

⁵³ Bennett, “Arsinoë and Berenice at the Olympics,” 93. He posits that Arsinoë’s victories were at the 127th Olympics in 272. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoë II.”

⁵⁴ Burstein, “Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View,” 203, n. 32. See also, Bielman-Sánchez, “Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides,” 56-57.

⁵⁵ On the political significance of this act, see Part I, chapter 2.1, note 56.

couple.⁵⁶ While Arsinoë did not act overtly in a military capacity, her presence on this expedition would begin a regularizing process of depicting queens as taking part in the duties of rulership, including the defense of their realm.

In foreign policy, the Chremonides decrees (*IG II*² 686-687; *IG II*³ 1.912; *SIG*³ 434-435) acknowledged that she maintained a pro-free-Greek policy, against the interests of Antigonos Gonatas, with which her brother-husband agreed. It reads: “King Ptolemaios in accordance with the predilection both of his ancestors and of his sister is manifest in his concern for the common freedom of the Greeks.”⁵⁷ The nonchalant way she is mentioned in the decree disguises the underlying importance that Arsinoë had a foreign policy of her own that was well enough known to be mentioned. It also demonstrates that the Ptolemaic couple was being regularly depicted by this point as a unit.⁵⁸ Here, it should again be noted that there is great debate surrounding whether or not this decree indicates that Arsinoë had influence and/or authority over her brother. Some scholars, such as Hauben, conclude that this inscription confirms that Arsinoë conducted Ptolemaic maritime policy prior to her death, while others, such as Will, Burstein, and Hazzard, argue that Arsinoë was included in the Chremonides Decree as “un formule de courtoise.”⁵⁹ This is another example of historians taking their opinions to extreme opposites and trying to turn the royal couple’s power relationship into a zero-sum game. This inscription does not indicate that Arsinoë solely conducted Ptolemaic maritime policy, but the fact that she was included establishes

⁵⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 90.

⁵⁷ In Greek: ὁ τε βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ἀκολούθως τεῖ τῶν προγόνων καὶ τεῖ τῆς ἀδελφῆς προαιρέσει φανερός ἐστιν σπουδάζων ὑπὲρ τῆς κοινῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθερίας. Translation from AIO s.v. “*IG II*³ 1.912.”

⁵⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 93.

⁵⁹ Hauben, “Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l’Égypte,” 117. Hauben states that “Car, de même que la référence aux ‘ancêtres’ s’avère bien ancrée dans les faits, de même ce renvoi extraordinaire à la ‘sœur’ - renvoi qui est intégré à celui aux ‘ancêtres’ - doit correspondre à une réalité.” Burstein, “Arsinoë II Philadelphos: A Revisionist View,” 208-210; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 9.

that she was not powerless either. The fact that a woman's political opinion was mentioned at all is the unique factor here, and whether that opinion was included as a reflection of Arsinoë's real political leanings, her *proairesis* as Hauben terms it, or as a courtesy, it still reveals that even the Greeks were aware that the Ptolemaic monarchy should be presented as a coupled unit.⁶⁰

That Arsinoë had a foreign policy of her own that was well enough known to be referenced by Egypt's allies is demonstrated not only by the Chremonides Decree but also by two additional inscriptions. An earlier precedent may have been set when Arsinoë was mentioned in conjunction with her first husband, Lysimachos, as accepting the goodwill of the people of Delos (*SIG*³ 381.21-22).⁶¹ This may indicate that she began developing her foreign policy before she became queen of Egypt. Another example is present in an honorary decree from Telmessos (*SEG* 28.1224). After Ptolemy II confirmed that the city would not be given as a *dōrea* (δωρεὰ; gift/grant), the Telmessians requested that no one would subsequently ask for their territory as a *dōrea* from any "king or queen or other dynast."⁶² That the queen was mentioned in this inscription again shows an acknowledged power and influence by the queens of the period, most notably Arsinoë II, since it was Ptolemy II who issued the original letter. Finally, surviving honorary dedications inside and outside of Egyptian-held territories also speak to the recognition of the queen, including *OGIS* 27, a statue dedicated to Arsinoë at Olympia, *OGIS* 33, a statue dedicated to Arsinoë in Kyrenaica, *OGIS* 16, a temple dedicated to Serapis, Isis and Arsinoë at Halikarnassos, and *OGIS* 31, a dedicatory inscription from Alexandria.

⁶⁰ Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 116.

⁶¹ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 74.

⁶² Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 122.

In addition to her political visibility, Arsinoë II became an important part of Ptolemaic ritual and the religious public image of the dynasty as she became a Greek and Egyptian goddess. Her earliest duties as queen would have included appearing in public to take part in rituals connected to the cults of her parents, the *Theoi Soteres*, and her sister, Philotera, and, before her own death, she perhaps had a hand in developing the rituals dedicated to herself and her husband as the *Theoi Adelphoi*.⁶³ This cult was important because it not only presented the current ruling couple as a divine unit, but it was the first cult in which those being worshiped were also those instituting the worship.⁶⁴ A festival of the *Theoi Adelphoi*, which would come to be called the Theadelphia by the reign of Ptolemy III, was also established at the time of their deification, and it included a series of games and sacrifices in honor of the royal couple.⁶⁵ This new cult was further popularized by the production of the gold jugate coins, as discussed in Part I, chapter 3.3.

Also prior to her death, Arsinoë was assimilated to Aphrodite by one of her and Ptolemy's *philoï*, the Admiral of the Ptolemaic navy (*SIG* 420; *IG* 11.4.127) and first priest of the *Theoi Adelphoi* cult, Kallicrates.⁶⁶ He dedicated a temple to Arsinoë-Aphrodite at Cape Zephyrion. The assimilation to Aphrodite was an important one for both Arsinoë and the queens who would come after her, and it was an easy association to make, as Aphrodite had

⁶³ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 88, 97, n. 104. There is contention surrounding whether the cult of the *Theoi Adelphoi* was established in 273 or 272/1 (see Carney, n. 104), but either year is well before Arsinoë's death, which indicates she would have been aware of and could have helped in establishing the new cult. See also, Part I, chapter 3.

⁶⁴ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 97. Carney notes, for example, that previous cults for women of the Diadochic period had been instituted by their *philoï*.

⁶⁵ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 94.

⁶⁶ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 99, n. 137, 139. Carney argues that the cult was established during her lifetime, as with similar cases of female cults established by their *philoï* (see n. 137), and that Kallicrates was a *philos* of both the queen and king (see n. 139). See also, Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 365, n. 21, 22; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," 33, n. 63.

been depicted as apotheosizing her mother, Berenike I (Theoc. *Id.* 15.106-109, 17.45-52).

Since Berenike had also been assimilated to the goddess during her own lifetime (Theoc. *Id.* 17.40-44), in the same pattern as earlier Hellenistic royal women, Arsinoë's own assimilation to the goddess made her part of a growing Hellenistic and Ptolemaic religious tradition.⁶⁷

In her guise of Arsinoë-Aphrodite or Arsinoë Zephyritis, Arsinoë II became a protector of both the marine sphere and marriage. Posidippos, for example, described Arsinoë-Aphrodite as a goddess of the seas and a protector of maritime soldiers and travelers (Posid. AB 39). Because of this association, the cult would expand to many of the Ptolemaic maritime holdings throughout the Mediterranean, which would lead to eponymous harbor cities for the queen.⁶⁸ While Kallicrates was the initiator of this cult, Carney argues that Ptolemy II, and perhaps even Arsinoë herself, would have had a hand in shaping it.⁶⁹ Ptolemy, in his efforts to fashion the overall divinized image of his dynasty, was able to use the image of his deified queen as a symbol of the Ptolemaic fleet and part of his expansive maritime policy. Moreover, Arsinoë, who had been queen twice before to embattled kings and who had previously erected the rotunda to the maritime gods of Samothrace, must have been aware of the advantages of this association as well.⁷⁰ Her assimilation to the goddess and her maritime associations were solidified after Arsinoë's death when Kallimachos issued

⁶⁷ See notes 10, 11, above. See also, Agnieszka Fulinska, "Divae Potentes Cypri? Remarks on the Cult of the Ptolemaic Queens as Aphrodite," *Eos* 99 (2012), 50-56.

⁶⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 98; Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 113; Pfeiffer, "The God Serapis, his Cult, and the Beginnings of the Ruler Cult in Ptolemaic Egypt," 399; Savalli-Lestrade, "La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l'époque hellénistique," 69; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 71.

⁶⁹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 100.

⁷⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 98; Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 114.

his *Apotheosis Arsinoes* (Frg. 228) that described the Dioscuri, who also had associations with both Aphrodite and seafaring, carrying the queen to Olympus.⁷¹

In addition to her nautical associations, the Hellenistic Aphrodite was also a goddess of women and marriage. As a goddess of marriage and joining together in love, Aphrodite was an ideal association for the queen as the Ptolemies strove to depict an image of royal, matrimonial love (Part I, chapter 2.2). This was a theme that was echoed in the *Idylls* of Theokritos that described the love of Ptolemy I and Berenike I and Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II (Theoc. *Id.* 17.38-40 and 128-30). Additionally, epigrams by both Posidippos (AB 12 G-P) and Kallimachos (Callim. *Epigr.* 6) reveal that young women prayed to Arsinoë-Aphrodite for happiness in their nuptials, perhaps in the hopes of emulating the happiness and love depicted by the royal couple.⁷² This theme was also likely emphasized on the coinage bearing the image of Arsinoë, which Ptolemy produced after her death (see below), because the diademed stephane and lotus scepter she would bear in her portraits assimilated her to both Aphrodite and Hera in their roles as patrons of marriage.⁷³

Gutzwiller postulates that Arsinoë's patronage of the Adonia festival in Alexandria, which transformed it into a state-sponsored event, may have also been a way to further her association with Aphrodite and "[lift] the concept of shared desire between lovers from its previous place of near invisibility into public prominence as a model for her subjects to emulate."⁷⁴ Through the emphasis on marital love and harmony, the assimilation with Aphrodite held additional significance because it characterized the role of the *basilissa* as a

⁷¹ Branko F. Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2015), 100, n. 172, 107; Branko F. van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Death of Arsinoë II Philadelphus: The Evidence Reconsidered," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 142-143; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 101.

⁷² Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 366, n. 23.

⁷³ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 124.

⁷⁴ Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 367.

woman who brought prosperity to her home and kingdom.⁷⁵ It represented the queen and, through their unity, the king as well, as guarantors of prosperity and bounty, both in marital fertility and agricultural fecundity.⁷⁶ This concept was echoed by Athenaeus who wrote that the cups held by the statues of Arsinoë Zephyritis poured out “delight and feasting” (Athe. 11.497b-d). This assimilation with Aphrodite would become an important association that many of the succeeding Ptolemaic queens would continue to emphasize, and it would pave the way for assimilation to additional deities, especially Isis, after Arsinoë’s death and by succeeding queens.⁷⁷

Along with being assimilated with Aphrodite and Isis, Arsinoë was deified as the *Thea Philadelphos* either slightly before or immediately following her death in 270 or 268 BCE.⁷⁸ Current scholarly consensus is that she was deified as *Thea Philadelphos* after her death; although, some scholars, including Gutzwiller, Pomeroy, and Carney, have argued that she likely had a hand in at least planning some of the aspects of her individual cult slightly before her passing, perhaps basing it on aspects of her worship as Aphrodite.⁷⁹ Alternately, van Oppen de Ruiter contends that the *Thea Philadelphos* cult was established before her

⁷⁵ Savalli-Lestrade, “La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l’époque hellénistique,” 70.

⁷⁶ Savalli-Lestrade, “Il ruolo pubblico delle regine ellenistiche,” 426.

⁷⁷ Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 45, 47; Carney, “The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women,” 33, n. 64. Quaegebeur, for example, cites that “a few Greek texts, some hieroglyphic inscriptions identify Arsinoë with Isis,” and he also references a statue in the Vatican where Arsinoë is called the “daughter of Geb” and “image of Isis.” *OGIS* 16 commemorates the dedication of a temple to Serapis, Isis, and Arsinoë Philadelphos in Halikarnassos.

⁷⁸ For a thorough analysis of the debate surrounding the death date of Arsinoë, see van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Death of Arsinoë II Philadelphus: The Evidence Reconsidered,” 139-150. See also, Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 104; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 51, n. 61. Both van Oppen de Ruiter and Carney indicate that the date of 268 is convincing, but it cannot be unquestionably confirmed with the available data.

⁷⁹ For the cult being established after her death, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103; Müller, *Das hellenistische Königspaar in der medialen Repräsentation*, 366; Quaegebeur, “Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoë II divinisée,” 208; Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 41, 44. Koenen argues it could have been before her death, but was “most likely” after, see Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 51, n. 61, 56, n. 73. For arguments that Arsinoë had a hand in shaping her cult, see Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 366, n. 25; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 29-30; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 100, 107.

death and directed by Arsinoë.⁸⁰ While there is not currently enough evidence to firmly support a thesis that the cult of the *Thea Philadelphos* was established before Arsinoë's death, Carney convincingly argues that "the speed with which the initial stages of the cult appeared after her death strongly suggests that the creation of the cult had been planned before it, thus leaving open the distinct possibility that she had helped to shape it."⁸¹ In addition to Arsinoë's and Ptolemy's efforts in establishing the worship of the *Thea Philadelphos*, Caneva emphasizes the role played by individual initiative, both by local priests and individual worshipers, in the subsequent popularity and spreading of the cult.⁸²

Whether or not Arsinoë had a hand in the planning of her cult, both the cult of the *Theoi Adelphoi* and the *Thea Philadelphos* were necessary to Ptolemy's image after his queen's death. As has been repeatedly emphasized, Ptolemy had based Ptolemaic dynastic and religious imagery on the two of them as a ruling unit, so for the remainder of his reign, which lasted until 246 BCE, another twenty-four/twenty-two years after Arsinoë's death, Ptolemy needed to continue to use her image to maintain the popularity and stability of his reign. Although he had many mistresses (Athen. 13.576E-F), Ptolemy II never married again, and Arsinoë continued to be presented as his queen in official propaganda until his own death and during the reigns of his successors.⁸³

⁸⁰ For the argument that the cult was established prior to her death, see van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Death of Arsinoë II Philadelphus: The Evidence Reconsidered," 7-9. Koenen also argued Arsinoë had the title of Philadelphos as early as 272/271 BCE. Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 51, n. 60 and 61, ⁸¹ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 107.

⁸² Caneva, "Ruler Cults in Practice: Sacrifices and Libations for Arsinoë *Philadelphos*, from Alexandria and Beyond," 89-91, 93-96.

⁸³ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 127. See also, Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 74; Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 120. Roy emphasizes the importance of the dynastic image that was based on the royal couple, and he also observes that maintaining that royal image did not prevent Hellenistic kings from having mistresses. These mistresses were instead left out of propaganda that emphasized the royal couple, even if the mistresses were publicly acknowledged, as Bilistiche was for Ptolemy II.

In order to initially popularize and subsequently maintain the popularity of Arsinoë's new cult, Ptolemy II took several steps.⁸⁴ First, the properties of the cult itself had to be established, and the worship of Arsinoë Philadelphos had both public and private components. The public sphere consisted of a festival, the Arsinoeia, with a procession, and it was accompanied by sacrifices in her temple, the Arsinoeion.⁸⁵ In c. 268/267 BCE, a unique eponymous priestesshood, the *kanephoros* ("basket-bearer"), was established to conduct the rites of Arsinoë Philadelphos and lead the yearly procession (See Appendix D).⁸⁶ The *kanephoros* became an important priestly position that was held by two powerful Egyptian families, and it further helped Ptolemy solidify his rule by linking these members of the powerful, native priestly class to the dynasty.⁸⁷

Additionally, Ptolemy proclaimed her a *synnaos thea* with the Mendes Stele (CG 22181) in 265/264, which stated both a priest and a *synnaos thea* (σύνναος θεά, "temple-sharing goddess") statue of Arsinoë should be added to the Egyptian temples throughout the kingdom.⁸⁸ As a *synnaos thea*, Arsinoë received daily libations and incense offerings in Egyptian temples.⁸⁹ The title she received on the decree, "Beloved of the Ram," further connected her to Egyptian religious practice by "implying a sexual relation in which the

⁸⁴ To reiterate, Arsinoë may have had a hand in establishing some of these steps, but it is impossible to say which with any certainty.

⁸⁵ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 106, 108, 109; Caneva, "Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism," 80-81; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103, 104. See also, *P. Oxy.* 28.2465. This papyrus is dated to the reign of Ptolemy VI, but provides insight into the rights of the cult.

⁸⁶ The new priestesshood was included in the dating protocol for the first time in *P. Sorb. 4440*, which is dated to 268/267. Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 58; Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 113; Caneva, "Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism," 80, n. 11; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 56, n. 73; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103. See also, Part I, chapter 3.1, note 105.

⁸⁷ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 108; Caneva, "Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism," 84-86. For the importance of the priestly class to Ptolemaic rulership, see Part I, chapter 2.3.

⁸⁸ Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 43, 45, fig. 15; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 84, fig. 3.3.

⁸⁹ Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 437.

Ram, as avatar of the creator, impregnated the queen with the future pharaoh.”⁹⁰ This elevated her to the plane of divinity and confirmed her adoption of the Ptolemaic heir (Schol. Theoc. 17.128), who would inherit his divinity from her, as a Greek and Egyptian goddess, and from his father, as pharaoh.

In the private component of Arsinoë’s worship, non-official individuals were prevented from participating in the *kanephoros*-led procession, but they could erect either permanent brick altars or temporary sand ones in front of their houses along the route of the festivities or on their roofs (*P. Oxy. 27.2465*).⁹¹ Using these altars, individual devotees could offer vegetal or small animal sacrifices and shells.⁹² Private offerings could take the form of libations poured from special oinochoai, which were produced in faience and decorated with an image of Arsinoë holding a double cornucopia (called a *δίκερας*, “*dikeras*”). These vessels are important because they provide a glimpse of the popular devotion to the queen and the new ruler cult, perhaps being first produced for use during the Arsinoeia, but they also show the contemporary belief in the domestic protective power of the *basilissa*, since they were kept in the home after festivals and often buried with the owner.⁹³

⁹⁰ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 95-96.

⁹¹ Caneva, “Ruler Cults in Practice: Sacrifices and Libations for Arsinoe *Philadelphos*, from Alexandria and Beyond,” 93. Caneva further notes that the use of sand for the altars certainly relates to Arsinoe’s maritime associations (97)

⁹² Savalli-Lestrade, “La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l’époque hellénistique,” 69; Caneva, “Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism,” 80, 82; Caneva, “Ruler Cults in Practice: Sacrifices and Libations for Arsinoe *Philadelphos*, from Alexandria and Beyond,” 93, 98. For a catalogue of altars, stone blocks, and vessels pertaining to the worship of Arsinoe *Philadelphos*, both within Egypt and in the surrounding areas, see Caneva, “Ruler Cults in Practice: Sacrifices and Libations for Arsinoe *Philadelphos*, from Alexandria and Beyond,” 109-115.

⁹³ Savalli-Lestrade, “La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l’époque hellénistique,” 69-70; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 109. In her monograph on the topic, Thompson notes that these vessels were produced for use by citizens, probably during the period of 270-240 BCE, as cheaper imitations of the gold and silver vessels used during the ruler cult festival. She also posits that they could have had multiple uses, including being offered by the Ptolemies to their courtiers as gifts, being produced in Alexandria for people to use during the ruler cult festival, as offerings at temples, or for libations in cemeteries. Thompson argues that the vessels could have been used by private individuals during the festivals to offer libations to the ruler cult, and then the vessels were taken back by the owners to their home to bring luck/protection to their house and to be reused at later festivals or at their own funerals. I think it is likely that they had multiple functions,

Additionally, Ptolemy II reinforced the founding of the cult itself with several augmenting actions. He established the Arsinoite nome in the Fayum where Arsinoë could be worshiped in both her Greek and Egyptian personae, and that worship helped to create a commonality between the native and immigrant members of the population.⁹⁴ He travelled the delta extensively during the period of 265-263 promoting her worship, and he established at least twenty-five cult sites of the deified Arsinoë.⁹⁵ He also allotted a portion of the *apomoira* tax to maintain the economic stability of the cult, as commemorated on the Pithom Stele (CG 22183).⁹⁶ Finally, he issued coinage bearing a portrait of the deified Arsinoë, which included iconography of deification that was meaningful for both the Egyptian and Greek portions of the population.⁹⁷

The coins produced in the name of Arsinoë bear a portrait of the queen on the obverse, in which she wears a veil and diademed stephane (Greek motifs of royalty and divinity), with a ram's horn earring (an Egyptian symbol of Amun that connected her to both the Egyptian tradition and to Alexander the Great), and holding a lotus scepter on her shoulder (a symbol of divinity that assimilated her to Hera and Aphrodite in the Greek tradition, and Isis in the Egyptian).⁹⁸ The Lotus scepter was an especially important motif on the coinage because it referenced both Arsinoë's general role in the cycle of creation and rebirth and her specific apotheosis. It also provided "a grounding for her nature as a

determined by the people who either received or purchased the vessels. Dorothy Burr Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 47, 75, 118-119. See also, Susan Walker and Peter Higgs, eds., *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 69, cat. no. 48.

⁹⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 108.

⁹⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 96.

⁹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 89, 108-109. For the *apomoira*, see Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 66-69, and Part I, chapter 3.1.

⁹⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 103.

⁹⁸ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 124-125.

protective goddess ensuring the success of her widower-brother's reign, especially by guaranteeing the annual renewal of the land through the Nile inundation."⁹⁹ Thus, Arsinoë not only became a goddess of love, marriage, and fertility, but she also became a protector for her brother's reign, making her an integral part of his dynastic iconography, even in death.

The reverse of her coins emphasized similar motifs. They are stamped with the double cornucopia (*dikeras*), which would become the special emblem of the queen chosen by Ptolemy II (Athen. 11.497B-C), as also seen on her oinochoai. The *dikeras* is bound with a royal diadem and filled with sacrificial cakes, pomegranates, and bunches of grapes hanging from the left and right. The pomegranate was an emblem of both Hera and Aphrodite, again emphasizing Arsinoë's connection to those goddesses in their roles as patrons of women and marriage, but it was also a symbol of Isis, who had protected her brother-husband and son, which would allude to Arsinoë's protective role.¹⁰⁰ In the general sense, the *dikeras* and its contents were a symbol of fertility that referenced several aspects of Arsinoë's deified state, including her position as a fertility goddess, her role of insurer of dynastic continuance as the adoptive mother of the Ptolemaic heirs, and the dynasty's overall association of descending from Dionysus via Alexander the Great.¹⁰¹ The cornucopia motif was then encircled by the legend ΑΡΣΙΝΟΗΣ ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ, her cultic title.

All these symbols and allusions, when taken together on the coin, would have produced a powerful message to the viewer about Arsinoë's continuing place in Ptolemaic ideology and propaganda. The coins themselves probably did not see widespread use,

⁹⁹ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 124-125.

¹⁰⁰ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 125.

¹⁰¹ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 125-126.

especially among the lower classes. They were produced in three denominations during Ptolemy II's lifetime: the silver decadrachm, the first of which were minted soon after her death in either 270 or 268, and a series of gold *mnaiēia* and silver tetradrachms, which were probably first minted in correlation with the diversion of the *apomoira* tax to support the queen's cult, with a second series produced at the ending of the Second Syrian War.¹⁰² This minting timeline suggests that these coins, since they were minted in larger denominations of precious metals, would have first circulated among the upper classes, as an attempt by Ptolemy II to popularize his queen's new cult and then to justify his diversion of the *apomoira* tax. The final issuances, which were produced to be distributed as donatives to soldiers at the end of the Second Syrian War, would have been an effort to further popularize her cult and its associated messages among the military class, whose important role in supporting the Ptolemaic dynasty and cult has already been addressed (see Part I, chapter 2.3).

One last action undertaken by Ptolemy to solidify Arsinoë's deification was that he gave her the throne name of *nsw bitj* or King of Upper and Lower Egypt. Arsinoë was the first Ptolemaic queen to receive a throne name, also called a cartouche name, added to her birth name (see Appendix E).¹⁰³ Reigning queens during the Pharaonic period, such as Hatshepsut and Tausret of the 19th dynasty, had also been given cartouche names, and knowledge of that had survived into the Ptolemaic period via Manetho; however, the queens

¹⁰² Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 107-110, 114, Tab. 2.2. Many additional issuances of the Arsinoë type coinage were produced during the reigns of successive monarchs as well.

¹⁰³ For arguments that the name was given to her posthumously, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 85; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 85, 115-116; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 19; Quaegebeur, "Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoë II divinisée," 205, 208-209; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes," 258. Recently Nilsson has put forth a new argument, that the title was bestowed upon her during her lifetime, see Nilsson, "The Crown of Arsinoë II. The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority," 400, 402, 405. See also, Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 134, n. 28.

who previously held this title had ruled Egypt as regents.¹⁰⁴ The fact that Arsinoë was given this title and other kingly attributes, such as her distinctive crown and double-uraeus, may again indicate her political activity while alive. While she did not rule alone as Hatshepsut and Tausret had, she did work in conjunction with her brother-husband, as has been argued throughout this chapter. Naming Arsinoë *nsw bitj* could have been a way for Ptolemy to present her as not only a beloved queen to the people, but it also could have been a sign of respect for his deceased queen and partner, especially to the Egyptian clergy who would have recognized the significance of the title, more so than the Greek portions of the elite.¹⁰⁵ Bennett convincingly postulates that the title was given to her post-mortem, as part of Ptolemy's effort to popularize the dynastic cult and her personal cult, and later queens were instead given a Horus name (see Appendix E), which was deemed more appropriate, rather than a Throne name.¹⁰⁶

As with much of Arsinoë's life, the granting of the title *nsw bitj* to this queen has caused much debate among scholars, including whether it was given to her pre- or post-mortem, and what the title indicates about her true power and possible co-rulership.¹⁰⁷ Carney argues that Arsinoë could be shown with kingly attributes in the Egyptian style, including the throne name *nsw bitj*, because a precedent was set for it in the Egyptian tradition by powerful New Kingdom queens.¹⁰⁸ Nilsson also makes a well-supported

¹⁰⁴ Quaegebeur, "Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoé II divinisée," 204-205.

¹⁰⁵ As mentioned at note 42, above, Ptolemy did not give Arsinoë the title without fully understanding its meaning. The title did not indicate that she was a true-coregent, as Quaegebeur and Hauben have argued, since a true-coregency was not possible for a woman yet at this time (see next paragraph), in the way it would be for later queens, but neither was it bestowed upon her without meaning, as Hazzard argued. Quaegebeur, "Ptolémée II en adoration devant Arsinoé II divinisée," 208-209; Hauben, "Arsinoé II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 127; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 97-99; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 115.

¹⁰⁶ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe III."

¹⁰⁷ See note 103, above.

¹⁰⁸ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 85, 115.

argument that the various Egyptian titles held by Arsinoë would have indicated a co-rulership, but she is looking at the issue purely from the Egyptian iconography, with little consideration for the Greek tradition.¹⁰⁹

When viewing these queens, and any possible powers they might have exercised, it is imperative to understand that they had to work within and represent themselves to a dual cultural milieu. For the Greek population, and to some extent the Macedonian, it was not acceptable during Ptolemy II and Arsinoë's rule for a Greek *basilissa* to hold kingly attributes or to participate in a form of co-rule. Arsinoë's power was unquestionably limited by that attitude, as evidenced by the editing of the story of Arete by Apollonios, which transformed Arete from a Homeric co-ruler to a queen who worked in conjunction with her husband in private.¹¹⁰ While these early Ptolemaic queens had inherited many rights from their double Egyptian and Macedonian heritage (see the bulleted list in the Concluding Points to Part I), both Egypt and Macedon were still patriarchal societies in which men were the authoritarian figures, with women able to act in supporting roles to those men. Robins has previously observed that the Pharaonic Egyptian tradition "did not accept female kings; that a woman very occasionally succeeded in gaining the throne did not mean that this was a normal option of royal daughters."¹¹¹ Thus, in the Pharaonic period, the rulership of women, such as Hatshepsut and Tausret, were exceptions to the norm. A similar theme is present in the Macedonian past. Women, such as Olympias and Adea-Eurydike may have commanded armies, but these were brief exceptions to the rule, rather than the norm, and these women

¹⁰⁹ Nilsson, "The Crown of Arsinoë II. The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority," 400, 402, 405.

¹¹⁰ Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 85-86, 116. See also, Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 19. On Apollonios' Arete and Arsinoë, see note 44, above.

¹¹¹ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 37.

were specifically championing the interest of their sons to rule, not their own.¹¹² Thus, Arsinoë could be shown with kingly attributes in her Egyptian style depictions, especially those related to the religious worship of the gods, since it was her duty as queen to participate in the monarchic religious duties and maintain Ma'at, but, true co-rule was not possible yet.

The importance of Arsinoë's time as *basilissa*-consort, however, should not be underestimated. In much the same way that Arsinoë followed in the footsteps of the Pharaonic queens, she created an image which could be emulated by her succeeding Ptolemaic queens, in both the religious and political spheres. Religiously, the cult of Arsinoë Philadelphos was extremely important, not only to Ptolemy II's plans, but also because it would serve as the model for many of the queenly cults, including that of her successor, Berenike II. Ptolemy's efforts to propagate the cult succeeded spectacularly, and the cult was so popular, it was still attested to by the reign of Kleopatra VII.¹¹³ This meant that Arsinoë's role as patron, cult supporter, and advising and supporting figure to her husband was well remembered and able to be utilized by succeeding queens. In the political sphere, although Hazzard unpersuasively insisted Arsinoë held no political power, he ends his assessment of the queen by making an important point: he notes that, whether or not she had any actual authority while queen, a perception of her power was held by those outside of the court, as exemplified by extant sources like the Chremonides Decree.¹¹⁴ The perception of her power influenced the roles and authority available to succeeding queens. Thus, Arsinoë II, because of the immense popularity of her cult, held a recognizable power and influence after her

¹¹² See Part I, chapter 1.2, note 33.

¹¹³ Caneva, "Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism," 87, n. 52. Here, Caneva is citing stele *BM* 392. See also, Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 42.

¹¹⁴ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 99.

death, which would cause subsequent kings and queen to look to her for the pattern of queenship.

Ultimately, although Arsinoë was restricted in the political power she could access and did not participate in an official co-rulership, as it would come to be exercised later in the dynasty, the regular representation of her with kingly attributes, which were repeatedly copied well after her death, normalized the image of a queen with political power for both the Egyptian and Greek portions of the population, so that by the second century BCE, Ptolemaic queens could begin to act on the power previous queens had been depicted with, but unable to act upon. Arsinoë became the model for a Ptolemaic queen who was well educated, maintained her own network of *philoï*, and acted in the traditional role of queen as a patron of the arts and religion. She also expanded that role by becoming one half of the ritual and public dynastic image. Whether the impetus for these changes was from her, her husband, or from them both, Arsinoë was the vanguard of Ptolemaic queens and set the stage for the power they would eventually wield.

6. Berenike II: The Efficient but Overshadowed Queen

Arsinoë II was succeeded by Berenike II, who was an equally, if not more so, efficient queen. The subsequent popularity of Arsinoë II, especially in her cult worship and post-mortem imagery, has caused Berenike to be overshadowed by her larger-than-life predecessor. Consequently, this chapter will seek to remedy that adumbration and reveal the ways Berenike II continued and built upon the normalizing processes started by Arsinoë II.

6.1 Berenike's early life and scholastic debates

Similar to Arsinoë II, much of the timeline surrounding the events of Berenike's life is uncertain and contentious among scholars, so it is important to begin with a brief summary of what is known about her. Berenike of Kyrene, later Berenike II, was the daughter of Magas of Kyrene, the son of the Macedonian noble Philip and Berenike I, and Apama, daughter of Antiochos I and Stratonike (*P. Oxy.* 20.2258; see Appendix B).¹¹⁵ Magas was appointed governor of the Ptolemaic territory of Kyrene by his stepfather, Ptolemy I (Paus. 1.6.8), but after Soter's death Magas rebelled against his half-brother, Ptolemy II, and crowned himself king of Kyrene (Paus. 1.7.1). Magas married Apama as part of his alliance with Antiochos against the Ptolemies, sometime around 269/8 BCE, after which she bore Berenike, perhaps in the 260s (the exact year of her birth is unknown).¹¹⁶ Berenike was their

¹¹⁵ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 14, 30-36; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 7. Van Oppen de Ruiter thoroughly explores the question of Berenike's parentage and the regnal dates of Magas (7-13).

¹¹⁶ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 8, 18-19, 20, 24-25; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 4, 14, 34; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice II," "Magas of Cyrene." The year of Berenike's birth is debated. Magas and Apama's marriage is usually cited as occurring shortly before the First Syrian War, around 276/5 BCE, providing Berenike with a birth year in the early 270s. See, for example, McAuley, "Princess & Tigress: Apama of Kyrene," 177, 181. In a challenge to those dates, van Oppen de Ruiter convincingly proposes a date of 269/8 BCE for Magas' and Apama's marriage, indicating that Berenike would have been born in the 260s and a teenager of marriageable age when her father died sometime between 252-250 BCE. He, in concurrence with Bennett, proposes a date of ca. 267/6 BCE for her birth. Clayman states the marriage of Magas and Apama was in 275 BCE, but she argues for a birthyear for Berenike sometime in the late 260s but prior to 264 BCE by using the dates of Berenike's marriage to Demetrios the Fair and Ptolemy II to "[extrapolate] backwards." Both van Oppen de Ruiter and Clayman also

only surviving child, so van Oppen de Ruyter argues that Magas reconciled with Ptolemy II before his own death, betrothing Berenike to the Ptolemaic heir in order to prevent a succession crisis, a claim also supported by Justin (*Just. Epit.* 26.3.2).¹¹⁷

After her father's death (c. 252/1 BCE), however, Berenike's mother broke the engagement with the Ptolemies in favor of a marriage to Demetrios the Fair, the half-brother of Antigonos Gonatas. Apama, as a member of the Seleukid family, would have wanted an alliance marriage for her daughter that would benefit her birth family, rather than their rivals, the Ptolemies. Demetrios, although an Antigonid, had strong familial and marital connections to the Seleukid dynasty, and, most importantly, he also had relations to the rival Eurydikean branch of the Ptolemies via his mother Ptolemais, daughter of Ptolemy I and Eurydike (*Just. Epit.* 26.3.3).¹¹⁸ The marriage of Berenike and Demetrios (if they were married) occurred sometime around 251/0 BCE, and he was dead soon after.¹¹⁹ Demetrios began his tenure in Kyrene deleteriously by angering the populace and army (*Just. Epit.* 26.3.4), but when it

note the contention surrounding the death date of Magas, which van Oppen de Ruyter sets in 252/1 (8, 19, 25, 39) and Clayman in 250 BCE (34). This dissertation will utilize the timeline proposed by van Oppen de Ruyter, as it is the most well supported.

¹¹⁷ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 19; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 14, 32. Clayman states absolutely that Berenike was Magas' and Apama's only child; van Oppen de Ruyter points out that she was the only surviving child for which there is a record.

¹¹⁸ See Appendix B. Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 20; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 36; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 45; McAuley, "Princess & Tigress: Apama of Kyrene," 182, 184. For the rivalry between the Eurydikean and Berenikean lines of Ptolemy I's offspring, see Part I, chapter 3.3, pgs. 71-72.

¹¹⁹ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 20-21, 25, 39; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 38, n. 88. If the Demetrios affair occurred in 251/0 BCE, as proposed by van Oppen de Ruyter, Berenike would have been 16/17 years old. There is some question of whether Berenike and Demetrios were ever actually married or, if married, whether they consummated their marriage because of the way Justin described the events. Justin (26.3) describes Apama as Demetrios' mother-in-law (*socrus*), but he also refers to Berenike as a young, premarital girl (*virgini/virginis*). Clayman also notes that Catullus similarly called her a *parva virgo* (66.26). Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 233.

Furthermore, Clayman and Van Oppen de Ruyter both note that Demetrios' death is usually assumed to have happened soon after he and Berenike's contested wedding, also because of the way Justin told the story. Both the inscription IG V, 2.299 and a passage in Eusebius (Clayman does not cite the passage; van Oppen de Ruyter cites Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.237, ed. Schoene) indicates that he may have lived longer than previously thought. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 46.

became clear that Apama and Demetrios had initiated a sexual relationship (Just. *Epit.* 26.3.4-5), assassins were sent to kill him (Just. *Epit.* 26.3.6-7).¹²⁰ Scholars, including Bevan, Hölbl, Gutzwiller, Clayman, Penrose, Lorber, and van Oppen de Ruyter, argue that this murder was conducted on the orders of Berenike.¹²¹

That Berenike was a teenager at the time of her betrothal to Demetrios might cast doubt on her ability to order his murder. She was, however, a royal woman of Greco-Macedonian heritage who would have been aware of, if not groomed for, the infighting that came along with that heritage. Additionally, Berenike had not only the Greco-Macedonian tradition of strong women to look back on, but there was a Kyrenaian tradition of strong royal females as well. Stories of the Battiad rulers of Kyrene were preserved that described instances of assassinations and female political maneuverings. For instance, Eryxo, wife of the Battiad king Arkesilaos II, was credited with assassinating her brother-in-law after he strangled her husband (Hdt. 4.160). Pheretima, after the death of her husband Battos III and the exile of her son Arkesilaos III, ruled Kyrene as regent (Hdt. 4.165). After Arkesilaos' murder, she petitioned the Persian governor of Egypt for help in avenging her son, after which she commanded the Persian Egyptian army in punishing the people of Barke (Hdt. 4.167; Polyaeus 8.47).

¹²⁰ McAuley makes the salient point that although Demetrios' death is often blamed on his affair with Apama, it was his angering of the army and people that ultimately led to his downfall. He also posits that "it was this discontent among the democratic faction [the *popularibus militibusque*] which proved to be the wellspring of initial support for Berenike, from which the teenage queen drew quite effectively." McAuley, "Princess & Tigress: Apama of Kyrene," 187.

¹²¹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 74; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 46; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 362, 368, 369, *passim*; Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 123; Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 232; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 4-5, 38; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 211, n.144; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 68; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 118, *passim*. See also, Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones and Stephanie Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," in *Creating a Hellenistic World*, eds. Andrew Erskine and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2010), 248.

The story of Pheretime has many similarities to the tales of women of the Diadochic period, such as Olympias, who acted on behalf of their sons. The story of Eryxo's assassination of Learchos is similar to Berenike's own possible murder of Demetrios, so it is easy to assume she may have been acting with this precedent in mind.¹²² While the command to murder an adulterous husband seems to fit with the queen she would later become, there is not sufficient evidence to unquestionably confirm this supposition. The murder plot could have been hatched as a court conspiracy, by factions who were unhappy at the prospect of being ruled by a foreign prince, by parties who wanted more democratic control of the kingdom, by the *philoï* of the princess who wanted to avenge her mistreatment, or perhaps even a combination of all three.¹²³ In any of these scenarios, however, it seems that Berenike must have been at least aware of the plot, if not acting in collusion with the conspirators, especially since Justin specifically notes that she called for her mother to be spared when Demetrios was killed (Just. *Epit.* 26.3.7).¹²⁴

Whether she ordered the assassination or not, after Demetrios' death, Berenike renewed her betrothal to Ptolemy III (Just. *Epit.* 26.3.6, 8), whom she married several years later at his accession to the Egyptian throne in 246 BCE. This event brings up two additional areas of debate concerning Berenike's life: what happened during the interim between Demetrios' death and Berenike's marriage to Ptolemy II and when did her marriage to Ptolemy occur? This debate is further confused by the uncertainty of the dating of events, since early scholarship on the topic used a "high chronology," which placed Magas' death in

¹²² Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 27. See also, Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 210, n. 140.

¹²³ See note 120 above on the democratic factions. This seems the most likely scenario, especially since the country was subsequently administrated by a republican-style party, see note 127, below.

¹²⁴ Although, in this particular passage (26.3), Justin does make the error of calling Berenike's mother Arsinoë, rather than Apama. This could be because Berenike was styled as Arsinoë II's daughter in later Ptolemaic propaganda, see note 212, below.

259/8 BCE, and current revisions of the timeline place his death between 252-250 BCE. Scholars who utilized the high chronology also placed the Demetrios affair in 259/8 BCE, meaning over twelve years would have passed between his death and Berenike's second marriage; whereas in the revised chronology, which places the affair in 251-249 BCE, only four to five years would have passed.¹²⁵

The earliest secondary scholarship on the queen argued that Berenike reigned in Kyrene, perhaps with Ptolemy as her betrothed consort, during the interim.¹²⁶ More recent interpretations, however, have noted that, while Berenike remained queen of Kyrene in name after her father's death, the Kyrenaian government seems to have been ruled by a council. Hölbl, for example, cites Polybios and Plutarch for Berenike's reign in Kyrene (Polyb. 10.22.2-3; Plut. *Vit. Phil.* 1.3-4), and he uses those accounts to determine that, after Magas' death, a republican-style party, led by the philosophers Ekdelos and Demophanes, was established to rule the kingdom.¹²⁷ Although little is known about the government they put into place or what role Berenike would have played in it, Clayman contends that it was instituted sometime between 249-248 BCE, and van Oppen de Ruiter argues for an earlier date of 250/49; he further proposes that the governmental changes were not done with Ptolemaic approval, as the coins they issued included the word "Koinon," which indicates

¹²⁵ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 8-9, 20-21, 25; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 31, 34-35, 36.

¹²⁶ Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas*, 452-453; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 132; Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 245, n. 4; Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 99; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 39, 117, 127; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 248-249. Llewellyn-Jones and Winder reemphasize the theories of Tarn and Macurdy by arguing that Ptolemy II sent his son and heir to overthrow the council and ruled Kyrene as viceroy or regent for the five-year interim. No evidence is cited for this claim, so it is a questionable and not well supported hypothesis. Accordingly, the theory is challenged at note 136, below.

¹²⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 46. See also, van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 23, 26, 39; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 68.

that they considered themselves a league of self-governing Kyrenaian cities.¹²⁸ Van Oppen de Ruiter also reasons that neither Berenike nor Apama (if she was still living) were involved with these constitutional reforms, and that the existence of a Kyrenaian *koinon* is supported by the numismatic evidence, although the dating of the Kyrenaian coins is heavily debated by numismatists and historians.¹²⁹

Granting that Berenike appears to have had little control over governmental concerns during this period between the death of Demetrios and her marriage to Ptolemy III, she still held a significant position as Kyrene's queen, as shown by the coins that were minted during this interim bearing her portrait.¹³⁰ Berenike's silver Kyrenaian coins show a youthful profile on the obverse with an unveiled head and melon-bun hair-style, and she wears a diadem to indicate her queenly status. The reverse depicts a central club, flanked by control marks of either the silphium, cornucopia, or trident, the monogram of Magas, and the mint letters Π or ΠΥ, all encircled by a wreath and the legend ΒΕΡΕΝΙΚΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ.¹³¹ Van Oppen de

¹²⁸ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 39. See also, van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 26-27, n. 20, 31, 39. Van Oppen de Ruiter echoes Clayman's point and notes that most scholars date the *koinon* period to that between Demetrius' death and the accession of Ptolemy III in 246 BCE. He later posits that the council was instituted 250/49, and it could have been short lived, lasting only until 249/8 BCE, at which time Kyrene returned to Ptolemaic control and Ptolemy III could have joined Berenike in Kyrene. Hölbl, in contrast, argues that the *koinon*, the league of the cities Kyrene, Ptolemais, Arsinoe, and Berenike, was instituted by Ptolemy III after the cities were brought back under Egyptian control as a solution for desired Kyrenaian independence. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 47.

¹²⁹ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 26-27, 31; T. Buttrey, "Coins and Coinage at Euesperides," *Libyan Studies* 25 (1994): 137-143; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 47. While van Oppen de Ruiter notes on pg. 26 that Berenike did not have a role in the constitutional reforms of Kyrene, he later proposes (30) that she may have had a role in the administration of Kyrene in conjunction with the council, since Solinus (27.54) credits her with helping to fortify the city walls of the city named for her, Berenike (modern Benghazi).

¹³⁰ The attribution of these coins is heavily debated. One camp of scholars argue that they represent Berenike I, and the other argues for the identification of Berenike II. On this debate and the two camps, see Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 116, esp. n. 535, 121, 391-392. I agree with the Berenike II camp. The youthful portrait of the queen is indicative of Berenike II, rather than a "rejuvenated and idealized" portrait of Berenike I, especially since the bronze coins of Berenike I depict her as a mature woman.

¹³¹ For examples of this coin type, see: Reginald Stuart Poole, *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum: The Ptolemies, Kings of Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1883), xlvii, 60, nos. 9-14, pls. 13.7-8; Ioannes N. Svoronos, *Ta Nomismata Tou Kratous Ton Ptolemaion* (Athenais: P. D. Sakellariou, 1904), nos.

Ruiter observes that the unveiled head of Berenike and the youthfulness of her countenance indicates she was unmarried, especially if the coins were minted, as he proposes, in the 250s, with additional issues after the death of both Magas and Demetrios.¹³²

Additionally, the use of the *Basilissa* legend categorizes these coins as an important precursor to Berenike II's later Egyptian coinage, which would utilize the same inscription. These coins may have been issued to support both Berenike's decision to resume her betrothal to Egypt's heir and her intention to become the queen of Egypt and *basilissa*-consort to Ptolemy III. The iconography of the coins, which presents Berenike as a young, unmarried woman, and the inscription, which declares Berenike's position as a *basilissa*, both a queen and princess of Kyrene, would have reinforced her eligibility as a match for Ptolemy III. The coins themselves, which would have circulated among the Kyrenaian elite, would have publicized her decision to resume the betrothal that was established by her own and Ptolemy III's father prior to Magas' death, advertising both her filial duty and queenly character. They are important evidence that, while Berenike may not have had an active role in the Kyrenaian council, she was still important symbolically as a *basilissa*. These coins are also the first evidence of Berenike using her position as *basilissa* to her advantage by publicly presenting her eligibility and desire to become Egypt's queen.

The second area of contention concerning the period after Demetrios' death is the date of Berenike II's marriage to Ptolemy III. As mentioned above, the marriage was set up by Magas and Ptolemy II prior to Magas' death. After those plans were derailed by Apama,

316-320, pls. 3.43-45, A.41, 42; Ulrich Kahrstedt, "Frauen auf antiken Münzen," *Klio* 10 (1910): 262-263; Helmut Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer* (Berlin: Mann, 1975), 94; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, nos. 728-731, 121, Fig. 2.4.

¹³² Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 29. Tarn earlier put forth a similar argument that the coins depicted her youth and eligibility as a possible Ptolemaic queen. Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas*, 449-451.

the subsequent death of Demetrios in 251/0 BCE made it possible for Berenike to follow her father's wishes and resume the betrothal to Ptolemy III, but their marriage did not occur until 246 BCE, four to five years later.¹³³ Thus, scholars have debated both the exact date of their marriage and why they were betrothed for so long, especially since, if Kyrene was attempting to establish itself as a *koinon*, a political-alliance marriage between Kyrene and Egypt would bring that territory back into the Ptolemaic fold.

Here it should be reiterated that many of the older pieces of scholarship on this topic, such as Macurdy, Tarn, Mahaffy, Bevan, and Bouché-Leclercq, used the “high-chronology” of Magas’ death, placing it in 259/8 BCE.¹³⁴ For these authors, they were working with an estimate of over twelve to thirteen years passing before Berenike and Ptolemy’s marriage. This could be why this debate became such a key part of early Berenikean scholarship; a twelve-year betrothment is more questionable than the current estimate of four to five years. Macurdy, for example, initially argued that the reason for the delay was because Ptolemy II was deciding on whether to marry his daughter Berenike to his son, to Antiochos, or to Arsinoë II’s son by Lysimachos, but recent evidence has proven this theory unsustainable.¹³⁵ Other historians argue that the marriage was delayed because Ptolemy III joined Berenike in

¹³³ The earliest arguments for a marriage date of 246 BCE include Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 123; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 190; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 245-246, n. 5. See also Mahaffy, who argues their marriage took place before Ptolemy III left for the Third Syrian War. Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 104. For more modern scholars, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 46; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 80; Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice,” 362; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 30; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 76. For additional commentary on the debate, see Hans Hauben, “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” in *More than Men, Less than Gods: Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship*, P. P. Iossif, A. S. Chanikowski, C. C. Lorber, eds. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 357, n. 2.

¹³⁴ See pgs. 133-134, above.

¹³⁵ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 123, 132. On the surface, Macurdy’s argument seems plausible, since she cites a date of 247 BCE for the marriage of Antiochos and Berenike Syra, which would mean the marriage of Berenike II and Ptolemy III occurred only a year later. Current scholarly consensus for the marriage of Berenike Syra and Antiochos, however, is that it occurred right after the peace agreements of the Second Syrian War in 253/2 BCE, meaning their marriage took place before the death of Magas, which makes Macurdy’s theory untenable.

Kyrene and ruled with her there as Ptolemaic governor.¹³⁶ This argument is not wholly convincing either as there is no evidence that Ptolemy III joined Berenike in Kyrene; for example, no sculptural dedications or papyri issued by him as *strategos* and no Ptolemaic coins survive. While an absence of evidence is not a confirmation that Ptolemy III was not there, the survival of coins bearing Berenike's profile but none depicting Ptolemy III as governor is a major detraction against this argument. Van Oppen de Ruiter also points out that Ptolemy III's presence in Kyrene would have made any form of Kyrenaican federation impossible.¹³⁷ Since the coinage evidence clearly shows a *koinon* was formed, even if briefly, this cast serious doubt on the theory that Ptolemy joined his betrothed in Kyrene.

Another line of argumentation, taken up by scholars like Hauben, Criscuolo, and Penrose, is that Berenike and Ptolemy were married before the death of Ptolemy II in 246 BCE.¹³⁸ Hauben references the Adulis inscription (*OGIS* 54), which states that Ptolemy III inherited Libya (Kyrenaica) from his father. Hauben uses the inscription to contend that Ptolemy III and Berenike II must have been married before Ptolemy II's death in order for Ptolemy III to inherit the territory that was brought back under Ptolemaic control by his marriage to Berenike.¹³⁹ This is, however, a dubious interpretation, since the inscription was issued after Ptolemy III returned from the Third Syrian War to recount his achievements, not

¹³⁶ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 132; Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas*, 452-453; Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 99; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 182, n.2; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 248-249; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 30, n.45, 31, 39. Van Oppen de Ruiter also notes that this topic of Ptolemy III's possible governorship is tightly intertwined with the debate surrounding Ptolemy "the son," see his n. 44. On Ptolemy "the son," see also, Part I, chapter 3.3, note 147.

¹³⁷ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33. It should also be noted, that later he argues instead that Ptolemy did join Berenike, after the removal of the federation (117, 127).

¹³⁸ Hans Hauben, "L'expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av. J.-C.: quelques mises au point," *Archive für Paapyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 36 (1990), 30; Lucia Criscuolo, "Agoni e politica alla corte di Alessandria," *Chiron* 33 (2003), 314, 325-326; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 212-213.

¹³⁹ Hauben, "L'expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av. J.-C.: quelques mises au point," 30; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 212; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 132, n. 56.

during the reign of his father (see Appendix F). More pertinently, Kyrenaica was considered rightfully part of Egyptian territory, since Magas had originally only been given governorship of the territory (Paus. 1.6.8) and had rebelled against Ptolemaic control to claim his kingship (Paus. 1.7.1). The claim of inheritance was, perhaps, included in the Adulis inscription with that credence in mind and the knowledge that the territory was already firmly reunited with Egypt through Berenike and Ptolemy's marriage.

Similarly, Criscuolo also contends that Ptolemy III and Berenike were married prior to Ptolemy II's death, and she places the union in 249 BCE, when the second Ptolemaia in honor of Apollo, Artemis, and Leto was celebrated by Ptolemy II.¹⁴⁰ To support her argument, Criscuolo claims that Cattulus' translation of Kallimachos' *Coma Berenices* was liberal, so his reference to Ptolemy III and Berenike II being newly-wed (*novo auctus hymenaeo*, Catull. 66.11) at the time of the dedication of the lock should not be read verbatim. This seems too much of a stretch, however. Van Oppen de Ruitter likewise determines that Criscuolo's argument is flawed because it does not sufficiently connect a possible wedding to the reconstituted Ptolemaia, it does not take into account the Kyrenaican federation, nor does it acknowledge that none of the Ptolemaic kings, with the exceptions of Ptolemy I and IX, were married before they ascended to the throne (this theory will be returned to below).¹⁴¹

Penrose attempts to resolve these issues by citing a passage from Hyginus that claims Berenike rode into battle with her (adoptive) father, Ptolemy II (Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.24), which

¹⁴⁰ Criscuolo, "Agoni e politica alla corte di Alessandria," 314, 325-326; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 212; van Oppen de Ruitter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33.

¹⁴¹ Van Oppen de Ruitter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 248-249, n. 7. On the importance of this theory, see notes 149, 150, below.

he contends she did to quell the rebelling Kyrenaican federation.¹⁴² But, the plausibility of this passage is questioned by most Hellenistic scholars, and, simply put, both Berenike's presence on a battlefield as a teenager and the description of her leading the troops in place of her more militarily experienced father-in-law, even considering both her being a royal woman of Macedonian heritage and the precedent of other Hellenistic royal women going into battle, is just not realistic.¹⁴³

With the exceptions of Hauben, Criscuolo, and Penrose, the consensus among recent Hellenistic scholars is that Ptolemy III and Berenike II's marriage occurred just before the start of the Third Syrian War. Even among the scholars who agree on the timing of their marriage, there is still debate concerning why it was postponed. Clayman argues that the marriage occurred in 246 BCE, and she posits that the years between betrothal and marriage were a result of the death of Demetrios, which, especially if it was conducted on the order of Berenike, may have made her a morally questionable figure as the potential queen of Egypt.¹⁴⁴ Clayman further reasons that this stain on her moral character, if it initially impacted her reputation, was subsequently overturned by the writings of both Kallimachos and Apollonios, which presented Berenike as a traditional Greek woman who only resorted to murder in order to honor her father.¹⁴⁵ While Clayman thoroughly and convincingly supports her argument that Kallimachos' *Hymn to Athena* and *Hymn to Demeter* and parts of Apollonios' *Argonautica* should be read as a commentary on Berenike's motives for

¹⁴² Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 211-213.

¹⁴³ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 34, n. 75; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 20; Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 234; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 33.

¹⁴⁴ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 78.

¹⁴⁵ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 38, 79, 84, 89, 120. Clayman thoroughly explores how the writings of Kallimachos and Apollonios related to and defended Berenike *passim* chapters three and four of her work.

murdering Demetrios, her overall conclusion that a public character rebranding for the queen was needed in the first place is unconvincing.

Van Oppen de Ruyter counters that the murder of Demetrios would not have impacted Berenike's reputation as much as Clayman might insist.¹⁴⁶ While his overall reading of this part of Clayman's argument is severe, his point that this incident would not have followed Berenike for the rest of her life is valid. I would further argue that murder of spouses and family members was common enough during the Diadochic period and subsequently in all of the Hellenistic kingdoms that Berenike's participation in this murderous tradition would not have been seen as a surprising or particularly reprehensible turn of events, especially given Demetrios' affair with her mother prior to his death. The murder of Demetrios would have been in line with the characteristics previously exhibited by Hellenistic royal females and may have been seen as a justifiable reaction allowed by her position, rather than damaging to her reputation, especially since she had a double tradition of lethal females to follow from both the Macedonian and Kyrenaian lines.¹⁴⁷

If the marriage was not postponed in order to rehabilitate Berenike's reputation, why did Berenike and Ptolemy wait to marry until 246 BCE? Lewellyn-Jones and Winder have proposed the most convincing solution to this question. They built on a theory first put forth

¹⁴⁶ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 26. He also calls her attempts at finding correlations to Berenike in the works of Kallimachos and Apollonios "farfetched" and "unconvincing," which is a rather harsh reading. While her overall theory that Berenike's reputation needed rehabilitation is flawed, Clayman does convincingly support her claim that Berenike is being alluded to by those two poets, especially in her analysis of Kallimachos' *Hymn of Athena* and *Hymn of Demeter*. More to the point, since both Kallimachos and Apollonios were poets that were patronized by the Euergetae, they would have been expected to write about the royal couple to show honor to their patrons. Not seeing allusions to the royal couple in these writing seems to be the more questionable stance.

¹⁴⁷ See pgs. 132-133 on the Kyrenaian precedent. In defense of her argument, Clayman briefly mentions that interfamilial fighting was common among the Macedonian royal houses, but she contends that "though Berenice was not their first female practitioner of the art of political assassination, a woman who would kill her husband was especially problematic..." Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 120. See also, Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 232.

by Mahaffy, who contended that Ptolemaic heirs did not get married before they ascended to the throne.¹⁴⁸ They argue this was an emerging Ptolemaic tradition, perhaps put into place by Ptolemy II with his marriage to Arsinoë II (although that marriage was conducted seven years after his ascension), that Ptolemy III would have been expected to follow as well.¹⁴⁹

That Ptolemy III and Berenike II's marriage was delayed in order to conform to a newly developing Ptolemaic marital policy becomes increasingly clear when the marriage patterns of the dynasty as a whole are taken into account. Later Ptolemies, such as Ptolemy IV, V, VI, and others, would also marry only upon or after their ascensions (see Appendix A). As mentioned above, with the exceptions of Ptolemy I and IX, no other Ptolemies were married before they became *basileus*-pharaoh.¹⁵⁰ Even for Ptolemy I, only his children by Eurydike and Berenike, his queens after becoming satrap of Egypt, were considered for his heirs, with the children of Berenike, his *basilissa*-consort, officially succeeding him. Ptolemy and Berenike must have postponed their marriage until Ptolemy III's succession was secured in order to guarantee the legitimacy of their children and prevent the dynastic infighting that had occurred during the previous two reigns.¹⁵¹

This theory, that their marriage was postponed in order to conform to a newly emerging dynastic policy that was implemented to ensure the legitimacy of the royal children and stem familial infighting, is further supported by the recently proposed later date for

¹⁴⁸ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 45. Mahaffy reiterates this claim on pg. 104, stating that Berenike had been “long betrothed to [Ptolemy], and only awaiting his coronation to become his royal wife.”

¹⁴⁹ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, “A Key to Berenike’s Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt,” 250.

¹⁵⁰ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33, n. 65. On why Ptolemy IX broke with this pattern, see Part III, chapters 11.1 and 12.1. I will further argue in both those chapters that Ptolemy IX's children by his first wife, Kleopatra IV, were considered illegitimate because they were born prior to his ascension; whereas, his child born of his second wife and *basilissa*-consort, Kleopatra Selene I, was called his only legitimate heir (Paus. 1.9.3).

¹⁵¹ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 124.

Berenike's birth as well. If Berenike was born sometime between 267-264 BCE, as proposed by van Oppen de Ruiter and Clayman, rather than in the 270s, as earlier scholarship claimed, Berenike would have been between eighteen and twenty-one years old when she married Ptolemy and in the prime of her fertility.¹⁵² Thus, the marriage could have been postponed for the four- to five-year interim after Demetrios' death in preparation for Ptolemy ascension, while also allowing Berenike to reach full fertility potential; whereas, if she had been older (born in the 270s) the four- to five-year wait could have been destabilizing, allowing good years of fertility to pass. That Berenike was also proclaimed as Ptolemy II's sister in royal propaganda (see below), and in emulation of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II's relationship, also seems to indicate that the Ptolemies were attempting to generally endorse dynastic policies that emphasized dynastic legitimacy and precluded infighting.

Thus, after Ptolemy III's ascension to the throne, the marriage of Berenike II and Ptolemy III was effectuated in 246 BCE, which also commenced Berenike's tenure as *basilissa*-consort of Egypt. She was a young woman in the prime of her fertility, and she quickly fulfilled her first queenly duty of providing heirs for the kingdom by birthing six children in the first seven years of their marriage.¹⁵³ As with every other aspect of Berenike's life, however, this early period of her queenship also has two debates surrounding it. First is the possible tenuousness of her position upon becoming queen, and second is the idea of her regency, both of which are intertwined with the Third Syrian War.

¹⁵² See note 116, above.

¹⁵³ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 21, 31-33. Van Oppen de Ruiter provides a thorough analysis of the possible birth order of their children, proposing the order (and tentative birth dates) of: Arsinoë III (246/5 BCE), Ptolemy IV (244 BCE), Magas (243 BCE), Alexander (242), Lysimachos (241), and Berenike Parthenos (240/39 BCE). See also, Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 171; Chris Bennett, "The Children of Ptolemy III and the Date of the Exedra of Thermos," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 138 (2002), 145.

Almost immediately following Ptolemy III's enthronement and subsequent marriage, he was required to march on Syria with the outbreak of the Third Syrian War (246-241 BCE), also called the Laodikean War. At the end of the Second Syrian War (260-253 BCE), Ptolemy II and Antiochos II, as part of their peace negotiations, organized a marriage between Antiochos II and Ptolemy's daughter, Berenike, called *Phernophoros* (Dowry Bearer/Bringer; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.25-30 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F43) and, later, Syra. As part of the negotiations, Antiochos was required to repudiate his current wife, Laodike I, by whom he had two children, and confirm that the succession would go to any children produced from his marriage to Berenike.¹⁵⁴ When Antiochos died in 246 BCE, around six months after Ptolemy II, Laodike initiated a coup by which she placed her own son, Antiochos III, on the Seleukid throne.¹⁵⁵ Ptolemy III invaded the Seleukid kingdom in order to protect the interests of his sister, but by the time he arrived she and her infant son had been murdered by Laodike, her son, and their supporters (Polyainos 8.50; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.25-30 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F43; App. *Syr.* 11.65; Just. *Epit.* 27.1.1-7).

With the immediate upheaval caused by the start of the Laodikean War, Llewellyn-Jones and Winder have theorized that Berenike II would have arrived in Egypt and been very unsure of her position as Egyptian queen. They argue that since Antiochos II died

¹⁵⁴ Altay Coşkun, "Laodike I, Berenike Phernophoros, Dynastic Murders, and the Outbreak of the Third Syrian War (253-246 BCE)," in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 108-109, n. 4.

¹⁵⁵ Coşkun, "Laodike I, Berenike Phernophoros, Dynastic Murders, and the Outbreak of the Third Syrian War (253-246 BCE)," 109-110, n. 10; Malcolm R. Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 120-121; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 44, 48-49; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 125-126. See also, Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 129-130; Nourse, "Women and the Early Development of Royal Power in the Hellenistic East" 262, 266. Because of the passage by Porphyry, there is some debate whether Antiochos recalled Laodike after Ptolemy II's death. Either way, after his death Laodike, in support of her son, claimed Antiochos had made a deathbed proclamation that his eldest son by her should succeed his father as king.

immediately following Berenike II and Ptolemy III's wedding, making Berenike Syra a marriageable widow, the pressure on Ptolemy to follow in his parent's footsteps and marry his sister would have been great, especially since his own father had repudiated a cousin-wife (Arsinoë I), in order to marry his sister (Arsinoë II), once she was widowed.¹⁵⁶ This theory raises an additional question: if a marriage to a full sister was so desirable that Ptolemy would have been "under great pressure" to marry her, why would Ptolemy II not have married his two children to begin with, rather than sending Berenike Syra to the Seleukids? As argued in Part I, chapters 3.3 and 3.4, the ultimate goal of Ptolemy II's incestuous marriage was to emphasize stability and dynastic continuance in his burgeoning dynasty. By sending his daughter to the Seleukid kingdom, he was able to make an alliance marriage that would benefit his kingdom and heirs. Although that marriage ultimately led to the Third Syrian War, which seems to contradict that goal of stability, the war and marriage still ended up being a boon for the Ptolemies who gained large amounts of territory when peace was concluded.

Most importantly, Berenike II was a close enough relation that the marriage, in conjunction with the adoption of incestuous terminology by the royal couple, could utilize and continue to promulgate the practices Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II had initiated. A long-standing tradition in Egypt, continuing into the Ptolemaic period from the Pharaonic, was that the king called his chief-wife his sister.¹⁵⁷ By adopting this practice in official propaganda, Ptolemy III could continue to use the consolidating factors of his parents'

¹⁵⁶ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 250-251.

¹⁵⁷ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 23; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 211, n. 145; Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 119. See also, Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 202; Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 132. Bevan states that "the queens of Egypt were officially called 'Sisters' of the king." Minas also provides the example of Queen Ahmes of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who was titled *śn.t nšwt* (King's Sister) and *mw.t nšwt* (King's Mother).

incestuous marriage for his own. For example, the earliest poetic issuance concerning Berenike and her reign with Ptolemy, the *Coma Berenices*, lamented that she mournfully parted from her “dear brother” (*fratris cari*) when he left for the Third Syrian War (Catull. 66.22).¹⁵⁸ Similarly, official inscriptions would likewise list them as brother and sister, beginning around the same time or slightly after the poem was issued. The inscription of Boulagoras of Samos (*SEG* 1.366) is the oldest extant inscription listing Berenike II as *adelphē* (“sister”) to Ptolemy III, and it dates to c. 246-243 BCE.¹⁵⁹ This inscription was followed by others, including the more well-known Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56), which titled the ruling couple as “King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoë the Sibling Gods, and Queen Berenike, his sister and wife, the Benefactor Gods...” The use of the title “sister” for Berenike would have several additional important consolidating factors that will be examined further below.

To return to the debate of Berenike’s possible tenuousness as queen in 246 BCE, however, does the use of the title “sister” by Berenike II indicate that Ptolemy III would not have considered a marriage to his biological sister, were she to be widowed? Not necessarily. Even so, it also does not appear that Berenike’s position was as unsecure as Llewellyn-Jones and Winder might assume, particularly since Berenike Syra was murdered before Ptolemy

¹⁵⁸ The original poem by Kallimachos was issued in 245 BCE, see van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 36, n. 89. This portion of the poem only survives in Catullus’ reproduction of the work, but it is assumed that Catullus would not have used the term “brother” if Kallimachos had not also used the word.

¹⁵⁹ Criscuolo, “Agoni e politica alla corte di Alessandria,” 315, n. 14; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 99, n. 69, 128, n. 33. Criscuolo posits that the title “sister” was likely not used in official propaganda until 244/3 when they also adopted the epithet *Theoi Euergetai*. Although, the title *Theoi Euergetai* does not appear in inscriptions until 243/2 (see Appendix D), so she is about a year early in this assumption. The epithet was also first used in the papyrus *PSI* 4.389, dated to August/September 243.

even reached Syria. Moreover, they based their support of this argument on two pieces of evidence that have since been refuted.¹⁶⁰

Not only was the assertion of Berenike being Ptolemy's sister immediately put forth after their marriage, but Berenike, as Ptolemy's "sister" and consort, is also often credited with ruling Egypt while he was away during the Third Syrian War. This assumption perhaps arose from the earlier scholarship, which also claimed she ruled Kyrene independently after her father's death.¹⁶¹ While many of the earliest sources mentioned Berenike may have ruled in Kyrene after the death of her father, none of them mention a regency for her while Ptolemy went to war in Syria. Mahaffy, Bevan, Bouché-Leclercq, and Macurdy all note that Ptolemy III and Berenike II were married, after which the king left on campaign, but none of them discuss possibilities for who ran the government during his absence.¹⁶² Only Bevan mentions the queen in more than a passing reference to her marriage to Ptolemy III, when he points out that their marriage helped Egypt regain control of Kyrene and that "Ptolemy III

¹⁶⁰ First, they claim, "Ptolemy even, arguably, struck gold and silver coins with her [Berenike Syra's] image, in imitation of Philadelphos' similar coinage for Arsinoe II." Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 251. Although they do not cite either source, Llewellyn-Jones and Winder's reference to these coins may derive from Hazzard's argument in the 1995 edition of his work, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, and the later book *Imagination of a Monarchy* (2000) in which he claimed that the unusually weighted coins bearing the inscription "Berenike Basilissa" were issued by Ptolemy III for Berenike Syra, rather than Berenike II. The 2015 reprint of *Ptolemaic Coins* has since removed that argument, and numismatic consensus is that the coins are of Berenike II. Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors* (1995), 4-5; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 114-115. Llewellyn-Jones and Winder would not have had access to this source or others that subsequently established that these are the coins of Berenike II, since their article was published in 2010, but for current scholarship their argument, at least on this issue of coinage, is dated and incorrect. On the coinage of Berenike II, see pgs. 158-160, below, and Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 162-166; Tara Sewell-Lasater, "A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary," *Revue Numismatique* (Forthcoming, 2020).

Second, they also argue that the Gorub papyrus, which they interpret as describing a visit by Berenike II to Ptolemy III in Syria, proves she was desperate to save her marriage. Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 253-254. Clayman presents a convincing refutation of that argument. Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 127. See note 164, below, for the origins of this argument.

¹⁶¹ See at note 126, above.

¹⁶² Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 104; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 190; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 245-246, n. 5; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 123, 132.

had by his side a queen who had also given proof of Macedonian strength of will.”¹⁶³ In fact, both Bevan and Macurdy argue, based on the Gorub papyrus, that, rather than remaining at home in Egypt, Berenike joined Ptolemy in Syria, but this theory is now also thought to be incorrect.¹⁶⁴

It is only with the more modern sources that references to a possible regency by Berenike appear. Popular works and textbook sources tend to be bolder in outright claims of rulership for the queen. For example, Tyldesley, in a popularly-aimed general overview of Egyptian queens, speculates that “When Ptolemy III left Egypt to lend his support to his sister...he looked to the old Egyptian traditions, and left his wife ruling in an absence that stretched for five years.”¹⁶⁵ Fantham et al., in their textbook about women in antiquity, simply state “Berenice governed Egypt when her husband went off to campaign in the Third Syrian War.”¹⁶⁶ Serious works of scholarship by historians in the 1990s and 2000s either began to hint at a regency or similarly made outright claims to it. Hölbl, in his reference work on the Ptolemies, hinted at a possible regency when he noted that Berenike was the foremost lady of the Ptolemaic house, which allowed her to mint coins in her name while her husband was away at war, and historians like Ashton, Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, and Koenen

¹⁶³ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 190.

¹⁶⁴ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 202; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 133. This is an argument echoed later by Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, but refuted by Clayman, see note 160, above.

¹⁶⁵ Joyce Tyldesley, *Chronicle of the Queens of Egypt: From Early Dynastic Times to the Death of Cleopatra* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 2006), 192. It should also be noted that her assumption of a five-year absence is also incorrect, as Ptolemy returned in 245 BCE to deal with the native uprising and famine, see note 186, below.

¹⁶⁶ Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 148.

followed his lead.¹⁶⁷ Some numismatists studying Berenike's coinage make outright claims of regency.¹⁶⁸

As is his habit, Hazzard took his assumptions to the opposite extreme, arguing Berenike had no power in Egypt, and that, regarding the famine of 245 BCE (Just. *Epit.* 27.1.9), which necessitated Ptolemy III's return from Syria, "Berenike apparently lacked the presence of mind, the legal power, the ability or the prestige to bring the subversives to order."¹⁶⁹ The implication is that if she could not deal with the famine, she could not have ruled as regent. The only two authors to write monographs on Berenike II, van Oppen de Ruiter and Clayman, seem to disagree on the topic. Van Oppen de Ruiter plainly states: "In her husband's absence, Berenice II was left in command of the Lagid court as queen regent."¹⁷⁰ Clayman makes no claim to a regency at all, and instead seems to avoid the debate altogether. Rather, and perhaps in contrast to Hazzard's claim, she briefly references the famine of 245 by opining "that it did not grow into something larger and more dangerous may reflect on the queen's ability to manage the crisis..."¹⁷¹ That Berenike was managing a crisis at all might be Clayman's way of referencing a possible regency, but she makes no outright statement to the fact.

¹⁶⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 47; Sally-Ann Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt* (London: Pearson, 2003), 59; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 252; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 55-56. Koenen, for example, does not claim a regency for Berenike, but he notes that Berenike received a female Horus name and "thus was regarded as pharaoh."

¹⁶⁸ Examples include, Maria C. Caltabiano, "Berenice II: Il Ruolo Di Una *Basilissa* Rivelato Dalle Sue Monete," in *La Cirenaica in Età Antica: Atti Del Convegno Internazionale Di Studi*, Enzo Catani and Silvia M. Marengo, eds. (Macerata: Università degli studi di Macerata, 1998), 103-104; David Vagi, "The Ptolemaic Pentakaidekadrachm," *Journal of the Society for Ancient Numismatics* 20, no. 1 (1997), 8.

¹⁶⁹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 113. See note 186, below, for more on the famine and native rebellion.

¹⁷⁰ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33, n. 69, 37, 39.

¹⁷¹ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 128.

Unfortunately, there is no extant evidence that indicates Berenike II ruled as a regent while Ptolemy III went on campaign for the Third Syrian War. As noted in Part I, chapter 2.3, although the pharaoh was considered an absolute ruler, he was supported by a large bureaucracy that saw to the day-to-day running of the kingdom. While Ptolemy III was away at war, he would not have needed his queen to run the government, strictly speaking, as there was an army of officials that already saw to its efficient regulation. Important administrative decisions would have been either handled by the highest-ranking bureaucrats or sent to Ptolemy III in Syria, and the extant evidence supports the conclusion that the king was still contacted for the most pressing matters. For example, no *prostagma* were issued in Berenike's name, and the dating protocols on papyri were not changed, as they would be for later queens that did hold sole-rulership or co-rulership with their husbands and sons (see Appendix C).¹⁷² Papyri evidence demonstrates that Ptolemy, even while out of the country, was still consulted on important matters. For instance, *P.Col.* 4.83 is a petition by a resident of Philadelphia that was issued in 245/244 BCE, when Ptolemy would have either still been in Syria or just returned to deal with the famine uprisings (*Just. Epit.* 27.1.9), and it is addressed directly to the king (βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίωι).

As Berenike would have just arrived in Egypt in 246 BCE, she would have been unfamiliar with the royal administration of Egypt, and thus somewhat unqualified to make administrative decisions immediately, especially since she was not yet fully established

¹⁷² I want to thank Catharine Lorber for pointing out that while Berenike would have enjoyed a position of the highest honor during the king's absence, that does not infer a special authority on her without some supporting evidence. Personal email correspondence, December 2017. Lorber's conclusions are echoed by Hazzard who observed that during the period of 246 to 222 BCE, petitions were addressed only to Ptolemy III. While I do not agree with his claim that Berenike held no power at all, he is correct in his assessment that the evidence does not support a regency for her in Ptolemy's absence. He notes that during later periods, when Ptolemaic kings and queens held co-rulerships, plural addresses were used by petitioners mentioning both the king and queen. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 114. His point is confirmed in Appendix C of this work. See also, Part III where the papyri and dating protocols of Kleopatra I, II, and III are analyzed in greater detail.

within Ptolemaic propaganda, as she would be later. Although the *Coma Berenices* had been issued by 245, putting forth the earliest concept of Berenike as one-half of the ruling couple and sister to the king, the first official inscriptions declaring her as *adelphe* (sister) to Ptolemy would not appear until 244/43, with additional inscriptions making similar declarations only after they took the title of Euergetai in 243/2 BCE.¹⁷³

Although Berenike did not hold a regency, this should not detract from the things she did do to make increased power for later queens a reality. Much like Arsinoë, a regency was not yet possible for Berenike, not only because she had just arrived in Egypt when her husband had to leave, but also because, as discussed above for Arsinoë, a woman wielding public power at this point was still not acceptable to the Greek portions of the population, even though Arsinoë had started the normalizing process.¹⁷⁴ Rather, Berenike had to work behind the scenes to accomplish her goals, just as her predecessor queen had, in order to further establish the queen as one half of the public face of Ptolemaic monarchy and solidify the platform that would allow later queens to hold regencies successfully. This could have been a difficult task for Berenike, as she was technically a foreign queen entering into Egypt, but it was also a responsibility that she was prepared to handle after all the uncertainty that had defined her childhood and teenage years. Now that all the debates surrounding her early life have been addressed, Berenike's accomplishments as queen can be examined in order to explore how her actions continued and furthered the normalizing processes started by her predecessor.

¹⁷³ See note 159, above. Criscuolo, "Agoni e politica alla corte di Alessandria," 315, n. 14; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 121, n. 4.

¹⁷⁴ For an explanation of the double cultural milieu that both Arsinoë and Berenike had to work within, see pg. 127, above.

6.2 Berenike II as *basilissa*-consort to Ptolemy II

When Berenike first arrived in Egypt, it would have been necessary for her to take up the mantle of queen and *basilissa*-consort immediately and to act within the established supportive role for her position. Specifically, she would have been expected to resume the duties that upheld Ma'at, such as patronage, euergetism, and participation in religious rituals, which had been neglected during the more than twenty-year period Egypt had gone without a queen. This twenty-year break in queenly duties is additional evidence of the power held by Arsinoë's reputation and the skillful use of her memory by Ptolemy II, but by the time Ptolemy III took the throne a living queen may have been a welcome sight to the people. Berenike was well equipped to assume this role. As with the Hellenistic women that came before her, she was a woman who was educated, had a network of personal *philoï*, and had amassed some personal wealth, especially since she had been queen of Kyrene for the previous four to five years.

Since she was a princess of the Greco-Macedonian tradition and had a mother who was also part of the same tradition, Berenike would have received a Hellenistic education. Her education could have also been supplemented by the prominence of scholasticism in the Kyrenaian court. Magas, as king of Kyrene, emphasized the arts and sciences, perhaps in emulation of his fellow Hellenistic monarchs of much larger kingdoms, and he was connected to the Kyrenaic school of philosophy (Diog. Laer. 2.102-103). He may have also received Buddhist missionaries from the Mauryan king, Asoka (*Major Rock Edict* 13), making him one of only five Hellenistic rulers to do so.¹⁷⁵ Several important Alexandrian scholars, including Kallimachos, Eratosthenes, and Lysanias, started their scholastic careers

¹⁷⁵ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 33; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 9, n. 12.

at the court in Kyrene under Magas and, later, served Berenike during her tenure as queen of Kyrene and Egypt.¹⁷⁶

Consequently, when Berenike became queen of Egypt, she followed in her father's footsteps, and those of her predecessor queen, to become a patron of the arts in her new home. A high valuation on scholarship may have been an early commonality shared by the newlyweds, as Ptolemy also followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather by continuing to expand the Mouseion and Great Library, and he even required that all ships entering Alexandria allow copies of their books to be made for the library (Galen, *Comm. II in Hipp. Librum XVII Epidemiarium* 239). Berenike, for her part, appears to have had a special interest in supporting scholars from Kyrene, so, as a patroness of the arts, she included the scholars Posidippos of Pella, Apollonios of Rhodes, Kallimachos of Kyrene, and Eratosthenes of Kyrene as part of her and her husband's court. All these men held important court positions, particularly as tutors and functionaries at the library, and they also served as *philoï* of the king and queen.

Berenike's own *philoï* network may have thus included her countrymen, Kallimachos and Eratosthenes, and Pelops, the Ptolemaic *strategos* of Kyrene.¹⁷⁷ Kallimachos was an especially important poet of the Ptolemaic court, not only because he helped organize and contribute to the Great Library, but also because he wrote prolifically about the court under Ptolemy II and III.¹⁷⁸ His surviving works are one of the main sources that provide some

¹⁷⁶ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 34.

¹⁷⁷ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 62. See also, Gregor Weber, *Dichtung und höfische Gesellschaft: die Rezeption von Zeitgeschichte am Hof der ersten drei Ptolemäer* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1993), 105, n. 5.

¹⁷⁸ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 51-54. Clayman notes that Kallimachos would have been established at the Ptolemaic court during the reign of Ptolemy II, holding an important position as court poet when Berenike arrived in 246 BCE, and he probably remained part of that court well into the 230s.

insight into Berenike’s life. For instance, his epigram 15 is an appeal to Berenike for court patronage. As shown by his petition, and much like Arsinoë II, Berenike may have been able to pay patronage expenses herself, and Clayman theorizes that Kallimachos’ allusion in the epigram to Berenike’s statue being “damp with perfume” (Ep. 15.2 G-P) is a reference to the Kyrenaian perfume industry that supplied much of her personal wealth (Athen. 15.689A).¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, in her role as benefactor to her *philoï*, who served as scholars and librarians in the Alexandrian Library and Mouseion, Berenike also became a patron of those great institutions and helped expand their fame and knowledge. Under Berenike and Ptolemy III’s patronage, Kallimachos catalogued the library’s collection in his *Pinakes* and Eratosthenes served as chief librarian (*P. Oxy.* 10.1241) and tutor to the Euergetai’s children.¹⁸⁰

Not only did Berenike II support scholastic endeavors, but, much like her namesake Berenike I and her predecessor Arsinoë II, she also emphasized the arts through sportsmanship. Berenike participated in the Olympics (Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.24) in an unknown year, and, although the record does not say if she won, Bennett indicates that Hyginus would not have mentioned it had she not.¹⁸¹ She also won a Nemean victory in the four-horse chariot race in either 243 or 241 BCE, as commemorated by Kallimachos in his *Victoria Berenices*.¹⁸² These victories are also perhaps referenced by Posidippos in AB 88 where he credits Ptolemy IV, Berenike’s son, as saying “but that my mother, a woman, won a victory in the chariot races, this is a great feat” (ἀλλ’ ὅτι μάτηρ εἶλε γυνὰ νίκαν ἄρματι, τοῦτο μέγα).

¹⁷⁹ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 60, 103.

¹⁸⁰ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 52-53, 56-57. Clayman also proposes she and Ptolemy may have patronized Kallimachos and Eratosthenes’ students, including Kallimachos the younger, Istrus the Kallimachian, and Philostephanos of Kyrene.

¹⁸¹ Bennett, “Arsinoe and Berenice at the Olympics,” 91, n. 5; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 20; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 145, n. 111.

¹⁸² Bennett, “Arsinoe and Berenice at the Olympics,” 91, n. 7, 92-93; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 20; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 145.

There is another four-horse chariot victory attributed to a Berenike by Posidippos (AB 78), but scholars disagree on which Berenike the last line of the poem is referencing. Bennett and Criscuolo argue the Berenike in the poem (Βερενικης της βασιλευουσης) must be Berenike Syra, but Clayman argues for an identification of Berenike II because Posidippos describes this Berenike as being *athlophoros* (αθλοφόρος) or “prize-winning,” the same epithet the priestesses of Berenike II’s cult would be given after her death (see Appendix D).¹⁸³ Whether she won all three of these victories or only those described by Hyginus and Kallimachos, the importance of Panhellenic victories in general, as for both Berenike I and Arsinoë II, was that these victories brought *kleos* to the family name. Since owning, training, and maintaining chariot teams was exorbitantly expensive, horse-racing victories had a long tradition of being a method by which Greek royalty and nobility could acquire prestige; but, as both Pomeroy and Bennett also mention, winning victories was not just a public exhibition of wealth, it was also an act that demonstrated the legitimacy and power of the dynasty through the earning of prestige.¹⁸⁴ Van Bremen and Clayman even suggest that the *athlophoros* may have carried Berenike’s prizes in the same way Arsinoë’s *kanephoros*

¹⁸³ The *athlophoros*, or “prize-bearers,” was a priestesshood established for Berenike after her death by her son in 211/0, which might have been in recognition of her victories in various games. Fraser also emphasizes that the *athlophoros* were placed in the dating protocol before the *kanephoros* of Arsinoë, giving Berenike’s priestesshood “lasting priority in this respect over the cults both of Arsinoë and of all subsequent queens.” Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 219; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 170; Bennett, “Arsinoë and Berenice at the Olympics,” 92-93; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 243; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 58; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 134, n. 63, 148-151, 157. Clayman incorrectly dates the initiation of the cult to 215/4 in her n. 63, perhaps as a misinterpretation of Fraser. See also, Criscuolo, “Agoni e politica alla corte di Alessandria,” 313-315, 327-331. Criscuolo suggests that Kallimachos’ *Victoria Berenices* might also describe Berenike Syra (331-333), but, similarly to Clayman’s argument, it seems unlikely that Berenike II’s son would have named her priestesshood the “prize-bearers” if Berenike had only won a single victory during her lifetime, especially since most of the other contemporary members of the family, male and female, had won multiple victories.

¹⁸⁴ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 142; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 20; Bennett, “Arsinoë and Berenice at the Olympics,” 93. See also, Riet Van Bremen, “The Entire House is Full of Crowns: Hellenistic Agones and the Commemoration of Victory,” in *Pindar’s Poetry, Patrons and Festivals: From Archaic Greece to the Roman Empire*, Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 348.

carried baskets. If this were true, Berenike's prizes would have been carried in processions, perhaps culminating in the crowning of a statue of the queen, similarly to the procession and robing of the Athena Parthenos during the Panathenaia, which would celebrate Berenike's victories repeatedly throughout the years.¹⁸⁵ Thus, Berenike's victories were important to the prestige of her family both during her life and after her death.

Although the *athlophoros* were priestesses dedicated to Berenike after her death, during her lifetime she also participated in acts of social and religious benefactions, all of which served her queenly duty to uphold Ma'at. Most importantly, Berenike's acts of benefaction were almost always coupled with those of her husband in an effort to show the unity of the king and queen, perhaps since there had not been a living queen for so many years. As described in chapter 5, prior to Arsinoë's death, Ptolemy II had developed Ptolemaic propaganda to be based on the ruling couple as a unit, and after she died, he was able to use his queen's memory to great effect. Ptolemy III, however, had a living queen by his side, so they could more realistically emphasize the unity of two living monarchs.

For example, Ptolemy III left for the Third Syrian War in 246 BCE, but by 245 BCE he had to return to his kingdom to deal with a famine and native uprisings that had resulted from a failed Nile inundation (*P. Lille* 1.13; *P. Haun* 6, Fr. 1, ll. 14-17; *Jer. Comm. Dan.* 11.7-9; *Just. Epit.* 27.1.9).¹⁸⁶ To manage the famine, the king and queen imported grain at

¹⁸⁵ Van Bremen, "The Entire House is Full of Crowns: Hellenistic Agones and the Commemoration of Victory," 364, n. 98; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 157-158; Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 151.

¹⁸⁶ The revolt was referenced by both Saint Jerome (cumque audisset in Aegyptum seditionem moveri) and Justin (in Aegyptum domestica seditione revocatus esset). See also, Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 109-111; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 196-197; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 254-255; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 49, n. 78; Hauben, "L'expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av. J.-C.: quelques mises au point," 32-33; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 111; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 128; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 76, n. 26. Lorber also indicates that unrest may

great expense to feed the people, as shown by the inscription on the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56):

and when the river once overflowed its banks insufficiently and all those in the country were terrified at this happening and were thinking upon the destruction that had taken place under some of the former kings, in whose reign those dwelling in the country met with droughts, exercising provident care over those in the temples and the others inhabiting the country, by exercising much forethought and forgoing not a little of their revenues for the sake of the safety of the people, and by sending for grain for the country from Syria and Phoenicia and Cyprus and many other places at rather high prices they saved the inhabitants of Egypt, leaving behind an immortal benefaction and the greatest record of their virtue both for contemporaries and for future generations, in return for which the gods have granted them their kingdom peacefully established and will give them all the other good things for all time; with good fortune, be it resolved by the priest of the country.¹⁸⁷

In this decree, the priests praise the king and queen for their joint actions in response to the famine. The grain mentioned in the inscription may have even been imported to Egypt on ships owned by Berenike (*P. Ryl.* 4.576).¹⁸⁸ Queens using their personal wealth for the purposes of social benefaction was a well-established tradition that Berenike could emulate and use to gain favor with the people during such trying times.

Shortly after this event, by 243/242 BCE, the royal couple took the epithet *Theoi Euergetai*, or “Benefactor Gods.”¹⁸⁹ The cultic connotations of this title will be examined in

have been quite severe, as demonstrated by the loss of at least three coin hoards around this time. Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 137.

¹⁸⁷ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 112-118; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 255, 267; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 49; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 112; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 85, 124, 167; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 33, n. 70, 76. Athen. 5.209B also mentions grain coming into Egypt sent by Hiero II. For a full translation of *OGIS* 56, see Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 151-154.

¹⁸⁸ C. H. Roberts and E. G. Turner, *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester: Volume IV, Documents of the Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine Periods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1952), 26-27. Roberts and Turner also note that the queen’s ships are also referenced in *P. Lille* 22, 23; *P. Teb.* 1034, 1035. See also, Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 85, 124; Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 145.

¹⁸⁹ See notes 159, 173, above. Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 53; Hauben, “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” 365, n. 44; Hauben, “L’expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av J.-C.: quelques mises au point,” 32; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of*

greater detail below, but for the purposes of religious benefaction, this title indicated that prosperity and fertility flowed from the royal couple to their people. Subsequently, the association with benefaction was not only shown by their epiklesis, but it was also emphasized in many of the Euergetai's propagandistic issuances. For example, their euergetism was celebrated in poetic form, like Kallimachos' *Hymn to Demeter*, in priestly proclamations, including the Canopus Decree (*OGIS 56*) quoted above, and on coinage.¹⁹⁰

Coins bearing an image of Berenike II were minted from the period of the Third Syrian War, from c. 245 BCE, until about the latter half of the Euergetai's reign.¹⁹¹ These coins were minted in some of the largest denominations seen in the Hellenistic World, and, as such, they were remembered in antiquity as βερενικειον νομισμα (*Berenikeion nomisma*; Poll. 9.85). They bear a portrait of the queen on the obverse, in which she wears a veil and diadem, has wide eyes, and a slight double-chin. The reverse depicts a single cornucopia, bound with a royal diadem, which is encircled by the legend ΒΕΡΕΝΙΚΗΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ.¹⁹² The main features of the iconography of the coins of Berenike, including the profile portrait

Ptolemaic Egypt, 121, n.4, 133-134, n. 63; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 36. Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 118; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 49, 81, 95. Mahaffy and Hölbl, working from the reference in Saint Jerome (*Jer. Comm. Dan.* 11.7-9), argue the title was a result of Ptolemy III returning stolen *simulacra deorum* to Egypt (81), but, if that was the original impetus for the title, it subsequently took on more important fertility and benefaction connotations, especially when coupled with the actions of the king and queen in response to the famine. Hölbl also concedes (41) that such a title of “ideological significance” was useful since Ptolemy's return to Egypt was occasioned by a rebellion. It should also be noted that van Oppen de Ruiter and Hauben in “L'expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient” place the adoption of the Euergetai title in 244/243. Hauben, in subsequent articles, including “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” utilizes the 243/3 date instead.

¹⁹⁰ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 113; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 122, 167; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 38. See note 187, above, on the Canopus Decree in which the royal couple were honored by the priests for their response to the famine.

¹⁹¹ Sewell-Lasater, “A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary,” section III.3.

¹⁹² The exceptions to this are two of the hemidrachm types of Berenike coins (Sv. 983, 984) in which she is shown wearing a veil and stephane, but I point out the oddity of these coins and the need for their reevaluation in a forthcoming article. Sewell-Lasater, “A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary,” section III.1.

of the queen on the obverse and the cornucopia on the reverse, were adopted from the coins of Arsinoë II, but they were modified to represent the new queen. For instance, Berenike's coins did not utilize many of the aspects of divinity that were present on the Arsinoë II coins, such as the stephane and lotus scepter, because these coins were produced while Berenike was alive. The cornucopia of Berenike was shown as a single horn, rather than as a *dikeras*, and the contents were also edited to reflect the new queen. Berenike's cornucopia contents include, from left to right, a cluster of grapes, a pomegranate, a pyramidal cake, and an ear of grain; the ear of grain was an emblem that became specific to Berenike, much as the *dikeras* was for Arsinoë.¹⁹³

Thus, the earliest issuances of these coins served ideological and ceremonial purposes. Preparations for the adoption of Ptolemy III and Berenike II's new epithet were initiated with the minting of large, silver dodecadrachms/15-drachm pieces after Ptolemy's return to Egypt in 245 BCE, and they were likely a ceremonial production that was distributed to celebrate both Ptolemy's return from the Third Syrian War and Berenike's part in that successful return.¹⁹⁴ Since the coins were issued as a precursor to the adoption of the royal couple's epithet, this could be why the legend of these coins utilizes the term *basilissa*, rather than a specific epithet, as was used on Arsinoë's coins. Similarly to Arsinoë's coinage, supplementary denominations of the Berenike coins were minted by the end of the war for use as donatives to the soldiers in c. 241 BCE and thereafter.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ On the general iconography of the coins of Berenike II, see Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 153-154, 176-182, Fig. 3.6. See also, Sewell-Lasater, "A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary," section I.

¹⁹⁴ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 153, 394-395; Sewell-Lasater, "A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary," section III.3. See also, note 198, below, and pg. 161 on the *Coma Berenices* and Berenike's propagandistic role in Ptolemy's return from war.

¹⁹⁵ Sewell-Lasater, "A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary," section III.3.

Much like the coinage of Arsinoë, the symbolism used on the coinage of Berenike II would have produced a powerful message to the viewer about Berenike's place in Ptolemaic ideology and propaganda. The ear of grain, for example, alluded to the royal couple's actions in dealing with the famine, but it would have also been a symbol, especially in conjunction with the cornucopia, of Berenike's own fertility. The combination of the ear of grain with the cornucopia would have represented the wealth and abundance of the royal couple and their protection of their realm, but in specific reference to the queen, it would have also alluded to her role as insurer of dynastic continuance as the birther of heirs. Furthermore, since the denominations were so large, they would not have circulated among the lower classes, but they would have popularized the new couple's imagery among the elite and priestly classes, and, most importantly, among the soldiery, who would have played a key role in dealing with the uprising that resulted from the famine.¹⁹⁶ This is why some of the denominations also include Dioscuric imagery, with the stars of the Dioscuri flanking the cornucopia on some of the gold denominations, and the piloi used on some of the silver.¹⁹⁷ The imagery of the Dioscuri, who were considered savior gods to soldiers and sailors during war, demonstrates that Berenike was considered a savior to her husband, since the dedication of a lock of her hair, as described in the *Coma Berenices* (see below), and her accompanying prayers had ensured his safe return from the Third Syrian War.¹⁹⁸

Accordingly, and in addition to social and religious benefactions, and similarly to Arsinoë II, Berenike II acted as support for her husband in both the political and religious

¹⁹⁶ On the importance of the military in spreading Ptolemaic propaganda, see Part I, chapter 2.3.

¹⁹⁷ See, for example, the gold pentadrachms (Sv. 978/*CPE* 737) and the silver pentadrachms (Sv. 989/*CPE* 742). For a list of the specific denominations that include Dioscuric imagery, see Sewell-Lasater, "A Die Study of the Gold and Silver Coinage of Berenike II, with Numismatic and Historical Commentary," section III.3.

¹⁹⁸ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 181, 395. See note 194, above.

spheres. Just as the Pithom Stele (CG 22183) had helped establish the royal couple of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II as the center of Ptolemaic public image during their reign, so too did the literature issued during Ptolemy III and Berenike II's rule strive to center the Ptolemaic public image on the new royal couple. The emphasis on the royal couple as a unit was put forth soon after Ptolemy and Berenike's wedding with the *Coma Berenices*, which was issued in 245 BCE. Although the *Coma Berenices* was written by the court poet Kallimachos, it described actions taken by Berenike, and Kallimachos was writing on behalf of the king and queen by whom he was patronized and for whom he acted as *philos*.¹⁹⁹ According to the poem, when Ptolemy III left for the Third Syrian War, Berenike dedicated a lock of her hair at the temple of Arsinoë-Aphrodite, after which it was discovered by the court astronomer, Konon of Samos, as a new constellation (Callim. Frg. 110; *PSI* 1092; *POxy.* 2258C; Catull. 66). This act not only provides an additional example of Berenike's religious activity, but it also shows an attempt to create continuance from the previous dynasty and both the Egyptian and Greek traditions.

By dedicating her lock at the temple of Arsinoë-Aphrodite, Berenike was showing reverence to the queen she was attempting to emulate.²⁰⁰ Even further than that, dedications of hair had a long history in both the Egyptian and Greek traditions, so her action would have had a special meaning to the populations over which she was newly appointed. In Egyptian mythology, Isis had also dedicated a lock of her hair in lamentation for her husband Osiris

¹⁹⁹ Gutzwiller similarly opines that the dedication of the lock and Kallimachos' subsequent poem was likely "staged with the knowledge and consent of the court." Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 363, 372-373, 384.

²⁰⁰ According to Hauben, "la personnalité royale et divine de la nouvelle reine se développera sous l'égide spirituelle de sa devancière..." Hauben, "Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques," 359. See also, Hauben, "Arsinoë II et la politique extérieure de l'Égypte," 119-124, n. 90; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 89-90; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 363.

(Plut. *Mor., De Is. et Os.* 14).²⁰¹ Isis' lock served as a symbol of her bereavement over the loss of her husband, and, according to the myth, the goddess shed so many tears the Nile flooded.²⁰² This story provides an aetiological explanation for the inundation, and, thus, Isis' hair was associated with fertility and agricultural abundance, the same connotations the Euergetai would soon adopt for themselves after Ptolemy's return.

In Greek culture, hair cutting was a regular symbol of both mourning and transition through the stages of life. Tearing of the hair as a symbol of mourning is regularly attested from the eighth century through Classical Greece both on funerary amphorae and in literary productions, including the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and classical drama.²⁰³ In addition to mourning, the shearing of hair was also used to mark the transition from childhood into adulthood and married life in both the Egyptian and Greek traditions. Egyptian boys and girls cut their "lock of youth" upon entering puberty, and Greek girls and boys likewise could dedicate their shorn hair to Artemis or other deities upon reaching marriageable age (*Anth. Pal.* 6.59, 155-156, 164, 198, 276-279; Hdt. 4.34; Paus. 1.43.4, 2.32.1; Poll. 3.38).²⁰⁴ While Berenike was

²⁰¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 100-101. See also, Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 109.

²⁰² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 100-101; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 109, n. 215; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 371-372, n. 39. Gutzwiller notes that many sources indicate the dedication of hair was a purely Greek tradition, a theory also seen in Hauben and Nachtergaeel. Hauben, "Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques," 363, n. 33; Georges Nachtergaeel, "La chevelure d'Isis," *L'Antiquité Classique* 50 (1981): 584-606. Nachtergaeel even argues there was no connection to the Egyptian tradition because Isis' lock was an act of mourning, rather than an offering. Yet, the two actions, mourning and dedication, were not mutually exclusive. Berenike's act seems to be both a dedication of her hair to request a favor from the gods (the safe return of her husband), and also an act of mourning at being separated from her new love (see below on royal love). Thus, her action fits into both traditions.

²⁰³ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 86, n. 71, 73; van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis," 355-356. Literary examples of hair ripping can be found in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. See also, Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 369-371; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 100; Hauben, "Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques," 363, n. 33; Nachtergaeel, "La chevelure d'Isis," 603, n. 87.

²⁰⁴ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 86; van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis," 356-

long past puberty at this point, since she married Ptolemy around eighteen to twenty-one years old, the connotations of dedicating hair when transitioning to married life may still have been a clear allusion that could have endeared her to the Egyptian and Greek populaces alike. Furthermore, when the Lock's association with marital transition was combined with the two additional traditions of shearing hair out of mourning for her departed husband and making a dedication of hair to beseech the gods to return that husband to her, the actions in the *Coma Berenices* would have been a multi-faceted and powerful act of propaganda.

This act of propaganda would also present the idea of matrimonial love between Ptolemy III and Berenike II and the perception of the *basilissa* as a bringer of prosperity, both of which would begin the process of establishing the new queen as one-half of the political unit. According to Gutzwiller, the dedication of Berenike's lock, and the subsequent poem produced by Kallimachos, were an attempt to provide a foundation myth that could connect the new monarchs with the dynastic tradition established by their predecessors, while also identifying the new couple's unique qualities.²⁰⁵ The first two royal couples had both emphasized royal love in some way, which was an important characteristic of Ptolemaic rulership and showed their effort to maintain Ma'at, as described in Part I, chapter 2.2.²⁰⁶ The Soteres represented themselves as birthing legitimate children from a loving union, which was necessary since Ptolemy I was polygamous; for the Philadelphoi, their union was defined by sibling affection; and the Euergetai chose, through the *Coma Berenices*, to present an image of the attraction of a young and newly-wedded bride and groom.²⁰⁷ For example, in

357; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 109; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 369-371, n. 33, 384; Nachtergaele, "La chevelure d'Isis," 596, 602, 603.

²⁰⁵ Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 362; Pantos, "Bérénice II Déméter," 350-351.

²⁰⁶ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 62, 97.

²⁰⁷ Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 368; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 255; Roy, "The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King," 119. Gutzwiller proposes that the concept of a "young" bride

the poem, Berenike is described as being deeply distraught and weeping at the departure of her husband (Catull. 66.21-30). Gutzwiller contends that the poem depicts Berenike as being distraught not only for being separated from her new husband, but also for missing the pleasures of married life. The personification of the lock in the poem could emphasize Berenike's sexual passion for her husband, all while maintaining the queen's public modesty.²⁰⁸ The building of a marriage based on mutual desire and love was also important because those characteristics facilitated the birthing of legitimate children. The queen being depicted as sexually attracted to her husband was an important way of ensuring dynastic fertility and stability, which was, again, in line with their soon to be adopted title of Euergetai. Sexual attraction between the royal pair and fertility would also have been emphasized by the queen either being pregnant or having just given birth to their first child when Ptolemy III returned in 245 BCE.²⁰⁹

When presenting Berenike II and Ptolemy III's unique type of love, the dedication of the lock and the subsequent poem also had the purpose of producing an image of dynastic continuance through their promised fertility and their upholding of the previous reign's propaganda. Just as Ptolemy II had used the jugate coinage to emphasize an image of dynastic continuance from his parents, the *Coma Berenices* and subsequent official decrees by Ptolemy III, including *OGIS* 60, 61, 65, and the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) that was issued later in 238 BCE, proclaimed that Ptolemy and Berenike II were brother and sister,

and groom was a "distortion," but she seems to be working with the high chronology, where Berenike would have been around twenty-seven when she arrived in Egypt. In the revised chronology, she would have been around twenty years old at her marriage to Ptolemy III, which would also better support the theory that an image of young, newlywed love was used as part of the Euergetai's public propaganda. See notes 116, 152, above.

²⁰⁸ Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 378, 384; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 100; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 90.

²⁰⁹ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 87-88.

even though they were first cousins.²¹⁰ Establishing Berenike as Ptolemy’s ἀδελφὴ καὶ γυνή (“sister and wife”) provided them with an incestuous marriage in the style of their predecessors, and it began the process of making incestuous marriage a Ptolemaic norm for couples succeeding the Adelphoi, especially since Ptolemy III and Berenike II’s children, Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, would return to a true, incestuous union, as will be discussed in chapter 7.²¹¹ The pseudo-incest of the Euergetai also had the byproduct of providing both Ptolemy III and Berenike II with new parents that distanced them from past embarrassments.²¹² Becoming the adopted daughter of Arsinoë II dissociated Berenike from her rebellious biological father and her mother, who slept with Berenike’s first husband, and, for Ptolemy III, it removed the connection with his biological mother, Arsinoë I, who had been banished for treason (see chapter 4.2).

Accordingly, all the examples described above demonstrate Ptolemy III and Berenike II’s efforts to work within the framework provided by their new adoptive parents, while also refocusing the Ptolemaic propaganda on themselves and their own unique characteristics as monarchs. Their propaganda, from the earliest issuance of the *Coma Berenices* through to

²¹⁰ Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 267, n. 2; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 133-34; Hauben, “L’expédition de Ptolémée III en Orient et la sédition domestique de 245 av J.-C.: quelques mises au point,” 34; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 242; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 99, n. 69, 127-128, 167; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 35-36, 39; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 53, 62, 97. Koenen lists the Canopus Decree as being issued in “the ninth year (288 BC),” which must be a typo for 238, since Ptolemy III and Berenike II were not ruling in 288.

²¹¹ See Part I, chapter 3.3 on Ptolemy II and Arsinoë’s incestuous marriage. See also, Carney, “The Reappearance of Royal Sibling Marriage in Ptolemaic Egypt,” 435; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 35, 91, 127; Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 119.

²¹² Both Ptolemy III and Berenike II were depicted as being the children of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II in their propaganda, including the Adulis Inscription (*OGIS* 54), Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56), *OGIS* 28, 60, 61, 65; *P. Hib.* 1.89, 90, 171. See also, Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 159, 162-163, n. 2, 183, 261, n. 1; 267; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 189, 193, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 46; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 94, n. 74; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 242; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 103, 121; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 36, 127.

later inscriptions, including *OGIS* 60, 61, 65, and the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56), mentioned above, strove to depict the royal couple as a unit, and in this way, Berenike was able to act in a supporting political role for her husband while also helping to form the propaganda that would define their rule. As a consequence, not only were her religious benefactions coupled with those of her husband, but in the political sphere, Ptolemy's actions were also coupled with his wife's, as it says on the Canopus Decree: "King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoe the Sibling Gods, and Queen Berenike, his sister and wife, the Benefactor Gods..." (*OGIS* 56).

Along with helping to define their reign's propaganda, Berenike also acted as an advisor to Ptolemy III. Aelian tells the story of an early period in Ptolemy III and Berenike II's rule when the king acted irresponsibly. In the story, Aelian describes that Ptolemy would play dice while making decisions about subjects who had been condemned to death. Berenike reprimands him, saying "when the lives of men were in question, it should not be so slightly considered, but seriously and not at play: for there is no comparison betwixt dice and men" (Ael. *VH* 14.43). These words, while brief, are the only credited to the queen that survive.²¹³ They depict her as a wise and moral ruler who takes her responsibility to her people seriously and cares that they be treated fairly. She is portrayed as a good influence on Ptolemy, and he is shown to value her counsel. This story and Ptolemy's reliance on her for advice may also be corroborated by her title *Tjatyt* (*t3tj.t*), Female Vizier (see Appendix E).²¹⁴ Similarly to Arsinoë, Berenike is shown working somewhat behind the scenes and in conjunction with her husband. Much like the Adelphoi's relationship, Ptolemy had the final say in governmental

²¹³ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 123.

²¹⁴ Lana Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History* (Sweden: Uppsala University, 1986), 179; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 37.

decisions, and Berenike was there to guide and advise him, while not overstepping her role as *basilissa*-consort.

In her role as both political and religiously supportive spouse, Berenike not only advised her husband on court matters, but she also travelled with him throughout their kingdom and participated in temple building efforts. The Euergetai were active builders throughout Egypt, with more than a dozen construction projects accomplished during their reign, such as new buildings, additions to older structures, and renovations of important temples and shrines.²¹⁵ While Ptolemy III was the main decision maker behind these constructions, Berenike was often shown working in conjunction with him in the scenes and inscriptions that would decorate their façades. For instance, Ptolemy and Berenike, with the emphasis they both placed on scholarship, expanded the Serapeum to include a “daughter” library, an annex to the Great Library.²¹⁶ Another example, a golden plaque (*OGIS* 60) was found in the foundations of the temple of Osiris at Canopus naming Ptolemy III and Berenike II as dedicators: “King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoe, the Sibling Gods, and Queen Berenice, his Sister and Wife, dedicate this precinct to Osiris.”²¹⁷

As part of their renovations of temples throughout Egypt, the Euergetai would visit monuments and make dedications to the deities worshiped there. For example, Ptolemy and Berenike, accompanied by their children, visited the temple of Isis at Philae in 243/242 BCE to make dedications to the goddess and her son Harpocrates (*OGIS* 61).²¹⁸ Lorber posits that

²¹⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 87; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 162; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy* 112. Hölbl lists the structures refurbished, added on to, or newly constructed by Ptolemy III.

²¹⁶ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 160; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy* 112; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 64.

²¹⁷ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 133-34; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 87; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 166; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy* 112.

²¹⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 87; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 163. Similarly to *OGIS* 60, *OGIS* 61 states: “King Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy and Arsinoe, the Sibling Gods, and

this ceremonial visit by the royal couple resolved the threat of native uprisings that occurred after the famine in 245 BCE, and she states that “the presence of the king and queen on the southern border of their kingdom symbolized the restoration of their control over all of Egypt.”²¹⁹ More to the point, this is also another instance of the king and queen’s political actions being paired. Presenting Berenike, and even their children, as key parts of these types of dedications continued the normalizing processes started by Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II that confirmed the queen as taking part in the duties of rulership. Not only was it important to present the queen as participating in monarchical duties, but the inscriptions and reliefs were a key way the royal pair could display their propaganda to the people. For example, Clayman contends that the reliefs on the north wall of the *pronaos* of the temple of Isis at Philae depict a pregnant Berenike.²²⁰ In this scene, her position as queen and bearer of many children is emphasized to put forth a message that not only were the Euergetai benefactors agriculturally, but the queen’s body, and her production of heirs that would provide stability to the dynasty, was an important aspect of dynastic fertility and benefaction.

Finally, and again similarly to Arsinoë, Berenike acted in a supporting role in her husband’s foreign policy. By the reign of Ptolemy III and Berenike II, the Ptolemaic pro-Greek policy had been clearly upheld by the two previous monarchs: Ptolemy I, who fought against Demetrius Poliorketes, and Ptolemy II, who fought the Chremonidean War. Ptolemy III defended Athens against Antigonos Doson (Polyb. 2.51.2-3), and in return the Athenians named him an eponymous hero (Polyb. 5.106.6-8).²²¹ Berenike was included in these honors

Queen Berenice, the Sister and Wife of King Ptolemy, and their small children, dedicate this temple to Isis and Harpocrates.”

²¹⁹ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 137. On the possible severity of the uprisings, see note 186, above.

²²⁰ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 163-164, n. 29.

²²¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 51-53; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 111; Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 96-103.

and coupled publicly with her husband in his pro-Greek policy when in 224/223 BCE a new phyle, the Ptolemais (Paus. 1.5.5), was created in Athens in honor of the royal pair, a new deme, the *Berenikidai* (Βερενικίδαι), was introduced, statues of the queen and king were erected in the agora (Paus. 10.10.2) and gymnasium, and the couple as the Euergetai was honored with a cult in the city (IG II² 4676, 5029a).²²² The *strategos* of the Aetolian League even utilized a seal that depicted Berenike as Demeter in gratitude, which is another indication of Berenike's acknowledgement in Hellenistic politics.²²³

Subsequently, it became regular practice, both throughout the kingdom and by allies, to mention the king and queen together. For instance, a letter to Zenon (*P. Cair. Zen.* 3.59358) mentions their birthday celebrations, soldiers in Hermopolis erected a statue in their honor, and the Samians, Samothracians, and Rhodians all produced inscriptions bestowing honors on the royal couple.²²⁴ Thus, while Berenike did not have a foreign policy of her own, in the way that Arsinoë may have, the unity of the Ptolemaic couple was well enough known and acknowledged by this time that peoples or cities who wanted to issue honors to the royal pair knew they should be coupled in dedicatory inscriptions or decrees.

Another important duty of the queen, in addition to being a supportive wife, was acting as one half of the religious public image and contributing to the religious obligations expected of the monarchs. Just as it had been Arsinoë's responsibility to partake in rituals to the *Theoi Soteres*, so now that became Berenike's charge as well to both the Soteres and Adelphoi. Ritual acts could include participating in the major festivals, such as the Arsinoeia,

²²² Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 81; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 52.

²²³ Pantos A. Pantos, "Bérénice II Déméter," *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 111 (1987), 343.

²²⁴ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 112. See also, Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 134. Clayman lists several additional dedicatory inscriptions where Ptolemy and Berenike were honored together from Crete (*ICret* II 19.2 and III 4.4), Delos (*IG XI* 4 677) and Samos (*SEG* 1.366).

and smaller tasks performed by the king and queen, such as offering libations of myrrh, scented oils, incense, or wine to their ancestors.²²⁵ On the monumental scale, Berenike was shown in ceremonial dress alongside and of equal rank to her husband, and she made regular dedications to temples, as mentioned above.²²⁶

Most importantly, Berenike was the first living queen to appear in monumental scenes of the transference of power, as mentioned in Part I, chapter 3.4. These scenes depicted the current ruling couple inheriting both their power to rule and legitimacy from the Egyptian gods and the coupled deities that ruled before them. Temple reliefs showing the pharaoh alone inheriting power from the gods and paying homage to them were commonly produced throughout the Pharaonic period. The Ptolemies, beginning with the Adelphoi, regularized the image of the pharaoh and his queen appearing together before the gods, and the Euergetai were the first living couple to participate in a transition of power scene, as seen in Fig. 1.²²⁷



Fig. 1. Arch of the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn. The Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 22186). Yellow underline: Ptolemy I and Berenike I; Orange underline: Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II; Red underline: Ptolemy III and Berenike III. Photo and editing by the author.

²²⁵ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 90; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 110; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110.

²²⁶ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 85, 168; Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaiques et Traditions Egyptiennes,” 254; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 149.

²²⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110. See also, Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 96; Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaiques et Traditions Egyptiennes,” 246; cf. Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 129; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 163; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 38.

The arch of the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186; Fig. 1), which preserves a version of the Canopus Decree, depicts the reigning couple, Ptolemy III and Berenike II, followed by Thot, Seshat, and the royal couple's deified ancestors, the Gods Adelphoi and Soteres.²²⁸ The right side of the carving depicts additional Egyptian deities who present the Euergetai with emblems of sovereignty, and, in the accompanying inscription, Ptolemy's father (Ptolemy II), adoptive mother (Arsinoë II), and grandmother (Berenike I) promise him the protection of the gods, while Ptolemy I, as the founder of the dynasty, offers to strengthen his grandson's throne.²²⁹ In this way, the new royal couple are being granted the approval to rule by both their now deified royal predecessors and the gods themselves.

A similar image is shown on the Euergetes Gate in the Temple of Khonsu at Karnak, where the royal couple are given their formal titles by Khonsu as the deified Adelphoi and Soteres observe, an act by which the divine powers of the deceased and deified couples are passed to the new royal pair.²³⁰ Quaegebeur additionally comments that in this scene Berenike is titled the "heir(ess) of the brother-sister gods," which indicates that she is receiving the transferal of power alongside Ptolemy; it is not just he, as pharaoh, that is ascending, but rather the royal couple is inheriting ruling power jointly.²³¹ Although Berenike was not yet a true co-ruler to her husband, this jointly-inheriting imagery was important for

²²⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 107, fig. 3.6, 110; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Egyptiennes," 247, fig. C; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 133; Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 48; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 162, fig. 10; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 38.

²²⁹ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 150.

²³⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 162, fig. 9; Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 96; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Egyptiennes," 248, fig. D; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 135, fig. 5; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 38, plate 3.13(a).

²³¹ Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 98, n. 27.

two reasons. First, it demonstrates that by this point the Ptolemaic royal ideal was truly based on the ruling unit; the king could not rule without his queen by his side and vice versa.

Secondly, these types of images, which depicted Berenike and Ptolemy as equal, would set an important precedent for later queens to emulate and allow them to truly become co-rulers to their spouses and co-ruling children (see Appendix A). These types of scenes would be repeated by many of the succeeding Ptolemaic couples, including Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, as will be shown in the next chapter, and those after, as will be shown in Part III.

Just as Ptolemy III and Berenike II inherited their right to rule from their predecessors through a transference of power, so too would they inherit their perceived divinity, their expectation to be worshiped as deities in the way the Soteres and Adelphoi had been, and the drive to continue the new dynastic tradition of the ruler cult. Ptolemy III and Berenike II would follow in the footsteps of the Adelphoi and be the second royal couple to institute their own worship while living, but they built up to that assertion slowly, proclaiming themselves the *Theoi Euergetai* in 243/242 BCE, three to four years into their reign.²³² For Berenike, her personal divinity would first be shaped by the *Coma Berenices*, issued in 245 BCE, and assimilation with Greek and Egyptian deities.

The catasterism (καταστερισμός, an aetiological myth explaining the origins of a constellation) of Berenike's lock, described in Kallimachos' poem, and her burgeoning connection to Aphrodite were the first hints towards her divinity.²³³ Van Oppen de Ruiter

²³² See notes 159, 189, above, and 262, below, for the date of the *Theoi Euergetai* epithet.

²³³ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 90, 108; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 89, 111, 109. See also, Hauben, "Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques," 360, 362, 365. Hauben emphasizes that Berenike was the only person in history to have an officially recognized catasterism while living. Berenike I and Arsinoë II had both been apotheosized after their death, by Aphrodite and the Dioscuri respectively, but Berenike's brush with apotheosis occurred while she was still living, which also might be why it was just a lock of her hair, rather than her whole being, that was taken to the heavens.

further argues that the *Coma Berenices* emphasized Arsinoë II as Berenike's mother, especially in her guise of Arsinoë-Aphrodite, to show that Berenike inherited her divinity from her "mother," and the poem, in general, referenced the eventual deification of the royal couple together since the "astronomic symbolism intimates that the Ptolemaic king and queen, by virtue of their benevolent actions, deserve worship like the deities with whom they are assimilated or identified."²³⁴ This idea is further supported because, as mentioned above, Ptolemy III and Berenike II were the first of the Ptolemies to produce monumental works of art depicting themselves as inheriting their power and divinity from the preceding royal couples, the Soteres and Adelphoi.

While the catasterism of her lock set the tone for Berenike's deification, her assimilation with well-known, long-worshiped goddesses was the main stimulus towards her own divinity. Immediately following her wedding, Berenike was assimilated to Greek and Egyptian goddesses, including Aphrodite, Isis, and Demeter. Aphrodite was a straightforward, and perhaps expected, association for Berenike II, since Berenike I and Arsinoë II (and many other royal Hellenistic women) had already been assimilated to the goddess.²³⁵ Also, since Aphrodite was a goddess of marriage and matrimonial love, the *Coma Berenices* concisely set up such an assimilation by having the lock dedicated at the temple of Aphrodite-Zephyritis and by depicting the marital love between Ptolemy III and Berenike II.²³⁶

²³⁴ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 91-92, 99, 105, 109. He concludes on pages 105 and 109 that the "*raison d'être*" for the poem was to foreshadow the Euergetai's deification.

²³⁵ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 31-38; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 363-364, n. 18. See chapter 4.1 on Berenike I's association with Aphrodite. And see chapter 5 on Arsinoë's assimilation to Aphrodite and her associations with women and marriage.

²³⁶ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 31; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 58; Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 239; Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice," 363-364, 367; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 70, n. 107, 108.

Another Greek goddess that Berenike may have been associated with was Athena. Although Athena was not worshiped in Ptolemaic Egypt, the association may have been one she carried with her from Kyrene, since Athena was popularly thought to have been born there (Aesch. *Eum.* 292-293; Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.1308-1311) and the Kyrenaians worshiped a similar armed goddess (Hdt. 4.180).²³⁷ Berenike was like Athena in several ways, including that she honored her father above her mother and was a patroness of the arts, and these similarities may have been referenced by Kallimachos in both his *Hymn to Athena*, which Clayman argues should be interpreted as alluding to the new queen, and in the *Coma Berenices*, which Koenen contends relates Berenike to Athena before her marriage and then to Aphrodite after.²³⁸

In the Egyptian sphere, Isis was another goddess with whom Berenike had much in common. Isis, like Aphrodite, was associated with fragrant skin, and Berenike was similarly associated with the Kyrenaian perfume industry (Athen. 15.689A) from which she made her personal wealth.²³⁹ Additionally, in Kallimachos' *Victoria Berenices*, the poem connects the queen with Io, another goddess who had a long history of being identified with Isis (Hdt. 2.41.2; Diod. Sic. 1.24.8).²⁴⁰ Most importantly, and similarly again to Aphrodite, Isis was the Egyptian goddess of women and a patroness of married life. She was a goddess who was a

²³⁷ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 81-82; cf. Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 234.

²³⁸ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 81-82; cf. Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 234-235; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 107-108, n. 209; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 89. See also, pgs. 82-84/235-237 where Clayman argues that Kallimachos' *Hymn to Athena* should be interpreted as describing Berenike.

²³⁹ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 102-103; cf. Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock," 241-242. Similarly, Aphrodite was also associated with perfumes. Van Oppen de Ruyter, for example, says "Perfumes, mixed unguents, alabaster flasks, and mirrors are the prerogatives of Aphrodite. Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 89. See also, Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 110.

²⁴⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105.

wife and mother, and she shared mortal women’s experiences in that she had been married, loved her husband, and then mourned him after his death.²⁴¹ This was another straightforward association to make for Berenike, who, like Isis, was married to her “brother,” and had mourned him when he left for war by dedicating a lock of her hair, just as Isis had done (Plut. *Mor.*, *De Is. et Os.* 14).²⁴² Isis’ sacrifice of her hair had fertility connotations that, according to the story, originated the inundation.²⁴³

Berenike would also take on these fertility connotations when she became the *Thea Euergetis*, as will be explained below, but they first inspired an assimilation with Demeter, sometimes called Demeter-Isis, another goddess of fertility.²⁴⁴ This combining of two fertility goddesses was acknowledged by Herodotus, who noted that “according to the Greeks, Isis is the same as Demeter” (2.59; Diod. Sic. 1.25, 96). While the conflation of these goddesses is a significant example of the combining of Greek and Egyptian deities in association with royal deification, Demeter specifically may have inspired much of the iconography the queen would take for herself. Berenike would adopt the single cornucopia, with an ear of grain and other fruits, as her special emblem, as shown on her coinage.²⁴⁵

Accordingly, Berenike was assimilated to Isis-Demeter, and took on her fertility attributes. A papyrus, for example, calls Berenike “Isis, Mother of the Gods,” (*P. Petr.* 2.1), perhaps referencing the queen’s production of Ptolemaic heirs and the next generation of

²⁴¹ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 39; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 239.

²⁴² See note 201, above. Also, Isis and Berenike were both called the ἀδελφὴ καὶ γυνή (sister and wife) of Osiris and Ptolemy, respectively. As examples, for Isis, see Diod. Sic. 1.27.4; for Berenike see *OGIS* 56, 60, 61, 65.

²⁴³ See note 202, above.

²⁴⁴ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 84-85; Pantos, “Bérénice II Démèter,” 343-352; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 239.

²⁴⁵ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 177; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 85. See also, pgs. 85-89 in Clayman where she argues that Kallimachos’ *Hymn to Demeter* should be interpreted as describing Berenike. On the use of the ear of grain on Berenike’s coinage, see pgs. 159-160, above.

deities, and on oinochoai she was sometimes dressed in Isis' traditional clothing.²⁴⁶

Monumental depictions of the queen in the Egyptian style, including the Kôm el-Hisn stele relief (CG 22186; Fig. 1) and the Euergetes Gate, also make this connection as Berenike is shown wearing the vulture headdress of Mut, the sun disc enclosed by the cow horns of Hathor, the double feather plume of Ma'at, and the royal uraeus of Wadjet.²⁴⁷ All of the goddesses whose component parts make up this headdress also had associations with Isis in her role as fertility goddess and birther of children, so Berenike was assimilated to several Egyptian deities as well, including Mut, another goddess of fertility and the birthing of heirs.

Most importantly, Berenike was assimilated to Hathor. Hathor was the companion deity to Horus, the incarnation of the Pharaoh, and thus was a deity closely related to the queen and divine queenship.²⁴⁸ Hathor was a goddess of sexuality, childbirth, and marriage, similarly to both Aphrodite and Isis, and Llewellyn-Jones and Winder theorize that Berenike adopted Hathoric imagery in order to differentiate herself from the queens who came before her, especially Arsinoë II, who had also identified herself with Aphrodite and Isis.²⁴⁹ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder convincingly argue that Hathor would have been an appropriate goddess for Berenike to assimilate herself to, not only because she was also a goddess of fertility and marital love that would allow the queen to promote the same connotations as

²⁴⁶ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 29-30,47; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 101, n. 77, 170; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105; Peter Van Nuffelen, "Le culte des souverains hellénistiques: le gui de la religion grecque," *Ancient Society* 29 (1998-1999), 179. On the oinochoai of Berenike II, see pg. 184, below.

²⁴⁷ Van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis," 41-42; Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 256-260, fig. 3, fig. 5, fig. 6, and fig. 7; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes," 255, fig. C, fig. D, and fig. K; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 130, 135, fig. 5.

²⁴⁸ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 256.

²⁴⁹ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 255, 263. See also, van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 98-99.

with Aphrodite and Isis, but Hathor was a unexploited goddess that could provide Berenike with a unique image, separate from that of Arsinoë, and “Hathor [offered] Berenike a key into unlocking the codes of Pharaonic queenship, for Hathor is the lover of the King but also his divine protectress...a supportive counterpart... [Berenike] played the perfect Hathor to [Ptolemy’s] Horus”²⁵⁰ By assimilating herself to Hathor, Berenike could take on attributes that were unique, yet still familiar, and the association specifically coupled her with the king, an action that fit in well with the rest of their propaganda. Finally, van Oppen de Ruyter rightly points out that through all these various associations with Greek and Egyptian deities, Berenike could embody all the religious paradigms of female royalty, including eroticism and royal love (Aphrodite, Isis, Hathor), motherhood (Isis, Hathor, Demeter, Mut), fertility (Aphrodite, Isis, Demeter, Hathor, Mut), hunting (Neith, Artemis), warfare (Athena, Bastet), and justice (Isis, Demeter).²⁵¹

All the similarities Berenike had in common with these various goddesses, expressed both in the literature of the period and in relief carvings, indicated that she could claim divinity via her actions and expect reverence from both the Greek and Egyptian portions of the population because she played the part of a goddess.²⁵² This also meant that she could emphasize her unique attributes by assimilating herself to goddesses like Hathor, while also promoting dynastic continuance by taking on associations with the same goddesses as Arsinoë. For example, through her assimilation with various goddesses that were patronesses of women, Berenike could also become a protector of women in her kingdom, as shown in a

²⁵⁰ Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, “A Key to Berenike’s Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt,” 263-264.

²⁵¹ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 112-113.

²⁵² Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 108. This is similar to what van Oppen de Ruyter argued for the royal couple, see note 234, above, and van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 112.

passage by Hyginus, which describes Berenike giving an order to return a dowry. Hyginus explains that “And moreover, Eratosthenes says that [Berenike II] would have ordered returned to each of the young women of Lesbos the dowry having been left by their parents, which no one would have relinquished, and she established among them the right to petition.” (Hyg. *Poet. astr.* 2.24).²⁵³ Since Hyginus’ source was Eratosthenes, who lived at the court and tutored the children of Berenike, the story is likely accurate. Clayman argues that Lesbos would have been under Ptolemaic control at the time, so perhaps the petition was given to Berenike since it concerned women’s issues.²⁵⁴ Hyginus’ story, then, shows both Berenike’s political action as the supporter of her husband, but also that she had political avenues of her own to maintain, especially in regard to women, because of her place as both queen and protectress of women.

She may have also been associated with seafaring, like Arsinoë. Berenike’s son built her a shrine in Alexandria after her death at which she was worshiped as “Berenike the savior” (Βερενίκη Σώζουσα, *Berenike Sozousa*) in a cult for sailors (Zenobius 3.94), perhaps patterned on the worship of Arsinoë Zephyritis.²⁵⁵ Two mosaics from Thmouis (see Fig. 2) echo this



Fig. 2 Nautical Mosaic of Berenike II, from the Alexandria National Museum, Alexandria. Photo by the author.

²⁵³ “Eratosthenes autem dicit et virginibus Lesbiis dotem quam cuique relictam a parente nemo solverit, iussisse reddi, et inter eas constituisse petitionem.”

²⁵⁴ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 124.

²⁵⁵ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 47, n. 20, 136, n. 76; Clayman, “Berenice and her Lock,” 239, n. 38; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 105, 170; Savalli-Lestrade, “Les adieux à la βασίλισσα, Mise en scène en intrigue de la mort des femmes royales dan le monde hellénistique,” 198.

connection with seafaring in that they depict Berenike with a ship's prow crown, decorated with nautical imagery, and holding a mast as a scepter.²⁵⁶ Bronze coins issued from Marathos of Berenike after her death, which include the queen's profile on the obverse and a ships prow on the reverse, may also show her presentation as a naval deity.²⁵⁷ Although the mosaics and the coins are from a period after her death, the mosaics may have been copied from an image produced while she was living that has since been lost, indicating that her association with seafaring was put forth while she lived as part of the Euergetai's propaganda in which the queen, along with her husband, was a symbol of the reign's abundance, power, and wealth.²⁵⁸

All of these goddesses and attributes that Berenike was assimilated to meant that not only was she able to take on the associations previously held by two preceding queens, but she also expanded the avenues of goddess-assimilation to the greatest extent thus far. Although, Arsinoë's cults would remain the most popular throughout the Ptolemaic period, Berenike, in her assimilation to a wide variety of female deities and her ability to embody the religious paradigms of female royalty, would set an additional precedent for her succeeding queens. While the Ptolemaic queens of the second century would base their cults on that of Arsinoë, Berenike provided the means by which they could truly expand and justify their divinity via assimilation to a wide variety of goddesses, both Greek and Egyptian.

As with Arsinoë, this may prompt the question: How much control did Berenike have over her image and deification? Van Oppen de Ruiter convincingly argues that Berenike had

²⁵⁶ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 136, fig. 2; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 27, figs. 2a and b; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 60-64, plates 3.11 and 3.12.

²⁵⁷ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 137. For an example of this coin, see George Francis Hill, *A Catalogue of Greek Coins of Phoenicia* (London: British Museum, 1910), 122, no. 15, Pl. XV. 7.

²⁵⁸ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 27; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 141.

a hand in the propaganda surrounding the dedication of her lock, and through that, her own eventual personal deification. He proposes that Berenike would have initially offered her hair in a grand ceremony that she planned in cooperation with the court, her *philoï*, Konon and Kallimachos, and the native priests, and a second ceremony would have taken place for Konon and Kallimachos to present their discoveries and the poem to the king, upon his return in 245 BCE.²⁵⁹ The purpose of these grand presentations would have been to quell the rising unrest provoked by the poor flood season, until the king could return from war, and to present the first concepts of the deification of the royal couple.²⁶⁰ If the queen did have a hand in determining not only the ceremony surrounding the presentation of her lock, but also the way Kallimachos foreshadowed her personal divinity, that would demonstrate a level of political acumen on her part, an astuteness that can be seen in many of the other stories that survive from her life, and thus further support this theory.

More importantly, it would also indicate that the king and queen's eventual joint divinity was first predicated on that of the queen. While this may seem like a provocative statement, it should rather be another indication of Berenike's shrewd political judgement, and perhaps even Ptolemy's, if he was in league with her plans. Presenting an image of the queen's divinity before the king's had the double purpose of building on the popularity of the previous queen and taking advantage of the joy the people may have had at once again having a living queen, in order to subdue discontent and commend the royal couple to the

²⁵⁹ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 87-88, 110, 112, 115, 118-119, 129. Van Oppen de Ruiter notes that he based this theory on a brief mention in Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, "A Key to Berenike's Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt," 251. See also, Gutzwiller, "Callimachus' Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda," 363, 372-373, 384. Gutzwiller points more towards Berenike's *philoï* as the masterminds behind the dedication, but she still concludes that it was a powerful act of propaganda.

²⁶⁰ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 87-88, 110, 112, 115, 118-119, 129.

people. Although she did not act as regent while Ptolemy was away during the Third Syrian War, Berenike could still have played an important part in quelling the rising unrest by using her own personal image and endearing herself to the people via her offering of hair, her first act as the supporting spouse and *basilissa*-consort that she would be to Ptolemy for the next twenty-four years.

Furthermore, it seems she did this, not only through the *Coma Berenices* and its accompanying presentation ceremony, but also through the coinage that bore her image. If the earliest issuances of these coins were produced as commemorative pieces, on which her actions described in the *Coma Berenices* were alluded to through the Dioscuric imagery, as proposed above, then the combination of these two propagandistic vehicles, the poem and the accompanying coins, can be interpreted as shrewd political maneuverings by the queen and king to promote their deification and reduce discontent. As with much in Berenike's life, however, this theory that she played such a role in determining the method of her deification and her place in the reign's propaganda cannot be unquestionably confirmed with the evidence available, and even van Oppen de Ruiter comments that some of his points are conjecture.²⁶¹ Yet, it is a viable theory and one which is well supported by what is known about this queen's personality and rule.

In addition to being assimilated to many Greek and Egyptian deities, Berenike was worshiped before and after her death as part of the Ptolemaic ruler cult as one half of the *Theoi Euergetai* and through her individual cult as the *Thea Euergetis*. The royal couple officially took this epithet in 243/242 BCE.²⁶² Thereafter, they were made *synnaoi theoi* of

²⁶¹ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 119.

²⁶² See notes 159, 232, above. Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 118; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 189; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 134; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 254; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 49, 95, 105; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 53; Hauben,

the Egyptian gods with the Decree of Alexandria in 243 BCE (See Appendix F).²⁶³ As both Greek and Egyptian gods, the Euergetai were worshiped throughout their empire. For instance, the Ptolemaic garrison in the town of Itanos consecrated a temenos to the royal couple (*ICret.* III 4.4 = *SIG I*³, 463), and sanctuaries to the royal couple were dedicated by private individuals in Thera and Hermupolis.²⁶⁴ By the reign of the Euergetai, as the third deified ruling couple, the increasing popularity of the royal cult is visible through the large increase in private dedications to them.²⁶⁵

As part of the Alexandrian royal cult and as *synnaoi* to the Egyptian gods, the worship of the Euergetai would have been accompanied by rituals, both public and private. In the public sphere, it does not seem that Berenike had a personal festival, as Arsinoë did, but rather, as with all their public imagery, the Euergetai were coupled in their rule and celebrated in joint festivals. The Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) mentions the institution of a *panegyris* (a great festival) in honor of the Euergetai, which was held annually over five consecutive days at the expense of the state.²⁶⁶ It would be accompanied by a procession, perhaps a musical or athletic competition, and sacrifices in honor of the deified couple to

“Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” 365; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 121, n.4, 133-134, n. 63, 165; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 36, 118.

²⁶³ Yahia el-Masry, Hartwig Altenmüller, and Heinz-Josef Thissen, *Das Synodaldekret von Alexandria aus dem Jahre 243 v. Chr.* (Hamburg: Buske, 2012), 117-130; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 144-145, esp. n. 130. In earlier works it is regularly cited that the Euergetai were made *synnaoi* by the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) in 238 BCE, but it is now clear that the earlier Decree of Alexandria, perhaps the first of the major priestly synods under Ptolemy III, extended the royal couple that honor first. For use of the 238 BCE date, see Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 53; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 110; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 165, n. 39; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 66. See note 210, above, about the date typo in Koenen.

²⁶⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 96; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 134, 165; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 112. For the dedications at Thera, see *IG* 9.3, 421, 422, 863, 1333-1350, 1388.

²⁶⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 96-97.

²⁶⁶ Hauben, “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” 368. Hauben later (371) further emphasizes the importance of this event, since *panegyris* were, “fête normalement réservée aux ‘plus grands dieux,’” it brought the Euergetai to equal rank of the great gods. Additionally, this festival was proclaimed in addition to those already established by the Alexandria Decree. See Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 145.

give thanks for their benefactions.²⁶⁷ The Canopus Decree (*OGIS 56*) specifies that the festival include *stephanophories* (the carrying of crowns in procession), sacrifices, and libations.

This festival was important to the Euergetai because, according to the Decree, it put them on equal footing with the “other great gods” that already had yearly, state-sponsored festivals held in their honor. Additionally, it took place during the heliacal rising of Sothis/Sirius, the star of Isis, and on the first of Payni, the Egyptian religious New Year that heralded the gathering of crops and the beginning of the inundation. This meant that the Euergetai appropriated the patronage of the harvest and new flood, which effectively corroborated both their position as benefactors and the traditional role of pharaoh, and the association with Isis’ star, which was considered the generator of the new flood and the source of life and prosperity, also fit in well with their imagery of benefaction.²⁶⁸ Here a distinct connection can also be made specifically to Berenike, since her assimilation to Isis was, by this point, well established, and this was perhaps a special nod directly to the queen by the native priests.

Besides this major festival, the Canopus Decree (*OGIS 56*) also mentions that the Euergetai were already celebrated with three monthly *heortai*, which were smaller, single-day celebrations in which sacrifices and libations were offered in the larger sanctuaries throughout Egypt, totaling 36 simple celebrations per year.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, as a *synnaos thea*, Berenike was worshiped with daily offerings of incense and libations by the Egyptian

²⁶⁷ Chaniotis, “The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers,” 438.

²⁶⁸ Hauben, “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” 369; van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 104, 114; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 108.

²⁶⁹ Hauben, “Ptolémée III et Bérénice II, divinités cosmiques,” 368.

priests.²⁷⁰ In the personal sphere, similarly to Arsinoë, Berenike could be worshiped by the people in either her Greek or Egyptian guise, with small offerings or libations.

Consequently, the same type of oinochoai that were produced for Arsinoë were also dispensed for Berenike, during the period of 240-210 BCE (and subsequently for Arsinoë III, as will be described in chapter 7).²⁷¹ The oinochoai for Berenike depict the queen pouring a libation from a *phiale* and holding a single cornucopia, sometimes with ears of grain, a reference to her position as Benefactress.²⁷² Thompson also indicates that while Arsinoë II, and many subsequent queens in emulation of her, utilized the *dikeras*, Berenike II was only ever shown with a single cornucopia.²⁷³ Perhaps this was Berenike's way of differentiating herself from her pervasive adoptive mother.

As with the vessels produced for Arsinoë, the oinochoai of Berenike demonstrate the popular devotion to her, in that there was popular demand for vessels bearing the image of the new queen, and they represent the contemporary belief in the domestic protective power of the *basilissa*.²⁷⁴ Berenike's oinochoai are also unique because they reveal that her worship continued over time. Thompson posits that, while Arsinoë was always shown on her vessels as young and beautiful, since they were produced after her death, Berenike's oinochoai show the queen gradually aging and gaining weight as they were produced throughout the period of her reign, which lasted more than twenty years.²⁷⁵ This is significant because, as Thompson

²⁷⁰ Chaniotis, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers," 437.

²⁷¹ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 47.

²⁷² Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 169. The single cornucopia and ears of grain were the unique emblem adopted by Berenike on her coinage and other Greek-style representations, including these oinochoai, see notes 193, 245, above.

²⁷³ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 33.

²⁷⁴ See note 93, above. Savalli-Lestrade, "La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l'époque hellénistique," 69-70; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon*, 109.

²⁷⁵ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 60, 85-87; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 169.

indicates, there was a close relationship between the imagery used on the queens coinage and these faience vessels, with the artists who created them perhaps basing the queens' faience images on that of their coins.²⁷⁶ Thus, a similar pattern can be seen in the numismatic evidence of these queens, where a youthful, deified imagery was used for the coins of Arsinoë II, versus the more realistic portrait of Berenike, with her slight double-chin. Additionally, vessels produced of Berenike after her death, during the reign of her son, depict her with a stephane, an indication of her post-mortem divinity.²⁷⁷ Although Arsinoë is often credited with having the more popular cult and worship of the two queens, these oinochoai, and the fact that they were produced to be used in popular worship for over two decades in honor of a living queen, speak to Berenike's continual popularity throughout her life and the important position she held as a living queen during her and her husband's reign.

The daily and state-sponsored worship of the Euergetai, especially the changes instituted by the Canopus Decree, heralded an important transformation in the way the Ptolemaic ruler cult would be propagated from this point on. Hölbl points out that, for the previous Ptolemies and other Hellenistic monarchs, divinity was conferred by great deeds, but by the reign of the Euergetai, as shown by the Canopus Decree and the deification of both the royal couple and their young daughter Berenike Parthenos, divinity was now an innate quality of the royal family conferred on them by the Egyptian priesthood.²⁷⁸ By connecting the fertility of the land and prosperity of the people to the divinity of the royal couple, a concept that had long been intertwined with the position of pharaoh, but was now tied to the royal couple as a pair, it ensured that their divinity became a matter of birth, rather than deed,

²⁷⁶ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 34, 78.

²⁷⁷ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 29, 61.

²⁷⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 109.

and all future Ptolemaic couples would become part of the royal cult while living, since their divinity was now seen as intrinsic, rather than earned. The perceived inherent divinity of Ptolemaic royalty could be an additional reason why incestuous unions became the norm among all the succeeding Ptolemaic royal couples, with the exception of Ptolemy V who had no biological sister to wed. The practice of royal incest would transmit divinity undiluted to the children of such a union, and, in the case of Ptolemy V, his wife, Kleopatra I Syra, was titled his ἀδελφή καὶ γυνή (“sister and wife”), just as Berenike had been, to remove reminders of her foreign origin (see Part III, chapter 8).

This development of intrinsic divinity leads to one last point concerning Berenike and her religious worship.²⁷⁹ As one half of the ruling and divine pair, and as has been mentioned previously, Berenike II was the first queen to be shown accompanying her husband for a ceremony of the transference of power. On the Euergetes Gate in Karnak, she is shown accepting the power to rule with her husband, and from Khonsu they are given their formal titles.²⁸⁰ Berenike is titled as a female Horus (*Hr.t*), wearing the first Ptolemaic royal consort Horus name (also called a royal titulary), *Hr.t hk3.t ir.t n hk3.t* or “Female Horus, daughter of a ruler, who is born of a ruler” (see Appendix E).²⁸¹ While Arsinoë II had received a

²⁷⁹ It should also be briefly noted here that this development of “intrinsic divinity,” as I have termed it, may be unique to Ptolemaic Egypt. It does not seem that this idea of the rulers, especially the queens along with the kings, being born divine developed elsewhere in the Hellenistic kingdoms. There may be hints towards it with figures like Antiochos III and IV, and perhaps with some of the later Ptolemaic queens that married into the Seleukid kingdom and their children, but the idea of the ruling couple becoming inherently divine unquestionably developed first in Ptolemaic Egypt as a result of the influences from the Pharaonic tradition. This is a general conclusion, however, that would benefit from a more specific analysis, for which there is not room here.

²⁸⁰ See note 230, above. Berenike is also given this title in the Canopus Decree that is preserved on the Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186), according to Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 152, n. 36.

²⁸¹ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 135; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 85, 167; Quaegebeur, “The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty,” 98, n. 27; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 148, n. 163; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*, 179. The translation Minas provides is “Tochter eines

cartouche name after her death, the cartouche name was given to queens to mark their position as royal consorts. Only queens who ruled in their own right during the Pharaonic period, such as Hatshepsut and Tausret, were given a royal titulary.

Additionally, in some demotic sources, Berenike was named *t3 Pr- '3.t Brnjg3* or “the female-pharaoh Berenike” (see Appendix E).²⁸² These two titles have often been used as supporting evidence for the argument that Berenike ruled as regent while Ptolemy was away during the Third Syrian War.²⁸³ As was argued above, however, she did not rule as regent in either Kyrene, where a council saw to the day to day running of the kingdom, nor in Egypt. So, what was the purpose of these titles? As Berenike did not rule on her own and was instead almost always coupled with her husband in their public imagery, as has been shown throughout this chapter, her presentation with a royal titulary must have been an additional way of presenting Berenike II and Ptolemy III as one ruling unit. Since she was presented as equal to her husband in their monumental religious depictions, she needed a corresponding titular equality to complete the concept that they were a royal unit acting in harmony both religiously and politically.

Granting Berenike with this specific Horus name also had the added advantage of emphasizing her royal birth and minimizing her foreign origin.²⁸⁴ That this title was bestowed upon her with the purpose of downplaying her non-Ptolemaic origin is supported

Herrschers, die von einer Herrscherin geboren ist.” Lorber provides a slightly different translation: “ruler’s daughter, born of a female ruler.”

²⁸² Quaegebeur provides the demotic *t3 Pr- '3.t Brnjg3*, which he translates as “la femme-pharaon Bérénice,” or “the female-pharaoh Berenice.” Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes,” 255. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 85; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 163; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 37.

²⁸³ For example, see van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 37; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 152, n. 35.

²⁸⁴ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 148-149.

by Kleopatra I, the only other foreign-born queen of the dynasty, receiving an almost identical Horus name (see Appendix E and Part III, chapter 8). But, Berenike receiving a royal titulary has also led scholars to argue that she not only ruled as regent, but also served as a co-ruler to Ptolemy, much like the arguments that were made for Arsinoë II on account of her throne name (see chapter 5).

Similarly to Arsinoë, however, Berenike could be shown with kingly attributes in her Egyptian style depictions and titles because a precedent was set for it in the Egyptian tradition by powerful New Kingdom queens and by Arsinoë herself. As with her predecessor queen, Berenike was not yet a true co-ruler because of the attitudes and traditions of the Greek portion of the population over which she ruled.²⁸⁵ While she could advise her husband behind closed doors and act in support of him in several capacities, including in foreign policy and religious duties, as evidenced above, she was not an officially acknowledged co-ruler. She was not addressed alongside her husband in petitions, she was not included in the dating protocols (see Appendix C), and she was not listed in decrees as participating in governance, apart from benefactions.

It is in this instance, nevertheless, that Berenike's true importance as a Ptolemaic queen is the clearest. Conferring Berenike with titles like "female Horus" and "female pharaoh" produced an image of Berenike as the equal of Ptolemy. While, in reality, Ptolemy had the final say in governance and Berenike acted in a supporting role, Berenike being presented as equal to her husband in both dynastic imagery and title created a perception of equality. Just as a perception of power was created for Arsinoë, so too did Berenike present a perception of power and equality in rulership that the later queens of the dynasty would

²⁸⁵ For an explanation of the double cultural milieu that both Arsinoë and Berenike had to work within, see pg. 127, above. See also at note 174, above.

emulate, and Berenike, in the titles she was presented with, acted as the model for the later co-rulerships of the dynasty, even though she did not truly participate in one herself.²⁸⁶

Ultimately, just like Arsinoë, Berenike was limited by her position as a supporting queen-figure in the public political power she could wield, and she was restricted from being officially recognized as a co-ruler. The presentation of her with kingly attributes, equal to those of her husband, however, continued the normalization processes that had started with her predecessor and that would be emulated by her successors. Berenike continued and expanded the model of a Ptolemaic queen who was educated, wealthy, and maintained a network of *philoï*. By birthing six children in the first seven years of her marriage, Berenike fulfilled the ultimate duty of the queen in producing heirs who would solidify the dynasty and ensure its stability; although, that stability would be thwarted through no fault of her own via the murderous actions of her son and his advisors (see next chapter).

Berenike was a patroness of the arts and sportsmanship, and she was active in social and religious benefactions. She acted as support for her husband both politically, by helping to define their reign's propaganda, serving as an advisor to Ptolemy, and travelling with him to temples throughout the kingdom, and religiously, by participating in the religious duties of rulership. Her actions, however, were always coupled with those of her husband. Whereas Ptolemy II could rule without his queen by using her image to his advantage, Berenike II was an integral part of Ptolemy III's reign. She was deified alongside him, and her personal divinity, first presented by the catasterism of her lock and her assimilation to many Greek and Egyptian goddesses, predicated their joint divinity. While Arsinoë was the vanguard of

²⁸⁶ Van Oppen de Ruiter, for example, elucidates that Kleopatra VII used many of the epithets of Arsinoë II, and Kleopatra I adopted those of Berenike I, actions which “reveal the authority and popularity that Arsinoë II and Berenice II commanded in the Lagid kingdom.” Van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis,” 122.

queenly power and the model on which Ptolemaic queenship would be based, Berenike, as a living queen who ruled with her husband for over two decades, was able to successfully put that model into practice and expand upon it. The combination of achievements by these two women made the power that later queens wielded possible.

7. Arsinoë III: The Heiress to a Murder

Berenike II was succeeded by her daughter, Arsinoë III, and, while Berenike's actions led to increased power for queens in the long-term, they had repercussions that her daughter had to face in the short-term. Arsinoë, similar to the first Ptolemaic queen of her name, is a *basilissa*-consort about whom little material survives. It seems she, and her brother who would become her spouse, were raised in what should have been a pleasant family dynamic. Ptolemy III and Berenike II's reign was one unmarred by marital scandal or the succession issues that plagued the reigns of Euergetes' predecessors. The great love the Euergetai had for their children is demonstrated, for example, by the deification and mourning proclaimed for Berenike Parthenos in the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56). Furthermore, there is no convincing evidence that Ptolemy III kept mistresses, as his father had, and Bevan says, "perhaps the high-spirited Berenice of Kyrene was a woman of force enough to keep her husband to herself," a sentiment echoed by Macurdy and subsequent scholars.²⁸⁷

After Ptolemy III died in 222 BCE (Polyb. 2.71.3; Just. *Epit.* 29.1.5), that pleasant family dynamic fell apart as Ptolemy IV took the throne and, with the guidance of his advisor Sosibios, began to murder members of the royal family.²⁸⁸ First, Ptolemy and/or his advisors assassinated his uncle, Lysimachos (Polyb. 15.25.2), and then his own younger brother, Magas (Polyb. 5.34.1, 5.36.1, 15.25.2), who was popular with the army (Plut. *Vit. Cleom.* 33.3). Berenike II followed as the third victim (Polyb. 5.36.1, 6, 15.25.2; Just. *Epit.* 29.1.5;

²⁸⁷ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 205; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 133; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 54; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 172, n. 67, 175, n. 80; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 50; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 242-243. Pomeroy and Ogden posit that Oenathe, the mother of Agathokles and Agathokleia, was Ptolemy III mistress, but Clayman refutes this claim, see n. 67.

²⁸⁸ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 172-173. Clayman explains that Sosibios was the "Head of Affairs" (Polyb. 5.35.7) for Ptolemy IV, a position he inherited from his father, who had served under Ptolemy II, and from his own service to Ptolemy III.

Zenob. 5.94). Some scholars have proposed that Berenike was included in this familial purge because she supported her son Magas as a possible candidate for the throne.²⁸⁹ This theory can be disregarded, since, considering the more than two decades Berenike helped her husband solidify their reign, it is unlikely she would have undone all their work after her husband's death. Rather, Polybios provides us with insight into why she was murdered when he mentions that the plotters were "in great fear of their project failing chiefly owing to the high courage of Berenice" (5.36.1). Berenike, who had served as queen for twenty-four years, was an important, well-respected, and maybe even domineering figure at court that needed to be removed before Ptolemy IV and his advisors could effectively wield power on their own.

Arsinoë III, then, was the daughter of an involved and attentive queen, from whom she must have learned much, but she also must have learned from her mother's death. There are no extant sources that indicate how Arsinoë reacted to or what her role might have been in the murder of her powerful mother, but it seems she retreated to a position of supportive queen figure, either voluntarily or by force, and undertook only few of the public actions that had been the norm for her mother and adoptive grandmother. Her image would be used to maintain the propaganda of the dynasty that had been established by the Adelphoi and Euergetai, but only one instance, the Battle of Raphia, provides an indication of the queen she might have been, after which she was again relegated to the shadows until her own murder in 204 BCE.

²⁸⁹ Clayman, "Berenice and her Lock, 243; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 172, n. 67; Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World*, 150; Anne Bielman-Sánchez and Virginie Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," in *Power Couples in Antiquity: Transversal Perspectives*, Anne Bielman-Sánchez, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2019), 69, n. 1.

Unlike Arsinoë II and Berenike II, there are no major controversies that surround the scholarship on Arsinoë III, because there is not a great deal that has been written about her. What is known about her life can be summed up quickly and is completely intertwined with what is known about her brother-husband. Ptolemy IV became *basileus* at the death of his father in 222 BCE, and he was crowned Egyptian pharaoh in 221 BCE. Ptolemy IV was about twenty (perhaps as old as twenty-two) at the time of his ascension, and Arsinoë would have been around twenty-five.²⁹⁰ During the period of 221-220 BCE, Ptolemy and Arsinoë were married. The earliest scholarship proposes that Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III married after he returned from Raphia, after 217 BCE, but this argument was based on readings of Polybios (5.83) and Third Maccabees (1.1) that describe Arsinoë as Ptolemy's sister, rather than as his wife.²⁹¹ More recent evidence, including the Stele Vienna 153 and *P. Dem. Vatic. 2037B*, prove they were married prior to the outbreak of the war in or before 220 BCE.²⁹²

Prior to their marriage, there is little evidence concerning Arsinoë's childhood, but it can be safely assumed that she received a Hellenistic education, similar to the education received by her mother and adoptive grandmother. Eratosthenes, who became the head librarian in Alexandria after Apollonios (POxy. 1241), acted as the tutor of Ptolemy III and

²⁹⁰ On the birth years of Ptolemy III and Berenike II's children, see note 153, above. Hölbl cites an age of 20 for Ptolemy IV, but by van Oppen de Ruiter and Bennett's calculations he may have been closer to 22. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 127; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 21, 31-33; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 171; Bennett, "The Children of Ptolemy III and the Date of the Exedra of Thermos," 145; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 69, n. 3.

²⁹¹ For the early scholarship, see Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 128; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 230-231; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 321-322; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 138; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 118, n. 88. The early theory of a later wedding could also have developed because, prior to Bennett's thorough analysis of the Exedra of Thermos (see previous note), Arsinoë was thought to be younger than Ptolemy IV, rather than older. As Ogden mentions, the earlier theory also claimed that they waited to marry because she had not yet reached maturity. This can be discounted since Arsinoë was older than her brother. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 82.

²⁹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 127, n. 3, 168, n. 65; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe III." Hölbl also cites *SEG* 16.860 = *SB* 8.10017.

Berenike II's children.²⁹³ It does not appear that he was only tutor to the Euergetai's male children, since Eratosthenes' final work was a biography of and eulogy to Arsinoë III (Athen. 7.276A-C; *FGrHist.* 241 F16), which also indicates his respect and admiration for the queen.²⁹⁴ Although other Ptolemaic queens were referenced regularly in court poetry and literature, Arsinoë III appears to be the only Ptolemaic queen who received an individual biography (hers is, at least, the only one that is mentioned in the extant sources), which is an important point I will return to below.

In the same passage in which Athenaeus mentions the queen's biography, he also tells the story of Eratosthenes and Arsinoë III walking by a festival in Alexandria (Athen. 7.276A-C). This anecdote may also indicate that Arsinoë III patronized court scholars, like Eratosthenes. Ptolemy IV was a lover of literature, perhaps thanks to his tutoring by Eratosthenes and his parents' efforts to build the Library in Alexandria, and an appreciation for the arts may have been an interest the sibling-couple had in common. For instance, Ptolemy dedicated a temple and cult to Homer (Ael. *VH* 13.22), and the royal couple patronized a festival to the Muses in Boeotian Thespeia.²⁹⁵ For the festival to the Muses, Ptolemy and Arsinoë gave the Thespians 25,000 silver drachmae and both wrote letters in support of the undertaking, which were engraved on a stele at the site.²⁹⁶ Additionally, on the Apotheosis of Homer Stele (BM 1819,0812.1), Arsinoë is shown crowning the poet.²⁹⁷

²⁹³ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 45, 57.

²⁹⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 133.

²⁹⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 133; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 117, n. 81; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 174; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 74-75.

²⁹⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 74, n. 34. On these letters, see at note 344, below.

²⁹⁷ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 60.

Although she may have enjoyed the literary arts, there is no surviving evidence that indicates her appreciation of the arts extended to sportsmanship, in the way it had for her foremothers. That is not to say she did not participate in chariot racing, as many Hellenistic women did, there is just no surviving evidence that proves she either had a desire to maintain a team, was permitted to take part in the tradition, or, if she did participate, won any victories. One could assume that, with the example set by her mother, Arsinoë would have been keen to earn victories of her own, but, as with modern children, her mother's grand achievements, for which she was commemorated in a religious cult, could have conversely dampened her daughter's enthusiasm for the sport. Without additional evidence, it is impossible to confirm either option.

Similarly to Arsinoë II and Berenike II, Arsinoë III also cultivated *philoï*, including Eratosthenes and possibly Josephus, a Palestinian farmer, and his son Hyrcan (Joseph. *AJ* 12.170-174).²⁹⁸ Her ability to build a *philoï* network in the way her mother and adoptive grandmother had, however, may have been restricted by Ptolemy IV's advisors, Sosibios and Agathokles. As mentioned in Part I, chapter 2.3, beginning with Ptolemy IV, a transition occurred during which Ptolemaic kings came to rely less on traditional *philoï* and more on ministers born of the high-ranking Alexandrian families. Sosibios had earned distinction under Ptolemy III, so he was already in a powerful position to influence the young king when Ptolemy ascended to the throne.²⁹⁹ Sosibios was joined by Agathokles as another advisor (Polyb. 5.63.1; 14.11.1), and Ptolemy also took his advisor's sister, Agathokleia, as his mistress (Polyb. 14.11.5; Just. *Epit.* 30.1.7; Plut. *Vit. Cleom.* 33.2), which allowed their

²⁹⁸ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 62; Savalli-Lestrade, "La place des reines à la cour et dans le royaume à l'époque hellénistique," 63, n. 17.

²⁹⁹ See note 288, above.

mother, Oenanthe, to play a role in courtly life (Just. *Epit.* 30.2.3-5; Plut. *Vit. Cleom.* 33.2). Hölbl posits that Agathokles was a childhood friend of Ptolemy, and the family seems to have had a place at court because they were distant relatives of Berenike II, descendants of her father Magas' sister, Theoxena.³⁰⁰ The new king would have grown up interacting with Agathokles and Agathokleia, making the jump from friends to advisors and lovers an easy one. Agathokleia became his mistress at some point prior to Arsinoë birthing Ptolemy V in 210 BCE, because, according to Polybios, Agathokleia acted as wet nurse to the royal heir (15.31.13), which also indicates she had recently had a child, presumably by Ptolemy IV.³⁰¹

Polybios also relates that Ptolemy left the running of the kingdom to his administrators, primarily Sosibios and Agathokles (5.32). While they were able to handle many of the governmental and diplomatic issues well, they may have been especially restrictive towards the queen, not only because she was the daughter of the influential Berenike II, but also because she was a rival to Agathokleia. As a Ptolemaic queen and a Hellenistic royal woman, Arsinoë would have been expected to participate in not only artistic and athletic patronage, but also religious euergetism. Yet, there is little evidence that survives of her benefactions, religious or otherwise, with the exception of her patronage of the festival to the Muses, mentioned above. It is unclear whether this is a matter of the material not surviving the ravages of time or evidence of her further restriction by Ptolemy's advisors.

Arsinoë was commemorated in private dedications, but official records of her own actions seem to be missing. Hazzard, for example, cites several dedications that were made

³⁰⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 128; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 175.

³⁰¹ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 81-82, 236. If Agathokleia did have a child by Ptolemy IV, there is no record of what happened to that child.

by private individuals in honor of the king and queen in Alexandria, Thebes, and other parts of the kingdom.³⁰² This practice is a continuation from their parents' reign where the king and queen were mentioned together in honorary dedications throughout their empire.³⁰³

Hazard also comments that in many of the decrees made specifically by Ptolemy in which Arsinoë should have been included, at least by being mentioned in the body of the document as one half of the deified royal couple, she was left out. For example, in a decree issued by Ptolemy to regulate the *technitai* of Dionysos (*C.Ord.Ptol.* 29), the king speaks only in the first person singular and does not mention the queen.³⁰⁴

Additionally, Polybios (15.25.9) and John of Antioch (Frg. 54) both remark that Arsinoë was insulted throughout her life. Polybios (14.11.5) and Athenaeus (13.577A) also reference the negative influence wielded by Agathokleia over Ptolemy. It is suspicious, then, that so much material survives as evidence of Arsinoë II and Berenike II's patronage and benefactions, when almost none survives for Arsinoë III, who was queen for over fifteen years. The common denominator here seems to be the actions of Ptolemy's advisors and his overbearing mistress, who must have somehow curtailed Arsinoë's public activity or cowed her to the point of wishing to remain out of the public eye.

³⁰² Hazard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 118, n. 90, 91. See also, Hölbl who mentions a statue of the *Philopatores* erected in Boeotia. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 132. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton also mention dedications at Amphiareion and Delphi. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 74-75.

³⁰³ See note 264, above.

³⁰⁴ Hazard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 119, n. 95, 96. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo correctly identify that queens were not included in official royal dating protocols until the regency of Kleopatra I (see Appendix C and Part III, chapter 8), so Arsinoë III would not have been included in this document's introductory lines. I think Hazard is referencing here that a queen's actions could still be coupled with the king's in the body of official documents, as was often the case with Ptolemy III and Berenike II, even if she was not included in the official introductory protocol. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 149.

Since Sosibios and Agathokles seemed to understand that the basic public image of the king and queen needed to be maintained in order to avoid popular unrest, however, some of the public, dynastic imagery that paired the king and queen, which had become the norm during the reign of the Adelphoi and Euergetai, was reproduced for Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, especially the religious and monumental imagery. For example, although she was left out of important decrees issued for the purpose of governance, her image was still utilized alongside that of the king on temples, such as the Horus Temple at Edfu.³⁰⁵ In these scenes, Arsinoë is depicted in traditional queenly regalia, standing behind her husband in the supporting role as he offers to the gods, all of which fits well with the Ptolemaic ideology of the pharaoh and his queen consort that had been developed during previous reigns.

The most intriguing depiction of Arsinoë, however, is also her earliest and only monumentally preserved individual religious dedication. Similarly to her mother, Arsinoë dedicated a lock of her hair at the time of her marriage as an indication of her transition into married life and womanhood.³⁰⁶ An inscription commemorating the event states: “To you Artemis, wielder of bow and painful arrows, Arsinoë, the maiden daughter of Ptolemy, shorn of her lovely tress, grants this lock of her own hair in your fragrant shrine” (Damag. *Epigr.* 1= *Anth. Pal.* 6.277).³⁰⁷ As with Berenike’s dedication of her lock, this may have been Arsinoë’s way of participating in a time-honored tradition and ingratiating herself to the

³⁰⁵ Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 49; Quaegebeur, “Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes,” 255, n. 59, 60; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201. These scenes will be analyzed in greater detail below, see pgs. 202-203.

³⁰⁶ On the practice of shearing of hair to mark the transition from childhood into adulthood and married life, see note 204, above.

³⁰⁷ Van Oppen de Ruyter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 86-87; van Oppen de Ruyter, “The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis,” 359; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 109, n. 213; Gutzwiller, “Callimachus’ Lock of Berenice: Fantasy, Romance, and Propaganda,” 372; Georges Nachtergaele, “Bérénice II, Arsinoë III et l’offrande de la boucle,” *Chronique d’Égypte* 55 (1980), 240, 244-245.

people. Since this action was so early in the royal couple's reign, it is impossible to determine whether it was initiated by Arsinoë, with a desire to follow in her mother's footsteps, or directed by Ptolemy's advisors. Either way, it was an effective propagandistic act that may have been meant to create a perception of continuity in the wake of Berenike's murder.

Along with this traditional act of religious piety, Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III were incorporated into the Egyptian branch of the ruler cult as the *Theoi Philopatores* and as *synnaoi theoi* to the Egyptian gods the same year as their marriage.³⁰⁸ By 216/215 BCE, after the Battle of Raphia and the subsequent benefactions made by Ptolemy IV to the priests and temples described in the Raphia Decree (CG 31088/50048), they were also incorporated into the Alexandrian Greek branch of the ruler cult.³⁰⁹ Their almost immediate inclusion in the Egyptian royal cult demonstrates the changes mentioned in chapter 6, that after the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) the divinity of the royal couple came to be seen as an inherent quality, but their inclusion in the Greek branch of the cult only after the Battle of Raphia also shows there was still a place for great deeds in the deification process as well.³¹⁰

As one half of the *Theoi Philopatores*, and similarly to Arsinoë II and Berenike II, Arsinoë III was worshiped daily in the temples, but her worship was coupled exclusively with that of her brother-husband; she was not deified in her own right as Arsinoë II (the *Thea Philadelphos*) and Berenike II (the *Thea Euergetis*) had been (see Appendix D).³¹¹ The Raphia

³⁰⁸ Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 54; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 168-169, n. 65. Hölbl cites a demotic text, *P. Dem. Vatic.* 2037B, dated to the year of their wedding or shortly after, to prove they were included in the Egyptian branch of the royal cult.

³⁰⁹ On Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III's induction into the Greek branch of the ruler cult, see Part I, chapter 3.5. Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 54. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 169.

³¹⁰ On the development of the inherent divinity of the royal couple, see pgs. 185-186, above.

³¹¹ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 89. Hölbl does mention that she was titled the "Thea Philopator," alongside her husband, the "Theos Philopator," in an inscription from Koile-Syria. This, however, is another

Decree (CG 31088/50048), for example, states that statues of Ptolemy and Arsinoë would be erected in the temples of Egypt, and offerings would be made to them three times per day.³¹² Since Arsinoë was left out of many pronouncements in which she should have been included, the next portion of the Decree, where the festival and procession of the newly proclaimed gods are described, only Ptolemy is named.³¹³ Arsinoë III was not granted an individual eponymous priestesshood until after her death when she was deified by her son in 199/198 BCE, and that priestesshood was simply called a *hiereia*, a priestess of Arsinoë Philopator (ἱερεία Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπατορός), rather than having an individualized title, as with the *athlophors* of Berenike II and the *kanephoros* of Arsinoë II (see Appendix D).³¹⁴ Finally, no coins were minted bearing her image and emphasizing her religious importance, as had been done for preceding queens.³¹⁵

Arsinoë somewhat stood on her own in one particular area of religious worship, and it was the only area of worship that was not strictly controlled by the state. Similarly to Arsinoë II and Berenike II, Arsinoë III could be worshiped by the people in either her Greek or Egyptian guise with small offerings or libations. Accordingly, the same oinochoai that were popularly sold for Arsinoë II and Berenike II were also dispensed for Arsinoë III, and she was the last queen for whom they were produced.³¹⁶ I use the clarifier “somewhat,” in regard

example of an honorary dedication by a private individual, following the pattern set by the Euergetai, rather than a Ptolemaic sanctioned issuance. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 170.

³¹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 162.

³¹³ See note 304, above.

³¹⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 165, 171; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 57-58.

³¹⁵ The only coins issued by Ptolemy IV that might have alluded to Arsinoë III were a jugate type bearing an image on the obverse of Serapis and Isis. But, Lorber notes that, while there might be an ideological or symbolic association with the royal couple, the portraits on the coin are not recognizable as the royal pair. Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 236-237, Fig. 4.1a-b. Furthermore, if the jugate imagery was meant to represent the royal couple, this is additional evidence that their divinity was exclusively coupled. The only coins that can be confidently attributed as an image of Arsinoë III were minted after her death by her son. See, for example, Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 84, cat. no. 75.

³¹⁶ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 169; Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 73. Thompson’s catalogue includes three fragments that she identified as belonging to Kleopatra I, but Ashton

to her popular worship and oinochoai, because the vessels that bear an image of Arsinoë III do not bear her name, as noted by Thompson.³¹⁷ Whereas previous oinochoai bore the names of the queens for whom they were produced, the vessels that can be attributed to Arsinoë III are done so via either imagery identified with the queen or inscriptions that, for unknown reasons, bear only the name of her husband, Ptolemy Philopator. These vessels were produced popularly in private workshops, but Thompson posits that, since they were produced for use in conjunction with the ruler cult, the imagery may have required official approval.³¹⁸ This could be the reason some of the Arsinoë III oinochoai bear the name of her husband, instead of her own, especially if the king's advisors were attempting to curtail her public activity.

Nevertheless, as with the previous two queens, these vessels represent a popular demand for religious objects bearing Arsinoë's image, and they demonstrate that the *basilissa* was still seen as a protectress of the domestic sphere, even if she was not as publicly active as her predecessors. Like the other vessels of this type, Arsinoë III's oinochoai were made of faience and depict the queen in Greek dress, holding a single cornucopia, but her right arm either holds a *phiale*, like the images of her mother, or is raised, perhaps in a "martial pose" to commemorate her role in the Battle of Raphia (explained below).³¹⁹ These vessels may also be an indication that she was assimilated to goddesses, like Aphrodite, Isis, and Demeter, as Arsinoë II and Berenike II had been. For her mother and adoptive

argues against that identification and confirms Arsinoë III was the last queen for whom the oinochoai were produced. Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 61, 92-93, 165-167, cat. nos. 122-124; van Oppen de Ruiter, "The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis," 320.

³¹⁷ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 87, 119.

³¹⁸ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 87, 119.

³¹⁹ Thompson, *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience: Aspects of the Ruler-Cult*, 26, 89, 160, cat. no. 109, pls. D, 38; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 215, n. 161; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, fig. 6. On the Battle of Raphia and Arsinoë's role in it, see at notes 334, 335, below.

grandmother, these oinochoai represented a connection with Isis, either in their clothing or inscriptions, and Arsinoë III is similarly shown holding a cornucopia, which for her mother was a symbol of benefaction and association with Demeter.³²⁰ As with much that has been described for this queen, if these oinochoai did represent an assimilation to any of these goddesses, it seems to be on account of the expectations of the populace that wanted to worship her, as they had done for her predecessors, rather than an officially sanctioned assimilation put forth by the state or her *philoï*. Hints of officially sanctioned assimilations are only available in the monumental depictions of the queen in temples.

Although Arsinoë III was not worshiped individually in the official sphere while alive, her popularity and popular worship could have been inspired by her early visibility in dedicating a lock of hair and her presence on large public monuments where she was regularly depicted alongside the king. In fact, of all the queens thus far, Arsinoë III was attested to more often than any of her predecessors on surviving monuments. According to Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, Berenike I was represented on Egyptian monuments three times, Arsinoë II thirty-four (with eighteen occurring during Ptolemy II's reign), and Berenike II sixty-two times (with forty-six during her reign); in contrast, Arsinoë III was depicted on temples ninety-eight times (with ninety-two dating from her reign).³²¹ Although it appears Sosibios and Agathokles may have restricted Arsinoë III's ability to act as freely as her predecessors had, they were shrewd advisors who maintained the dynastic and cultic practices of the Soteres, Adelphoi, and Euergetai.

³²⁰ On Arsinoë II's oinochoai, see chapter 5, note 93; on Berenike II's see chapter 6, notes 246, 272, above.

³²¹ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 77.

Accordingly, just as Ptolemy III and Berenike II were shown inheriting their power from the deified royal couples who came before them, so too were Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III depicted in scenes of the transference of power on Egyptian temples.³²² Quaegebeur maintains that continuing from Ptolemy III, the current royal couple was always presented as the heir of the preceding royal couple.³²³ For example, Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III are shown receiving power from their ancestors on the Horus Temple at Edfu.³²⁴ In many of the scenes at Edfu, Ptolemy is assimilated to Horus and Arsinoë was correspondingly associated with Hathor, as the king's divine consort.³²⁵ In the transference of power scenes, Arsinoë was depicted as the ritual equal and supporting spouse of her husband. Accordingly, and similarly to her mother, her depiction in the transference of power scenes indicated that the power to rule was inherited by the royal couple, not the king alone.³²⁶

Likewise, a stele from the British Museum (BM 1054) depicts Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, in identical attire to Ptolemy III and Berenike II on the Euergetes Gate, standing before a local triad of deities as *synnaoi* and inheriting power from their ancestors.³²⁷ This imagery of the transferal of power was, by the reign of the Philopatores, a necessity to

³²² On transference of power scenes, see pgs. 170-172, above. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 168; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes," 255; cf. Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 134. See also, Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 64. She notes that Ptolemy IV's ancestors were also listed in the temple of Thoth in Dakke and on twenty foundation plaques from Tanis. After Ptolemy IV, transference of power would more often be represented by written ancestor lines, rather than scenes depicting all the ancestors, since by Ptolemy VI the line was getting quite long. This will be discussed in greater detail in Part III, chapters 9.3, pg. 297, and 10.3, pg. 358.

³²³ Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 98, n. 28.

³²⁴ Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 49; Quaegebeur, "Reines Ptolemaïques et Traditions Égyptiennes," 255, n. 59, 60; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 79-80.

³²⁵ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201. On Berenike II's assimilation to Hathor and Hathor's connection to divine queenship, see note 248, above.

³²⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 79-80. See note 231, above.

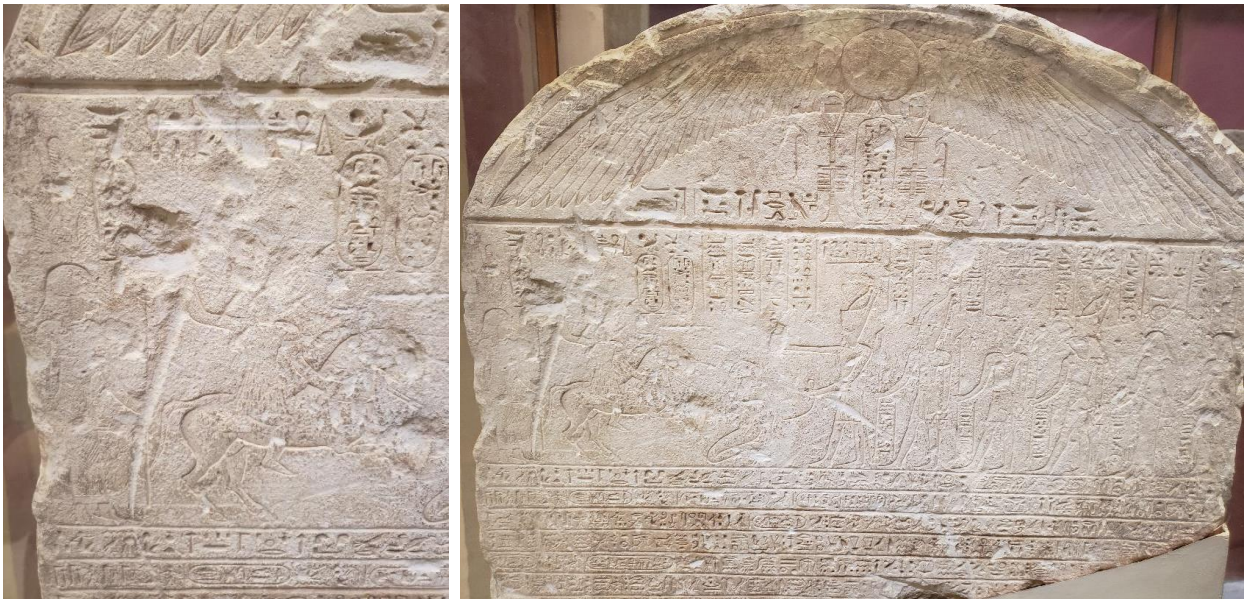
³²⁷ Quaegebeur, "The Egyptian Clergy and the Cult of the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 98; Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 49; van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 38, n. 111.

dynastic continuance, and a key part of that imagery, due to the actions of the Euergetai, was that the king and queen be shown together and of equal standing. At the same time, Arsinoë is assimilated to Isis and Hathor in this image by wearing the queenly Hathoric crown and the knotted Isis garment, which also demonstrates that the continued assimilation of the queen to historic goddesses was an important supplement to the royal couple's personal divinity.³²⁸

The Raphia Decree also echoes the power transference in the way it describes the honors bestowed on the royal couple:

It has come into the hearts of the priests of the temples of Egypt: to increase the afore-existing honours rendered in the temples to king Ptolemy, the ever-living, the beloved of Isis, and to his Sister, queen Arsinoë, the Father-loving Gods, and those rendered to their parents, the Benefactor Gods, and those rendered to their forefathers, the Gods Adelphoi and the Saviour Gods (CG 31088/50048).

At the top of both copies of the decree, the Memphis Stele (CG 31088, see Hölbl, Fig. 6.1) and the Pithom Stele, No. II (CG 50048, see Figs. 3.1, 3.2), Ptolemy IV is depicted on



Figs. 3.1 and 3.2. Left, close-up image of Arsinoë III standing behind Ptolemy IV on the Pithom Stele, No. II. Right, full image of the arch of the stele. The Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 50048). Photos by the author.

³²⁸ Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201.

horseback, smiting Egypt's enemies, and Arsinoë III stands behind him in the supportive queenly role, wearing the Ma'at double-plumed headdress and uraeus that signifies a deified queen.³²⁹

Although Arsinoë was left out of many official dedications in writing, her image was still utilized to continue the coupled dynastic imagery of the *basileus*-pharaoh and *basilissa*-consort. In order to continue maintaining this image of a dynastic unit, as had been done for Berenike II, Arsinoë was also titled “ruler” (*hk3.t*) at the temple of Horus at Edfu (see Appendix E).³³⁰ Similarly to her mother, this title was likely conferred on Arsinoë to show her religious importance and present her as the deified equal of her brother-husband; although, she may have earned the title in two additional ways.

First, Arsinoë earned the title by ensuring the stability and continuance of the dynasty by producing an heir. Arsinoë gave birth to their only child, Ptolemy V, around 210/209 BCE (*OGIS* 90; *P. Gurob.* 12), which satisfied her main duty as queen.³³¹ Ptolemy V was also the first Ptolemaic heir born of an incestuous union, even though the imagery and vocabulary of brother-sister marriage had been in use since the Adelpoi. Producing a second, female child would have fully ensured the endurance of the dynasty and the maintenance of Ptolemaic incest practices, but Ptolemy's preference for his mistress and the death of both Ptolemy and Arsinoë within five years of their first child's birth may have prevented further offspring.³³²

³²⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 163, Fig. 6.1. On the importance of her placement on both CG 31088 and CG 50048, see note 352, below.

³³⁰ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 112; Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*, 179.

³³¹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 236; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 133; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V.”

³³² Ogden credits the production of only one child to the low fertility of incestuous unions, a theory which Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton also mention, but Ager thoroughly refutes this argument. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 81; Ager, “The Power of Excess,” 172; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, “Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight,” 82.

The second way Arsinoë ensured the stability of the dynasty was through her actions during the Battle of Raphia, and it is through the events there that a glimpse of her true character may be revealed. The Battle of Raphia was the final engagement of the Fourth Syrian War (219-217 BCE). The tensions that would lead to the Fourth Syrian War were instigated by the newly ascended Antiochos III (222-187 BCE) when he attacked Ptolemaic possessions in Koile-Syria, and the war officially began in 219 BCE when Antiochos reconquered Seleukia in Pieria (Polyb. 5.59.1-61.2; Just. *Epit.* 30.1.4), which had been taken by Ptolemy III during the Third Syrian War.³³³ In 217 BCE, Ptolemy IV and Antiochos III resumed their campaigns after the winter break and met at Raphia (Polyb. 5.79-80, 84-86; Just. *Epit.* 30.1.6), which ultimately culminated in Ptolemaic victory. Arsinoë accompanied Ptolemy on this campaign, and according to Polybios was present at the battle (Polyb. 5.83.3, 84.1, 87.6).³³⁴ When the tide of battle turned against the Ptolemaic forces, it was Arsinoë III who addressed the troops, “marching up and down the ranks of the soldiers with her hair unbraided, call[ing] to the soldiers with pity and tears in her eyes to fight courageously for their wives and children, and promis[ing] each of them two *minae* of gold if they went on to victory” (3 *Macc.* 1.4; Polyb. 5.83).³³⁵

This image of Arsinoë rallying the troops to victory is reminiscent of her Macedonian foremothers, including Olympias and Adea-Eurydike, who also joined their troops on the battlefield (see Part I, chapter 1.2).³³⁶ The story is also supported by the Raphia Decree (CG

³³³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 128-129.

³³⁴ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 133; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 310, 321; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 228; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 136-137; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 131; Roy, “The Masculinity of the Hellenistic King,” 123.

³³⁵ Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 215; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, “Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight,” 70. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton argue that the passage in *Third Maccabees* is certainly based on Polybios’ account.

³³⁶ Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 174; Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, 114-152.

31088/50048), which states that Ptolemy IV paid 300,000 *chrysoi* to his army, called the Raphia Donative, to honor his queen's promise.³³⁷ In these events, Arsinoë is presented as not only a brave and generous queen, but her actions also fit well with the tradition of queenship that Berenike II and Arsinoë II had developed of a *basilissa*-consort who was active in support of her husband and king and who took an interest in the defense of her kingdom and maintenance of foreign policy.

Unfortunately, other than the birth of Ptolemy V in 210/209 BCE, very little is known about the queen's life during the period after Raphia and before her death in 204 BCE. Shortly after Ptolemy IV died in 204 BCE of unknown causes, Arsinoë III was murdered by Sosibios and Agathokles, who afterwards displayed the ash urns that were said to hold the cremated remains of the king and queen (Polyb. 15.25.2, 12; Just. *Epit.* 30.2.6).³³⁸ This seems to have been their first mistake, as Cheshire points out that having their monarch cremated would have horrified the Egyptian portion of the population and, perhaps, even the Alexandrians, who had by this point adopted many Egyptian mortuary customs.³³⁹ The advisors then produced a forged will proclaiming themselves the guardians of the young

³³⁷ Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 215; Julien Olivier and Catharine Lorber, "Three Gold Coinages of Third-Century Ptolemaic Egypt," *RBN* 159 (2013), 103, 107. Olivier and Lorber indicate that this donative was perhaps paid in part by a rushed minting of the radiate Ptolemy III *mnaiēia*. On the importance of this donative, see at note 355, below.

³³⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 133-134, n. 38; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 176; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 82; Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 83. Clayman cites one theory by John of Antioch (*FGrH* IV 558 F54) that the royal couple may have died together in a fire. Ogden notes two additional theories, one that Arsinoë was repudiated by Ptolemy IV, as also told by John of Antioch (*FGrH* IV 558 F54), and another that she was murdered by Ptolemy prior to his death, as told by Justin. Justin calls her Eurydike, and John was writing well after the event, so it seems Polybios is the most trustworthy source. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, citing Bennett, also propose that Arsinoë may have died shortly before Ptolemy. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoë III," "Ptolemy IV."

³³⁹ Wendy Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 45 (2009), 352.

Ptolemy V (Polyb. 15.25.5), and he was placed in the care of Oenathe and Agathokleia (Polyb. 15.25. 12).

When the people heard of the queen's death and deduced that she had been murdered, they simmered in anger until 203 BCE when they rose up under the leadership of Tlepolemos and, as a mob, killed Agathokles, Agathokleia, and Oenathe, quite gruesomely (Polyb. 15.25-33).³⁴⁰ Polybios mentions that no one cared that the king had died (15.25.9), but for the queen, on account of her abused life and unhappy death, they "fell into such a state of distraction and affliction that the town was full of groans, tears, and ceaseless lamentation, a testimony, in the opinion of those who judged correctly, not so much of affection for Arsinoë as of hatred of Agathocles" (15.25.9-10). He takes some emphasis away from the queen by declaring that the people's actions were a result of their hatred for Agathokles, rather than love for Arsinoë, but the mob's actions must have been at least in part due to the popularity of the murdered queen, perhaps even both murdered queens: Arsinoë, whose treatment was fresh in their minds, and Berenike, whom they had not yet been able to avenge. Polybios even remarks later that the man who did the deed of killing Arsinoë, Philammon, was murdered, along with his family, by the young girls who were the best friends of the queen (15.33.11-12).³⁴¹

As shown by the reaction to her death and her popular worship, evidenced by the oinochoai bearing her image, Arsinoë III had the potential to be a great queen, in line with that of her mother and adoptive grandmother. Her early hair dedication and her speech at the battle of Raphia demonstrate what an active and effective queen she could have been, had she

³⁴⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 134-135; Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt*, 177. Hölbl also notes that Sosibios died at some shortly after the production of the forged will.

³⁴¹ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 51.

been allowed to do so. This statement then leads to one final point concerning this queen: was she not allowed to act? Or, were her actions covered up? With all the evidence of her life presented and analyzed, two different theories can be put forth.

The first theory, as mentioned throughout this chapter, is that Arsinoë III was curtailed in her queenly endeavors by Sosibios and Agathokles. While her image was utilized in monumental religious depictions and she was presented in the traditional role of supportive queen, evidence for the more extracurricular duties of her role, such as religious euergetism and social benefaction, is missing or sparse. Thus, the theory that she was purportedly repressed by her brother, his advisors, or both is the easiest to arrive at, given the scarce evidence of her life and actions, and it is generally the concept that has been accepted by historians for why Arsinoë was so comparatively inactive.

If, however, the evidence of her life is analyzed more carefully, a second theory of her rulership can be put forth. Arsinoë III may have accomplished many of the duties of queenship, following the example set by Berenike II and Arsinoë II, but after her death a *damnatio memoriae* was put into effect, perhaps by the same advisors who had plotted her murder, in order to cover up how active and effective a queen she had been. This theory can be supported by several aspects of her life. The first hint is that she was honored with a biography by Eratosthenes after her death. Dedicating an entire biography to the queen, especially when she was the successor of two extremely active queens who did not receive their own biographies, indicates that Arsinoë III must have done enough of note to fill such a work.

Additionally, she was known well enough throughout the rest of the Hellenistic world, as shown by the regular dedicatory inscriptions, to indicate a political and religious

activity at least on par with that of her predecessors. Several of the dedications that were made in the royal couple's honor were already mentioned above, but Livy, for example, also remarks that when a Roman ambassador was sent to Egypt in 210/209 BCE he presented Arsinoë with a purple cloak and *palla* (27.4.10), gifts of equal value to those presented to her brother-husband, which indicate the embassy's acknowledgement of her equal standing and importance at court.³⁴² Moreover, Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton argue that the few inscriptions outside of Egypt that reference the queen prove she played a "prestigious role, equal to or even superior to that of her brother-spouse."³⁴³ In the stele that preserves the letters the royal couple sent in honor of the Boeotian festival to the Muses, for instance, Arsinoë's letter appears above that of her brother, and his letter describes his approval for her actions; in another dedication at Delphi (*IG IX.1².202*), Arsinoë's name appears before that of her brother.³⁴⁴ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton provide several additional examples of inscriptions, all outside of Egypt, which provide evidence of the honors dedicated to the queen.³⁴⁵ They also point out that even within Egypt she was depicted on Egyptian style temples more than any queen that had come before her.³⁴⁶ All of these examples point to a much more politically and religiously active queen than the surviving sources from only Egypt present, indicating there may have been a purposeful removal of the evidence of her actions within Egypt.

³⁴² On the dedications, see note, 302 above.

³⁴³ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 74-75.

³⁴⁴ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 75, n. 40.

³⁴⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 75-76, ns. 41, 42, 43.

³⁴⁶ See note 321, above.

That Arsinoë was more religiously active within Egypt than previously thought is further supported by additional analysis of her imagery within Egyptian temples. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton have provided the first in-depth look at the monumental iconography of Arsinoë III. Of this queen's ninety-eight representations, two of those depict her appearing before the gods officiating alone.³⁴⁷ While the king was regularly depicted offering to the gods alone, previously, the queen was usually shown on monuments alongside the king, with the exception of queens who ruled in their own during the Pharaonic period, such as Hatshepsut. Several later queens were depicted in this same way, including Kleopatra III, Kleopatra Berenike III, and Kleopatra VII, but they were all queens that came after Arsinoë III and who were all officially acknowledged co-rulers or *basilissai*-regnants (as will be shown in Part III). It is telling, then, that Arsinoë III was the first Ptolemaic queen to be depicted offering to the gods alone. That she started an iconographic trend of religious representation, especially considering it would then be adopted by the most powerful women of the dynasty, calls for a reassessment of her political and religious importance. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton have nicely summed up the issue:

This element [the depiction of the queen officiating alone], combined with the increase in representations of Arsinoë III, confirms the idea that there was, at this time, a real desire to amplify and accentuate the queen's role within the temple. If this was also used by the royal policy in order to reinforce the dynastic power, the influence of the queen on her brother and her privileged role can no longer be dismissed.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁷ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 80-81. Both of these scenes are from the temple of Arensnouphis at Philae. For example, in one of the scenes, Arsinoë offers praise and worship to Hathor.

³⁴⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 82.

These representations may also provide additional evidence for why Arsinoë received the title “ruler” (*hk3.t*). It was a title used to make her the religious equal of her brother, but, perhaps, the title was also conferred on her, not only for ensuring dynastic continuance and her actions at Raphia, as theorized above, but also because of her active participation in rulership and religious duties.

The need for reevaluation is further supported by her popular worship and the events after her death. I made the point above that Arsinoë’s regular appearance on monumental temples perhaps inspired her popular worship. Yet, her popular worship and the evidence of the popularity of her oinochoai, when evaluated in conjunction with the new analysis of her many appearances in temples, here again, may be an indication that she was more religiously active than previously thought. If the oinochoai were produced out of a habit, that the people wanted to worship this queen in the same way they had worshiped her predecessors, why would the vessels not also have been produced for her succeeding queens? Rather Arsinoë’s oinochoai, especially those that perhaps reference her actions at Raphia, should be understood as being a product of the queen’s religious action and visibility. If the oinochoai were produced out of a religious habit, they would have been made for Kleopatra I as well once she became queen, but if the oinochoai were produced due to the queen’s visibility and religious activity, it would make sense that none were produced for Kleopatra I since she did not become queen until 194/193 BCE, ten years after Arsinoë’s death (see Part III, chapter 8).

The peoples’ reaction to Arsinoë’s death also supports this conclusion. Berenike II was a remarkably popular queen, but the people did not rise up to kill her murderers. It was only after Arsinoë’s death that the people finally turned to mob violence. Polybios says their

anger was on account of their hatred for Agathokles. It seems, however, that they hated him not only for his mismanagement of the kingdom, but also for his vile actions against the queen and the misrepresentation of the king's wishes in his forged will. Even if they rose up on account of their anger against Agathokles, that rage was derived from his murder of the queen. Especially if, as has been proposed by Hölbl, Ptolemy had intended for Arsinoë to be their son's regent.³⁴⁹ If Arsinoë was murdered to prevent her from taking up the mantle of regent, the implementation of a *damnatio memoriae* by those same advisors is ever more plausible.

Finally, the concept of a *damnatio memoriae* for Arsinoë is ultimately made possible if her position as regent and the people's reaction to her death were precipitated by her receiving support from the Ptolemaic army. The most telling evidence of the activeness of her rulership is drawn from the main event of her life that could not be erased: her involvement in the Battle of Raphia. While the description that survives is brief and exists in only two sources, the survival of such a description, again if analyzed a bit more deeply, underlines how exceptional Arsinoë was. As cited by Bielman-Sánchez, Arsinoë's speech at the Battle of Raphia may be the only historically proven example of a public speech by a woman in the Greek world.³⁵⁰ In fact, with the exception of the women from the Macedonian period, such as Olympias and Adea-Eurydike, only Arsinoë III, Kleopatra III, Kleopatra VII, and Arsinoë IV were credited among the major Hellenistic kingdoms (the Antigonid, Seleukid, and Ptolemaic) as appearing on the battlefield, and even among those authoritative

³⁴⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 134.

³⁵⁰ "De fait, dans le monde grec, on ne connaît qu'un seul exemple historiquement attesté de ce qui pourrait s'apparenter à un discours de femme: Arsinoé III, la soeur-épouse du roi lagide Ptolémée IV, a pris publiquement la parole lors de la bataille de Raphia..." Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" 53. Bielman-Sánchez may not be completely accurate in this claim, see the following note.

Ptolemaic queens, only Arsinoë III is ascribed with a public speech.³⁵¹ Here again, as with Arsinoë's appearance before the gods alone, it appears she began a pattern that later, more powerful queens would emulate. No ancient sources reprimand Arsinoë for her actions, and instead, the reliefs atop both the Pithom, No. II (CG 50048, see Figs. 3.1, 3.2) and Memphis Stele (CG 31088), which depict the queen standing supportively behind the king as he smites the enemies of Egypt, seem to remind the viewer of and show approval for her actions at Raphia.³⁵² This is another unique image of Arsinoë, as these stelae illustrate one of the only depictions of a Ptolemaic queen in a war-focused context, rather than a religious or transference of power scene.³⁵³

The real importance of Arsinoë's actions at Raphia, however, are tied to the military changes that were taking place at this time. As mentioned in Part I, chapter 2.3, under Ptolemy IV the first native Egyptians were trained and equipped as part of the Ptolemaic army (Polyb. 5.65.8-9, 82.6, 85.9).³⁵⁴ As also mentioned in that chapter, the military was important as an instrument of monarchic power. Consequently, Arsinoë, in promising to pay the troops and by fulfilling that promise after the war's conclusion with the 30,000 *chrysoi* mentioned in the Raphia Decree (CG 31088/50048), would have gained the loyalty of the

³⁵¹ Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" 54, n. 2, 55. See also, Part I, chapter 1.2, note 33. Scholars are reevaluating whether Olympias and Adea-Eurydike led these armies or were symbolic leaders. Either way, Carney argues that Adea-Eurydike addressed troops in military attire (Athen. 13.560F). For an overview of royal women and warfare during the Hellenistic period, see Carney, "Women and War," (Forthcoming).

³⁵² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 163-164, Fig. 6.1; Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" 54

³⁵³ Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" 54. In this article, Bielman-Sánchez claims this is the only image of a Ptolemaic queen in a militaristic context, but Kleopatra I was shown similarly on the Memphis Decree (CG 22188), which Bielman-Sánchez discusses in a later article. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 165.

³⁵⁴ Lloyd, "From Satrapy to Hellenistic Kingdom: The Case of Egypt," 95-96; Bugh, "Hellenistic Military Developments," 279; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 130; Olivier and Lorber, "Three Gold Coinages of Third-Century Ptolemaic Egypt," 103.

army, both the Greek and new native Egyptian members.³⁵⁵ Olivier and Lorber make an interesting point that “conceivably her promise applied only to the phalanx which, in the event, distinguished itself and won the battle.”³⁵⁶ According to the sources they cite (*3 Macc.* 1.5; Polyb. 5.85.7-5.86.6), it was the Egyptian phalanx that were mainly responsible for the victory. If this payment from the queen went exclusively to the new Egyptian soldiers, Arsinoë would have been in a powerful position to act with the support of the military when she and Ptolemy returned to Egypt, making her a threat to his advisors.

Furthermore, if Arsinoë exhortations were seen as a key reason for the Ptolemaic victory, she would have returned home to great fanfare and love from the people as well. This could be why, even though the Raphia Decree imagery depicts her in a supporting military role, the text of the decree does not mention her speech and credits the Donative specifically to Ptolemy IV, perhaps in an attempt to maintain that the king was the main securer of victory. Arsinoë, in gaining the loyalty of both the people and the military, particularly the new Egyptian portions of the army, would have been a great threat to Ptolemy’s advisors, especially in the event of her husband’s death, if she were to become regent of the young heir. Her actions at Raphia, then, and the loyalty they accumulated for her, would have given her a powerful platform from which to act once she and Ptolemy returned home, but these actions probably also directly resulted in her murder, the *damnatio memoriae* that was in all likelihood implemented afterwards, and the subsequent mob violence by the people.

³⁵⁵ On the Raphia Donative, see note 337, above. For a thorough overview of how that donative could have been paid, see Olivier and Lorber, “Three Gold Coinages of Third-Century Ptolemaic Egypt,” 103-107; Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 208-210. Olivier and Lorber come to the conclusion that they are unable to reconcile the original size of the emission to the descriptions in literary sources, but in her later work, Lorber seems to have solved the issue.

³⁵⁶ Olivier and Lorber, “Three Gold Coinages of Third-Century Ptolemaic Egypt,” 105.

While current scholarly consensus is that Arsinoë III was a meek queen who was not given the opportunity to participate in the traditional activities of Ptolemaic queenship, a reexamination of the available evidence can provide a convincing argument that she was a much more active queen than previously thought, who had many of her actions and influence erased or covered up. In the coming years, additional scholarship by Bielman-Sánchez, Joliton, and myself will hopefully change the picture of this queen that scholars have held for so long. For now, what can be said of her with certainty is that Arsinoë III was relegated to a position of figurehead queen, and, other than her actions at the Battle of Raphia, we cannot currently know how great she was or could have been, especially since her life was cut short. Arsinoë III was the heiress to her mother's murder, who was then murdered herself, but her death and the subsequent deaths of her murderers created an important moment in the transmission of what it meant to be a Ptolemaic queen, which would be to the advantage of Kleopatra I and the succeeding queens of that name.

Concluding Points: Regularizing Co-rule

As the male members of the Ptolemaic dynasty established their dynastic policy, the queens established their role of power within that structure, and it was an increasing pattern of co-rule. Arsinoë II was able, in only five to seven years, to establish herself as a patron of the arts, an active religious benefactor, and a supporting figure to her husband. Her image was then utilized by her husband for the remainder of his reign, producing an image of a queen who held great power during her lifetime and whose religious cult would be emulated for the rest of the dynasty.

Her successor, Berenike II, was able to take on these same artistic and religious roles, but she also, as a queen who lived and ruled with her husband for the entirety of their reign, helped solidify the importance of the Ptolemaic brother-sister king and queen as a ruling, coupled unit. She had a hand in establishing the propaganda of their rule, both politically and religiously, and anecdotes from the period establish her political activity and acumen. The titles of “female ruler” and “female pharaoh” and the religious cults that developed around her were inspirations for her successor queens.

Berenike, it seems, was such an integral part of rulership that Ptolemy IV felt he had to have her murdered before he could fully take over as king himself. This would, unfortunately, have many negative consequences for her daughter, Arsinoë III, who was either curtailed in her queenly activities, or, more likely, experienced a *damnatio memoriae* after her murder. The few pieces of evidence that survive and allow us to learn about this queen demonstrate that she followed in the footsteps of her mother and adoptive grandmother. She was depicted more than any other queen up to this point on temples, and she began a pattern that later, more powerful queens would emulate in her religious and militaristic actions.

The subsequent early deaths of Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, meant that a king, Ptolemy V, and queen, Kleopatra I, who had never known these powerful figures would ascend to the throne. The new queen, consequently, only had the images of her predecessors to learn from, and those images presented two powerful women who had ruled as the equals of their husbands, participating in the governance and religious maintenance of their kingdoms, whether or not that had been the exact reality of the situation. Kleopatra I, as will be shown in Part III, would thus build on the perceptions of power and equality in rule that had been presented for Arsinoë II and Berenike II to become the first Ptolemaic queen to hold true co-rulership with her young son and act as the first *basilissa*-regent. The power wielded by Kleopatra and her successors would not have been possible without the achievements of Arsinoë II and Berenike II and the unfortunate early death of Arsinoë III.

PART III: THE KLEOPATRAS: *BASILISSAI*-REGENTS, CO-RULERS, AND *BASILISSAI*-REGNANTS

8. [Kleopatra I: The First *Basilissa*-regent](#)
9. [Kleopatra II: The First Spousal Co-Ruler and *Basilissa*-regnant](#)
 - 9.1. [Kleopatra II as co-ruler to Ptolemy VI](#)
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 - 9.3. [Kleopatra II's *philo*i, supporting actions, and religious associations](#)
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10. [Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III: Like Mother, Like Daughter](#)
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11. [The Forgotten *Basilissai*: Kleopatra Berenike III, Kleopatra V Tryphaina, and Berenike IV](#)
 - 11.1. [Kleopatra Berenike III](#)
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 - 12.1. [Kleopatra IV](#)
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[CONCLUDING POINTS: KLEOPATRA VII, NOT THE ODDITY AFTER ALL](#)

Part III focuses on the later queens of the Ptolemaic dynasty. In the same way that Ptolemy I, II, III, IV set the policy and precedent for the kings that would come after them, Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and Arsinoë III began the normalizing processes that allowed the later Ptolemaic queens, the Kleopatras, to wield increasing amounts of public power. Pomeroy notes that “in the second century B.C., when Egypt was wracked by foreign attacks and civil unrest, queens began to assume the prerogatives of kings with greater regularity than they had in the preceding century.”¹ These prerogatives that Pomeroy mentions can be seen in the parcels of power that each of the Kleopatras took for themselves, beginning with the regency of Kleopatra I, and each queen bolstered her growing power by taking it a step further than the previous.

¹ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23.

Kleopatra I ruled with her son from 180 to 177 BCE (see Appendix A), and in Greek and Demotic papyri from the regency period she is listed as the dominant sovereign, since her name precedes that of her son (see chapter 8). Kleopatra II, like Berenike II, was titled pharaoh along with her two brother-husbands, but she shared true co-rulership with them in a way Berenike II could not. She was also the first queen to rule as a *basilissa*-regnant (see chapter 9). Kleopatra III, similarly to Kleopatra I, while ruling with both of her sons successively, had her name placed before theirs, only she did this as a dominant co-ruler, since both her sons were adults by the time of their joint rule (see chapter 10).

In the same way the name Ptolemy was used for all of the kings as a means of showing dynastic strength and exclusivity, so too did the name Kleopatra begin to take on a similar connotation during the reigns of Kleopatra I, II, and III.² That the queens began to emulate the male naming practices of the dynasty is an indication of their growing access to power. Just as Ptolemy Soter had given his name to his decedents as a way of transferring power to them, so too would the name Kleopatra take on similar connotations for the female descendants of the dynasty.³ This concept of name repetition fit well into the Egyptian tradition also.

In the Egyptian beliefs, the Pharaoh was the incarnation of Horus, and his queen, Hathor. The successful rule of a royal pair ensured the continuation and stability of Ma'at, and the use of dynastic names for both the male and female monarch emphasized the concept of cyclicity and the rebirth of each succeeding royal couple as Horus and Hathor. The

² Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23. Carney echoes this point about the importance of the name Ptolemy. Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 15.

³ See Part I, chapter 3.3, pg. 74, where this concept was also briefly commented on, including citations to Ager, "Familiarity Breeds: Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 22; Carney, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, 77.

Ptolemaic practice of incest also fit into this concept, as the living royal couple could fully embody every aspect of these deities, who were also siblings, and pass down undiluted royal and deified blood to their offspring. In this way, each new, living Ptolemy and Kleopatra became Horus and Hathor, as the previous couple transitioned into Osiris and Isis, mimicking and embodying the cyclicity of the gods.⁴ That the Kleopatras used this concept to bring increasing visibility to themselves and the role of the queen in that cyclicity is demonstrated by their increasing identification and assimilation to Hathor and Isis, especially by Kleopatra III who would present herself as the living incarnation of Isis (see chapter 10).

The steady accumulation of power by the three initial Kleopatras, and their efforts to put themselves before their sons and husbands, allowed succeeding queens to take on the first aspects of sole rule. Kleopatra II ruled part of the kingdom as *basilissa*-regnant for several years (see chapter 9), Kleopatra Berenike III ruled the entire kingdom alone for several months in 80 BCE (see chapter 11.1), and Berenike IV ruled Egypt as accepted sovereign during the period when Ptolemy XII Auletes was exiled to Rome, from 58 to 55 BCE (see chapter 11.3; see also Appendix A). All of these queens, the power they accumulated, and the normalization they provided for female rule, culminated in the rule of Kleopatra VII, who after the death of her two brother-consorts was sole Pharaoh of Egypt for fourteen years (44-30 BCE).⁵ She would later appoint her young son, Caesarion, as her heir and co-ruler, in the same pattern that previous male pharaohs had done throughout the Pharaonic and earlier Ptolemaic period, fully taking on the male role of kingship for herself.

⁴ The *Pyramid Texts*, for instance, indicate that the pharaoh was seen as Horus during his life and transformed into Osiris at his death, so each new pharaoh embodied this transition. As the queens took on greater importance, they too began to embody this transition by identifying with Hathor and Isis. On the *Pyramid Texts*, see James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 8-9.

⁵ Kleopatra VII's full reign was twenty-one years, from 51-30 BCE. During that time, however, she co-ruled with her brother Ptolemy XIII from 51-47 BCE and then her second brother, Ptolemy XIV, from 47-44 BCE.

Accordingly, this Part will be split into five chapters. Chapter 8 will focus on Kleopatra I, the first *basilissa*-regent. Chapter 9 examines the first half of Kleopatra II's rule, during which she was the first queen to truly co-rule with her two brother-husbands and then the first queen to rule on her own for a span of about three to four years. Chapter 10 will further explore the last period of joint reign between Kleopatra II, Ptolemy VIII, and Kleopatra III, but the main focus will be on Kleopatra III as the successor to her powerful mother. Chapter 11 will scrutinize three of the later queens of the dynasty, Kleopatra Berenike III, Kleopatra V Tryphaina, and Berenike IV, all of whom were powerful queens in their own right but are often overlooked in the wake of Kleopatra III and the impending rule of Kleopatra VII. Finally, Chapter 12 will conclude by surveying three additional, often disregarded queens, Kleopatra IV, Kleopatra Selene I, and Arsinoë IV. Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene were briefly *basilissai*-consorts to their brother husbands in Egypt, but they were repressed as queens by the supremacy of their mother, Kleopatra III. They still impacted Ptolemaic history by marrying into and then becoming active queens in the Seleukid kingdom. Arsinoë IV is similarly overshadowed by the notoriety of her sister, Kleopatra VII, but she had her own impact on the Ptolemaic period that is deserving of unbiased analysis.

Just as with Part II, this section will not only provide evidence for how these queens gained increasing access to power over time, but it will also present sub-arguments relative to each specific queen. Kleopatra I navigated transitioning court mechanics, which saw the outmoding of previous *philoï* bonds and the replacement of those friendships with a reliance on aristocratic bureaucrats and eunuchs. This enabled her to succeed as regent in a way Arsinoë III had been unable to, but it also meant that many of her individual actions were not

commemorated or celebrated, as the actions of earlier queens had been by their literary *philoï*. She also had a hand in placing greater emphasis on queenly assimilations with Isis, rather than Aphrodite, an action that would serve her daughter and granddaughter well in their own religious imagery.

Building on the achievements of her mother, Kleopatra II may have served as regent in Egypt while Ptolemy VI was campaigning in Syria prior to his death. During her second marriage, she did not have as contentious a rivalry with her brother-husband or daughter as has previously been proposed. Rather, the regular repetition of the supposed enmity between Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII, as well as between Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III, has led previous scholars to view their reign only through that lens, a gross oversimplification, and to generally discount the things they did accomplish. Similarly, Kleopatra III is depicted in the ancient literary sources as a domineering, overly ambitious, and transgressive queen. Her actions are still universally lambasted in modern sources, and she is described as a woman who did not know her correct place and overstepped her role. If her period of rule is reanalyzed without the biases of the ancients, however, it becomes clear that she was one of the most successful monarchs of the dynasty, who acted with similar intents to the men of her line.

Finally, the last two chapters of this Part overview the queens who are so often overlooked in Ptolemaic history, in order to demonstrate that they are important to understanding the dynasty's development, as the inheritors of the efforts of the earlier queens and as the immediate precursors to Kleopatra VII. As the forgotten queens of the dynasty, however, they also struggle under the weight of misconceptions, such as their incorrectly assumed illegitimacy.

8. Kleopatra I: The First *Basilissa*-regent

Kleopatra I was the second and last non-Ptolemaic woman to marry into the Ptolemaic royal line.⁶ As a newly arrived queen in Alexandria, from her own line of powerful but foreign monarchs, she would have looked to the figures of Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and especially the murdered Arsinoë III when taking up her position as queen of Egypt. Arsinoë II was the first queen to become one half of the ritual and public dynastic image, and her regular representation with kingly attributes may have inspired later queens, beginning with Kleopatra I, to attempt to wield what they interpreted as a similar public power.⁷ Berenike II was the supportive queen, who was always shown in conjunction with her brother-husband, and she helped fully establish the position of the Ptolemaic queen as one half of the ruling unit. Kleopatra I would resume the neglected duties of the queen after a long period without one, in much the same way Berenike had.

Above all, because of the early death of Arsinoë II and the murders of both Berenike II and Arsinoë III, Kleopatra only had the images of these women to learn from when taking on the role of Ptolemaic queen, and those depictions presented powerful women who had ruled as the equals to their husbands, participating in the governance and religious maintenance of their kingdoms. While much of Arsinoë III's influence was expunged, even a possible *damnatio memoriae* could not erase that she was the queen who rallied the Ptolemaic troops to a great military victory. Her death may have also provided Kleopatra

⁶ Berenike II was the first exogamous spouse of the dynasty, but even she was from a territory, Kyrene, that was considered a Ptolemaic possession (see chapter 6). Kleopatra Syra was the first and only, truly foreign princess to marry into the Ptolemaic dynasty. Other exogamous marriages would also occur between the Ptolemies and Seleukids. Later Ptolemaic women were married to Seleukid royalty (see Appendix B and chapter 12), and Berenike IV married two non-Ptolemaic males (see chapter 11.3); although, she did not produce Ptolemaic heirs with either of these men.

⁷ As was argued in Part II, chapter 5, Arsinoë II did not exercise co-rule with Ptolemy II, as has sometimes been credited to her, but her regular representation with kingly attributes produced a perception of her power long after her death.

with the impetus for building successful relationships at court. Kleopatra would, thus, draw from each of these women in different ways, but, most importantly, she would take advantage of the precedents they had set in order to become the first *basilissa*-regent of the dynasty.

Kleopatra I not only drew from her Ptolemaic predecessors, but she also had a distinguished Seleukid lineage, as the daughter of Antiochos III and Laodike III. She was born of a long line of Seleukid kings and queens, and Antiochos III was the most powerful Hellenistic monarch of the late third and early second centuries. He was active militarily, winning victories against many of the other Hellenistic kingdoms, including Egypt, Parthia, and Baktria, and he was the Hellenistic monarch that came “closest to putting Alexander the Great’s empire back together again,” had he not be thwarted by Rome.⁸ On her mother’s side, Kleopatra I bore a lineage of Persian and Seleukid kings and queens, as Laodike III was the daughter of Mithridates II of Pontus and his wife Laodike (daughter of Antiochos II and Laodike I).

Kleopatra I was the first of that name in the Seleukid house, perhaps named for Kleopatra, the sister of Alexander the Great, with whom several of the Diadochs tried to arrange a marriage (Diod. Sic. 20.37.4).⁹ But the name itself, which translates to “renowned/famous in her father,” also seems appropriate for the daughter of a monarch like Antiochos III, who gave himself the epithet, Μέγας (Megas or “the Great”). She was also the first Kleopatra of the Ptolemaic house, and, even if the name came to the Ptolemies via

⁸ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 82. For a thorough overview of Antiochos III’s activities as king, see Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 171-180, 194-198, 214-220, 222-223.

⁹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 270; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra I”. See also, Strootman, “‘The Heroic Company of my Forebears’: The Ancestor Galleries of Antiochos I of Kommagene at Nemrut Dağı and the Role of Royal Women in the Transmission of Hellenistic Kingship,” 220. For a thorough overview concerning Kleopatra, Daughter of Philip II, see Meeus, “Kleopatra and the Diadochoi,” 63-92.

marriage, it was one that would subsequently take on great meaning for the dynasty as a whole. Kleopatra, the foreign princess, would be transformed by Ptolemaic propaganda into a Ptolemaic queen and precedent-setter, the founding Kleopatra, who the later Kleopatras looked to as the queen who first took real power into her own hands.

Her assumption of power would, however, come much later, and only peripheral information is known about Kleopatra Syra, the Seleukid princess. First, she came from a line of strong Seleukid women. Her mother, Laodike III, may have acted as regent for her young son, Antiochos, while her husband was away at war, and she issued benefactions to the cities of Iasos and Teos.¹⁰ Her grandmother, Laodike, was the first Seleukid queen of Pontus, a foreign princess who became a queen, just as Kleopatra would be. Finally, her great-grandmother, Laodike I, was the queen for whom the Laodikean War (the Third Syrian War) was named (See Part II, chapter 6).¹¹

Second, as a Hellenistic royal daughter, she was certain to be engaged in an alliance marriage, just as all her predecessors had been. As expected, Kleopatra and her sisters were used by their father for political alliances (*App. Syr.* 1.5), and they probably received Hellenistic educations to prepare them for their roles as queens. Much like her predecessors, Kleopatra's education, which would have included learning to read and write, as well as studying Classical literature, would allow her to engage and understand the politics of the court over which she would rule. An education may have been especially important for Kleopatra, who was headed to Alexandria, a capital of learning in the Hellenistic world. That

¹⁰ Bielman-Sánchez, "Quand des reines transgressent les normes, créent-elles l'ordre ou le désordre?" 56; Bielman-Sánchez, "Régner au féminin. Réflexions sur les reines attalides et séleucides," 57-58; Nourse, "Women and the Early Development of Royal Power in the Hellenistic East" 264-265. The theory of her regency is contested, much like Berenike II's regentship while Ptolemy III was away during the Third Syrian War.

¹¹ For a thorough overview of Laodike I, see Coşkun, "Laodike I, Berenike Phernophoros, Dynastic Murders, and the Outbreak of the Third Syrian War (253-246 BCE)," 108-134.

she drew strength from the powerful women who came before her, both Seleukid and Ptolemaic, and received an education is supported by her later independence and that she was able to successfully navigate royal politics and duties as regent to her son.

Much like Arsinoë III, the early period of Kleopatra I's life is intertwined with what is known about the boy who would become her husband. Although Ptolemy V had been appointed co-ruler with his father soon after his birth in 210 BCE, when Ptolemy IV died in 204 BCE, Ptolemy V was only a six-year-old child.¹² His years as “co-ruler” were in name only, so after his father's death, the kingdom was overseen by the boy's regents and advisors, first by Sosibios and Agathokles (Polyb. 15.25.4-5), and after their murders, by Tlepolemos (Polyb. 15.25.26-28; 16.21.1), Sosibios, son of Sosibios (Polyb. 15.32.6, 16.22.1-2), Aristomenes (Polyb. 15.31.6), and, finally, Polykrates (Polyb. 18.55.6-7).¹³ It was clear to the Antigonid king, Philip V, and the Seleukid king, Antiochos III, that Egypt was weak under the rule of one so young (Polyb. 3.2.8; 15.20; 16.10.1; Livy 31.14.5; App. *Mac.* 5; Just. *Epit.* 30.2.8), so within two years of Ptolemy V's ascension the Fifth Syrian War began in 202 BCE.

Between the period of 202-196/195 BCE, Egypt lost many cities and territories to the Antigonids and Seleukids, especially in Asia Minor.¹⁴ Philip's incursions were halted by the outbreak of the Second Macedonian War (200-197 BCE) with Rome (Polyb. 16.34.2-4), and the Alexandrian officials sent Rome a complaint about Antiochos' actions by 197 BCE (App. *Syr.* 1.2). While awaiting Rome's answer, Ptolemy V (aged thirteen or fourteen) had his

¹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 133; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 79.

¹³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 135-136; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V”; Cheshire, “Cleopatra ‘the Syrian’ and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda,” 349.

¹⁴ For a thorough overview of the Fifth Syrian War, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 136-140; Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 196.

coming of age ceremony (ἀνακλητήρια, anakleteria; Polyb. 18.55.3), was crowned pharaoh, and was officially given the epikleses Epiphanes (“Manifest”) and Eucharistos (“Beneficent”) in Memphis on March 26, 196 BCE, according to the Rosetta Stone (*OGIS* 90).¹⁵ By 196/195 BCE Rome sent a delegation to Antiochos at Lysimacheia (Polyb. 18.49.2-3; Livy 33.39.1; App. *Syr.* 1.3) declaring that he had to return Ptolemaic possessions, but, due to Antiochos’ skillful maneuverings, the negotiations culminated in the relinquishing of Koile-Syria by the Ptolemies to the Seleukids and the engagement of Ptolemy V to Antiochos’ daughter, Kleopatra I Syra (Κλεοπάτραν τὴν Σύραν ἐπικλήσιν, “Kleopatra, surnamed Syra”; App. *Syr.* 1.5; Polyb. 18.51.10; Livy 33.40.3; Joseph. *AJ* 12.154; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.17-19 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F47). They were married at Raphia in 194/193 BCE (Livy 35.13.4; Cass. Dio. 19.18) when Ptolemy was sixteen and Kleopatra was around that same age, or perhaps a bit older or younger—her date of birth is uncertain.¹⁶

The details concerning the engagement and marriage of Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V are well-attested, with one exception: Koile-Syria would become an area of scholarly contention surrounding their marriage, Kleopatra’s possible dowry, and the beginnings of the later Sixth Syrian War. Polybios (28.20.9) and Appian (*Syr.* 1.5) state that the territory was given back to Egypt as part of Kleopatra’s dowry (also, Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.17-19 = Porph.

¹⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 139, n. 69, 165, n. 38, 171; Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 65. Bennett notes that Ptolemy’s full title was Ptolemy Epiphanes Eucharistos, which appeared as early as February/March 198 (*P. Receuil* 8 = *P. Dem. Dublin* 1659). Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V”. Hölbl makes a similar point that Ptolemy V was added to the dynastic cult at the Ptolemaia of 199/8.

¹⁶ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 270; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 140; Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 61; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra I.” Hölbl and Ashton provide an age of ten at her marriage, as do many historians following Hölbl, but none offer a methodology by which they arrived at that age. It seems to be a “fact” that is repeated by historians, with no evidence for how that age was calculated. Bennett, who evaluates her possible birth dates a bit more thoroughly, provides a birthdate between the years 219-210 BCE, so she could have been anywhere from twenty-five to sixteen at the time of her marriage. For the date of the marriage, see also Anne Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” in *Conseillers, ambassadeurs, experts*, Marie-Rose Guelfucci and Anne Queyrel, eds. (Besançon: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2017), 405, n. 3.

FGrHist. 260 F47); while Josephus (*AJ* 12.154-155) claims that the territory was retained by Antiochos and the tax revenues were shared “between the sovereigns” (ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς βασιλεις), provoking disputes over whether the two sovereigns were Ptolemy and Antiochos or Ptolemy and Kleopatra. Early historians, such as Macurdy and Bevan, repeated the claims made by Polybios and Appain and disagreed on the outcome; but, modern scholarly consensus is that Antiochos would not have given over such a contested territory, and any claim that he did was later Ptolemaic propaganda used to instigate the Sixth Syrian War (the War itself will be covered in greater detail in the next chapter).¹⁷

Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo further argue that Diodorus Siculous (29.29) and Porphyry (*Jer. Comm. Dan.* 11.20 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F48) indicate that Ptolemy V, before his death, planned on launching a campaign to win back Koile-Syria, a campaign that would have been unnecessary if the territory had been included as part of Kleopatra’s dowry.¹⁸ Rather, they propose that a better interpretation of the sources would be that Kleopatra was granted income from Koile-Syria during her lifetime (as a *dōrea*, or gift/grant), which was non-transferable to her children, while Antiochos retained control of the territory itself. In fact, the three times that Josephus mentions the farming of taxes in Koile-Syria (12.167, 12.185, 12.217), he also mentions that the queen was with the king and his advisors. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, as additional proof of this arrangement, cite that, after Ptolemy’s death, Kleopatra abandoned his plans to retake Koile-Syria and that those preparations for war were then resumed after her own death. Ending hostilities against her

¹⁷ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 144; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 271; Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 150, 160; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 145; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 82, n. 3; Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 407, n. 14.

¹⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l’exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 170; Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 407-408.

newly ascended brother, Seleukos IV, would have turned the members of the court against her, a conflict that the ancient sources surely would have mentioned, if she had not had a pertinent reason to cancel Ptolemy's plans for conquest. Pertinent reasons could include the protection of the income she received from the territory, that her income benefited the kingdom without having to wage war, and the possibility that Ptolemy was murdered because of his plans to go to war (as will be explained below).¹⁹ Kleopatra's desire to protect her possible income can be further supported by trends that have been identified throughout this dissertation. It was quite common for Ptolemaic queens to have their own incomes, which they could use for acts of patronage and euergetism that would have been expected of them.

Accordingly, once Kleopatra became queen of Egypt, she would have quickly taken up the responsibilities of queen and *basilissa*-consort. Much like the situation Berenike II found herself faced with, for Kleopatra, Egypt had been without a queen for about ten years, so it was necessary for her to resume the duties that upheld Ma'at. She, ideally, could have followed the pattern of her predecessors, by engaging in acts of patronage, both artistic and athletic, social euergetism, and through participation in religious rituals. Unfortunately, many of the types of evidence of these activities that survive for previous queens do not survive for Kleopatra I. For example, according to Polybios, Ptolemy V was interested in athletic competition, sportsmanship, and hunting (Polyb. 27.9.7-11; 22.3.8-9), but it is unclear if Kleopatra shared in that love of sportsmanship or was interested in chariot racing, as the earlier Arsinoës and Berenikes had been. Kleopatra I was not subject to a *damnatio*

¹⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 170-171; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 407-408. *Contra*, Hazzard, who used the example of Kleopatra abandoning plans to war against her brother as evidence that she held little influence at court prior to Ptolemy's death. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 125.

memoriae, as proposed for Arsinoë III, but rather Kleopatra had to navigate two unprecedented situations: the changing nature of Ptolemaic politics and court mechanics (in regards to the transition of *philoï*, see Part I, chapter 2.3) and the challenge presented by a major native uprising that established a rival internal state, both of which impacted how her reign was implemented and what was preserved.

Similar to her predecessor queens, Kleopatra may have tried to cultivate a network of *philoï*. Josephus (*AJ* 12.180; 12.203), for example, mentions the “friends” of the king and queen and that Kleopatra I had favorites whom she defended. But it seems these “friends” were not the powerful allies they had been for previous Ptolemaic kings and queens. As explained in Part I, chapter 2.3, by the reigns of Ptolemy IV and V a transition had occurred: whereas kings like Ptolemy I, II, and III had appointed and relied on their loyal *philoï*, men whose positions at court relied on the benevolence of the king and were maintained through personal friendship with him, Ptolemy IV and V had to navigate the established, elite Alexandrian families, who served in the highest-ranking positions at court and within the Alexandrian priesthoods and military. These men were reliant on the monarch’s favor to a certain extent, but the prestige and power they accumulated through service in assorted high-ranking positions by various family members was partially independent of the monarch as well, especially during the periods when these two monarchs were young children.²⁰ While the early *philoï* had been tied to the king with bonds of friendship and patronage, these

²⁰ For example, Aristomenes gained power via appointments by Sosibios and Agathokles, and eventually gained enough prestige to be appointed advisor to Ptolemy V (Polyb. 15.31.6). He subsequently fell out of favor with Ptolemy V, who had him put to death (Diod. Sic. 28.14). Another example, Polykrates originally rose to prominence via appointments by Sosibios and Agathokles, and he earned additional prestige after their deaths by serving in several military posts, including serving as the *strategos* of Cyprus. He used the wealth earned there to gain favor with Ptolemy V (Polyb. 18.55.6-7) and became one of his most trusted advisors until his death during the Thebaid Rebellion. Polykrates family would go on to serve in many positions in the Ptolemaic court. See Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 27-32.

ministers and advisors could rise to prominence through a combination of service to the king, nepotism through family bonds, or via alliances with other powerful men and their families. This meant they could, at times, act against the interests of the king or royal family, as Sosibios and Agathokles had, and, with that in mind, the example of Arsinoë III may have served the new queen well.

Arsinoë had been murdered by the advisors of Ptolemy IV, and if Kleopatra wanted to avoid a similar fate, she had to cultivate relationships with the powerful ministers of Ptolemy V's court. Wong proposes that is just what Kleopatra I did. She notes that concrete evidence for the building and/or strengthening of those relationships is lacking; there are no letters or inscriptions preserved indicating alliances, for example, but Wong argues that the ease with which Kleopatra would later take up the mantle of regent for her young son (which will be explained in greater detail below), must indicate that she had the cooperation and tacit approval of the highest-ranking ministers in the Ptolemaic bureaucracy.²¹ At Ptolemy V's death, Kleopatra was not murdered, as Arsinoë had been, so there must have been at least a partial cooperation there, since none of the ministers stepped forward to take over the regency themselves. At Kleopatra and Ptolemy VI's ascension, there were also no suspicious transfers, such as removing dissenters from court to positions on the fringes of the kingdom, as Agathokles had done after Ptolemy IV's death, or resignations of important positions in the bureaucracy, and, while Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo rightly critique that this is an *ex silentio* argument, it is still a convincing suggestion.²² The fact that a queen of foreign origin was

²¹ Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 34-35.

²² Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 34-35; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 167. For the removal of courtiers after Ptolemy IV's death, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 135.

able to become regent without challenge from the powerful Alexandrian families, when Arsinoë III, a Ptolemaic queen by birth, had been murdered, speaks to Kleopatra's personal strength and the relationships she had built at court.

Not only did Kleopatra successfully cultivate relationships with the elite families of the Alexandrian court, but she also took advantage of a new faction, the court eunuchs, which she may have also had a hand in integrating into the court. Eunuchs had a long history as the “loyal protectors and supporters of the throne,” in the Achaemenid Empire, starting under Cambyses, and continuing after the empire was conquered by Alexander and transitioned into the Seleukid Kingdom.²³ The first eunuch at the Ptolemaic court, Aristonikos, arrived slightly before Kleopatra I. Aristonikos was, perhaps, an Alexandrian, son of another Aristonikos (*THI* 260), but the details concerning his becoming a eunuch are unknown. According to Polybios (22.22), he was a σύντροφος (*syntrophos*, “companion”) of Ptolemy V when they were both young, so Aristonikos became part of the court at a young age; although, the person that put him forth for that appointment is unknown.

As a companion of the king, Aristonikos then moved up through courtly circles, serving as a diplomat, priest of Alexander, and as the chief of the cavalry for Ptolemy V during the Thebaid Rebellion (*THI* 260, 262).²⁴ In both the Second Philae Decree (*THI* 260) and the Decree of the Priests at Memphis (*THI* 262, CG 44901; see Appendix F) Aristonikos was called “beloved of his majesty,” indicating his great favor with the king, and he was granted the Ptolemaic court title of *philoï*.²⁵ As mentioned in chapter 2.3, under Ptolemy V, new hierarchical court titles were implemented, with *philoï* being the fourth rank in a series

²³ Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 37.

²⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 141; Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 40.

²⁵ Wong, “Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents,” 41, 44.

of five titles. Although the new *philoï* were in a slightly different position than the old *philoï*, Aristonikos, who had grown up with the king and served him loyally, may have been one of the few advisors of this period that was connected to the king through bonds of friendship and patronage in the traditional way, rather than being from a prominent family.

Aristonikos may have also set the bar for subsequent eunuchs to rise to prominence. Wong proposes that Eulaios arrived with Kleopatra I, as part of her retinue, and from then, he served as an attendant to the royal women, an advisor to Kleopatra during her time as regent, as Ptolemy VI's σύντροφος (*syntrophos*, here a personal tutor, rather than a companion of similar age), and as guardian (Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.21 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F49a) and regent (Diod. Sic. 30.16.1; Livy 42.29.7) for the young king after his mother's death (see chapter 9 for more on Eulaios).²⁶ By installing her own partisans at court, Kleopatra could build a support network similar to those that had been filled by *philoï* in the reigns of previous queens, and with the backing of her partisans she could easily transition to *basilissa*-regent in a way Arsinoë III had been unable to.

There was one draw-back, however, to the new type of *philoï* and eunuchs that filled Kleopatra's support network. These men were purely bureaucratic in function, which meant that Kleopatra did not have a Theokritos, as Arsinoë II had, or a Kallimachos, who had commemorated Berenike II's actions.²⁷ The loss of traditional *philoï* meant that her acts of artistic patronage, if she supported sportsmanship and/or literary scholarship, and any

²⁶ Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 45-46; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 408-409.

²⁷ Hölbl, for example, notes that Aristophanes of Byzantium was the successor of Eratosthenes as the director of the Alexandrian Library, and he was succeeded by Aristarchos of Samothrake, who was also the royal tutor for Ptolemy VI. But neither of these men dedicated works to the royal family, male or female, the way prior scholars had. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 191.

personal euergetism, separate from that of her husband, were not commemorated by her friends, as they had been by the court poets and *philoï* of previous queens.

Kleopatra's new relationships within the court would not only have helped her navigate court politics, but her support network could have also helped her deal with the second unprecedented situation of her reign: the rise of a rival internal state. The period known as the Thebaid Rebellion (206-186 BCE), during which a rival state centered in Thebes was proclaimed and ruled by two successive native pharaohs, began well before Kleopatra arrived in Egypt. The first native rebellions occurred under Ptolemy III and Berenike II (see Part II, chapter 6; Appendix A), but those were quickly suppressed. The Thebaid Rebellion lasted about twenty years. It originated during the rule of Kleopatra's father-in-law, Ptolemy IV, and may have been the result of growing native discontent. The native portions of the population were angered by paying the increasing taxes needed for the ongoing Syrian Wars, and they now had a class of native military (after the military changes implemented before the Battle of Raphia), who were trained in Greek fighting methods and could resist Ptolemaic domination, once they found leaders (Polyb. 5.107.1-3).²⁸

The Rebellion was eventually quelled, but it dominated Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I's reign for the first eight years of their marriage. It also determined, in many cases, who was able to gain favor with the king and who rose to power within the government. For instance, the regent Aristomenes fell out of favor, while Polykrates and Aristonikos rose to favor via military appointments. Kleopatra would have had to navigate these risings to and fallings from power when creating her own support system. The Rebellion also had a major impact on the royal couple's ability to participate in the euergetism and building activity that was so

²⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 154. For an overview of the revolt, see Hölbl 153-159.

efficacious for their predecessors, as will be explained below. This also meant that many of the types of commemorative inscriptions and monumental depictions that exist for previous royal couples are rare or non-extant for Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I.

Even with the lacunae that were created by the changing court mechanics and rebellious activity, there are still certainties that can be identified about Kleopatra's time as *basilissa*-consort to Ptolemy V. After their wedding, Kleopatra fulfilled her queenly duty of ensuring dynastic stability through the birthing of heirs. A lack of female children was the very issue that had precipitated her own marriage to Ptolemy V, so the need to birth Ptolemaic heirs, both male and female, must have been a pressure she was aware of soon after her arrival. She and Ptolemy V had three children: Ptolemy VI (Polyb. 28.20.9; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.25-30 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F49b, 50), Ptolemy VIII (Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.29-30 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F50), and Kleopatra II (Livy 45.11; Just. *Epit.* 38.8).

Whitehorne proposes that Kleopatra II may have been the oldest, with Ptolemy VI born next, and Ptolemy VIII as the youngest.²⁹ I would instead argue that Ptolemy VI, who was born in 186 BCE (he is the only of his siblings with a securely dated birth), was the oldest, followed by Kleopatra II (perhaps born c. 185 BCE), and then Ptolemy VIII (perhaps born c. 184/183 BCE).³⁰ The first attestation of a child for this royal couple is a dedicatory inscription from Philae in 185/184 BCE (*OGIS* 98), which mentions "Ptolemy, the son."³¹ If Kleopatra II had been born at this time, she would have been included in the dedication as well, since it was

²⁹ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 86; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 142.

³⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 142; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra I." It is also noteworthy that their first child was born the year the Theban Rebellion was finally quelled. This could either be attributed to Kleopatra reaching child-bearing age, if one holds to the earlier theories that she was only ten at the time of her marriage (see note 16, above), which I do not. Or, it could be additional evidence of the disruption caused by the Rebellion and its impact on the court and Ptolemy and Kleopatra I's early rule.

³¹ *OGIS* 98 reads: "βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος καὶ βασίλισσα Κλεοπάτρα, θεοὶ Ἐπιφανεῖς καὶ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ υἱὸς Ἀσκληπιῶτι." Translated as: "King Ptolemy and Queen Kleopatra, the Manifest Gods, and Ptolemy, the son, to Asklepios." Here it assumed "Ptolemy, the son" is Ptolemy VI, who would succeed his father as king.

Ptolemaic tradition to include all royal children, male and female, in these types of dedications, as had been done, for example, with the children of Berenike II and Ptolemy III in various inscriptions and monumental depictions (see Part II, chapter 6).

In addition to the birthing of heirs, Kleopatra acted in the same role as the queens that came before her: as the supportive *basilissa*-consort. During the period of Ptolemy V's rule, Kleopatra was regularly attested to in dedicatory inscriptions and on some temples and stelae. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, cite twenty-six Greek inscriptions and fourteen Egyptian documents in which the queen is mentioned in conjunction with the king, and Hazzard similarly lists nine dedicatory inscriptions throughout the Ptolemaic kingdom.³² In these documents, she is usually titled *basilissa*, in the Greek, along with other titularies, in the Egyptian, which will be explored in greater detail below, and her name is always placed after that of her husband, in the supporting position, as was tradition to this point. To illustrate, a hieroglyphic stele (CG 54313) places the queen's cartouche after that of Ptolemy V and names her the "Mistress of the Two Lands, Kleopatra."³³ An example outside of Egypt is a set of dedicatory phiales that were deposited at Delos by the choir of Deliades, in honor of King Ptolemy and Queen Kleopatra (*I. Delos* 442B).³⁴

In the religious sphere, Kleopatra was included in both reliefs on stelae, which presented an iconography similar to the imagery used by her predecessor queens (in ceremonial dress, standing just behind their husbands), and many inscriptions that presented her as the equal in cultic status to her husband. For instance, on a stele produced as a copy of

³² Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 150, n. 18 and 19; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 123-124, n. 117. *OGIS* I. 96, I.97, I.99, I.100, I.101, II.732, II.733; *SEG* 9.55, 24.1202.

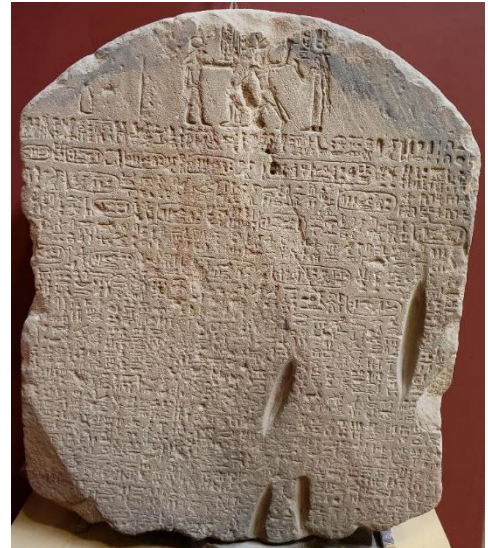
³³ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 149-150.

³⁴ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 163-164.

the Second Philae Decree (CG 44901, called the Decree of the Priests at Memphis) Kleopatra is represented on the arch with her husband in a cultic position equal to him, and she is mentioned in the body of the text as being granted honors similar to those given to Berenike II in the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56; CG 22186) and to Arsinoë III in the Raphia Decree (CG 50048/31088; see Appendix F).³⁵

Finally, correspondingly to Arsinoë III, Kleopatra I was shown in a militaristically supportive position to her husband. As described in chapter 7, Arsinoë III was shown behind her husband on the Raphia Decrees (CG 50048/31088; Figs. 3.1, 3.2) as he smote the enemies of Egypt. On a later copy of the Memphis Decree (CG 22188, the Nubayrah/Annobeira Stele), Kleopatra was carved standing behind her husband as he defeated the enemies of Egypt before the local gods and followed by three royal couples.³⁶

Similarly, on CG 44901 she was shown in a rough



Figs. 4.1 and 4.2. Left, close up image of Kleopatra I, standing behind Ptolemy V on CG 44901. Right, full image of the stele. The Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 44901). Photos by the author.

³⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 166.

³⁶ Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 49, n. 56; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 165. The Decree of the Priests at Memphis is sometimes also called a “Decree of Memphis,” but it is dated to 182 BCE and includes portions copied from the Second Philae Decree. The Decree of the Priests at Memphis (CG 44901, 182 BCE) should not be confused with the Memphis Decree on the Rosetta Stone (*OGIS* 90), dated to 196 BCE, and the copy of the Memphis Decree on the Stele of Nubayrah (CG 22188), also dated to 182 BCE. See Appendix F.

carving standing behind her husband, in the supportive position, as he undertook his military duties (see Figs. 4.1, 4.2). Just as Raphia had been an important victory for the Philopatores, so too was the ending of the Thebaid Rebellion a significant triumph for the Epiphaneis. Accordingly, both queens were depicted in the role of supportive spouse on monuments commemorating these victories in order to present the royal couple as unified and the queen as approving of her husband's foreign and military policies.

When observed together, all these surviving inscriptions and depictions strive to fit Kleopatra into the Ptolemaic propaganda that had been established for the previous ruling couples. Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I were presented as a ruling unit, who through their actions maintained the Ma'at of the kingdom, and, within that unit, Kleopatra was the equal of her husband and supportive of his actions and policies. This image of unity was important, firstly, because the Ma'at of the kingdom was being challenged by internal rebellions, and, secondly, since she was of foreign origin, Kleopatra needed to be adopted quickly into the Ptolemaic family to distance herself from her Seleukid birth.

Although Kleopatra was only distantly related to Ptolemy V, similarly to Berenike II, she was titled the king's sister (ἀδελφὴ or ἀδελφὴ καὶ γυνή, "sister and wife"; *sn.t* and *hm.t* in Demotic) in Greek and Demotic documents (*OGIS* 733, 99; *SB* 1.2138; *P. Dem. Louvre* 9415; *CG* 54313; *THI* 260, 261).³⁷ As with Berenike II, referring to Kleopatra in this way created an incestuous marriage for the couple in the style of their predecessors, which further fit them into established Ptolemaic propaganda. Van Oppen de Ruyter argues that the title sister was first given to Kleopatra during the Thebaid Rebellion (c. 191/190 BCE), as a way to quickly absorb her into the royal house during a time of crisis and allow her to renounce

³⁷ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 61; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 85, n. 10; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 150-151, n. 22, 25, 26.

her obligations to her birth family, who were considered the enemies of the Ptolemies after so many wars between the kingdoms.³⁸ The efforts to incorporate her into the propaganda may have begun slightly earlier, however, since Ptolemy minted coins of the Arsinoë II type, in which the bust was slightly altered to resemble Kleopatra I (Sv. 1241, 1242). Consiglio, after Lorber, posits that these coins were minted in 192/191 BCE to commemorate the marriage of Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I, and that the K monogram present on the obverse of the Sv. 1242 type, rather than representing an Alexandrian minting authority, is the first initial of the queen, which indicates both her new place within the dynasty's propaganda and the queen's growing institutional importance.³⁹

Granting her the title of sister and quickly incorporating her into the dynasty's imagery may have been vital for Kleopatra, since Antiochos had arranged marriages for all his daughters to strengthen his own kingdom, and, according to the *Book of Daniel* (11.17), he may have hoped this marriage would bring destruction upon Egypt. Instead, as noted by Jerome, "Kleopatra supported her husband rather than her father" (*Comm. Dan.* 11.17-19 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F47), as shown by Egypt's repeated attempts to align with Rome against Antiochos, although the Romans refused the aid offered by the Ptolemies (Livy 36.4.1-4). The royal couple even sent an embassy to Rome in 191 BCE after Antiochos' defeat at Thermopylae to praise them for removing Seleukid power from Greece (Livy 37.3.9-11).⁴⁰ Including the queen's name in this congratulatory message demonstrated to the

³⁸ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 37, 39-40. This point is echoed by Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo who argue that the title "conférait une légitimité remarquable en regard de son origine étrangère." Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 151.

³⁹ Nicolas Consiglio, "Les Frappes Monétaires Durant Les Règnes Conjoints de Cléopâtre I-Ptolémée VI et Ptolémée VI- Cléopâtre II: Un Témoignage des Nouvelles Prérogatives des Reines au IIe Siècle?" In *Inventer le pouvoir féminin: Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II, reines d'Égypte au IIe s. av. J.-C.*, Anne Bielman-Sánchez and Giuseppina Lenzo, eds. (Berne: Peter Lang, 2016), 421-422, 423.

⁴⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 141; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 85-86.

Hellenistic world that Kleopatra was now fully a Ptolemaic queen, no matter her parentage and original loyalties. These efforts must have worked because, as noted by Bielman-Sánchez, Kleopatra I received as many attestations of respect as the queens who preceded her and were of Lagid blood.⁴¹ Hölbl posits that she may not have turned completely against her birth family, however, since she did stop plans to invade Syria after her husband's death, but, the abandonment of those arrangements, if she was receiving income from Koile-Syria, had more to do with protecting her own interests, rather than familial loyalty.⁴²

The pseudo-incest of the royal couple not only strengthened the queen's claim of Ptolemaic heritage and loyalty, but it also provided her with a position that was equal to her "brother"-husband.⁴³ This equality of position is shown by her inclusion in the dynastic cult and the epikleuses extended to her, as had been established by the ruling couples who came before her. Ptolemy V was given cultic titles as early as 199/198 BCE, as the *Theos Epiphanes* (and *Eucharistos*) in both the cults at Alexandria and Ptolemais.⁴⁴ Around the same time, he was also made a *synnaos theos* as "Pharaoh Ptolemaios, (the god) who comes forth" (*Pr- '3 Ptlwmys (p3 ntr) nty pr, p3 i-ir pr*).⁴⁵ The royal couple was incorporated into

⁴¹ Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 406, n. 11.

⁴² On the possibility that Kleopatra earned income from Koile-Syria, see pgs. 229-230, above. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143. Although, it should be noted that her decision could have derived from a combination of both protecting her own interests and family loyalty. These types of decisions are not always black and white. As McAuley has argued, "the presumption has been that once married, such women sever all ties with their natal houses and passively embrace the agenda of their nuptial family." Kleopatra needed to promote her role as a Ptolemaic queen, but that does not mean she completely abandoned any family loyalty. McAuley, "Princess & Tigress: Apama of Kyrene," 177. A point also made by Carney, "Being Royal and Female in the Early Hellenistic Period," 201.

⁴³ Van Oppen de Ruiter, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship*, 40.

⁴⁴ For Ptolemy V's cultic titles, see note 15, above. Ptolemy IV instituted a second college of eponymous priests of the Ptolemaic royal cult in the city of Ptolemais in 215/214 BCE, about nine years prior to the Thebaid Rebellion (206-186 BCE). Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 170, 171; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 219; Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," 351. See also, Appendix D.

⁴⁵ Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," 355.

the dynastic cult at the time of their marriage in 194/193 BCE as the *Theoi Epiphaneis Eucharistoi* (“Manifest and Beneficent Gods”); see Appendix D).⁴⁶ This new joint cultic title is attested to in many inscriptions where the royal couple is listed as the *Theoi Epiphaneis* (OGIS 98; in Demotic as *ntr.wy nty pr*, “the two gods that appear,” Edfu 1.517; Edfu 2.159; THI 260, 261; *P. Louvre* 9415) or the *Theoi Epiphaneis Eucharistoi* (OGIS 95, 97, 99, 100, 733, SEG 4.874, 875).⁴⁷

The previous Ptolemies had all similarly participated in the dynastic cult and been worshiped as gods, but with Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I there was an innovation in the use of dynastic epiklese. While the previous Ptolemies and their queens had all been worshiped either after their death or during their lifetime, their divine epiklese were only used in dedicatory inscriptions by private individuals and in the dating formulas of the Alexander priests; their divine titles were not used in official documents, such as royal decrees, letters, and royal religious dedications.⁴⁸ OGIS 98, which was mentioned above as the first attestation of the royal couple’s son, is also the first recorded use of a divine epiklese by living monarchs.⁴⁹

OGIS 98 is a royal decree proclaiming a dedication to the temple of Asclepius by the royal family. While Johnson theorizes that the previous avoidance of divine titles by Ptolemies I through IV was in an effort to avoid self-glorification, I would instead argue that this change in title usage reflects the transition I have previously mentioned of royal divinity

⁴⁶ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 85; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 171; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V”.

⁴⁷ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 150-151, n. 20, 21, 27.

⁴⁸ Carl G. Johnson, “Ogis’ 98 and the Divinization of the Ptolemies,” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 51 (2002), 113. Johnson notes that the “avoidance of divine titles [for living monarchs] is consistent in papyri, inscriptions and coin inscriptions from the reign of Ptolemy I through Ptolemy IV.”

⁴⁹ Johnson, “Ogis’ 98 and the Divinization of the Ptolemies,” 113; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V”.

becoming intrinsic, rather than earned.⁵⁰ If, by this point, the royal couple was seen as having inherent divinity, granted to them by the gods on account of their positions as monarchs, the use of the dynastic title in official documents would be their right, rather than an act of self-glorification. The full transition to inherent divinity is also supported by Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I's epiklesis, Epiphanes, which Cheshire asserts was the first non-secular epiklesis with an implication of transcendence.⁵¹ Additionally, Johnson further advocates that Ptolemy V's official use of his divine epiklesis was in response to the challenges of his day, including the Thebaid Rebellion, since such a "superficial display of divine majesty would mask his own growing impotence."⁵² The need to bolster royal authority can also be directly correlated to the changing court mechanics, including the implementation of new hierarchical court titles, and that courtiers could gain power through channels other than monarchical favor.⁵³ Ptolemy needed a way to emphasize his own royal power, in response to challenges to his authority, and emphasizing the divinely imbued nature of his position was one way to do so. This was also an important step because he was bolstering not only his own authority, but also that of the queen, who was included in the official use of that divine epiklesis. After Ptolemy V, the succeeding monarchs would regularly make use of their epikleses, beginning with Kleopatra I during the period of her regency, when she utilized the title "Basilissa Kleopatra Thea Epiphanes" (*P. Frieb.* 12; Appendix D).⁵⁴

While Kleopatra had been included as part of *Theoi Epiphaneis* immediately following her marriage to Ptolemy V, official inclusion in the dynastic cult and as one of the

⁵⁰ Johnson, "'Ogis' 98 and the Divinization of the Ptolemies," 115. On the intrinsic divinity theory, see Part II, chapter 6.2, pgs. 185-186.

⁵¹ Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," 355.

⁵² Johnson, "'Ogis' 98 and the Divinization of the Ptolemies," 116.

⁵³ See Part I, chapter 2.3 and pgs. 231-232.

⁵⁴ Johnson, "'Ogis' 98 and the Divinization of the Ptolemies," 116. See also, Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 60, n. 13.

synnaoi theoi was not granted to her until after the birth of Ptolemy VI. By 186 and 185 BCE the Egyptian priests convened and with the First and Second Philae Decrees they granted Kleopatra I the title of *Thea Epiphanes* (“Manifest Goddess”) and extended to her all the honors that had been granted to Ptolemy VI prior to their marriage in the Memphis Decree of 196 BCE (the Rosetta Stone, *OGIS* 90), including the erection of cultic statues in temples, daily offerings to those statues, and festivals in the deified couple’s honor (*THI* 260, 261; see also Appendix F).⁵⁵ These honors are reminiscent of the honors bestowed on Berenike II in the Canopus Decree (*OGIS* 56) and Arsinoë III in the Raphia Decree (CG 31088).⁵⁶ Most importantly, it proclaimed the worship of the king and queen was joint, meaning they were now officially equal in cultic title and worship.

Being decreed as her husband’s cultic equal also meant that Kleopatra shared in the king’s religious duties. Accordingly, on a stele from the Egyptian Museum (CG 54313; Fig. 5) the pharaoh, Ptolemy V, is shown offering the produce of Egypt to the Buchis Bull, the incarnation of the Theban war god Monthu. The queen is not depicted with him in the imagery, but she is mentioned in the accompanying inscription, coupling her with her “brother”-husband and his actions in maintaining the Ma’at

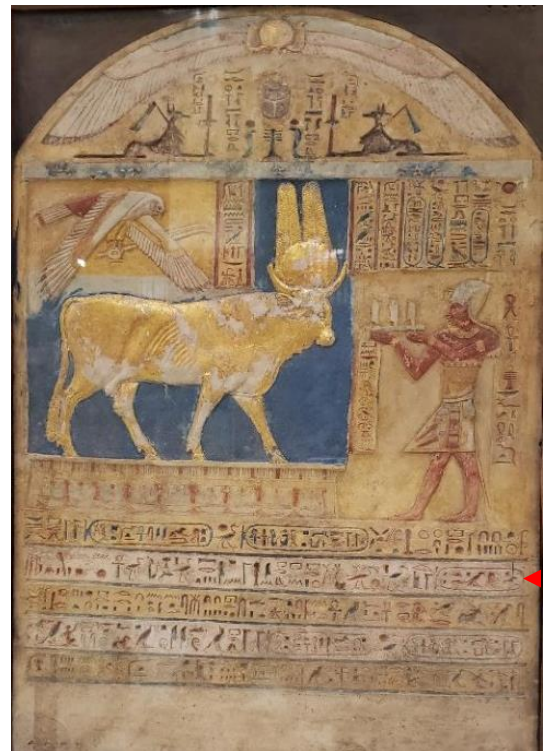


Fig. 5. Buchis Bull stele of Ptolemy V. The Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG 54313). The cartouche of Kleopatra I is identified with a red arrow. Photo and editing by the author.

⁵⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 167.

⁵⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 165.

of the kingdom.⁵⁷ Not only would their actions have been important pharaonic duties, but making offerings to the Buchis Bull and Monthu would have been especially important to the Epiphaneis after quelling the Thebaid Rebellion.

Around this same time, Kleopatra was also granted a Horus name in two inscriptions at the temple of Edfu (Edfu 1.517, 2.159), the royal titulary of *Hr.t* (“female Horus”), which was a title previously held by Berenike II (see Part II, chapter 6; Appendix E).⁵⁸ In the temple of Philae she was also called Female Vizier (*t3tj.t*). Only the queens Berenike II, Kleopatra I, III, and VII were granted Horus names, and only Berenike II and Kleopatra I were called viziers (see Appendix E). Also similarly to Berenike II, in the Demotic sections of the Philae Decrees (*THI* 260, 261) Kleopatra was titled “ruler” (*hk3.t*) and “female pharaoh” (*Pr- '3.t*; also in *P. Louvre* 9415).⁵⁹ For Kleopatra I, since these titles were granted to her before her husband’s death and before she became regent for their young son, they cannot be titles that were conferred on her to indicate her personal rulership, as has been previously claimed.⁶⁰

Rather, and similarly to what was proposed for Berenike II, the conferral of these titles on Kleopatra must have been done to further present Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V as one ruling unit. Since Kleopatra was a foreign princess whose loyalties could be questioned, she needed a title of corresponding titular equality to those held by Ptolemy to complete the concept that she and her husband were a royal unit acting in harmony, both religiously and politically. While the titles were not granted to her as an indication of her regency, they

⁵⁷ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 78, cat. no. 57.

⁵⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 167, n. 59; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 151-152, n. 33, 153. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo also note, Kleopatra’s full Horus name (“daughter of a ruler, born of a ruler”), was almost identical to Berenike’s. Kleopatra I: *s3.t hq3, jr.t n hk3.t*; Berenike: *Hr.t hk3.t, ir.t n hk3.t*, see Part II, chapter 6.2, note 281.

⁵⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 150-151, n. 24 and 28.

⁶⁰ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 151-152.

certainly could have provided her the added authority that was needed when the time came to appoint a regent and co-ruler for Ptolemy VI.

In conjunction with their titles, the religious unity of the royal couple and the transference of power to them from their ancestors would usually have been depicted on the monumental scale. Due to the Thebaid Rebellion, however, Ptolemy V was not as active a builder as his predecessors had been or his successors would be, so there are fewer representations of the Epiphaneis than there are for the previous and subsequent royal couples.⁶¹ Hölbl lists Ptolemy's few monumental additions, such as new decorations for the Apieion in Memphis, new construction on the Anubieion in Saqqara, work on the temple of Arensnuphis at Philae and a new naos, and, perhaps, the new construction of a temple of Imhotep at Philae in honor of the royal family's visit there (commemorated by *OGIS* 98, translated in note 31, above). Hölbl also cites the few inscriptions on temples, including the two added to the temple of Horus at Edfu that preserve Kleopatra's titulary (Edfu 1.517, 2.159) and the restoration of a relief on the enclosure wall of the great temple of Amun at Karnak.⁶²

This means that, unfortunately, no monumental transference of power reliefs survived for the Epiphaneis, and Kleopatra I, similarly to Berenike I, is only shown in the temple reliefs of later royal couples who are being granted power from their ancestors.⁶³ Whether

⁶¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 162; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 153, n. 44; Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 61. Minas-Nerpel cites that "Cleopatra I is not attested in any Egyptian ritual scene in the role of the living queen consort." She should have clarified this to indicate that Kleopatra is not depicted on any temples, since the queen is shown on two stelae (CG 22188, 44901), but, otherwise, her point is a salient one.

⁶² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 162.

⁶³ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 136; Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 64; Quaegebeur, "Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens," 49. Minas-Nerpel indicates that no scenes of transference of power or ancestor lines (inscribed lines of hieroglyphics that list all the royal

these scenes were either not carved for the Epiphaneis or they do not survive, an important type of propagandistic imagery is missing for this royal couple, which would have made the inscriptions and the titles they utilized all the more vital to make up for the lack of monumental depictions. The Stele of Nubayrah/Annobeira (CG 22188) and the arch of the later Memphis Decree (CG 44901; Figs. 4.1, 4.2) in which Ptolemy V is shown smiting the enemies of Egypt while Kleopatra stands behind him, are two of the only surviving relief images of the royal couple that can be dated to their reign.

Although the transference of power scenes are missing for this queen, that does not mean she was any less religiously important than her predecessors, and, instead, this is evidence of the lacunae created as a result of the situations she was dealing with, including navigating new court mechanics and internal rebellions. On the contrary, Kleopatra I's reign saw two momentous innovations in the religious worship of queens. First, in addition to being worshiped as part of the ruler cult, Kleopatra I was associated with other goddesses, as her predecessor queens had been, but there was an important shift with her assimilations. Whereas previous queens had been assimilated to well-known goddesses in preparation for their deification in the royal cult, Kleopatra was associated with various goddesses after her own divinity was pronounced. Rather than needing an association with established deities to bolster her own divinity, as with Arsinoë II and Berenike II, Kleopatra I, whose divinity was now inherent as the Ptolemaic queen, could be assimilated to other goddesses because they were analogously divine. As such, Kleopatra I utilized the iconographies of Isis, Hathor, and Demeter.

deified couples) survive from the reign of Ptolemy V. Quaegebeur notes that the Epiphaneis were later depicted on the Edfu Temple by both Ptolemy VI and VIII. For an example, see note 200, below.

Correspondingly, the second innovation is that there is not as much evidence for her assimilation to Aphrodite, who had been the main focal goddess for queens like Arsinoë II and Berenike II, but rather Isis would be the main goddess with whom Ptolemaic queens were associated from this point on, an inclination that would reach new heights under Kleopatra III and Kleopatra VII. Kleopatra I's role in this transition, however, has thus far been largely overlooked in scholarship on Ptolemaic queens. Ashton, for example, correctly points out that Arsinoë II and Berenike II were the first queens to be associated with Isis, but she then skips directly to Kleopatra III as the queen who was assimilated as a living incarnation of the goddess.⁶⁴ Only Minas-Nerpel has thus far acknowledged that "Cleopatra I laid the foundation for a development that intensified under her daughter and granddaughter," but even she only mentions this aspect in passing when describing the assimilation of Kleopatra III to Isis.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, Kleopatra I had a hand in the transition away from Aphrodite and towards Isis as the main goddess associated with Ptolemaic queens, and it is a trend that was a direct result of the situation in Egypt when Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V were ruling. By the 190s and 180s BCE, the Ptolemies had been the rulers of Egypt for over 100 years and five generations. The dynasty and immigrant populations were well established and had become accustomed to the native Egyptian traditions, if not somewhat Egyptianized. This is a trend that Ashton identifies in the statuary of the period, even though she misses the religious connection to Kleopatra I. Ashton explains that the period of Kleopatra I saw a change in sculpture: a move away from the melon-bun coiffure (often used in depictions of Arsinoë II

⁶⁴ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 116-117, 118-119. On Kleopatra III's assimilation to Isis, see chapter 10.

⁶⁵ Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 68.

and Berenike II) to the face-framing, cork-screw curls, probably due to the use of similar hair styles in Egyptian-style representations of queens, and a replacement of Greek-style statuary in the round with portraits that depicted the royal family in the Egyptian-style with Greek facial features.⁶⁶ Two examples of Kleopatra in this style are a Greywacke head in the British Museum (BM GR 1926.4-15.15) and a limestone head in the Alexandrian Greco-Roman Museum (21992).⁶⁷ These Egyptianized sculptures with Greek facial features could speak to the Alexandrian population, who still considered themselves Greek but had become increasingly Egyptianized, a Greco-Egyptian people, while also presenting recognizable imagery to the native population.

A similar development is thus visible in the area of religious worship. Whereas the earlier queens had found associations with Greek goddesses useful in connecting with the Greek portions of the population and legitimizing their rule, Kleopatra I, as has been emphasized, was facing a major native uprising, so connecting herself primarily with an Egyptian goddess, specifically the Egyptian goddess of queenship, would have been more helpful to her and the queens who succeeded her. There were some Greek goddesses whose iconography Kleopatra still utilized, such as Demeter, but the Egyptian goddesses became the primary foci of queenly assimilation from her rule on. Aphrodite, whose sea-faring attributes and role as patron of women had been so important to earlier queens, was thus enveloped by Isis, a goddess who fit better within the traditions and expectations of this later period.

⁶⁶ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 89-90, 133. Ashton describes this style as being “made according to Egyptian canons but with features that would enable a Greek to read the representation.” This trend might also be seen on the coins of Kleopatra I, in which she is depicted as Isis with the same style hair, see pgs. 260-261, below.

⁶⁷ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 52-53, cat. nos. 16, 17.

Accordingly, Kleopatra I was assimilated to Isis and Hathor. For example, a gold ring in the British Museum (BM GR 1917.5-1.97) depicts Kleopatra with cork-screw curls and the queenly headdress of a solar disc and cow's horns resting on ears of grain, which would associate her with the Egyptian goddesses Isis and Hathor and with the Greek goddess Demeter.⁶⁸ Since Isis was a goddess of women and married life, who had been depicted as marrying, loving, and then mourning her brother-husband, this would have been an easy association to recognize for Kleopatra I, just as it had been for Berenike II. Kleopatra arrived in Egypt as a foreign princess, but, according to Ptolemaic propaganda, she found harmony in her marriage and became the supportive “sister”-wife to her “brother”-husband. Ultimately, Kleopatra, much like Isis, had to mourn her husband's passing when he died unexpectedly (perhaps murdered, as Osiris had been), and then she became the champion and protectress of their young son, much as Isis had done for Horus.⁶⁹ Her actions as protectress and regent to her young son would solidify her assimilation to Isis, especially once Ptolemy VI adopted the epithet *Philometor*, which expressed his devotion to the woman who had been his protector (see below).

The cow horns in the queenly crown Kleopatra wore and the titulary she held also reference her assimilation to both Isis and Hathor. She was called *sn.t-hm.t-n-s3-R^e* (Sister and Wife of the Son of Ra; *Urk.* II: 204), and her Two Ladies name was “Her Bravery is that

⁶⁸ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 66-67, cat. no. 41. Cheshire also attributes ring 96 from the British Museum (1917.5-1.96) to Kleopatra I, but Walker and Higgs convincingly argue that it is rather Kleopatra III. Cheshire's argument that the queen is wearing a *chlamys* in the ring portrait in order to reference her role as regent also seems to be incorrect, since most of the rings from this period show the queens and goddesses in the same garment, as noted by Walker and Higgs. Ring 96 will be examined in greater detail in the chapter on Kleopatra III, see note 372, below. Cheshire, “Cleopatra ‘the Syrian’ and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda,” 363.

⁶⁹ Koenen, “The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure,” 64; van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis,” 138, 321. Van Oppen de Ruiter also attributes a small faience alabastron to Kleopatra I, which he argues depicts Kleopatra I “enacting a religious ceremony of mourning for her deceased husband...in which she mimicked the lamentations of Isis for Osiris.”

of Neith, Lady of Saïs, Her Honor is that of Hathor in Her Love.”⁷⁰ Both titles reference the queen as Hathor, since Hathor, the incarnation of divine queenship, was the companion deity to Horus, the incarnation of the Pharaoh and son of Ra/Osiris.⁷¹ By identifying herself with both Isis and Hathor, Kleopatra could not only follow in the illustrious footsteps of the queens that came before her, but she could justify her position of queenship, first, as the companion and equal to her husband the pharaoh, as Hathor, and secondly as the champion and protectress of her son, as Isis, when she took on the mantle of regent.

Finally, the ears of grain on her headdress would associate her with Demeter, probably Demeter-Isis, who was first assimilated to Berenike II when she adopted the ear of grain as her special emblem to represent the fertility of the royal couple.⁷² The ears of grain in her headdress and the association with Demeter indicated that, just as the goddess was the deity who brought fertility to the land and bounty to the people, so too did Kleopatra fill a similar role with her own queenly divinity. An association with Demeter and agricultural fertility could have been useful for Kleopatra I because during the rebellion in the Thebaid making sure the troops were well fed was of utmost importance, not only to ensure Ptolemaic victory, but also to maintain the loyalty and happiness of the troops.⁷³

Ptolemy and Kleopatra would have seen to this duty together, and the Philae Decrees, which were issued to proclaim the end of the Thebaid Rebellion, mention that “the King of

⁷⁰ Van Oppen de Ruiter, “The Religious Identifications of Ptolemaic Queens with Aphrodite, Demeter, Hathor, and Isis,” 117-118, 122-123, n. 41.

⁷¹ See Part II, chapter 6 on Berenike II’s assimilation to Hathor. Llewellyn-Jones and Winder, “A Key to Berenike’s Lock? The Hathoric Model of Queenship in Early Ptolemaic Egypt,” 256. Also, here it should be briefly noted that Horus was depicted in various myths as the son of Osiris, the son of Ra, or the son of other deities.

⁷² See Part II, chapter 6.2, note 245. Kleopatra was also assimilated to Demeter-Isis on bronze coins, which may have been produced during the reign of her husband. See also note 101, below.

⁷³ Cheshire, “Cleopatra ‘the Syrian’ and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda,” 380, n. 251, 252, 253.

Upper and Lower Egypt, the Son of Ra, Ptolemy... and his wife, the ruler, the Lady of the Two Lands, Kleopatra, the two Gods Manifest, have been doing every good thing in [Egypt]” (*THI* 260) and they gave “much money and grain in abundance to the temples of Egypt... and they ordered that the one artaba of each arura-measure, which was collected from the fields of the gods and the vineyards of the divine domains of the gods, should be remitted.” (*THI* 261). The First Philae Decree even specifically mentions the individual benefactions of the queen, stating:

The queen, Lady of the Two Lands of Egypt, Kleopatra, the sister and wife of king Ptolemy - may he live forever, beloved of Ptah, gave presents of silver, gold, precious stones in great quantity for the other statues of the goddesses of Egypt, making sacrifices, pouring libations and the rest of the ceremonies performed in the temples of the gods and goddesses of Egypt (*THI* 261).

Here it is Kleopatra, in her position as queenly goddess, who is giving back to the other gods and goddesses of Egypt that have been disrespected during the Rebellion.⁷⁴ In seeing to the happiness of those deities, she was assuring their benevolence for her people, and maintaining Ma’at during a time of crisis. If Kleopatra was well remembered for her piety and benefactions during this time of chaos, that could be another one of the many reasons her ascension to joint-rule with her son was not opposed.

Consequently, all the titles Kleopatra was granted and the religious associations she accumulated provided her with much needed authority when the unexpected happened. Ptolemy V died in 180 BCE, after a reign of twenty-four years, perhaps after being poisoned by his generals, who were angered by threats that he would take money from them to finance another Syrian campaign (Diod. Sic. 29.29.1; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.20 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260

⁷⁴ The Second Philae Decree explained that the rebels “desecrated the temples, they damaged the divine statues, they molested the priests and suppressed the offerings on the altars and in the shrines” (*THI* 260).

F48).⁷⁵ Evidence of his preparations for war is provided by not only the literary sources, but also by the appointment of Ptolemy VI as co-ruler in 181 BCE, in what Hazzard notes was a “usual precaution before war.”⁷⁶

Ptolemy V was succeeded by Kleopatra I and their six-year-old son, Ptolemy VI. Kleopatra was the first Ptolemaic queen to become *basilissa*-regent, a position in which she, according to the official documentation (see below, on her dating protocols as regent, and Appendix C), co-ruled with Ptolemy VI but acted as the dominant decision maker in the royal tandem.⁷⁷ She may have been able to take up the role of *basilissa*-regent because of a precedent in Egyptian law that accorded women the right to act as guardians of their minor children, but that was only one facet of her ascension.⁷⁸ She must have built a support network in the royal court while also participating in actions that would have earned her the love and support of the people and the military. Kleopatra was able to successfully take on the mantle of *basilissa*-regent in a way her predecessor, Arsinoë III, had been prevented from doing. Kleopatra’s actions, therefore, would set an important example for the queens who succeeded her.

Although she did what no other queen had previously done and set such an important precedent, she is largely overlooked and disregarded in the major works on Ptolemaic Egypt, especially in the scholarship of the earliest historians that are of historiographical importance. Bevan, for example, mentions her in a few places in his chapter on Ptolemy V, but he

⁷⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 142; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 125; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy V”; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 153-154, 165. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo also note that a theory proposed by Huss, that Kleopatra might have been behind the death of her husband, is unfounded.

⁷⁶ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 125, n. 121.

⁷⁷ See definition of term *basilissa*-regent in the Introduction, Table 1, pgs. 8-9.

⁷⁸ See Part I, chapter 1.1, note 3. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 157, n. 59.

dedicates only one page to the period of her regency, most of which focuses on her brothers in the Seleukid kingdom.⁷⁹ Similarly, Mahaffy summarized her regency in about a page's worth of text; although, he did note that she was both a "natural regent" and a "prudent woman," so he was one of the first historians to give her at least fleeting praise.⁸⁰ Bouché-Leclerq briefly references the queen's regency in one sentence at the end of his first volume of Ptolemaic history and only in a passing reference to the theory that she had a hand in Ptolemy V's murder, which he denies.⁸¹ He explains her regency in about one page at the beginning of his second volume, and, similarly to Bevan, he focuses more on her Seleukid connections, while simply noting that her regency was a period of peace.⁸² Macurdy wrote seven pages on Kleopatra I, most of which centered on her marriage and the issues surrounding her dowry. She dedicated three pages to the period of Kleopatra's co-rule with her son and acknowledges that she "governed wisely and well during the years of her regentship."⁸³

Later works that mention Kleopatra I usually focus, similarly to Bevan and Macurdy, on the negotiations and events before her marriage arrangement to Ptolemy V and the subsequent issues with her dowry, but the one thing all the later works make sure to emphasize, perhaps taken from Macurdy, is that, once she became regent, Kleopatra's name was listed before that of her son during the regency period.⁸⁴ It is understandable that scholars would mention the unprecedented change in dating protocols, but since her overall

⁷⁹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 282.

⁸⁰ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 165-166.

⁸¹ Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, 401. "la première des Cléopâtres historiques, qui allait gouverner le royaume au nom des ses enfants. Elle n'eût pas vu sans doute d'un bon œil une guerre éclater entre son mari et son frère; mais rien ne nous autorise à penser qu'elle ait collaboré ou acquiescé à un crime."

⁸² Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.2-3.

⁸³ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 145.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 145; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23.

position as regent and co-ruler was an even greater innovation, it is strange that she is so overlooked.

Perhaps the disregarding of her co-rulership period stems from the fact that the transition and period of rule were so peaceful? The ancient sources, for example, mention no disturbances or disputes at Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI's ascension, indicating the transition was a relatively smooth one. This presents a significant contrast to the events after the death of Ptolemy IV and the subsequent assassination of Arsinoë III, both of which are scrutinized in the ancient and modern sources alike. Was it the excitement of the events surrounding Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III's deaths that caused them to be preserved in ancient sources, while the peaceful and unchallenged transition of power at the death of Ptolemy V was overlooked? Rather than causing modern scholars to do the same, the unchallenged transition from a king to a *basilissa*-regent should prompt modern analysis, and it leads to an important question: why was the transition after the death of Ptolemy V a smooth one when the changeover after the death of Ptolemy IV was not?

Kleopatra, it seems, understood that court mechanics at this time were transitioning, including the new prominence of Alexandrian elite families, and she curried favor accordingly, while also taking advantage of a new support network in the court eunuchs. Her abandonment of Ptolemy's plans to go to war may be further evidence of her understanding of court politics. If Ptolemy was killed by the elites, who did not want to pay for a new war, Kleopatra abandoning those plans could only ingratiate her to those elites, while also protecting her own interests (if she was earning an income from Koile-Syria, as proposed above) and forestalling hostilities with the Seleukids and her brother. Arsinoë III, on the other hand, may have tried to build a network of *philoï*, in the way her predecessor queens

had, as discussed in chapter 7, but her network was either smaller or less effective than those constructed by her predecessors or it had been hindered or dismantled by Sosibios and Agathokles.

Although Arsinoë may have gained support from the military, especially the new native portions of the army, she was on the cusp of the transitioning court mechanics and fell to the machinations of powerful royal ministers. Furthermore, gaining popularity with the newly empowered native portions of the army may have made her a greater threat to those advisors, who saw her removal from court as a necessity, especially if Ptolemy IV had desired for her to be regent to their young son. Kleopatra, conversely, may have had approval from all the important parties, including the civil servants, the military, and the inhabitants of Alexandria.⁸⁵ In conjunction with Kleopatra's own political maneuverings, the powerful ministers at the time of Ptolemy V's death may have also learned from the doomed Sosibios and Agathokles, who both met untimely ends after murdering a popular queen.

Kleopatra reigned as the *basilissa*-regent and senior co-ruler with Ptolemy VI from 180 until her own death in 177 BCE (see Appendix A). The date of the queen's death is another area of scholarly contention. Early estimates, after Pestman, placed her death in 176 BCE, due to his interpretation of two papyri: *P. BM EA 10518* and *P. Cairo Eg. Soc.*⁸⁶ Accordingly, some scholars, including Hölbl, Whitehorne, and Hazzard, date her death between April and May/July of 176 BCE.⁸⁷ Reinterpretations of these papyri have led more recent scholars, such as Bennett, Bielman-Sánchez, and Lenzo, to convincingly propose 177

⁸⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 160.

⁸⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 158-161; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126, n. 127.

⁸⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 87; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126, n. 127.

BCE as the year of her death, providing her with a reign of about three years.⁸⁸ The circumstances surrounding her death are also unclear. She died suddenly, much like her husband, which has led some scholars to suspect foul play. Wong, for example, posits that Eulaios may have had a hand in Kleopatra's early death, but this is a theory that Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo reject as unfounded.⁸⁹ There is not currently enough extant evidence to determine a cause of death; it can only be confirmed that she disappears from the dating protocols after 177 BCE.

In contrast, the evidence does confirm that, during the three-year period of her reign, Kleopatra was an effective and active ruler. Her first action was to establish herself as the dominant partner in the co-rulership relationship she exercised with her young son. Papyri from the period (*P.Ryl.* 4.589; *P.Freib.* 3.12; *P.Freib.* 3.22; *P.Tebt.* 3.978; *P.Dem BM* 10518) demonstrate that the dating protocols on official documents were revised during the period of their joint rule to reflect the change in status of the queen and Ptolemy VI (see Appendix C).⁹⁰ In these protocols, Kleopatra I is listed before her son, Ptolemy VI, and she is titled *Thea Epiphanes*.⁹¹ Hölbl and Penrose both argue that since Kleopatra was referred to as *Thea* (goddess) and Ptolemy was not yet titled *Theos* (god), she was the effective ruler of Egypt,

⁸⁸ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra I"; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 158-161.

⁸⁹ Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 46; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 172.

⁹⁰ For an explanation of what constitutes a dating "protocol," see Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 158-159.

⁹¹ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 145; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 86, n. 11; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 154. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo cite twenty papyri in Greek and Demotic. *P.Freib.* 3.12, for example, reads: "βασιλευόντων Κλεοπάτρας τῆς μητρὸς θεᾶς Ἐπιφανοῦς καὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου θεοῦ Ἐπιφανοῦς," or "Queen Kleopatra the mother, Manifest Goddess, and Ptolemy, son of Ptolemy the God Manifest..."

since the pharaoh was a deified being.⁹² Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, also point out that, while Kleopatra was the dominant of the two monarchs, the papyri make it clear that their rule was considered a joint one through the use of the verb to rule (βασιλέων) in the genitive plural (βασιλευόντων), which indicated the rule of multiple people, and phrases that accompanied the dating protocol, including: “the first year of this period is also the first year that Queen Kleopatra and King Ptolemy, her son, [and son of] the Gods Epiphanes, exercise (the kingship) that they also inherited” (P.Ryl. Gr. 4.589).⁹³ Kleopatra’s dominant position is also demonstrated by the epithet Ptolemy VI received after her death, Philometor (“Mother-loving”, see Appendix D). Most importantly, this editing of the dating protocol would have an important impact for later queens, since from this point it became customary to include the queen by name (not just by epithet as one half of the deified royal couple or by her parentage of the current king) as a co-ruler, either dominant or secondary (see Appendix C).

The few available pieces of evidence dating to the period of Kleopatra’s regency further indicate that she was fully engaged in the rulership of the kingdom. The papyrus *P. Coll. Youtie* 1.12, in which the petitioner claims he was pardoned by the queen, advocates that she was involved in the judicial pharaonic duties.⁹⁴ A fragmentary seal in hieroglyphs bearing the name of Kleopatra and Ptolemy (Seal BM EA 24249), which was used in temples

⁹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 216; Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23.

⁹³ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 154, n. 49, 155. For the Greek text, see their n. 49, and their translation is: “la première année de cette période est aussi la première année où la reine Cléopâtre et le roi Ptolémée, son fils, dieux Epiphanes, exercent (la royauté) qu’ils ont aussi reçue en héritage.” They note later (p. 155) the ambiguity of “dieux Epiphanes,” which in the Greek could seem refer to Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V or Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI, but the demotic makes it clear that the title refers to Kleopatra I and Ptolemy V, since Ptolemy VI had not yet been granted an epiklesis at this time. So, in the translation of the French above, I have added [and son of] for clarification.

⁹⁴ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 86-87; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 168; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 165.

to seal documents, reveals that she was involved in the religious duties of the pharaoh as chief priest of Egypt.⁹⁵ Finally, an honorary inscription from Cyprus (*SEG* 16.788), in which Kleopatra was listed before her son, illustrates the acknowledgement of her superior position by a senior bureaucrat in the kingdom.⁹⁶ Although this is only one example, it provides additional evidence for the argument made above that Kleopatra cultivated relationships with the elite members of the kingdom, apparently not only in Alexandria, but throughout Ptolemaic-held territories. It also signifies that she fulfilled the pharaonic responsibilities of working with the bureaucrats who oversaw Ptolemaic-held regions and gained favor with the military in order to hold those far-flung territories during a time in which they could have easily rebelled against her authority. The only confidently attributed sculptures in the round of the queen, a bust from the British Museum (GR 1926.4-15.15) and another from the Greco-Roman Museum of Alexandria (21992), which were both previously mentioned above, also seem to emphasize her role as regent. According to Ashton, the sculptures of this queen are in the Egyptian style, with Greek portrait features, and parallel those of contemporary male rulers since she ruled as they did.⁹⁷

Kleopatra I may have also minted coins bearing her name on the obverse with her son's name on the reverse in gold, silver, and bronze denominations, but only one specimen

⁹⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 168. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo mention that the king's cartouche on the seal is damaged and could refer to Ptolemy VI or VIII, but they argue since Kleopatra is listed before Ptolemy, it is most likely a seal of Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI.

⁹⁶ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 87; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 168; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 165.

⁹⁷ Sally-Ann Ashton, "Identifying the Egyptian-style Ptolemaic Queens," in *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, Susan Walker and Peter Higgs, eds. (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 150, cat. nos. 16 and 17.

of her gold coinage survives.⁹⁸ The coin, which is held at the British Museum, bears a portrait of Kleopatra, with veil, stephane, and scepter on the obverse, surrounded by the legend ΚΛΕΟΠΑΤΡΑΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ, and the reverse shows a young Ptolemy VI wearing a diadem, encircled by the legend ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ.⁹⁹ The stephane and scepter Kleopatra wears in the portrait seem to have two meanings. First, they connect her to the iconography of the Arsinoë II coinage, which indicates that Kleopatra shaped her queenship role on the example (or the perceived example, see chapter 5) set by her predecessors.¹⁰⁰ Secondly, the stephane and scepter were iconographic motifs of royalty and divinity. They were used on the coinage of Arsinoë to represent her deified state, but on the coinage of Kleopatra they may instead represent her inherent divinity, which bolstered her authority to act as guardian and regent to her young son. The lotus scepter would be an especially important piece of symbolism, since it was a symbol of Isis, who had also acted as the protector of her young son.

Kleopatra's bronze coinage included on the obverse either a head of Ammon (Sv. 1380), a head of the deified Alexander (Sv. 1381), or a head of Isis crowned with grain (Sv.

⁹⁸ Kharstedt, "Frauen auf antiken Münzen," 274; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 145; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 9, Fig. 20; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126, n. 128; Catharine Lorber, "The Coinage of the Ptolemies," in *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage*, William E. Metcalf, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University, 2012) 222-223, Fig. 12.21. It should also be noted that scholars disagree, for the gold coinage, which side is the obverse, and which is the reverse. The scholars listed above, including Lorber and Hazzard, cite the Kleopatra side as the obverse, but others, including Walker and Higgs and Consiglio, list the Ptolemy side as the obverse. Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 84, cat. no. 77; Consiglio, "Les Frappes Monétaires Durant Les Règnes Conjointes de Cléopâtre I-Ptolémée VI et Ptolémée VI- Cléopâtre II: Un Témoignage des Nouvelles Prérogatives des Reines au IIe Siècle?," 423-424.

⁹⁹ British Museum CM 1978-10-21-1; Richard Pincock, "A Possibly Unique Isis Head Bronze Coin of Cleopatra I (180-176 BC)," *The Numismatic Chronicle* 170 (2010), 61; Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 9; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126, n. 128, 130; Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 84, cat. no. 77; Lorber, "The Coinage of the Ptolemies," 223, Fig. 12.21.

¹⁰⁰ Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 9; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126-127, n. 130. For the iconography on the Arsinoë coins, see Olivier and Lorber, "Three Gold Coinages of Third-Century Ptolemaic Egypt," 78-79; Troxell, "Arsinoë's Non-Era," 41. See also, Part II, chapter 5, pgs. 123-124.

1382), each of which were encircled by the legend ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ ΚΛΕΟΠΑΤΡΑΣ, and the reverses of each type were minted with the Ptolemaic eagle, with either closed or opened wings, standing on a thunderbolt, and accompanied by the inscription ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ.¹⁰¹ The coins bearing the image of Isis are of special interest to this study because, as Pincock argues, they likely represented an image of Kleopatra I assimilated to Isis.¹⁰² These coins, accordingly, provide additional evidence of Kleopatra's religious innovation of placing greater emphasis on Ptolemaic queenship being identified with Isis.¹⁰³

These coins, similarly to the gold example, also demonstrate that Kleopatra was basing her queenship on the precedents set by her predecessors. The imagery, which connects her to both Isis, via the cork-screw hair style, and Demeter, by the diadem lined with ears of grain, also links her to Arsinoë II and Berenike II, both of whom were also assimilated to Isis and Demeter. The coin imagery connects Kleopatra to Arsinoë via the depiction of a double cornucopia, Arsinoë's particular emblem, on the reverse, and it also connects her to Berenike through the ears of grain, Berenike's special coinage emblem. The utilization of the Berenike imagery would have been especially significant because, just as the grain emblem on Berenike's coins had referenced the royal couple's actions of importing grain at a time of scarcity, so too had Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I imported grain during the Thebaid

¹⁰¹ For examples of these types of coins, see Sv. Pls. 47a.9, 13, 15; Poole, *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum: The Ptolemies, Kings of Egypt*, lix-lx, 78-79, nos. 1-6, pls. 18.7, 18.9; Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 9-10, Fig. 21; Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 86, cat. no. 88; Kharstedt, "Frauen auf antiken Münzen," 274. See also, Pincock, "A Possibly Unique Isis Head Bronze Coin of Cleopatra I (180-176 BC)," 57-58, Fig. 1-2, 5; Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," 361. The coin types Sv.1232-1235, 1237-1238, 1240 also depict the Isis head, crowned with grain, on the obverse, and the eagle on the reverse. But they only include the legend ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ on the reverse with no inscription naming Kleopatra on the obverse. Pincock argues these were minted by Ptolemy V, after his marriage to Kleopatra I, which is additional evidence of her early assimilation to Isis.

¹⁰² Pincock, "A Possibly Unique Isis Head Bronze Coin of Cleopatra I (180-176 BC)," 59-60.

¹⁰³ On this religious innovation, see pgs. 248-249, above.

Rebellion.¹⁰⁴ This allusion to an earlier royal couple would have been important to demonstrate that the current monarch understood the importance of dynastic continuity and stability, but it could have also served as a way to bolster the authority of Kleopatra, now that her husband was dead, by referencing her participation in royal euergetism.

Furthermore, Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo point out the irregularity of the legend on these bronze coins. Ptolemaic coinage inscriptions, for both males and females, are usually ordered with the monarch's name, followed by their title, such as on Kleopatra's gold coin or the coins of Berenike II, but on these bronze coins Kleopatra's title comes before her name—although, the inscription of Ptolemy's name on the reverse is in the regular style. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo argue that the reversal of the title for Kleopatra on these coins could have been a way of highlighting the new role of the queen, as *basilissa*-regent, and her position as the superior figure in her joint-rule with her son.¹⁰⁵ Overall, these coins seem to have been produced with an important propagandistic purpose in mind, as with the coinage of preceding queens, to regularize the depiction of a *basilissa* with dominant power and to emphasize her religious and protective associations. This was a message that would have been effectively spread to the masses of the population as well, since these coins were minted in bronze, rather than in precious metals that would have seen limited circulation among the elite.

Additionally, Kleopatra was not only active in the administrative duties of the kingdom, she also maintained the important religious associations during her reign as well. This was demonstrated not only by her coinage, but also in the dating protocols that place her

¹⁰⁴ See pgs. 251-252, above, and the line excerpted there from the First Philae Decree (*THI* 261).

¹⁰⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 196. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo also note that recent scholarship has proposed that these coins may be of Kleopatra II, rather than Kleopatra I, and they indicate the need for additional scholarship on these coins. See also, Consiglio, “Les Frappes Monétaires Durant Les Règnes Conjointes de Cléopâtre I-Ptolémée VI et Ptolémée VI- Cléopâtre II: Un Témoignage des Nouvelles Prérogatives des Reines au IIe Siècle?,” 431-434.

name before that of her son. Her deified state was also referenced when she was titled the *Thea Epiphanes*. Similarly to the period of rule with her husband, however, there are no scenes of the transference of power from the period of her joint rule with her son. This could be for two possible reasons. First, she may have been too busy with the rulership of the kingdom to undertake the large responsibility of new construction. While her rule was a time of peace, it may have only been so because of her dedicated governance. Although she ascended to the throne unchallenged, that did not mean she did not have to continue to curry favor with the forces at court to keep herself in power. Second, there was no precedent for her position or any accompanying royal imagery that she could easily utilize. While the transference of power to a royal couple (husband/wife; brother/sister) was well established by this point, there was no Ptolemaic procedure for the imagery of a mother and son sharing power, this would only come later once the position of *basilissa*-regent and co-ruling *basilissa* became regularized by repeated queens exercising public authority. Images of co-ruling spouses would be developed under Kleopatra II (see chapter 9), and Kleopatra III would be depicted ruling with her sons (see chapter 10).

Although the imagery is missing, under his mother's guidance, Ptolemy VI was integrated into the dynastic cult as the *Theos Philometor* ("Mother-loving God") during year three of his joint reign with his mother (178/177 BCE) according to Greek papyri (*P.Freib.* 3.12; *P.Freib.* 3.22; *P.Freib.* 3.31; *P.Freib.* 3.29; *P.Freib.* 3.26; etc.), and year five (176/175 BCE, after Kleopatra's death) in the Demotic (*P. BM EA 10230*).¹⁰⁶ Immediately following

¹⁰⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 156, n. 52, 161; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 160-161; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 172. *Contra* Koenen who notes that Ptolemy VI was given the title at the outset of the joint rule. Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 64, n. 90. Bennet similarly dates the title to 179/178 BCE. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy VI".

her death, Kleopatra was granted an eponymous, joint priesthood “of Ptolemy and Kleopatra, his mother” (*P. BM EA* 10230, 10518). It existed from 177-169 BCE as, perhaps, an extension of their joint rule, which was ended by her untimely death (see Appendix D).¹⁰⁷ By 165/164 BCE, after the solidification of the joint rule of Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra II, and Ptolemy VIII (see next chapter), the joint priesthood of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra I was replaced with an individual priestess “of Kleopatra the mother, the Manifest Goddess” (*P. BM EA* 10515; *P. Dryton* 1).¹⁰⁸ This priestesshood was an honor bestowed upon her in similar fashion to the *kanephoros* of Arsinoë II, the *athlophoros* of Berenike II, and the *hiereia* of Arsinoë III; but, whereas those priestesses were centered in Alexandria, Kleopatra’s was located in the Thebaid city of Ptolemais, where Ptolemy IV had established a second cult center years earlier.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps her priestesshood was established in the Thebaid, rather than in the capital, in order to honor the area that had recently been rebellious with attention from the administrative center.

Kleopatra’s own death in 177 BCE and the mismanagement of the kingdom by Ptolemy VI’s new guardians (see next chapter), demonstrate just how effective her brief period of rule was.¹¹⁰ The peace that defined her brief reign has, however, led most historians to characterize it as an inconsequential period, which may be another reason that the period is generally neglected in modern scholarship. Although she only ruled for three short years, Kleopatra I’s innovations to Ptolemaic queenship were vital. While her husband was alive,

¹⁰⁷ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 161, 163; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 87. See also, Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 126, who notes that this cult was established by Kleopatra before her death, which is, unfortunately, unlikely. Hazzard is using the previously accepted death date for Kleopatra of 176, but the currently proposed death date of 177 indicates the cult was established after her death. On Kleopatra’s death, see note 88, above.

¹⁰⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I,” 163-163; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 87.

¹⁰⁹ See note 44, above, and Appendix D, note 17.

¹¹⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143.

she acted in the roles that, to this point, had become expected of a Ptolemaic queen. She was the last exogamous female spouse of the dynasty, but she was still described as the wife and sister of the king, in order to maintain the dynastic incestuous practices. She navigated court politics successfully, ensured the stability of the dynasty by birthing heirs, both male and female, and acted in support of her husband both in the political sphere and by participating in religious duties. Kleopatra was important religiously since she was deified as part of the dynastic cult before being assimilated to other goddesses, and she had a hand in transferring the queenly focus of assimilation from Aphrodite to Isis. But she also, unquestionably, took advantage of the changes that had been instituted by Arsinoë II, Berenike II, and Arsinoë III, which allowed the queen a greater public role and increased access to power.

Kleopatra then included her own innovation in the normalizing process of queens wielding public power by becoming *basilissa*-regent and ruling jointly, as the dominant partner, with her son. Whereas Arsinoë II and Berenike II were prevented from engaging in true co-rule with their husbands by the politics of their day, the more integrated Greco-Egyptian population over which Kleopatra ruled was more accepting of a female wielding power in public, and she was able to take on the mantle of regent and co-ruler unchallenged. While Kleopatra was not granted a co-rulership with her husband while he was alive, her ability to co-rule with her son, thanks to her own forethought and by taking advantage of the Egyptian traditions of which she was a part, opened the door for husband-wife co-rule to her daughter, Kleopatra II. Just as her predecessors had done, Kleopatra I would set a precedent for her successors who would from this point on increasingly partake in joint-rule with their spouses and children.

9. Kleopatra II: The First Spousal Co-Ruler and *Basilissa*-regnant

When Kleopatra I died, probably unexpectedly, in 177 BCE her son, the Ptolemaic heir, was only about nine years old. The young king's regency was subsequently taken over by Eulaios (Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.21 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F49a; Diod. Sic. 30.16; Livy 42.29.7), a eunuch who had been part of Kleopatra I's network and was familiar to the heir, since he had been appointed Ptolemy's *συντροφος* (*syntrophos*, personal tutor) by Kleopatra I.¹¹¹ Eulaios was aided in this endeavor by another of Kleopatra's supporters, Lenaios, a former Syrian slave from Koile-Syria (Diod. Sic. 30.15).¹¹² Whereas Kleopatra's regency had been marked by peace and good governance, the regency of these two advisors was one of mismanagement and defeat, possibly because Kleopatra had intended to rule alongside her son until he came of age and had not made the appropriate arrangements for the government to be taken over by more experienced advisors in the event of her death.¹¹³

Instead, Eulaios and Lenaios, two figures who would normally have been in the lower ranks of society, were able to take power, perhaps because of their closeness to the young Ptolemy, who at nine years-old could have voiced his preference for the guardians with whom he was familiar. In addition to possible advocacy by the young Ptolemy, Wong also points out that Eulaios and Lenaios must have had some support from the powerful Alexandrian families and ministers, who could have easily pushed them out, had they desired

¹¹¹ Eulaois became Ptolemy VI *ἐπιτροπος* (*epitropos*, guardian), according to Diodorus Siculus (30.16.1) and *tutor regis*, according to Livy (42.29.7). Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 45-46; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 408-409.

¹¹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143.

¹¹³ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 283; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 90. Whitehorne agrees with Bevan's theory that Kleopatra died unexpectedly and did not make plans for her children's guardianship, and he notes that Macurdy's theory that Kleopatra had appointed Eulaios and Lenaios as guardians because they were "more willing to take a woman's orders," is a rather sexist view that is characteristic of the period in which Macurdy was writing, even as a female historian. Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 148.

to do so, because the same powerful families that were prominent under Ptolemy IV remained in power through the reigns of Ptolemy V and VI.¹¹⁴ This may have even been skillful maneuvering on the part of the Alexandrian elites because everything that went wrong during Eulaios and Lenaios' regency could be blamed on the two guardians, allowing the elite ministers to remain blameless and avoid the fate of former regents, such as Sosibios and Agathokles.¹¹⁵ Accordingly, the ancient sources have not been kind to Eulaios and Lenaios, usually attributing their mismanagement of the kingdom to laziness and idleness, but, as both Hölbl and Wong point out, their mistakes should more accurately be ascribed to their inexperience.¹¹⁶

Indeed, Eulaios and Lenaios initial actions as regents seem sensible. First, they bolstered Ptolemy's position as pharaoh by having him incorporated into the Egyptian branch of the ruler cult and as a *synnaos theos*.¹¹⁷ At their ascension as regents, they had also become the guardians of Kleopatra I's other children, Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII. So, their next endeavor was to arrange a marriage between Ptolemy VI and his sister, Kleopatra II, which occurred in 175 BCE, even though both the bride and groom were underage.¹¹⁸ Kleopatra II, who was likely born c. 185/184, would have been about ten years old and Ptolemy VI about eleven.¹¹⁹ Through this action the regents preserved Ptolemaic policy, and

¹¹⁴ Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 53, n. 92, Appendix G.

¹¹⁵ Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 54.

¹¹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Wong, "Cleopatra I, The First Female Ptolemaic Regent: Her Predecessors, Policies, and Precedents," 47

¹¹⁷ As mentioned at note 106, above, Ptolemy VI was incorporated into the Greek branch of the ruler cult in year three of his reign with his mother. He is mentioned as Philometor in the titles of the Web priests in Demotic papyri dating from year five (176/5 BCE, *P. BM EA 10230*). See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143, n. 83.

¹¹⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 409.

¹¹⁹ Bennett, *PD s.v.* "Cleopatra II." See also, at note 30, above, and the discussion on the order of birth for Kleopatra I's children. Some historians claim Kleopatra II was the oldest, but based on *OGIS 98*, I argue that Ptolemy VI was born first and Kleopatra second.

thus showed their own adherence to and respect for tradition by continuing the practice of incest that had been either truly or symbolically upheld by the young couple's predecessors. Directly following their marriage, the new royal couple were also incorporated into the dynastic cult as the *Theoi Philometores*, the Mother-loving Gods (*P. Dem.* BM 10589; see Appendix D).¹²⁰

Very little is known about Kleopatra II during this early period of her life, especially before her marriage and deification, but some small details can be ascertained. Much like her mother, she would have received a Hellenistic education that would have prepared her for life at court and her eventual rulership as queen of Egypt. This may have been something her mother saw to during the short period of her regency, knowing her daughter would be queen of Egypt someday, and Kleopatra II's later dealings with the Alexandrian elites and the support network she gathered around her person (which will be discussed below) are certainly reminiscent of the diplomatic skills her mother exhibited during her own period of rule. But any claim to education directly by her mother is simply conjecture. What can be said for certain is that Kleopatra II's later success and longevity as queen, including the periods of co-rule with both her brothers, then her short period as *basilissa*-regnant, and finally her months as co-ruler with her daughter and grandson (see Appendix A), demonstrate that she had a firm understanding of the court, court mechanics, and Ptolemaic traditions that would have come with a thorough education.

Although the young couple was married in 175 BCE, since they were both underage, they were still under the purview of Eulaios and Lenaios. Things began to go wrong for the regents when they decided to resume Ptolemy V's aggressive stance against the Seleukid

¹²⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy VI."

kingdom, which was now ruled by Antiochos IV, the brother of Kleopatra I and Seleukos IV. The regents feasibly thought that reconquering Koile-Syria would solidify their political position, and, as explained in chapter 8, they had the pretext of retaking the territory by claiming that it had been promised as part of Kleopatra I's dowry (Polyb. 28.20.9; App. *Syr.* 1.5; Jer. *Comm. Dan.* 11.17-19 = Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F47). They began making preparations to declare war on Antiochos as early as 173/172 BCE (Livy 42.26.8, 29.7), but, as Diodorus Siculus explained, “the men who undertook these great tasks were completely without experience of warfare and battles, and they lacked even a single competent adviser or capable commander” (Diod. Sic. 30.15). The Sixth Syrian War (170-168 BCE) was declared in 170 BCE.

Perhaps as an act of unity against the impending threat of war, Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra II, and Ptolemy VIII were proclaimed as co-rulers (*P. Ryl.* 4.583) in 170 BCE, and Ptolemy VI, aged about seventeen, celebrated his anakleteria (ἀνακλήτηρια, coming of age ceremony; Polyb. 28.12.8-9) shortly after in 169 BCE.¹²¹ Military engagements began in earnest in 169 BCE, and the Ptolemaic army was defeated at every turn until Antiochos arrived at the gates of Alexandria (Polyb. 28.20.11). Prior to Antiochos' arrival, Ptolemy VI attempted to flee Alexandria (Polyb. 28.21; *I Macc.* 1.18), but he was captured and Antiochos convinced the young king that he would serve as his protector (Polyb. 28.23, Diod. Sic. 30.18.2, 31.1). The court and people of Alexandria refused this arrangement and instead recognized Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II as king and queen of Egypt (Polyb. 29.23.4; Livy 44.19; Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F2.7). At some point during all of these events, Eulaios and Lenaios were

¹²¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 144; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy VI,” “Cleopatra II.” *P. Ryl.* 4.583, which is dated to 170 BCE, includes the protocol: βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου καὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ καὶ Κλεοπάτρας τῶν Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν ἔτους πρώτου,” or “In the first year of the reign of Ptolemy and Ptolemy the brother and Cleopatra, children of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, gods Epiphaneis.”

deposed. What happened to them after their removal as regents is undocumented, and new commanders, but not new regents, took their place.¹²² By 168 BCE, Antiochos had resoundingly defeated the Ptolemaic forces; he claimed many Ptolemaic territories, including Cyprus and several important Ptolemaic cities within Egypt, and he may even have been acknowledged as protector of Ptolemy VI in Memphis (Polyb. 29.23.4; Livy 45.11; Porph. *FGrHist.* 260 F49a-b; *P. Tebt.* 3.1.698). All these victories resulted in naught, when an embassy from Rome arrived in Egypt, at the request of Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII (Livy, 44.19), and forced Antiochos to return the Ptolemaic territories and retreat to his own kingdom (Polyb. 29.27; Livy 45.12; Diod. Sic. 31.2).¹²³

The confusion and disorder associated with the Sixth Syrian War was only the first incident in a series of contentious events that would define the reigns of Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra II, and Ptolemy VIII. Kleopatra II, however, was the one constant through all the disputes. Kleopatra, as the only daughter of Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I was in a more secure position than her brothers; whereas she was uncontested by another royal female, they, especially Ptolemy VIII as the younger son, repeatedly fought for supremacy after being declared co-rulers so early in their tenures.¹²⁴ Both brothers also turned to their sister for aid and advice. Livy, for example, credits Kleopatra with having great influence over both her brothers when he describes that Ptolemy VI wrote to her to reconcile with Ptolemy VIII when he was held at Memphis by Antiochos IV, and Livy says that “his [Ptolemy VI’s] sister helped him very largely by her advice and her appeals to the brother [Ptolemy VIII]” (Livy 45.11). He also notes that later embassies were sent from “Ptolemy and Kleopatra, the kings”

¹²² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 145; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 94-95, n. 12.

¹²³ For a thorough overview of the events of the Sixth Syrian War, see Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 89-96; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 143-148; Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 258-260.

¹²⁴ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 151.

(*Legati ab Ptolemaeo et Cleopatra regibus*; Livy 44.19) and that replies were addressed to “the rulers of Egypt, Ptolemy and Kleopatra (*Regibus Aegypti Ptolemaeo et Cleopatra*; Livy 45.13).¹²⁵ From the point of her first joint rule with her two brothers in 170 through to her death in 116/115 BCE, Kleopatra ruled Egypt as either co-ruler or *basilissa*-regnant for fifty-five years, with only a short exile from 127-125/4 BCE, a period which will be explained in greater detail at the end of this chapter. Accordingly, Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo have identified seven periods and combinations of reigns that Kleopatra II participated in with various family members over that fifty-five-year span¹²⁶, which I have annotated here:

1. a reign of three with her brothers Ptolemy VI and Ptolemy VIII, from 170 until Ptolemy VI’s expulsion from Alexandria in 164 (Diod. Sic. 31.18.2),
 - a. During the brief period that Ptolemy VIII ruled alone in Alexandria (164-163) he took the title Euergetes (II), and he would use that epithet for the remainder of his various reigns in Kyrene and Egypt (see Appendix D).¹²⁷
2. a joint reign with her brother Ptolemy VI, after his reinstatement by the people of Alexandria, from 163 (Diod. Sic. 31.17c) until his death (Joseph., *AJ*, 13.116; *I Macc.* 11.18) in 145,
 - a. During this period, Ptolemy VIII ruled as king of Kyrene (Polyb. 31.10.5)
3. a joint reign with her brother Ptolemy VIII, from 145 to 140,
 - a. At which time (145/144) she also married Ptolemy VIII (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.4)
4. a reign of three with her brother Ptolemy VIII and her own daughter Kleopatra III, from 140 to 132/131,

¹²⁵ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 149-150; Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 410, n. 25; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 166. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo point out the significance of these passages by Livy: “Il s’agit d’un des rares cas où les auteurs antiques admettent l’implication d’une femme dans le champ politique.”

¹²⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 161-162. See also, Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 409-410.

¹²⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 183.

- a. Ptolemy VIII divorced Kleopatra II and married Kleopatra III in 141/140 (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.5), after which they ruled as a triad, with Kleopatra II designated as “the sister” and Kleopatra III as “the wife” (see, for example, *P. Tebt.* 1.6).
5. A reign alone in Alexandria, from 131/130 to 127,
 - a. The rebellion began in 132/131 (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.11), and Kleopatra II ruled from Alexandria from 131/0-127 as Kleopatra Philometor Soteira (*UPZ* 2.217; *P.Bad* 2.2)
 - b. From 127-125/4 Kleopatra fled to the Seleukid court of her daughter, Kleopatra Thea and her husband, Demetrios II (Just. *Epit.* 39.1)
6. A reign of three with Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III, from 125/124 (*P.Berlin* 3099, 3100, 5508) until Ptolemy VIII’s death in 116,
7. A reign of three with Kleopatra III and her son, Ptolemy IX, from 116 (*P.Dem. Ryl.* 3.20) until her own death in 116/115 (*P.Dem. Cairo* 30602, 30603), aged about seventy.

This chapter will focus on the first five periods of rule, encompassing Kleopatra’s time as co-ruler to Ptolemy VI, then Ptolemy VII, and finally as *Basilissa*-regnant. For a condensed list of these periods of rule, see Appendix A.

[9.1 Kleopatra II as co-ruler to Ptolemy VI](#)

As demonstrated by the excerpts from Livy above, Kleopatra began to accrue influence during the Sixth Syrian War and continued after the war’s end. Although most historians, both ancient and modern, credit the Romans with ending the Sixth Syrian War, Whitehorne reveals that the native Egyptians, or at least the priests who represented them, believed the gods had ended the strife, according to a vision received by a Web priest at the temple of Saqqara.¹²⁸ In this prophesy, Isis proclaimed the protection of Alexandria from the enemy, the preservation of the Ptolemaic line, and that the queen would see to the dynasty’s

¹²⁸ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 96.

continuance because she was pregnant with her first child, which the prophesy claimed would be male. Thus, it was through the queens' actions, both the queen of the gods (Isis) and the queen on Ptolemaic throne, rather than the two kings, that the kingdom would be preserved. And, Kleopatra did fulfill the prophesy in terms of birthing heirs. She and Ptolemy VI had at least four children over the course of their twenty-five years of joint reign: Ptolemy Eupator (born c. 166, *OGIS* 126; died c. 152 *P. Tor. Botti Dem.* 5), Kleopatra Thea (born c. 164, Joseph. *AJ*, 13.80; Just. *Epit.* 39.1.2), Kleopatra III (born c. 160/155, Just. *Epit.* 38.8.5), and Ptolemy (born c. 150s/140s, *P.Koeln* 8.350; died c. 145, Just. *Epit.* 38.8.4).¹²⁹

Unfortunately, both their sons would predecease them.

The period after the Sixth Syrian War was plagued by internal strife. First the ruling trio had to deal with an internal rebellion led by an Alexandrian courtier, Dionysios Petosarapis (Diod. Sic. 31.15a), and then they faced additional rebellions by the native portions of the population, who were angered by new agricultural laws (*UPZ* I.110).¹³⁰ All these issues led to conflict between the two brothers, and Ptolemy VI left Alexandria for

¹²⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 192; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy VI," "Cleopatra II," "Cleopatra III," "Berenice." Bennett also notes the possibility of an additional daughter, named Berenike, the fiancé of Attalos III of Pergamon, who could have been born in the late 160s. Ogden argues she was a Ptolemaic princess because of her name and that she was, instead, the daughter of Ptolemy VIII. Bennett solidly refutes the latter part of Ogden's argument, however. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 208.

There is also extensive scholarly contention surrounding Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VI's younger son, also named Ptolemy. *P.Dem. Ryl.* 3.16 confirms the existence of a second son because it calls Ptolemy Eupator the "eldest son" of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II. However, there is debate over whether the Ptolemy mentioned in the papyrus should be identified as this Ptolemy, Ptolemy Memphites, or another Ptolemy without epithet. See Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy," "Ptolemy Memphites." This is not a debate I will wade into here, since my focus is on the queens, and it does not appear that this contested Ptolemy ever effectively ruled alongside Kleopatra II. Some historians argue he did rule briefly with his mother, as Ptolemy Neos Philopator, after his father's death in 145. He can be identified as the son Justin argued was murdered by Ptolemy VIII after his marriage to Kleopatra II (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.4). If that is the case, he may have ruled for a very short time as co-ruler in name only, with Kleopatra II being the dominant partner. He should not, however be identified as Ptolemy Neos Philopator. Chauveau has convincingly argued that Neos Philopator was a cult initiated for Ptolemy Memphites as a reconciliatory act after the ending of the civil war between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II. Michel Chauveau, "Un été 145," *BIFAO* 90 (1990), 154–5. This work will follow suit with Chauveau's argument in identifying Ptolemy Neos Philopator with Ptolemy Memphites.

¹³⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 181-182.

Rome (Diod. Sic. 31.18.2) in 164 BCE, allowing Ptolemy VIII to become the sole pharaoh for a short period. After leaving Rome, Ptolemy VI went to Cyprus, where he was, perhaps, joined by his sister-wife, until they were recalled to Alexandria by the Alexandrian people in 163 BCE because of Ptolemy VIII's despotic behavior (Polyb. 31.18.14; Diod. Sic. 31.17c).¹³¹ Fraser observes that this is an important point in Ptolemaic history because the populace of Alexandria now realized they could act as both “king-maker and king-breaker,” a power they would exercise against several Ptolemaic monarchs, both male and female, from this point until the end of the dynasty.¹³²

After being recalled, Ptolemy VIII became the king of Kyrene (Polyb. 31.10.5), and Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II ruled Egypt together as co-rulers for the next eighteen years, until Ptolemy VI's death in 145 BCE. The dating protocols make it clear that this was a period of joint rule as they all begin with some form of “the Pharaohs/During the rule of Ptolemy and Kleopatra, his sister, the Mother-loving Gods...” (see Appendix C).¹³³ Kleopatra II took advantage of the precedent set by her mother, as the use of the genitive plural (βασιλευόντων) was retained, and Kleopatra was listed by name after her brother-husband as participating in governance.¹³⁴ This is a significant advance in queenly prerogatives and power because Kleopatra II was the first Ptolemaic queen to be included in the first part of the dating protocol by name and as a co-ruler to her spouse, and her

¹³¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 183; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra II.” Hölbl firmly states that Kleopatra joined Ptolemy in Cyprus. Bennett, however, points out that no classical source says she left Alexandria, but her absence is inferred from the dating formulae of Ptolemy VIII in 163, such as *P.Dem. Munich* 4, in which only he is listed.

¹³² Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 120.

¹³³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 184; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 127-128; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 162.

¹³⁴ On the precedent set by Kleopatra I, see pg. 258, above. See also pgs. 290-292, below, where the dating protocols of Kleopatra II are analyzed in greater detail.

subsequent actions as co-ruling queen demonstrate that her inclusion in the protocol was not simply honorary.

During her joint rule with Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra took an active part in the rulership of the country, both in support of her brother-husband, as previous queens had done, but also by actively ruling alongside him.¹³⁵ For example, at several times during their reign (the years 164, 163, 162, and 158 BCE are firmly attested), Ptolemy and Kleopatra would live in Memphis and personally receive petitions via the Window of Appearances in the Σεραπεῖον (Serapeion, *UPZ* I, p. 247, 250).¹³⁶ In fourteen petitions and two reports from the *strategos* Ptolemaios, Kleopatra is listed with her husband as the recipient of the requests, indicating that she was expected to have a say in the decisions that were returned to the petitioners and officials.¹³⁷ Additional petitions from private individuals, which are addressed to βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίωι καὶ βασιλίσσηι Κλεοπάτραι τῆι ἀδελφῆι (“King Ptolemy and Queen Kleopatra, the sister;”) demonstrate the same pattern (see, for example, *P. Amh.* 2.33; *UPZ* 1.14; *UPZ* 1.42). Kleopatra also participated in official travel throughout the kingdom, not only to Memphis, but also to the Thebaid, and she engaged in public hearings during travel (*C. Ord. Ptol.* 36).¹³⁸

Additionally, when Ptolemy VI became embroiled in the struggles for the throne between Demetrios I, Demetrios II, and Alexander Balas in the Seleukid kingdom (Joseph.

¹³⁵ *Contra* Hazzard, who argues that only Ptolemy VI and VIII co-ruled, while Kleopatra was in a subordinate position. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 128.

¹³⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 184, n. 22.

¹³⁷ Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 411, n. 26; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 166, n. 31; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 128. Hazzard also cites several of these decrees.

¹³⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 166, n. 30. She may have also travelled with Ptolemy to Athens in 162/161 to participate in the Panathenaic Games, see note 180, below.

AJ 13.103-113; *I Macc.* 1-18), Kleopatra II may have stayed in Alexandria to oversee the government as co-ruler.¹³⁹ There are no indications that she travelled with him on campaign during this conflict, and Ptolemy was away for several years of their reign, commanding troops at Lapethos in 154, in Phoenicia in 150/49, in Koile-Syria in 148/147, and in Antioch in 145 BCE at the time of his death.¹⁴⁰ While a regency had not been practicable for Berenike II when Ptolemy III went off to war (see chapter 6), it was a distinct possibility for Kleopatra II. Kleopatra was already an acknowledged co-ruler, so the dating protocols would not have needed to be altered to acknowledge her authority in his absence. Ptolemy's campaigns also occurred in the latter half of their reign, by which time Kleopatra was a well-established part of the monarchy and had been engaging in the duties of rulership for many years.

Other scholars seem to oppose this conclusion, however. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, for example, note that during the period of 147-145 BCE, when Ptolemy was campaigning in Syria, no answers to petitions from the monarchs are preserved, which they interpret as reduced activity of the Royal Chancery and that Kleopatra could not support the king's endeavors on her own.¹⁴¹ I would conversely argue that the absence of papyri, which were preserved by only the most serendipitous circumstances, does not unquestionably confirm her lack of authority. As opposed to a reduction of activity in the Royal Chancery, the lack of papyri responding to petitions could also indicate that the administrative center

¹³⁹ On Ptolemy's actions in Syria during the latter part of his reign, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 192-194.

¹⁴⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 193-194; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 128-129. Hazzard uses these events as evidence of Kleopatra's "subordinate position," but I would argue they show the exact opposite. Ptolemy could leave on campaign and trust that she would see to their joint interests in the administrative center.

¹⁴¹ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 167. In a subsequent article Bielman-Sánchez indicates that Kleopatra successfully managed the kingdom during this period, but it is only a passing reference, not a specific revision of this earlier argument. Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 93-94.

was focused on supporting the war effort, so administrative correspondence concerning minor petitions had to be put on hold for a short period.

Consequently, Ptolemy VI's success in his campaigns prior to his untimely death, during which time he may have even been briefly proclaimed king of the Seleukid kingdom (Diod. Sic. 32.9c; Joseph. *AJ* 13.109-116; *I Macc.* 11.13; Polyb. 39.7), instead demonstrates that he was being well supplied and effectively supported by the Ptolemaic administrative center, which was headed by his co-ruling queen. Furthermore, that military reports were addressed to both the king and queen and that she was honored alongside her husband by gymnasiums, “un contexte para-militaire,” should both be interpreted as evidence of her involvement in successfully supplying military endeavors.¹⁴² The relatively smooth transition in power after his death also demonstrates that she was already exercising recognizable authority in the administrative center.

9.2 Kleopatra II as co-ruler to Ptolemy VIII

Accordingly, after ruling alongside Ptolemy VI for so many years, Kleopatra II was then instrumental in the negotiations that followed his death in 145 BCE. She would have called together the principal dignitaries of the kingdom, both from the court and representatives from the city of Alexandria, and they sent an embassy to Ptolemy VIII (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.2-3), offering him the throne on the condition that he married Kleopatra and formed a joint-reign with her.¹⁴³ In this arrangement, Ptolemy VIII's rule was thus

¹⁴² Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 167.

¹⁴³ Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 413, n. 33, 34; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 167, n. 36. Some historians have postulated that the people of Alexandria sent Ptolemy VIII the embassy, since, as mentioned above, they had similarly recalled Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II in 163, but Bielman-Sánchez argues that they would not have been able to do so without Kleopatra's consent in this instance because she was not out of favor with the people. Several historians also claim a regency between Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VII (Neos Philopator?) for a brief span before Ptolemy

conditional on his marriage to and co-rule with his sister, an unprecedented event in the Ptolemaic dynasty, which exemplifies both the important position queens had built for themselves to this point and the power they had accumulated. It also exemplifies Kleopatra's political acumen, since she expertly navigated what could have been a disastrous situation that provoked civil military action.¹⁴⁴ While the ancient sources, such as Justin and Josephus, describe this period as a rather chaotic one, which has led several modern historians to follow in the same vein, more recent analysis of the sources indicates that a period of only two weeks elapsed between the death of Ptolemy VI and the ascension of Ptolemy VIII, and, during that time, there were no errors or gaps in the dating protocols of 145 BCE.¹⁴⁵ In the protocols, the name of Ptolemy VI was replaced with Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra remained in the second position, indicating the transition of power was a smooth one with no detrimental impact on the administration of the kingdom (see Appendix C).

Kleopatra's first period of rule with her second brother (145- 132/1 BCE) was equal in name and protocol, but it was probably not as harmonious as her first marriage and period

VIII arrival. See, for example, Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 130; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 110; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 86. But this theory has been refuted by Chauveau. Michel Chauveau, "Encore Ptolémée 'VII' et le dieu Néos Philopator," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 51 (2000), 257-261. See also, note 129, above.

¹⁴⁴ There was one negative aspect to this arrangement. If her marriage to Ptolemy VIII was arranged with the understanding that her younger son by Ptolemy VI, Ptolemy, would be the heir, Ptolemy VIII's subsequent murder of the youth (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.4) was an unanticipated tragedy- if Justin's narrative is accurate, and if Ptolemy VII was the son that was murdered, which as mentioned in note 129, above, is heavily debated.

¹⁴⁵ Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Égypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C." *EuGeStA* 7 (2017), 95; Chauveau, "Un été 145," 144-145; Chauveau, "Un été 145, post-scriptum," *BIFAO* 91 (1991), 132; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy VI"; Anne Bielman-Sánchez and Giuseppina Lenzo, *Inventer le pouvoir féminin: Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II, reines d'Égypte au IIe s. av. J.-C.* (Berne: Peter Lang, 2016), 175-177, esp. 176. For example, Bevan and Mahaffy, probably following the account of Josephus, describe military action at the time of Ptolemy VI's death and Ptolemy VIII's ascension. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 306-307; Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 183. Josephus, however, conflated the events of Ptolemy VI's death and the later civil war between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, see note 259, below. Hazzard, perhaps following suit with Bevan and Mahaffy, also outlines military action, and he frames it as a fight between Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII, in which she had hoped to put her son, who he calls Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator, on the throne with her as regent. This is likely a misinterpretation on his part, both of the events and the identity of Kleopatra II's son. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 130-131.

of co-rule had been, since it ultimately erupted in civil war (132/1-127 BCE). Ptolemy VIII immediately resumed the types of actions that had earlier caused the people of Alexandria to dispel him from the city (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.5), including murdering courtiers (Diod. Sic. 33.13), using his soldiers to attack the populace of Alexandria (Polyb. 34.14.6), and driving the intellectuals from the city (Athen. 4.184B-C). He was soon nicknamed “Kakergetes” (“Malefactor,” Athen. 12.549D; Menekles of Barke = FGrHist. 270 F9) and “Physkon” (“Pot-belly” or “Fatso,” Joseph. *AJ* 12.228; Strab. 17.1.11; Plut. *Vit. Coriol.* 11.2).¹⁴⁶

Ptolemy’s behavior towards the court and intellectuals may not have met with Kleopatra’s approval, since his actions are out of sync with the events of the previous twenty-four years of her reign, but, nevertheless, the new royal couple was presented as ruling jointly, in the same style as Kleopatra’s previous union. Her new brother-husband obviously had strong opinions, and she needed to keep the peace in her newly created joint-rule. Thus, the official dating formula was edited to “the pharaohs Ptolemy and Kleopatra, the Theoi Euergetai” (*P.Dem. Ox. Griffith* 59; *P.Gen.* 2.87) from 145/144 BCE, and in some temple reliefs they were called “the two Horus,” the Rulers of the Two Lands,” and “The Two Rulers of Egypt.”¹⁴⁷ Ptolemy VIII’s coronation ceremony took place in Memphis in 144 BCE, and around the same time or shortly after, Kleopatra II bore their only child, Ptolemy Memphites (born c. 144/143, Diod. Sic. 33.13, 34/35.14; Just. *Epit.* 38.8).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 194-195; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 134, n. 163. Hazzard also notes that the Kenh hoard (*IGCH* 1708) may have belonged to someone who fled from Ptolemy VIII during this period. Hoard loss is often evidence of social violence.

¹⁴⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195, 280; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 164-165; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra II.” *P.Gen.* 2.87 reads: “βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπ[άτρας] θεῶν εὐεργετῶν τῶν...”

¹⁴⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195. Ptolemy Memphites is also attested to in two reliefs at Edfu, in which he is alternately titled the “successor of the king” and as a “God Euergets.” Bevan proposes that Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII may have had more than one child, based on *OGIS* 130 and 144, which mention children in the plural. A statement Macurdy also echoed. But Bennett argues that these inscriptions were issued before Ptolemy VIII took Kleopatra III as his wife, so they refer to both her and Ptolemy Memphites as the

Soon after Ptolemy Memphites' birth, Ptolemy VIII began a sexual relationship with Kleopatra III, but it was likely non-consensual given her age and is described by Livy, Justin, and Valerius Maximus as rape (Livy, *Per.* 59.14; Just. *Epit.* 38.8.5; Val. Max. 9.1.5).¹⁴⁹ Kleopatra II would have been around forty-one years old in 144/143 BCE; whereas, Kleopatra III, if she was born c. 160/155 BCE, would have been prepubescent or just entering puberty when Ptolemy VIII began grooming her.¹⁵⁰ Possible interpretations of the relationship between Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III have led to intense scholastic contention. Scholars disagree on why Ptolemy VIII took a second wife, if it was a polygamous union, and the possible role both Kleopatra II and III played in these arrangements. Most significantly, this rule of three, has led previous historians to assume that Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III engaged in a great rivalry, a concept which has influenced all previous scholarship on their reign.

Ptolemy VIII's reasons for eventually taking Kleopatra III to wife are a first area of contention. Polybios observed that Ptolemy VI had betrothed one of his daughters to Ptolemy

children of the king and queen. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 309, n. 3; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 157; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II," "Ptolemy Memphites."

¹⁴⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 88; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 110, 112, n. 18, 123. Here it should be noted that the way historians have previously written about the initial "relationship" between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III needs reevaluating. See, for example, Macurdy's rebuke of Mahaffy on the subject, Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 162. In more recent works, Hölbl completely overlooks Kleopatra III's age and the indication of violence in her and Ptolemy's initial sexual encounters, and he rather argues that Ptolemy's interest in Kleopatra III generated "hatred" in the relationship between Kleopatra II and III and caused "mother and daughter to become the fiercest of rivals." See note 156, below. Ogden argues that the ancient sources "only" describe it as rape because Ptolemy VIII was her guardian and was already married. His overall review of the situation is apologetic and problematic. Whitehorne also explains her 'rape' (as he notes it in single quotation marks, indicating his skepticism, perhaps?) as Ptolemy's means of exercising greater power over her, a young girl, in a way he could not with her mother. Whitehorne fully acknowledges Kleopatra III's young age and Ptolemy's grooming behavior, but then finishes his analysis with the misogynistic statement that: "it was not his fault that she would turn out to be even more intractable and domineering than her mother." Although, he seems to rethink this characterization in the subsequent chapter when he describes Kleopatra III as the victim "of her uncle's abominable lust." The initial violence of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III's affiliation tends to be disregarded, perhaps since she later married him and gained large amounts of personal power. Acknowledging her early experience of rape, however, can only help us further understand the queen she would become.

¹⁵⁰ See notes 30 and 129 for the possible birth dates of Kleopatra II and III.

VIII, after the younger brother tried to take Cyprus and was defeated by Ptolemy VI at the battle of Lapethos (39.7.6; see also, Diod. Sic. 31.33, for the battle). This led earlier scholars to believe Kleopatra III was that daughter, since Ptolemy VIII did eventually marry her.¹⁵¹ Bennett, as an alternative, reasons that the daughter mentioned by Polybios must have been Ptolemy VI's older daughter, Kleopatra Thea, and the engagement to Ptolemy VIII was broken when she was married to Alexander Balas.¹⁵² Ogden then proposed that Ptolemy VIII's marriage to Kleopatra III was his way of stemming Kleopatra II's power and ensuring his heirs were more reliant on him, rather than on her, a theory that seems to gain greater plausibility after Ptolemy VIII killed Ptolemy Memphites during the civil war period.¹⁵³ Whitehorne similarly suggests that the arrangement was meant to suppress his sister's power.¹⁵⁴ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton conversely observe that “no indication of a major conjugal crisis between Cleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII appears in the contemporary sources.”¹⁵⁵

It is, therefore, a modern anachronism to immediately assume Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII's relationship was one only defined by contention and scheming, and that is also the more interesting story to tell, especially when the themes of possible incestuous polygamy and murder are emphasized. Historians have justified the supposed hatred between the king and queen by equating it to the modern concept of spousal jealousy: who would not

¹⁵¹ See, for example, Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 157, 163; Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 187. Both Ogden and Whitehorne also mention the debate. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 88, n. 122; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 103-104, 113.

¹⁵² Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra Thea.”

¹⁵³ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 89-90.

¹⁵⁴ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 110.

¹⁵⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, “Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight,” 86.

be angry about their husband marrying a younger woman?¹⁵⁶ Even if Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII did not necessarily like each other all the time, especially if Ptolemy VIII really did murder Kleopatra II's youngest son, the "hatred" and "rivalry" that is often ascribed to the pair must be more sensationalist, rather than the reality of the situation, since they did rule together for several decades. While they would engage in a period of civil war, lasting about seven years (132/131-125/124 BCE) and demonstrating that there was certainly some contention between them, they ruled together peaceably for a combined total of over twenty-one years (145-132/131 and 125/124-116 BCE). Emphasizing only the supposed contention between the two (and later the three) has relegated them to a 'soap opera-esque' phase of Ptolemaic history, which has led to an oversimplification of their rule in most scholarly works and a general eschewal of the things they did accomplish. Yet, Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII still had to work together in order to run the kingdom, and they could agree on administrative issues, including addressing petitioners and the appointment of important officials, as will be confirmed below.

As a case in point, Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII needed to have more children in order to ensure the stability of the dynasty, lest their deaths initiate another period of regency by governmental ministers, but Kleopatra was reaching an age where bearing additional children would not be as safe. They only had one child together, and Kleopatra II had one available daughter, Kleopatra III, by her previous marriage. They could have betrothed Kleopatra III to Ptolemy Memphites, but that seems like an out of character choice for someone like Ptolemy VIII, who, at this point, had just regained the crown and only had one

¹⁵⁶ And this viewpoint, of course, also ignores the additional issues with her daughter being seen as "another woman," when she was a pre- or early pubescent girl. I also think that it was from this concept that Hölbl derived his idea of jealousy between mother and daughter, see note 149, above, but it could have also perhaps derived from Justin (38.8.11), who claimed a rivalry for the pair.

legitimate offspring.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, if Memphites had been married to Kleopatra III, a new royal pair would have been formed that could challenge the power of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, and it would have put Kleopatra II in a more powerful position than Ptolemy VIII, with Kleopatra II able to take on a regency in much the same way her mother had, in the event of Ptolemy's death or removal. Thus, rather than betrothing the only female heir to his newly born male heir, Ptolemy VIII married the girl himself in order to ensure that the dynasty would pass securely to his children at a later date. It is a decision for which he either had Kleopatra II's cooperation or, if not her support, it does not seem that she tried to prevent the union.¹⁵⁸ Kleopatra III gave birth to a son, Ptolemy IX, in 142 BCE, was incorporated into the dynastic cult in 142/141 BCE as part of the *Theoi Euergetai* (*P.Dem Berlin* 3113), was married to Ptolemy VIII in 141/140 BCE (*P.Dem. Amherst* 2.51), and was included in the dating protocols as third co-ruler around the same time (see Appendices A, C, D).¹⁵⁹

The association of the three with the throne, especially since, in this case, it was one male and two females being presented as co-rulers, has led again to much melodramatic writing about the trio. The emphasis placed on the contention between Ptolemy VIII and

¹⁵⁷ Chauveau, for example, proposed Ptolemy VIII may have married Kleopatra III to prevent her from marrying someone else and creating a new royal unit that would infringe on his own power. Chauveau, "Un été 145," 164.

¹⁵⁸ Here it is difficult to fathom a mother approving of her young daughter being married to a much older man, especially in light of the discussion about her rape in footnote 149, above, but the marriage of older men to girls just reaching childbearing age was common throughout the ancient world, especially for royalty. Whitehorne also argues that Kleopatra III could have conspired with Ptolemy VIII to hide their "relationship" until a son was born, but I find that scenario highly unlikely given her young age and that their early sexual encounters were likely non-consensual. Rather, his theory again derives from the misinformed concept that mother and daughter immediately became sexual rivals. Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 113-114.

¹⁵⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195-196; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II," "Cleopatra III," "Ptolemy IX." Bennett securely dates Ptolemy IX's birth to 142 BCE, the same year as the birth of the new Apis bull (*Contra Hölbl, A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 203). He also dates the marriage of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III to anywhere between 141 and 139 BCE. For an overview of the inscription evidence regarding possible marriage dates, see Giuseppina Lenzo, "A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612)," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 101 (2015), 227-229.

Kleopatra II has not only led to unfounded claims of rivalry between mother and daughter, but it has also caused historians to disregard the real oddities of their rule together. For example, Kleopatra III gave birth to her son, who would eventually become pharaoh, before her marriage to Ptolemy VIII, an unprecedented situation in Ptolemaic history. Whitehorne has previously argued that Ptolemy VIII waited to marry Kleopatra III until after the birth of their son to ensure she was fertile as part of his plan to replace Kleopatra II, but, since Kleopatra II was never assassinated or replaced, and instead only grew in power, I rather contend that Kleopatra II was party to the plan and marriage arrangement.¹⁶⁰

The Ptolemaic royal line had always had a focus on producing heirs to ensure the stability of the dynasty, as demonstrated in Parts I and II. Although during earlier periods of the dynasty the production of heirs from two women had created inheritance issues for Ptolemy II, now it was used as a means of further solidifying the dynastic line, since both of the mothers were of Ptolemaic birth themselves and, perhaps, because the women were party to the arrangement and not actually rivals.¹⁶¹ Whereas Eurydike I and Berenike I had been *basilissai*-consorts with limited influence, Kleopatra II was a much more active and influential queen, who by choosing to work with her brother-husband and allowing him to take a younger, more fertile wife, could ensure the production of additional heirs, both male and female. Just as Kleopatra II cooperated with Ptolemy VIII, regardless of personal feelings, she also worked with Kleopatra III during their long period of co-rulership, including after Ptolemy VIII's death (see next chapter).

¹⁶⁰ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 114.

¹⁶¹ For the rivalry between the Eurydikean and Berenikean lines of Ptolemy I's offspring, see Part I, chapter 3.3, pgs. 71-72.

That the trio cooperated in rulership, rather than being ruled by contention, is further supported by new analysis of their marriage arrangement. The joint rule of Kleopatra II, Ptolemy VIII, and Kleopatra III has often been labelled as a polygamous marriage, the first in the dynasty since Ptolemy Soter.¹⁶² Both Justin (38.8.5) and Valerius Maximus (9.1.5), however, indicate that Ptolemy VIII divorced Kleopatra II when he married Kleopatra III, a claim that is often disregarded by historians, since Justin made errors and is not always a reliable source and Valerius is similarly questionable. Bennett, however, argues that it was truly a divorce, after which Kleopatra remained a co-regent, rather than a wife. He postulates that this is the reason papyri and inscriptions from the period exclusively refer to her as “the sister” and Kleopatra III as “the wife” (see, for example, *P. Tebt.* I.6).¹⁶³

Lenzo also identifies a span of time, a little under a year from 141-140 BCE, during which Kleopatra II briefly disappeared from the protocol, which might be further indication of a divorce. Her brief disappearance could be evidence of the scribal confusion surrounding the identification of the previous queen vs. the new queen, which was solved by the recognition of Kleopatra II as the divorced but still co-reigning sister and Kleopatra III as the new wife.¹⁶⁴ In this arrangement, Kleopatra II could remain as a co-ruler and retain her administrative powers as part of the royal unit, but the responsibility for heirs would be passed onto her daughter, who would fulfill the more traditional role of *basilissa*-consort.

¹⁶² Hölbl, for example, says that “a second marriage of this sort was without precedent in the Hellenistic world.” And Ogden claims that in this act of polygamy he was “attempting to behave like a polygynous hellenistic [sic] king of the old school.” Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 88, 89.

¹⁶³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra II.” *Contra* Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 89. Lenzo also notes the uncertainty in the dating protocols immediately following the marriage of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III, which stabilized in 139 with Kleopatra II as the sister and III as the wife. *P. Tebt.* I.6 is the first example of this stabilization. Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 229, n. 61.

¹⁶⁴ Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 229.

Their new positions are further supported by the dating protocols and monumental depictions, which will be examined in greater detail below. With this arrangement, the trio reigned relatively peacefully until 132/131 BCE.¹⁶⁵

9.3 Kleopatra II's *philoï*, supporting actions, and religious associations

Here it is important to briefly break from the linear historical narrative and address some important facets of Kleopatra II's reign from 170 to 132/131 BCE, including her creation and utilization of a support network, her supporting actions as queen and co-ruler, and her religious associations and depictions. Similarly to her mother, Kleopatra II's active participation in government must have been facilitated by a support network of courtiers and partisans. Bielman-Sánchez points out that Kleopatra II's permanence in a court so fraught with assassinations can be explained by her cultivation of a solid network of partisans and extraordinary political skill on Kleopatra's part that allowed her to both maintain that network and mobilize it to her benefit at the appropriate moments.¹⁶⁶ Her first building and use of her support network must have been during the Sixth Syrian War, and that her brothers turned to her for help and advice (as illustrated by the passages from Livy quoted above), might also indicate that she had the support and approval of the advisors of Ptolemy VI, who were also her own advisors.¹⁶⁷ During the period of her joint rule with Ptolemy VI (163-145

¹⁶⁵ Hölbl cites one example of an uprising during this period, the rebellion of Galaistes, a former *philos* of Ptolemy VI, who tried to put a pretender on the throne (Diod. Sic. 33.20). Hölbl and Hazzard both claim that Galaistes had Kleopatra II's backing, but they provide no evidence in support of that statement. The rebellion could just have easily been an expression of the people's anger with Ptolemy VIII's dictatorial behavior, since Galaistes was one of many who fled the kingdom under his rule. But a pretender being placed successfully on the throne would have been just as damaging to Kleopatra II's power as it would have been to Ptolemy's. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 196; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 135.

¹⁶⁶ Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 410. "Une telle permanence, dans une cour coutumière des assassinats familiaux depuis le début de la dynastie, ne s'explique que par l'existence d'un réseau solide de partisans, et par une habileté politique hors du commun capable de mobiliser tout ou partie de ce réseau au moment opportune."

¹⁶⁷ Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 411, 412.

BCE), she acted cooperatively with her brother-husband, as demonstrated by the evidence of their joint rulership, and thus their support network was similarly joint.¹⁶⁸

Onias IV, son of the deposed High Priest of Jerusalem Onias II, was one of these joint partisans and perhaps also one of the *philoï* of the king and queen in the traditional way. He migrated to Egypt after the Maccabean Revolt (Joseph. *AJ* 12.387), and he was granted permission to build a Jewish temple in Leontopolis.¹⁶⁹ Although Josephus wrote of letters between Ptolemy and Kleopatra with Onias giving him permission to establish his temple in accordance with a prophesy from Isaiah (Joseph. *AJ* 13.62-73), that is not likely the reality of the situation, since Ptolemy and Kleopatra would not have been concerned with upholding a prophesy outside their own religion. Whitehorne, instead, convincingly argues that Onias and his people were allowed to settle the “territory/land of Onias” (Joseph. *AJ* 14.131; *BJ* 1.190) in order to provide a foundation and place of worship for the large groups of Jewish military colonists in the area, who could then act as a military buffer zone on the route from Pelusium to Memphis.¹⁷⁰ This would have been a much needed act of protection, since the perceived inviolability of the Egyptian land frontier had been destroyed by the invasion of Antiochos IV.¹⁷¹ This point is further supported by Hölbl, who maintains that Onias and his descendants remained important military figures under Kleopatra III (Joseph. *AJ* 13.348; see next chapter).¹⁷²

Kleopatra’s support network continued to be active after Ptolemy VI’s death, as shown by her ability to send an embassy to her younger brother and soon-to-be second

¹⁶⁸ For evidence of their join actions, see pg. 275, above.

¹⁶⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 190.

¹⁷⁰ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 102, n. 21. While Josephus’ record of Onias being granted permission to build his temple in Leontopolis is important, the words he credits to the king and queen, which describe them granting him permission on account of a prophesy by Isaiah and their desire to not offend God, must be fictitious.

¹⁷¹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 120.

¹⁷² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 190. See also, note 178, below.

husband. Furthermore, several men who had earned rank during her rule with Ptolemy VI continued to hold important positions during her reign with her new brother-husband.

Boethos, for example, rose to prominence during the period of 152-145 BCE, was appointed *strategos* of the Thebaid from 149 BCE, and founded two or three eponymous cities named for the queen, Philometoris, Kleopatra (*OGIS* 111), and Euergetis (*P. UB Trier S* 135-3; *P. UB Trier S* 135-1).¹⁷³ Under Ptolemy VIII he remained *strategos* of the Thebaid and was promoted to *epistrategos* by 135 BCE.

Seleukos, son of Bithys, was another partisan of Kleopatra II that rose to prominence during her reign with Ptolemy VI (*OGIS* 150) and stayed in favor after her marriage to her younger brother. After Ptolemy VIII ascension to the throne, he moved the command center of the Ptolemaic navy from Alexandria to Cyprus, a decision which has previously been interpreted as his way of removing influence and power from Kleopatra.¹⁷⁴ As argued above, the focus on the tension between the two has led previous historians to generalize most of Ptolemy VIII's actions as evidence of rivalry. Although Ptolemy moved the naval command center to Cyprus, he instituted Seleukos as the naval admiral (*ναύαρχον*, *nauarchos*) and later governor (*στρατηγός*, *strategos*) of Cyprus (*OGIS* 151, 152, 153, *GRA* 20539). Seleukos' appointment exemplifies Kleopatra's continuing influence at court and her ability to appoint her partisans to powerful positions throughout the kingdom.¹⁷⁵ This was an appointment that Ptolemy VIII must have consented to, since it was his decision to move the naval center in

¹⁷³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 189; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 416, n. 52; Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa*, 347. The city Euergetis could have been named for either Kleopatra II or III, who both used that epithet.

¹⁷⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 414.

¹⁷⁵ Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 413-414; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 168.

the first place, and according to the inscriptions cited above, Seleukos was also appointed as a συγγενῆ or “kinsmen” of the king, the highest ranking position in the hierarchy of titular orders that had been instituted by Ptolemy V.¹⁷⁶ The honors bestowed on Seleukos are evidence of not only Kleopatra’s influence on her brother, but also their ability to work together, when needed, to see to the prosperity of the kingdom.

Furthermore, Seleukos and his family would remain in power in Cyprus as partisans of the queen up to and following the civil war. Seleukos’ son, Theodoros, succeeded his father as kinsman of the king and admiral and governor of Cyprus between 135 and 132 BCE and again between 124-118 BCE (*OGIS* 145, 155, 156, 157, 162), and his daughter, Artemo, served as a *kanephoros* in Alexandria (for the period of 145 and 115 BCE) and also as a “priestess of queen Kleopatra, goddess” (ἱέρειαν βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς, *OGIS* 159) a special priestesshood established by Seleukos and his family on the island of Cyprus dedicated to Kleopatra II.¹⁷⁷ If the rivalry between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II had been as contentious as previously claimed, a family who were so unreserved about their connection to the queen would not have remained in power over the Ptolemaic navy, especially if Ptolemy had actually removed the naval center to Cyprus in order to lessen the queen’s influence.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ See Part I, chapter 2.3, pgs. 49-50.

¹⁷⁷ Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 413-414; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 223. Theodoros’ wife also received dedicatory statues (*OGIS* 161, 162). Fraser further observes that three of Theodoros’ daughters later held priestesseships dedicated to Kleopatra III. And in 107/106, another of Seleukos’ daughter was *kanephoros*, with one of Theodoros’ daughters serving as *athlophoros*. All of which indicates that Seleukos’ family retained favor under Kleopatra III, which also provides evidence against the supposed rivalry between Kleopatra II and III.

¹⁷⁸ This also provides additional evidence that Kleopatra II and III were not rivals. Onias IV was a partisan of Kleopatra II, and his descendants would serve Kleopatra III; similarly, Seleukos served Kleopatra II, and his descendants would serve Kleopatra III. Rival rulers usually cultivated rival, rather than shared, support networks.

In creating a support network, Kleopatra II followed the example of many of the queens that came before her, but cultivating a network of partisans was not the only way she emulated her foremothers. Much like the queens who came before her, Kleopatra also earned her own personal wealth. Several papyri, for example, prove that she owned ships (*P.Lille* 1.22), which were used to transport tax-grain from the *chora* to the administrative center. She also retained extensive land holdings (*BGU* 14.2438), which she leased out to farmers who paid her rent for the privilege.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, she returned to another tradition of her foremothers and competed in the Panathenaic games of 162/161 BCE, winning a victory with her horse team (*SEG* 41.115).¹⁸⁰ Ptolemy VI entered and won in the same year (*SEG* 41.115), so they may have participated in much the same way as their predecessors had: as a way to earn *kleos* for their family and dynasty, especially after the embarrassing events of the Sixth Syrian War. Bennett also argues that the purpose of both monarchs entering teams was to publicize and celebrate their return to power after Ptolemy VIII's removal in 163 BCE.¹⁸¹

Kleopatra's resumption of these traditional queenly activities were characteristic, it seems, of the image of her queenship that she wanted to project. Kleopatra strove to be the supporting queen, as her predecessors had been, but she was also a new type of queen that had much more real power than the Ptolemaic queens of the third century had wielded. The most revealing aspect of her joint rule with her brothers is her inclusion in the dating protocols from all the periods of her reign. She was always placed in the supporting queenly position, being listed after her brother-husband (with the exception of her period as *basilissa*-

¹⁷⁹ Jane Rowlandson (ed.), *Women and Society in Greek and Roman Egypt: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 36-37.

¹⁸⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II"; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (Ile siècle av. J.-C.)," 171.

¹⁸¹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II," Ptolemy VI." See also, Part II, chapter 5, at note 53, and chapter 6.2, at note 184, on the importance of competing in games.

regnant, which will be examined in greater detail below), but that she was included in the official protocols at all indicates her position as co-ruler. As Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo observe, institutional changes were reflected by variations in the dating protocols, which also conveyed who had access to royal power.¹⁸² Beginning during her initial tri-rule with her two brothers (170-164 BCE), Kleopatra was included as part of the plural verb “to reign” in Greek (βασιλευόντων) or with the individual title *basilissa* and in the Demotic with the plural Pharaohs (Pr-`3.w) or bearing a female singular title (Pr-‘3.t).¹⁸³ Inclusion in the official dating protocols had only previously been extended to Kleopatra I, and only during her period as *basilissa*-regent to Ptolemy VI.¹⁸⁴ Kleopatra II was, thus, the first queen to be both included in the official dating protocol as a *basilissa*-consort and to engage in a co-rule with her spouse (see Appendix C). Additionally, her position in the protocol moved as she gained or lost power throughout her tenure as queen. For example:

1. When ruling with both her brothers (170-164 BCE), she was placed in the third position, that with the least power,¹⁸⁵
2. When ruling jointly with her brothers individually, first Ptolemy VI (164-145 BCE), and then Ptolemy VIII (145-140/139 BCE), she was placed in the second position, as co-ruler to her current brother-husband,

¹⁸² Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 159.

¹⁸³ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 162, n. 18. See also, Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 226.

¹⁸⁴ Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 227. See also, note 134, above.

¹⁸⁵ This is also depicted in the one relief carving of the trio in the pronaos of the Temple of Deir el Medina, where Kleopatra is standing last, behind her two brothers. She also holds the third position in the accompanying inscription. Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 137-138, Fig. 7; Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 62, Fig. 5; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 268-269, Fig. 9.7.

3. When ruling as a unit of three (140/139-132/131 and 125/124-116 BCE), she was placed in the second position. All three are in a position of co-rule, but Kleopatra II is placed before the second queen, and is thus more powerful.¹⁸⁶

In documents, Kleopatra II was listed as the sister (ἀδελφή) of both Ptolemy VI and VIII, but rarely the sister and wife (ἀδελφή καὶ γυνή), the identifying phrase that had been regularly used for previous queens.¹⁸⁷ She was only described as a wife (of the king) in hieroglyphic documents with a religious context.¹⁸⁸ Since the Ptolemies were usually conscientious about maintaining continuity between rules, it is unusual that they would edit the descriptors used for identifying the queen in inscriptions, but it may have been a result of the trio's unique situation. For Kleopatra II, her birthright as the full-blood sister to both Ptolemy VI and VIII was more important than her position as their wife; she was the only female heir of Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I, so her position as queen was initially uncontested. The use of only sister, rather than sister and wife, could have also derived from the early joint-rulership exercised by the three siblings in which Kleopatra II was the sister to both Ptolemy VI and VIII but wife to only one (at first). The exclusive usage of the descriptor sister, rather than sister and wife, also transitioned well when the second rule of three was

¹⁸⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 162.

¹⁸⁷ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 163. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo note that the title wife in Greek was not used during her marriage to Ptolemy VI, and it was used very rarely during her marriage to Ptolemy VIII, usually before he married Kleopatra III. For example, a now lost architectural fragment is one of the few pieces that described Kleopatra II as Ptolemy VIII's sister and wife, but it was in hieroglyphics and on a temple, which fits it into the religious context mentioned in the next footnote. See, Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 225, 227.

¹⁸⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 163. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo rightly point out that the use of the title “wife” only in the religious context probably relates to the religious tradition that the fertility and stability of Egypt was reliant upon a married royal couple on the throne. For an example of her being called the wife of Ptolemy VI in a religious context, see Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 63, Fig. 5.

constituted between sister, brother, and daughter/niece-wife, especially if Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II divorced, as proposed above. In the second triad of rulership, her title of sister would again be the more important of the two, as an indication that the power she held was due to her birth and inherent divinity as the Ptolemaic female heir.¹⁸⁹

Her active joint rule with her successive brother-husbands was also demonstrated through her actions as queen. Just as she had publicly co-ruled with Ptolemy VI, similar evidence is present for Kleopatra's period of rule with Ptolemy VIII, including participating in public hearings and traveling throughout the kingdom.¹⁹⁰ For instance, the royal couple may have travelled to Edfu to attend an entrance festival celebrating the completion of a long-awaited temple of Horus.¹⁹¹ Although there was some tension between these two, they still saw to the running of the kingdom together in both the political and religious spheres, and, even after their possible divorce and Ptolemy VIII's marriage to her daughter, Kleopatra II remained an active participant in government. As just mentioned, she was listed in the second place in the dating protocols and continued to contribute to governance, as demonstrated by a circular in 139 BCE addressed to all the Ptolemaic officials from the three joint-rulers (*P. Grenf.* 2.15).¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ For example, the inscriptions honoring Seleukos mentioned above (*OGIS* 151, 152, 153, *GRA* 20539), are dedicated to him on account of his goodwill to the “king Ptolemy and his queen Kleopatra the sister and queen Kleopatra the wife, the gods Euergetai...”: βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν ἀδελφὴν καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν γυναῖκα Θεοῦς Εὐεργέτας; some inscriptions also include καὶ τὰ τέκνα, “and their children.”

¹⁹⁰ For examples of Kleopatra II's joint rule with her first husband, see pg. 275, above. Similar examples then exist for the period during which she ruled with Ptolemy VIII. For instance, Kleopatra II travelled the *chora* with him in 142 BCE. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 168.

¹⁹¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 265, 280.

¹⁹² Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 168.

Furthermore, although Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo adhere to the theory that Ptolemy VIII's second marriage had the aim of reducing Kleopatra II's influence, they acknowledge that her legitimacy did not subsequently suffer and that officials and military officers continued to honor her in dedications, along with Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III.¹⁹³ These dedications indicate Kleopatra II's recognized participation in governance, but they also provide additional evidence against the proposed intense rivalry between her and Ptolemy VIII. If Ptolemy's real goal was to remove Kleopatra II from power, would he not have made that known to those in powerful positions throughout the kingdom, who would have subsequently altered dedications accordingly by either placing Kleopatra II in the third position or removing her completely? Since Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII did end up engaging in a civil war, previous historians have somewhat teleologically assumed that Ptolemy was always trying to get rid of her. If that were truly the case, she could not have continued to gain power the way she did, even with her own supporting network of partisans.

In addition to her administrative endeavors, Kleopatra II also maintained a religious presence throughout the various periods of her rule. She was associated with Ptolemy VI as the Philometor Gods from 175 BCE, and her individual priestesshood was granted by 171 BCE. *P. Dryton* 12 and *P. BM EA* 10517, both dated to Sept. 171 BCE, evidence the institution of an individual, eponymous "Priestess of Queen Kleopatra [II]."¹⁹⁴ At her marriage to her second brother in 145 BCE, she took on his epithet and was worshiped either jointly with him (and later Kleopatra III) as the Euergetai Gods (*Theoi Euergetai*) or

¹⁹³ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 169.

¹⁹⁴ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Réflexions à propos de la régence féminine hellénistique: l'exemple de Cléopâtre I," 162; Koenen, "The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure," 64; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 285.

individually as the Goddess Euergetes (*Thea Euergetis*), a title she retained after her probable divorce from Ptolemy VIII, but not after her death (see below and Appendix D).¹⁹⁵

In temples, Kleopatra II received the title “ruler” (*hk3.t*), a title also held by Berenike II, her mother Kleopatra I, and, later, her daughter, Kleopatra III (see Appendix E).¹⁹⁶ Since this title was conferred on her prior to her period as *basilissa*-regnant, it must have been a title that was meant to bestow religious equity on the queen, just as it had been for Berenike II and Kleopatra I. Depicting the royal couple as one ruling unit was even more important for Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VI (and later, Ptolemy VIII) than it had been for previous royal couples since they actively, jointly-ruled in a way that had not been accomplished before between royal spouses. She was additionally referred to as a “Master of Karnak” with Ptolemy VI, a title rarely before used for queens, and after her marriage to Ptolemy VIII, her cultic titles expanded greatly. In some temple reliefs they were called “the two Horus,” the Rulers of the Two Lands,” and “The Two Rulers of Egypt,” and Kleopatra II was specifically referenced as a “daughter of a sovereign” and a “daughter of a sovereign and a sovereign.”¹⁹⁷

Here again, while the alleged rivalry between the two has previously been the focus of scholarship, it has caused historians to overlook important evidence: the expansion of her cultic titles in conjunction with the brother she was supposed to have had such a contentious relationship with indicates a growing power for the queen and an ability to work together with her brother-husband to maintain the religious duties of the kingdom. Similar to the

¹⁹⁵ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 164.

¹⁹⁶ This title is also attested for both Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III on a Xoite Stele from the British Museum (EA 612). See, Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 223.

¹⁹⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 195, 280; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 164-165. See at note 147, above. The title “daughter of a sovereign and a sovereign” also bears striking resemblance to Berenike I’s and Kleopatra I’s Horus names, see note 58, above, and Appendix E.

argument made above concerning dedications by officials, if Ptolemy had, in reality, been trying to remove Kleopatra from power, he could have forbidden these cultic honors, but instead, Kleopatra's religious visibility only grew as she was granted titles never held by previous queens. Additionally, these titles all reference her prestigious lineage, as the only female heir of the previous royal couple, and they emphasize that she was a central element in the royal unit (later trio), whose own legitimacy bolstered that of her brother-husband. Whereas previous queens, including Arsinoë II and Berenike II, had been shown with kingly attributes and power in order to strengthen the overall legitimacy and religious activity of the royal unit, Kleopatra II could be shown with these attributes because she realistically wielded king-like public power.

Accordingly, Kleopatra II was depicted in many scenes with both her husbands. She was regularly shown with her first husband in ritual scenes, including in the inner vestibule of the Sobek and Horus (Harueris) temple at Kom Ombo, where they were depicted as being granted power by Khonsu, Horus, and Sobek.¹⁹⁸ In this scene, Kleopatra II stands behind her husband, in the supporting queen position, wearing the traditional ritual garments and queenly headdress. Kleopatra II and her second brother-husband, along with her daughter, Ptolemy VIII's new wife, were also depicted at Kom Ombo. Kleopatra II's imagery is almost identical to her depictions with Ptolemy VI, but now her daughter stands behind her, and they are distinguished by the inscription, which names Kleopatra II "the sister" (*sn.t*) and Kleopatra III "the wife" (*hm.t*), as was common in papyri. Minas notes that in reliefs showing the three, Kleopatra II was always shown in the second position, with Kleopatra III in the

¹⁹⁸ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 136-137, Fig. 6.

third position, behind her mother, as was also the regular format in documentation.¹⁹⁹ Lenzo identifies six scenes of Ptolemy VIII and the two Kleopatras together (one at Karnak, one at Edfu, three at Kom Ombo, and one at Philae), and postulates that they all represent transference of power scenes, since they can be linked to nearby ancestor scenes or lists.²⁰⁰

Whereas Ptolemy V left very few monumental additions, his sons, Ptolemy VI and VIII, “built and decorated more Egyptian temples than any other Ptolemaic king,” and in many of these temples they included inscriptions of their ancestor lines where each of the Ptolemaic couples were listed in order as *synnaoi theoi*.²⁰¹ These ancestor lines originated with Ptolemy III, along with the scenes of transference of power. By Ptolemy VI and VIII’s reign, the inscribed ancestor lines were used more often, and scenes depicting each of the deified royal couples became less frequent.²⁰² This transition probably occurred because by this point the list of *synnaoi* was growing quite long, and an inscription could be fit onto a temple wall better than a scene depicting all involved.

There are still several traditional transference of power scenes attributed to Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II from Edfu, Qasr el-Aguz, and one from Tod. In the scene from the temple of Tod, Ptolemy VIII offers libations and incense, with Kleopatra II standing behind him offering flowers to Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II, Ptolemy III and Berenike II, Ptolemy IV

¹⁹⁹ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 139-140, Fig. 8. Lenzo echoes this point and, citing Minas, indicates that in mirroring scenes where the queens were shown individually with Ptolemy VIII in symmetrical positions, Kleopatra II was always shown on the right, the predominant place. Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 231.

²⁰⁰ Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 231-232.

²⁰¹ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 63-64, Fig. 6; Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 236. For an overview of the building activities of Ptolemy VI and VIII, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 259-271.

²⁰² Quaegebeur, for instance, notes that after Ptolemy VIII, there exists only one transference scene for Ptolemy IX at Edfu and one inscribed ancestor line for Ptolemy XII at Kom Ombo. Quaegebeur, “Cleopatra VII and the Cults of the Ptolemaic Queens,” 49-50.

and Arsinoë III, Ptolemy V and Cleopatra I, Ptolemy VI, and Ptolemy Eupator.²⁰³ In this scene the royal couple is legitimized by inheriting their power from not only their ancestors, but also the recently deceased Ptolemy VI and his initial heir, Ptolemy Eupator.

Legitimization seems to have been an important aspect for the royal trio of Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and III, perhaps since their reign as a trio was so unusual. The one stele that survives from their period of joint rule represents the unique concerns. It is a stele from the British Museum (EA 612), which depicts Ptolemy VIII offering Ma'at to the triad of Karnak, and behind him stands Kleopatra II, titled “the sister,” and Kleopatra III, titled “the wife.”²⁰⁴ This stele is unique because it duplicates a scene normally only shown in temple reliefs, where the royal couple offer Ma'at to the gods. The offering of Ma'at in temple scenes was often used as a method of legitimizing the power of the current ruling couple, and here it is interesting to note that it is a trio of rulers who offers to a trio of gods. Lenzo postulates that this stele was erected as an image of support and legitimization for such a specific situation, the co-rulership of three.²⁰⁵

Several scenes depicting Kleopatra with either Ptolemy VI or VIII also present an innovation in ritual depiction. In previous ritual scenes, making offerings of sacrificial goods to the gods was a privilege reserved specifically for the king, perhaps as a way to emphasize that it was the king who wielded the greatest power, and queens who accompanied their

²⁰³ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 65. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 265. Hölbl notes that in the ancestor scenes from Edfu and Qasr el-Aguz Ptolemy VI and Eupator are not included.

²⁰⁴ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 79, cat. no. 58; Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 220-221, Figs. 1 and 2.

²⁰⁵ Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 235.

spouse might hold flowers or a sistrum or raise a hand in greeting.²⁰⁶ Several reliefs, such as the ancestor scene from the temple of Tod described above, depict Kleopatra II in this traditional way, but others present her in a new, kingly act of obeisance. Although previous Ptolemaic queens had been described in documents and inscriptions as making offerings to the gods, including Kleopatra II's mother, Kleopatra I, in an inscription from Philae quoted previously (*THI* 261), Kleopatra II was the first Ptolemaic queen to be represented bringing a specific sacrificial offering to the gods. For example, on the Great Pylon of Philae Kleopatra, standing behind her husband, Ptolemy VI, offers ointment to Isis.²⁰⁷

In another scene from Philae, in the Hypostyle hall of the Temple of Isis, Kleopatra II, who is identified by a unique wig and arm jewelry, presents a wine sacrifice to Isis, along with Ptolemy VIII, who precedes her and presents a field to the goddess, and Kleopatra III, who is shown with the traditional hand raised in greeting.²⁰⁸ This specific scene also emphasizes the power Kleopatra II was able to retain and hold while ruling with her brother and daughter; she was still powerful enough to be depicted offering to the gods herself, again a unique depiction, and she was in a superior position to her daughter, who held the more traditional position of supporting queen and bearer of heirs. As Hölbl points out, it was the Egyptian priests who directed the temple ornamentation “on the basis of the situation within

²⁰⁶ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 62. The two images of Arsinoë III officiating alone may be an exception to this; see Part II, chapter 7, note 347. But in these scenes, Arsinoë offers praise and worship, rather than a specific offering.

²⁰⁷ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 61, Fig. 1. This is reminiscent of a scene of Hatshepsut from Karnak in which she directly offers to the gods as well. Robins argues that by offering directly to the gods, a traditional kingly action, Hatshepsut was attempting to legitimize her own reign by taking on kingly iconography. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 46. Kleopatra II may have been acting similarly, and her daughter, Kleopatra III, would follow in her footsteps, see note 386, below.

²⁰⁸ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 140, Fig. 9; Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 62, Fig. 3.

the ruling family.”²⁰⁹ Since these offering scenes were previously used to show the exclusive power wielded by the king, it logically follows that Kleopatra II is similarly being shown wielding ruling power as seen and acknowledged by the priests. These scenes are thus another indication of her active rulership alongside Ptolemy VIII; whereas, Kleopatra III takes the more supporting queenly position behind the two ruling figures.

Minas identifies that Kleopatra II, unlike her mother, was depicted regularly throughout her life, but she further contends that Kleopatra II, in contrast to her predecessors and successors, was not venerated posthumously. Minas attributes this to a possible *damnatio memoriae* instituted by her daughter, whom she calls Kleopatra II’s “direct rival for power.”²¹⁰ This is perhaps taken from Hölbl, who also noted that the dating protocol used by the time of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX in Lower Egypt omitted Kleopatra II, “the great adversary of her daughter...”²¹¹ This conclusion, however, is borne of the same issue emphasized throughout this chapter: the assumption that mother and daughter were rivals has caused historians to interpret all the events of their reign through the lens of that supposed opposition. Contrary to Minas’ claim, Kleopatra II was not always removed from inscriptions after her death. For example, a letter from Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX to Elephantine issued in 115 BCE, after Kleopatra II’s death, indicates that the priests still offered prayers and offerings to “king Ptolemy [VIII], queen Kleopatra the sister, and queen Kleopatra the wife, the gods Euergetai...” (*OGIS* 168). This is direct evidence that she was still venerated posthumously, at least in Elephantine.

²⁰⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 257.

²¹⁰ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 136. “wofür ihre eigene Tochter Kleopatra III., ihre direkte Rivalin um die Macht, gesorgt haben wird...” She reiterates the rival theory in, Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 58-76. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 287.

²¹¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 287.

Rather than being a strict condemnation of her memory, per se, Kleopatra II could have been removed from some of the protocols for two reasons. First, by the reign of the later Ptolemies, the dating protocol was not only becoming increasingly long (see Appendix C), but scribal errors and omissions became increasingly common as the epithets grew in number and verbiage.²¹² Also, while Kleopatra II may have been omitted from the dynastic cult of Lower Egypt after her death, she was included in the cult of Upper Egypt as part of the *Theoi Euergetai*.²¹³ Thus, she could have been left out of some dating protocols through scribal error, since the scribes by this point could have been confused as to whether Kleopatra II should have been part of the *Theoi Philometores*, the *Theoi Euergetai*, the *Theoi Philometores Soteres* (the title she would share with Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra III), or by her own individual priestess of Kleopatra, the Sister (See Appendix D).

Second, Kleopatra II may have been left out, not necessarily because of Kleopatra III's hatred for her mother, but because, after her mother's death, Kleopatra III was trying to bolster her own power, divinity, and godly associations. As will be described in greater detail in the next chapter, Kleopatra III was the first Ptolemaic queen to fully assimilate herself to Isis, and, in order to do so, she needed to overshadow all the queens who had come before her that were also associated with Isis, her mother included. Kleopatra III needed to emphasize her own religious legitimacy, and that may have come at the expense of her mother, who was an extremely powerful queen while alive.²¹⁴ Even in this instance, however, if a *damnatio memoriae* had truly been implemented by Kleopatra III against her mother,

²¹² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 286-287.

²¹³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II."

²¹⁴ This may also be evidenced by Kleopatra III taking her mother's title from the civil war period, the *Thea Philometor Soteira*, see next chapter. The "Philometor" portion of that title can only refer to Kleopatra II, another indication that their relationship was not necessarily one defined by hate, since Kleopatra III utilized that title for the rest of her period of rulership.

scenes like the one at Philae that depicted Kleopatra II offering to Isis, which exemplified the exceptional power her mother held during her lifetime, would have been removed, destroyed, or altered.

The importance of Isis brings up one last aspect that must be mentioned regarding Kleopatra II's religious presence. As with all the queens who came before her, she was assimilated to various Greek and Egyptian goddesses. Following in the footsteps of Kleopatra I, Kleopatra II was incorporated into the dynastic cult early in her tenure as queen, so any assimilations with other goddesses came secondarily to her own dynastic divinity, as it would be for the remaining queens of the dynasty (see Appendix D).²¹⁵ In the temple reliefs of Kleopatra II previously cited, she is always shown wearing the queenly headdress of Ma'at feathers, cow horns, and solar disc, which attests to her association with Isis and Hathor.

Not only was Kleopatra II connected to Isis through the obvious means of the queenly headdress, but two other previously mentioned pieces of evidence can be briefly revisited as indicators of her connection to the goddess as well. First, the prophesy received by the Egyptian Web priest, Hor, which predicted the end of the Sixth Syrian War and the preservation of the Ptolemaic royal line, attributed the protection of the dynasty to Isis and connected Kleopatra II to Isis as the earthly incarnation of protection and insurer of dynastic stability.²¹⁶ This prophesy shows that her connection to Isis occurred early in her reign, and, while dynastic stability would ultimately be ensured by her daughter, rather than her sons, as the prophesy predicted, her early connection to the goddess may have been one of the means

²¹⁵ Kleopatra II was inducted as part of the Philometor Gods from 175, one of the Euergetai Gods from 145, and had various personal priestesshoods dedicated to her throughout her tenure as queen, as described above. See notes 120, 147, 195, above.

²¹⁶ See note 128, above.

by which she gained and held on to such an unprecedented level of power, especially if she gained the people's approval by helping to end the war. Second, the sacrificial scenes in which Kleopatra II offers to the gods demonstrate that she retained both her association with Isis and the power that came with it. In both of the scenes cited above, Kleopatra II offers to Isis. While these scenes are important as innovations that depict her active power, it does not seem to be coincidental that the deity she offers to is Isis, the queen of the gods who also actively ruled alongside her brother-husband. Since Kleopatra II had been connected to Isis from her early days as queen, it would be only right for her to give thanks to the deity who bolstered her own power and divinity. That she was able to depict that gratitude on the monumental scale is evidence of her own power and influence.

[9.4 Kleopatra II as *basilissa*-regnant](#)

Now that the various aspects of Kleopatra II's network of partisans, her supporting actions as queen, and her religious associations have been examined we can return to the last period of her reign that will be examined in this chapter, the period of her sole-reign (131/130 to 127 BCE). The civil war between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, originated sometime in 132/131 BCE, although the reasons for its outbreak are unclear. Bennett and Lenzo confirm that the hostilities can be seen as early as 132/131 BCE in a papyrus from Memphis (*P. Dem. BM EA 10384*), which omits Kleopatra II from the dating formula, and shortly thereafter, in 131/130 BCE, according to Justin, Ptolemy VIII withdrew from the city because he had become hateful to the people (38.8.11).²¹⁷

²¹⁷ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II"; Lenzo, "A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612)," 229, n. 62. Lenzo concurs that the last papyrus listing three rulers in the protocol (*P. gr. UB Trier S 135-5*) dates from June 132, and the first papyri listing only Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III (*P. Dem. BM EA 10384*) dates from November 132. The anger the Alexandrian people felt towards Ptolemy VIII may have also been exacerbated by the rebellion of Harsiesi, see Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Harsiesi"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198-199. See also, Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 88, n. 12. She

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century historians credited the war's outbreak to Kleopatra's possible scheming, echoing a classical-era misogynistic *topos* that all politically active women were improper, deceitful, and immoral.²¹⁸ Some modern scholars, as a legacy of these earlier historians, have followed in the same vein, but others, perhaps in an attempt to combat that concept, have gone to the opposite extreme: attributing the outbreak of the war to Kleopatra's planning as a way to empower her as the main driver of events. Whitehorne, for example, proposes that Kleopatra II instigated the civil war because of the protracted animosity between brother and sister, because Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III had many children by the late 130s BCE, and since her own son was reaching his maturity.²¹⁹ On the surface, this seems like a reasonable analysis—Kleopatra would have wanted to protect the interest of her son, but Whitehorne's argument is derived from the same issue mentioned throughout this chapter of the supposed rivalry between the three monarchs. If Kleopatra II had consented to the marriage of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III for the purpose of birthing more children, as I have proposed above, Kleopatra II would not have needed to institute a civil war to see to the rights of her son, who, ideally, would have married one of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III's daughters.

Rather than being on account of petty rivalry or conniving on Kleopatra II's part as she attempted to assume greater power, the outbreak of civil war should be attributed to several predicating factors and the wider picture should be taken into account: non-elites could be the drivers behind events as well, and the people of Alexandria were growing

provides a thorough list of all the documents from 132-127 that include protocols only listing Ptolemy VIII or Ptolemy and Kleopatra III.

²¹⁸ See Introduction, Historiography section. This attitude is exemplified by several excerpts cited below, see notes 232, 236.

²¹⁹ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 117, 126-127.

increasingly angry. Ptolemy VIII had been removed from Alexandria in 163 BCE for his despotic behavior, which he resumed immediately upon his return in 145 BCE.²²⁰ His actions were not congruous with the way Kleopatra had previously ruled, but she had to work with her new brother-husband in order to maintain the Ptolemaic unit and public image of joint rule. By 132/1 BCE, however, his actions had become too much even for the people of Alexandria, who were angered by his continued murders of partisans, his removal of intellectuals from the city (Athen. 4.184B-C), his use of the army and mercenaries against the people (Polyb. 34.14.6), and, perhaps, even the treatment of Kleopatra herself.²²¹ The people also seem to have been angered by the corruption of governmental officials, who overtaxed the people in order to line their own pockets. Even after the end of the civil war between the monarchs, parts of the population and entire cities continued to fight, and a process of *anachoresis* intensified.²²²

While the people's anger had been exacerbated by the actions of the monarchs during the civil war, the heart of the matter was that they were more threatened by official corruption, which the monarchs tried to address with the amnesty decrees of 118 BCE (*P. Tebt.* 1.5 = *C. Ord. Ptol.* 53).²²³ In an attempt to both stem corruption and pacify the people,

²²⁰ See pgs. 274, 279, above.

²²¹ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 121; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197. Whitehorne describes all of Ptolemy VIII's despotic actions as "part of a master plan aimed at isolating his sister by ridding himself of any whom he saw as sympathetic to her cause, be they Jews, the elite among the Alexandrian Greeks, or the intelligentsia attached to the Library and the Museum." Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 127. This interpretation is extreme and melodramatic, and it again relies completely on the perceived rivalry between the two. If Ptolemy was trying to isolate his sister, his first victims should have been her powerful partisans, such as Seleukos and his family, who he instead gave governorship of Cyprus. On Seleukos, see pgs. 288-289, above.

²²² Here, *anachoresis* is defined as the abandonment of homes and farmland by people when faced with an untenable situation, such as oppressive taxes, corrupt officials, and military action that destroys their property. Also, Hazzard notes that in 123 the people of Krokodilopolis and Hermonthis were feuding, and in 122/1 Ptolemais and Upper Egypt were still fighting. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 138.

²²³ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 315-318; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 122; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201-202. Some of the actions by the monarchs that had set portions of the population against each other, including the gifting of land grants by either the king or queen to their partisans, were subsequently honored by the decree. The specifics granted to the people in the decree is outlined by both Bevan and Hölbl.

the decree granted amnesty for offences committed prior to 118 BCE (excluding against temples), returned confiscated properties, forgave tax and selected additional debts, and issued many other requirements concerning fair pay for labor, most of which were aimed at protecting workers and farmers. Hazzard, building on the arguments of Préaux and Rostovtzeff, posits that the decrees were meant to raise revenues, keep royal agents in check, and revitalize Crown lands and industries, since those had been damaged by the “arbitrary acts of government agents” and Ptolemy had lost prestige as king due to his inability to control the corruption within his bureaucracy.²²⁴ Thus, the civil war could have started as a domestic rebellion when Ptolemy was driven out of Alexandria by the people, who were angered by his actions and official corruption, exactly as Justin proposes (38.8.11).

It is another bad habit in historical scholarship to see all events pushed specifically by the actions of those in power, so rather than the civil war being predicated on the actions of only Ptolemy VIII or the ‘schemes’ of Kleopatra II, the people could have had a hand in its outbreak too. Once that occurred, then the two monarchs would have reacted accordingly. Kleopatra stayed in Alexandria, taking advantage of the people’s anger at her brother to gain greater power for herself, rather than being the instigator of events.

At the people’s instigation, Ptolemy VIII withdrew from Alexandria with Kleopatra III to Cyprus in 131/0 BCE, from where he could launch an attack to retake Egypt with the Ptolemaic navy, and Kleopatra II became *basilissa*-regnant, acclaimed as such by the people of Alexandria (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.12; Diod. Sic. 34/35.14; Livy, *Per.* 59.14; Oros. 5.10.6).²²⁵ During her sole rulership, Kleopatra II renamed herself Queen Kleopatra, the *Thea Philometor Soteira* (βασιλίσσαν Κλεοπάτραν θεὰν Φιλομήτορα Σώτειραν; The Mother-

²²⁴ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 138-139, n. 184, 185.

²²⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra II.”

loving, Savior Goddess). This epithet had several important connotations and connections. It connected her to the founder of the dynasty, Ptolemy Soter, the first *basileus*, as she was the first *basilissa*-regnant. Bielman-Sánchez also posits that it would evoke the savior and protective role for Egypt that she wanted to assume against the machinations of her brother.²²⁶ If the people were also rebelling against abuses by governmental officials, her savior title could have referenced her protection of the people against corruption as well.

Kleopatra II's new epithet also connected her to her first husband, Ptolemy VI Philometor, and their mother, Kleopatra I, the first *basilissa*-regent, whom the epithet of Philometor referenced.²²⁷ The connection to her first husband was important because it recalled her first period of joint-rulership, which was well-governed and peaceful, and it may have also alluded to the times during which Ptolemy VI was away at war and she oversaw the government. The change to her epithet is confirmed by papyri in which Kleopatra was listed alone in the protocol and the present active participle of the Greek verb "to reign" was feminized ($\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon\sigma\eta\varsigma$; *UPZ* 2.217; *P. Baden* 2.2), as was the title pharaoh (Pr-`3.t) in the Demotic. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo argue that this change indicates that she fully held an institutional position that was usually reserved for a male ruler, but she was able to legitimize her holding of such a position by feminizing the protocol form.²²⁸ During the Pharaonic period, women had become pharaohs, but these were exceptions to the rule, rather than the norm. For Kleopatra II, by feminizing the protocol form, she demonstrated that the traditional methods of kingly legitimization could be edited to support a female monarch. Her

²²⁶ Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 89-90, n. 22.

²²⁷ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 164; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197.

²²⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 163.

innovation would have major import for future queens because it showed that sole-reign by a female was possible and defensible.

Unfortunately, insufficient attention has been given to Kleopatra as the first *basilissa*-regnant. Similar to Kleopatra I's regency, Kleopatra II's sole-rule is not well analyzed in scholarship. This began with the ancient sources, including Diodorus Siculus, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Justin, and Orosius, all of whom did not credit the queen with any political strategy or military actions during the civil war, but rather chose to portray her as a victim and focus only on the emotions she felt in reaction to Ptolemy's brutality.²²⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton propose that, for the ancient writers, most of whom were Roman, the purpose of avoiding any mention of active participation on the part of the queen was to avoid any indication that Ptolemaic institutions could have been changed in a way that allowed women to hold active power, lest the elite women of Rome be similarly inspired.²³⁰ These two authors then subsequently note that this is an unfortunate habit that has influenced the present scholarship on queens.

Accordingly, Kleopatra's period of sole rule has been largely glossed over in history, by scholars from both the early twentieth century and more current. In the earliest scholarship, Macurdy, for example, praised Kleopatra II for being "the first of the Macedonian queens in Egypt to achieve a political equality with her husband," but of her

²²⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 87. They note in their conclusion (p.88-89) that men as the active participants and women as the passive victims of events is the regular stereotyped and gendered manner in which ancient sources, especially those of the Roman period, depict women. Bielman-Sánchez reiterates this idea of the sources showing Kleopatra II as the passive and victimized queen in a later article, Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," *passim*.

²³⁰ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 89. In a subsequent article Bielman-Sánchez further observed that while modern historians have sought to reassess the caricatured portraits of male rulers presented in ancient sources, a similar re-evaluation has not been undertaken for the queens. Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 85.

sole-rulership she only includes one sentence: “in 130 B. C. Euergetes was driven out of Alexandria and Cleopatra the Sister ruled the city.”²³¹ She is highly praiseful of Kleopatra’s intelligence but analyzes few examples of any real power she might have wielded. Bevan, on the other hand, was not laudatory of the queen. After enumerating all the bad behavior the ancient sources credit to Ptolemy VIII, Bevan states that: “It is not the behaviour of Euergetes which offers the gravest psychological difficulty in the story; it is the behaviour of Cleopatra.”²³² What was the behavior he found so repugnant: that she cohabitated with her brother and bore him a child after he murdered her younger son by Ptolemy VI, all in order to “remain queen at all costs.”²³³ Of her sole rule in Egypt during the civil war he mentions briefly that she was sole sovereign for a “moment” and only in Alexandria.²³⁴ Much like the ancient sources, his focus was on the actions of Kleopatra’s brother. Similarly to Macurdy, Mahaffy was another of the early historians that acknowledge the uniqueness of her co-rulership with her husband, which he observes “had not been accorded to any preceding queen, not even to Arsinoe Philadelphos.”²³⁵ Nonetheless, he is probably the worst offender when it comes to disregarding her period of sole-rule. He indicates that she began the civil war as a way to put her young son on the throne, but she was thwarted in this action by Ptolemy’s murder of the boy, which he describes by remarking “how she could have been such a consummate donkey as to leave the boy in the power of Euergetes...how she should have started a revolt which must secure his death...”²³⁶ In Mahaffy’s eyes, Kleopatra’s son’s death was her fault, not Ptolemy VIII’s. Of her period of sole rulership, Mahaffy makes no

²³¹ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 150, 158.

²³² Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 308.

²³³ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 308.

²³⁴ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 311.

²³⁵ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 169.

²³⁶ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 187.

mention, other than to reproduce a chart by another historian that includes her as reigning alone for the year 130-129 BCE, which Mahaffy then mistakenly argues is inaccurate since a papyrus in the name of Ptolemy VIII exist from the same period.²³⁷

Among the more modern scholars a similar negligence is seen. Fraser describes the lead up to and aftermath of the civil war, but he skips directly from 131 to 127 BCE.²³⁸ Hölbl observes that the Alexandrian people acclaimed Kleopatra sole queen, and then notes that her editing of the dating protocol to reflect her regnal years of sole rule was an “audacious innovation.”²³⁹ Pomeroy describes her in four sentences, including that she was listed as pharaoh and ruled for a short time alone.²⁴⁰ This is a more positive mention than some others, but still vague. Only with the work of Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo has a more in-depth analysis of the period become available, and they dedicate several articles to the topic.²⁴¹

The reason her period of sole-rule has been overlooked by past historians seems to be two-fold. First, as cited above, the ancient sources describe Kleopatra as a passive participant, ruled by emotions. The best example of this, is the reaction the sources credit her having to the death of her son. Ptolemy VIII’s first action, after fleeing from Alexandria, was to summon his son by Kleopatra II, Ptolemy Memphites, and murder him. He did this perhaps out of fear that Kleopatra would form a joint rule with their son in order to lock him out of power. After the deed, Ptolemy had his son dismembered, and sent the remains to

²³⁷ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 189, n. 3 We now know these overlapping papyri exist because two eponymous priesthoods were established in the camp of each monarch, see notes 247, 249, below.

²³⁸ Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 121-122.

²³⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197. Hölbl dedicates more space to the rebellion of Harsiesi (p. 198-199) than he does to Kleopatra’s period of sole-rule.

²⁴⁰ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 23-24

²⁴¹ See, for example, Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.”; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.).”

Kleopatra II in Alexandria on her birthday (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.12-13; Diod. Sic. 34/35.14; Livy, *Per.* 59.14; Oros. 5.10.6). The sources then claim that she was consumed by grief and sorrow (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.14; Diod. Sic. 34/35.14), only emerging from her mourning to send ambassadors requesting aid to another man, Demetrios II, king of the Seleukid kingdom and husband to her daughter Kleopatra Thea (Just. *Epit.* 38.9.1). A more active stance was taken by the people, who tore down Ptolemy's statues (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.12), and the nobles of the court, who displayed Ptolemy's Memphites remains to the Alexandrian people to anger them further (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.15).

In this way, Kleopatra is relegated to the “proper” feminine role of mourner within the domestic space, and the responsibility for the revolt and political action is credited to the people of Alexandria and the nobles.²⁴² While the sources strive to depict only the men and the vague groups of the “people” and “nobility” as taking action, if one reads between the lines, the queen is still an active participant. She sends the ambassadors to Demetrios, which indicates that she was developing a strategy with her advisors.²⁴³ Additionally, Hölbl attributes the displaying of Memphites' body to Kleopatra, so, although Justin credited this act to vague “nobles,” it follows that they would not have had the ability to exhibit the body of the son of the queen without her express permission, indicating she was party to the plan.²⁴⁴ Allowing the display of her son's mangled body also demonstrates that she was politically astute enough to realize the action would further win the people over to her side,

²⁴² Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 98.

²⁴³ Bielman-Sánchez notes that even in this instance Justin impugns Kleopatra's authority. Although he credits her with giving the order to send the ambassadors, he describes it as an emergency decision, rather than a political plan, and he grants Demetrios the title of king without conferring royal title on Kleopatra. Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 99-100.

²⁴⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198.

and she was not so crippled by grief, as the sources would have us believe, that she could not still engage in her queenly duties.

The second reason her period of sole-rule has been overlooked is because there is only a small selection of evidence that proves it occurred. For example, no new temples were built, and she did not produce any monumental depictions of herself as *basilissa-regnant*.²⁴⁵ Her lack of building may have been because her focus during her roughly four-year period of reign was spent maintaining her position against her brother. Many of the Egyptian temples were in contested regions, and the Egyptian priests supported Ptolemy's cause after he made generous donations to the temples, both of which would have prevented or limited building activity by the queen.²⁴⁶

Consequently, the main evidence of this period comes from papyri documentation. The papyri not only indicate Kleopatra's new title, but they also confirm the years she ruled as *basilissa-regnant* in Alexandria (131/130-127 BCE, see Appendix A) due to the presence of two sets of Eponymous priests, one in Alexandria of Kleopatra and another of Ptolemy Euergetes (II) outside of Alexandria.²⁴⁷ Bielman-Sánchez identifies a dozen papyrus and ostraca that attest to an individual reign for Kleopatra II, but two particular papyrus *UPZ* 2.217, dated to 131/130 BCE, and *P. Baden* 2.2, dated to 130/129 BCE, specifically identify

²⁴⁵ Bielman-Sánchez identifies one Greek stone decree from a gymnasium in Kom Ombo that was originally dedicated to Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III in 135 BCE, which subsequently had the names of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III chiseled off. This was probably done by Kleopatra II's supporters, however, rather than being done specifically at the order of the queen. Since the original letter was addressed to Boethos, it may also provide additional evidence that he sided with the queen during the civil war. See pgs. 314-315, below. Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 91; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 416.

²⁴⁶ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 87. Hölbl also records that Ptolemy VIII granted the priests at Philae their request to no longer provide for civil servants and troops passing through their area. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 280.

²⁴⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197.

years one through three of her reign.²⁴⁸ Additionally, *BGU* 3.993, dated to 127 BCE, indicates that the eponymous priests of Ptolemy Euergetes (II) were “in the king’s camp” indicating he had not yet retaken Alexandria.²⁴⁹

This timeline is also confirmed by the numismatic evidence, which shows a gap in coins produced by Ptolemy VIII from 131/130 to 127 BCE.²⁵⁰ Kleopatra II did not mint any coins bearing her own image during her period as *basilissa*-regnant, but she may have minted gold coins of the Arsinoë II type and bronze coins of the Ptolemy I type, which may have been her way of reassuring the populace of the stability of the currency in such a chaotic time, since both those types of coinage dated back to the earliest monarchs of the dynasty.²⁵¹ Additionally, since she took on the title of Philometeor Soteira, minting coins bearing the image of Ptolemy I Soter could have been her way of referencing her own connection to the founder of the dynasty.

The combination of the papyri and numismatic evidence confirms that Kleopatra II ruled portions of Egypt from at least 131/130 to 127 BCE. But it also demonstrates that she was an active queen, not a figurehead. Bielman-Sánchez rightly points out that for male

²⁴⁸ Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 89, n. 21.

²⁴⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra II”; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 197, 199. A similar papyrus dated to 131 also attests to the presence of a secondary eponymous priesthood dedicated to Ptolemy VIII, and it describes the priests “who are with the pharaoh.” This indicates the two priesthoods, one dedicated to Kleopatra II and the second to Ptolemy VIII, were in existence from at least 131-127 BCE. Bielman-Sánchez,

“Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 92.

²⁵⁰ Otto Mørkholm, “Ptolemaic Coins and Chronology: The Dated Silver Coinage of Alexandria,” *ANS MN* 20 (1975), 7, 11.

²⁵¹ Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 92, n. 32. These coins (Sv. 1498-1500) are usually attributed to Ptolemy VIII in older sources. See, for example, Kharstedt, “Frauen auf antiken Münzen,” 274; Hazzard, *Ptolemaic Coins: An Introduction for Collectors*, 87, Fig. 112, 113. Consiglio, however, has recently argued that the K monogram present on the Arsinoë coins could represent the first initial of the name Kleopatra. He makes this argument in connection to coins minted during the reign of Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI, but the same logic could hold for coins minted under Kleopatra II. Consiglio, “Les Frappes Monétaires Durant Les Règnes Conjoints de Cléopâtre I-Ptolémée VI et Ptolémée VI- Cléopâtre II: Un Témoignage des Nouvelles Prérogatives des Reines au IIe Siècle?,” 423, 428. See also, note 39, above.

rulers the granting of royal status and title automatically confirms that they exercised royal power and authority; Kleopatra's assumption of a unique epithet and feminized royal title should, therefore, indicate that she did the same.²⁵² The previous thirty-eight years of Kleopatra's joint rule with her brothers, during which time she navigated court politics, both through times of peace and previous wars, developed strategies with courtiers, appointed her partisans to important postings, responded to petitions, gave orders to senior officials in conjunction with her co-rulers, and managed the kingdom while Ptolemy VI was on campaign, would have prepared and well-equipped her for sole-rulership.²⁵³ For instance, it is certain that she appointed a new high priest for the Alexandrian dynastic cult, providing her with religious support, and she also worked with several military leaders, including the *strategos* of the Thebaid, Boethos, and the governor of Cyprus, Theodoros, both of whom were her partisans, before they were dismissed by Ptolemy VIII.²⁵⁴

Kleopatra did not rule the whole of Egypt during her sole reign, however, as documents from the period reveal. Papyri bearing the epithet of Philometor Soteira from the Thebaid demonstrate that Kleopatra held power in Alexandria and in several southern cities, including Thebes, Edfu, Herakleopolis, Dios Polis, and Hermonthis; while Ptolemy VIII's

²⁵² Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 94. "Notons en outre que pour tous les souverains lagides majeurs de sexe masculin, les Modernes admettent qu'à l'octroi du statut royal et du titre royal correspondait nécessairement l'exercice de l'autorité royale ; rien ne prouve qu'il en allait autrement pour un souverain lagide majeur de sexe féminin."

²⁵³ Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 93-94.

²⁵⁴ Theodoros was removed as naval commander and governor of Cyprus when Ptolemy fled to the island in 130, and Boethos was replaced as *strategos* of the Thebaid the same year. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 87, n. 86; Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 107; Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 416-417; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, *Inventer le pouvoir féminin: Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II, reines d'Egypte au IIe s. av. J.-C.*, 401-416.

dating formula is present on documents from the Fayum and Memphis.²⁵⁵ Kleopatra was able to hold power in the areas that remained loyal to her by working through her partisan network. The population of Alexandria remained loyal to Kleopatra, as described in the literary sources, but their partisanship of the queen is also confirmed by Ptolemy VIII having to lay siege to the city to win it back (Diod. Sic. 34/35.20).²⁵⁶ The Thebaid also remained loyal to Kleopatra because its *strategos*, Boethos, had been a *philos* of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II during their reign together; he then remained loyal to Kleopatra during her rule with Ptolemy VIII, and sided with her during the civil war.²⁵⁷ Two papyri from the period (*P. UB Trier S 135-3*; *P. UB Trier S 135-1*), both dated to 132 BCE, demonstrate that Boethos was still *epistrategos* and *strategos* of the Thebaid, and he was in the process of founding a military city named for the queen, Euergetis, before the start of the war.²⁵⁸ She also received support from the Jewish populations in both Alexandria and the *chora*, especially the groups led by Onias and Dositheos (Joseph. *Ap.* 2.5.49-54), both of whom were her *philoï*.²⁵⁹

Ptolemy VIII, however, had the loyalty of a majority of the *chora* and native portions of the population. From 130-127 BCE, he steadily reconquered the parts of Egypt that were loyal to the queen, until she was forced to flee (Just. *Epit.* 39.1.4), and he was able to retake

²⁵⁵ Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 90.

²⁵⁶ Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 415.

²⁵⁷ On Boethos, see notes, 173, 245, above. Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 91; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198.

²⁵⁸ Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, the Red Sea Basin, and North Africa*, 347.

²⁵⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198; Bielman-Sánchez, “Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L’entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.),” 415-416; Chauveau, “Un été 145,” 163. Bielman-Sánchez notes that Josephus confuses the events of 145 and the civil war, which weakens his value as a source for the period. But she and Chauveau both argue that the episodes Josephus describes were used as propaganda against Ptolemy VIII, so, whether or not they are completely accurate, they indicate that much of the Jewish population took the side of Kleopatra during the civil war.

Alexandria late in 127 BCE (*OGIS* 135).²⁶⁰ An inscription from the Thebaid dated to 130 BCE reveals the presence of soldiers loyal to Ptolemy VIII, and the same year Boethos was replaced as *strategos* of the Thebaid by a partisan of Ptolemy VIII, an Egyptian named Paos (*OGIS* 132).²⁶¹ Ptolemy, it seems, was supported by the military, especially the groups of mercenary soldiers that he paid, and the corrupt officials who wanted to retain their positions and rights, to the continued detriment of the people. Ptolemy used these two groups during the course of the civil war and would not address corruption issues until well after its end, with the amnesty decrees of 118 BCE, as mentioned above.

The period of 127-125/4 BCE saw Kleopatra in the Seleukid court with her daughter Kleopatra Thea. This is one of the most poorly documented periods of her life, as the literary sources are both vague and critical of the queen's actions. Justin credits Kleopatra with sending ambassadors to Demetrios II to ask for help (38.9.1), perhaps in 130/129 BCE, and he later claims that she promised Demetrios the Egyptian throne (39.1.2). Bielman-Sánchez has previously argued, however, that while Kleopatra's motives in asking the Seleukid king for help are unclear, it is highly unlikely that she would have offered him the throne after ruling for so many years and fighting to maintain her authority in Egypt.²⁶² When Kleopatra

²⁶⁰ Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 91; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 200; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 122.

²⁶¹ Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 91, n. 28; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 312, n. 12. It should also briefly be noted that Paos was the first native Egyptian to be promoted to a high government position in the Ptolemaic period, and that act may have further solidified the native support for Ptolemy VIII.

²⁶² Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 100. In an earlier article (*Deux femmes*, 2016), she suggested that Kleopatra had perhaps planned to engage in a joint-reign with Demetrios, but she seems to be reevaluating that theory in the 2017 article (*Stéréotypes et réalités*). I concur with that reevaluation. Kleopatra would not have offered her kingdom to an outside king or have allowed a joint rule with him. Rather, I would argue that Justin framed her request for help from Demetrios in a way that would fit into the stereotypes (active men, passive women) of his day, and Kleopatra II was, in fact, actively trying to protect her sole-rule. Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "*Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)*," 171.

fled Alexandria, probably in 128/127 BCE, she also took part of the treasury with her. Justin hints that this was an unjustified action (39.1.4), but a portion of the treasury would have been earned by the queen through the taxes on the land she owned and the grain she transported on her ships.²⁶³

Once Kleopatra reached the Seleukid court and the hospitality of her daughter Kleopatra Thea, she was still in an uncertain position because Demetrios was soon after defeated by rival forces of his own, led by Alexander II Zabinas, who was supported by Ptolemy VIII. Demetrios was then murdered by 126 BCE (Just. *Epit.* 39.1.4-8; Joseph. *AJ* 13.267-268).²⁶⁴ Bielman-Sánchez suggests that in the aftermath of Demetrios' death, Kleopatra II and Kleopatra Thea developed a strategy by which they planned to place Kleopatra Thea's younger son on the Seleukid throne, reinstate Kleopatra II on the Egyptian throne, and institute rapprochement between the Seleukid and Ptolemaic kingdoms.²⁶⁵ Their plan must have worked because by 125/124 BCE Kleopatra was reinstated in Egypt. By 124/123 BCE Ptolemy reversed his Syrian policy by withdrawing support from Alexander Zabinas, and, instead, he sanctioned Kleopatra Thea's chosen son, Antiochos VIII Grypos, by marrying his daughter, Tryphaina, to him (Just. *Epit.* 39.2.3).²⁶⁶

Chapter 10 will resume with Kleopatra II and the reconstituted joint reign between her, Ptolemy VIII, and Kleopatra III. The focus of that chapter, however, will be on

²⁶³ See at note 179, above. See also, Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 101.

²⁶⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 200.

²⁶⁵ Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 417; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides-Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 171; Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 104-105, n. 86.

²⁶⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201; Adrian G. Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 255.

Kleopatra III, as it was during the civil war and the period after that she began to come into her own power as a Ptolemaic queen and the successor of her mother's power and influence. Before transitioning focus to the daughter, however, what should be concluded concerning her mother's reign? Kleopatra II was one of the most powerful Ptolemaic queens. She was also one of the longest reigning at over fifty years of rule. In fact, she is one of the longest ruling monarchs in history, but she is never included in the popular lists of "longest ruling monarchs" because she is also one of the most overlooked queens in history.

This obfuscation of her achievements can be attributed to several factors. There is the issue of politically active ancient women being characterized as wicked or insolent, branded as being more audacious than effective. And, of course, as has been emphasized throughout this chapter, the perceived rivalries between Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III have regularly overshadowed any other aspects of their reign together, much to the detriment of the things they did accomplish. To conclude this chapter, then, it should be reiterated that, while Kleopatra and Ptolemy VIII may have experienced tensions throughout their reign, they spent more time effectively ruling the kingdom together.

Kleopatra II, as the first *basilissa* spousal co-ruler, jointly held power with Ptolemy VI, and then Ptolemy VIII, during which time she saw to the political, religious, and international affairs of Egypt. She was also the first *basilissa*-regnant, ruling the administrative center of Egypt on her own for a period of at least three to four years. Her ability to rule Alexandria on her own and her feminization of the dating protocol would allow several successive queens to follow in her footsteps, most notably, Kleopatra VII. Finally, far from having a rivalry with her daughter, Kleopatra III, Kleopatra II inspired her co-ruling and successor queen, who was able to gain an even greater amount of power than her impressive mother had.

10. Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III: Like Mother, Like Daughter

In much the same way Kleopatra I learned from the example of Arsinoë III, Kleopatra III must have learned from both the triumphs and defeats of her mother. As argued in the previous chapter, their relationship, rather than being defined by the regularly cited jealousy-based rivalry, should more appropriately be described as one of necessity and tolerance, especially on the part of Kleopatra II, who abided the marriage of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III for the purpose of producing heirs. For the daughter, Kleopatra III would have witnessed her mother working with and alongside her brother-husband, putting aside personal feeling or dislikes. Kleopatra III would have seen that her mother's patience, ambition, and political astuteness culminated in achievements, including Kleopatra II's brief period of sole reign in Alexandria and her significant religious visibility, but those characteristics could not prevent her personal tragedies, such as the deaths of all her male children.

In learning from her mother's triumphs and mistakes, Kleopatra III would become one of the most powerful queens of the dynasty. This is, perhaps, another reason the supposed rivalry between the mother-daughter pair is often unquestioningly repeated by scholars. They make the mistaken assumption that Kleopatra III was the same queen in her late teens and early twenties, during the early phases of her period as the third of three co-rulers, as she would become later in life: an independent monarch, who ruled over her children with an iron fist. The events that occurred early in her queenship between her mother and step-father/uncle/husband, especially during the civil war period when Kleopatra III was still a youth herself, would shape the queen she became once those two were dead. The experiences she endured as a young woman also provide insight into why she may have been reluctant to later share power with her own children. Thus, it is with the events of the

civil war that this chapter must resume, but from the point of view of Kleopatra III, in order to explore the queen she grew into being.

10.1 Kleopatra II and III, the civil war and its aftermath

During the civil war, by which time Kleopatra III would have reached her mid- to late-twenties, she retreated with Ptolemy VIII to Cyprus in 131/130 BCE and probably returned with him as he campaigned throughout Egypt from 130 BCE. One set of the dating protocols from this period (see, for example, *BGU* 3.993) are in the name of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III as the *Theoi Euergetai* (II), which reveals that Kleopatra III remained with her husband during the conflict.²⁶⁷ That Kleopatra III sided with her husband is usually attributed to the perceived mother-daughter rivalry, but the reality of the situation may not have been that simple. Ptolemy VIII began a sexual relationship with Kleopatra III when she was a young girl, so her choice to stay with him could have had less to do with her feelings towards her mother and more to do with the grooming she had received from Ptolemy VIII since her youth.²⁶⁸

There were also her children to consider. By 132 BCE, Kleopatra III had at least four, perhaps five, children by Ptolemy VIII: Ptolemy IX (born c. 142 BCE; Just. *Epit.* 39.3; Paus. 1.9.1), Tryphaina (born c. 141/140 BCE; Just. *Epit.* 39.3), Ptolemy X (born c. 140/139 BCE; Just. *Epit.* 39.3, 39.4), Kleopatra IV (born c. 138/135 BCE; Just. *Epit.* 39.3), and Kleopatra Selene (born c. 135/130 BCE; Just. *Epit.* 39.3).²⁶⁹ The murder of Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VI's last son (and Kleopatra III's brother) by Ptolemy VIII (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.4), may have

²⁶⁷ See pgs. 312-313, above. This same set of protocols were initially cited in the previous chapter as an example of the dual appointment of rival priests of Alexander by both Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 199.

²⁶⁸ See note 149, above.

²⁶⁹ See Appendix B. There is some debate on whether Ptolemy IX was the son of Kleopatra II or III, but Bennett solidly concludes he was the son of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra III," "Ptolemy IX."

been reason enough for Kleopatra III to side with her husband in protection of her own children, a decision which would have also then been further reinforced by Ptolemy VIII's murder of Ptolemy Memphites during their time in Cyprus (Just. *Epit.* 38.8.12).

Whatever her reasons for staying with her uncle-husband, when they returned to Egypt and began campaigning to retake the kingdom (by c. 130 BCE), a new priest of the dynastic cult was appointed for Kleopatra III, known as a *hieropolos* of the deified Kleopatra III, and, from that point on, she was portrayed as “Isis, the great one, mother of the gods” (ἱερός πάλος Ἰσιδος μητρὸς θεῶν μεγάλης; *hjr3pwI3 is.t t3 hnm.t t3 mw.t n3 ntr.w t3 ntr.t '3t*; see Appendix D).²⁷⁰ Hölbl proposes that Kleopatra was granted this new priesthood and title in order to elevate her religiously over her mother, Kleopatra II the *Thea Philometor Soteira*, and the importance of the new priest is shown by his inclusion in the dating protocols after the Alexander priest but before all the other queenly priestesses (see Appendix C).²⁷¹ What began as a religious association probably instituted by her husband or his priests for propagandistic purposes, however, would take on greater meaning for the queen, and Ptolemaic queenship in general, as her reign progressed.²⁷² Kleopatra's goddess assimilations, especially after Ptolemy VIII's death, will be explored in greater detail below.

Of course, any attempt to clarify Kleopatra III's growing power must be assessed in light of the last resumption of tri-rule (125/4-116 BCE) with her mother's return from Syria.

²⁷⁰ The title is first attested to in 130 BCE in *P. Dem. Leiden 273a*. See also, *P. Dem. Eheberträge 8D* and *Z*; *P. Dem. Eheberträge 37*; *P. Dem. Cairo II.30609*. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 199, n. 96, 286; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra III”; Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 67.

²⁷¹ The last part of the dating protocol would read: the *hieropolos* of Isis, the great one, mother of the gods, the *athlophoros* of Berenike Euergetis, the *kanephoros* of Arsinoë Philadelphos, and the *hierieia* of Arsinoë Philopator. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 199.

²⁷² Fraser, for example, notes that the *hieropolos* “appears only spasmodically” during the remainder of Ptolemy VIII's reign, but after his death, it was regularly included in the dating protocols by Kleopatra III. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 221.

Here we must briefly return, for the last time, to Kleopatra II. By 125/124 BCE Kleopatra II returned to Alexandria to rejoin the ruling unit. The last papyrus listing only Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III (*P. Dem. Tor. Amen* 9) dates from August 125 BCE, and the first papyrus that lists the newly reconciled ruling trio (*SB* 22.15537), which places Kleopatra II back in the second position, is dated to January 124 BCE.²⁷³ Kleopatra II was once again referred to as the sister of Ptolemy VIII, with Kleopatra III as the wife (see, for example, *P.Ryl. Gr.* IV 581; *P. Cairo* CG 30608, 30609). These designations, along with Kleopatra II's secondary placement in the dating protocol, would be retained until Ptolemy's death in 116 BCE. That Kleopatra II could resume the status she held before the civil war, being listed after Ptolemy but before her daughter, indicates that she still held a measure of influence.

Moreover, Kleopatra II was able to resume the titles and retain the influence she held prior to the civil war because Ptolemy VIII initiated the reconciliation with her. Just as with the outbreak of the war, the reunion of Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII seems to have been predicated on several factors, both from the royal figures involved and the people. Kleopatra II was driven from Egypt because Ptolemy VIII had the military power to take back the country. She then schemed with Kleopatra Thea during her exile to take advantage of the political climate and force negotiations, but the people of Alexandria, it seems, also wanted Kleopatra II back on the throne alongside their king.²⁷⁴

Diodorus perceived that after the civil war Ptolemy VIII, perhaps realizing he could not rule effectively over a people who hated him, began to repent from his former cruelties

²⁷³ Lenzo, "A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612)," 229, n. 63; Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 104, n. 84.

²⁷⁴ On the theory that Kleopatra II and Kleopatra Thea developed a plan to place Kleopatra II back on the Egyptian throne, see pg. 317, above.

and engage in acts of clemency meant to win their favor (Diod. Sic. 34/35.20). Ptolemy first pardoned the general who had held the city of Alexandria against him, Marsyas (Diod. Sic. 34/35.20), and his reunification with his sister, whom the people of Alexandria had supported during the turmoil, could have been a second act of appeasement. Several of the cities that had aligned with either the king or queen continued to fight, usually over land grants that had been gifted by either the king or queen to their partisans, so by 118 BCE the royal trio issued a great amnesty decree (*P. Tebt.* 1.5 = *C. Ord. Ptol.* 53), which granted pardons for offences committed prior to 118, excluding those against temples. It also set terms for the return of confiscated properties, the forgiveness of tax and selected additional debts, and many other requirements concerning fair pay for labor.²⁷⁵ Bevan was one of the earliest historians to point out the importance of this decree, noting that the reconciliation of the royal brother-sister pair meant that Ptolemy had to accept the grants made to Kleopatra II's partisans and she the grants made to his.²⁷⁶ This is significant because it shows that Ptolemy was not the unequivocal victor; he was required to compromise with Kleopatra II, who still had leverage with the people of Alexandria.

Additional amnesty decrees of 118 proclaimed mutual forgiveness among the members of the royal family and incorporated Ptolemy Memphites into the dynastic cult as the *Theos Neos Philopator* ("the New Father-Loving God," see Appendix D), a duplicitous epithet probably intended to conceal his father's murderous actions and emphasize the new unity of the royal family.²⁷⁷ However hypocritical the new title of their son was, these actions

²⁷⁵ The amnesty decrees were briefly mentioned in the previous chapter. See note 223, above. See also, Appendix F.

²⁷⁶ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 315. The document is outlined by Bevan over pgs. 315-318. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 201-202; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 138-139.

²⁷⁷ *C. Ord. Ptol.* 54-55 were issued after the initial decree. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 202, n. 113, 286; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II

again demonstrate that Ptolemy VIII needed to show the people he was reconciled with his sister and she with him. Part of that reconciliation must have been religious, as the *Ma'at* of the kingdom could not be maintained if the monarchs were at odds, but it also reveals that Kleopatra II retained some leverage and personal influence since Ptolemy pardoned her, deified their son, and was forced to compromise with her.

The only suggestion of a change or reduced amount of power for Kleopatra II may be hinted at in the dating protocols themselves. When Kleopatra III was integrated into the rule of three, the dating protocols initially used the plural verb “to reign” in Greek (βασιλευόντων) and the Demotic used the plural Pharaohs (Pr-`3.w) in regards to the royal triad.²⁷⁸ After the civil war, from 127 BCE until Ptolemy VIII’s death in 116 BCE, the plural verb was replaced with a singular masculine title *basileus* and the feminine singular title of *basilissa* for each queen (see, for example, the petition *P.Cair. CG 10256*), and similarly in the Demotic the singular titles of pharaoh and female pharaoh (Pr-‘3.t) were also used. Bielman-Sánchez argues that this change to the protocol demonstrates a reduction in authority for Kleopatra II.²⁷⁹

Kleopatra’s actions upon resuming her queenship in 125/124 BCE, however, do not reflect a diminishment of power. If she was one of the driving forces behind ending the civil war hostilities, as proposed in the previous chapter, she would have been in a strong position to negotiate the resumption of her authority and pre-civil war standing.²⁸⁰ This can be confirmed by the amnesty decrees of 118, which reveal Ptolemy’s need to cooperate and

(IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 170; Lenzo, “A Xoite Stela of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II with Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III (British Museum EA 612),” 230; Chauveau, “Un été 145,” 154-156.

²⁷⁸ See note 183, above.

²⁷⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, “Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.),” 162, 170, n. 18.

²⁸⁰ See, note 274, above. Bielman-Sánchez, “Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.,” 104-5.

compromise with Kleopatra II. Her continuing influence is also demonstrated by the reappointment of her partisans to high-ranking offices. Theodoros, the son of Seleukos, for instance, was reappointed as naval commander and governor of Cyprus sometime between 124-118 BCE (*OGIS* 145, 156, 157, 162).²⁸¹ Furthermore, reducing Kleopatra's authority in punishment for her actions during the civil war would have countered Ptolemy VIII's efforts to resuscitate his own reputation with the people.

In contrast to Bielman-Sánchez's theory, the changes to the dating protocol indicate a restructuring of the ruling triad's shared power in general, rather than a specific reduction in authority aimed at Kleopatra II personally. Prior to the civil war, Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra were inarguably the main powers on the throne, a ruling duo, even if a trio in name.

Kleopatra III was included as part of the ruling trio, but she was young, inexperienced, and eclipsed by two older and more robust ruling figures. During the civil war, Ptolemy VIII had finally included Kleopatra III in more of the ruling propaganda by establishing her new priesthood, the *hieropolos*, and naming her as the living Isis. Kleopatra III's assimilation to the mother goddess provided her with greater visibility and an authority she could act on, and it also occurred around the same time she would have been reaching a more mature age.

By the end of the civil war, Kleopatra III was in her late 20s or early 30s, and she now had the experience and maturity to take on more ruling responsibility. She had, after all, watched her mother co-rule all these previous years, which must have inspired her to want a similar power for herself. Unfortunately, this last period of this trio's rule is poorly documented, other than the amnesty decrees, which themselves speak more to Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II's relationship. It seems, however, that the period of 125/124-116 BCE, was

²⁸¹ On Seleukos, see pgs. 288-289, and on Theodoros, see note 254, above. Bielman-Sánchez, "Comment identifier des appuis discrets? L'entourage des reines Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (180-115 av. J.-C.)," 418.

a relatively peaceful time, during which the trio ruled together, efficiently and effectively.

The steady accumulation of more ruling authority by Kleopatra III, rather than being directly evidenced by documentation, can instead be inferred from what happened when Ptolemy VIII died.

[10.2 Kleopatra III as dominant co-ruler with Ptolemy IX and X](#)

Ptolemy VIII died in 116 BCE, and he left “the kingdom of Egypt to his wife, and one of her two sons, whichever she herself should choose... she was more inclined to fix on the younger of her sons, but the people obliged her to nominate the elder” (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.1-2. See also, Paus. 1.9.1-2).²⁸² Ptolemy IX had been named crown prince, after Ptolemy Memphites’ death, and had been sent to Cyprus as *nauarchos* and governor, which Pausanias says Kleopatra III ordered so that she could appoint her younger son as king, when the time came (1.9.1). This may be an exaggeration on the part of the ancient sources, spicing up their narratives by creating a rivalry between mother and son, just as they had between mother and daughter.²⁸³ The ancient historians may have also interpolated contention in these early interactions between mother and son because they knew there would be issues later in their reign.²⁸⁴ Ptolemy IX was, in all likelihood, sent to Cyprus in order to gain experience in governance, and there is no indication that Kleopatra III first attempted to put her younger son on the throne. The dating protocols transition smoothly from Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II,

²⁸² This granting of ruling power to Kleopatra III is also evidenced by the Egyptian titulary both her sons would bear, in the Two Ladies name of Ptolemy IX and the Horus name of Ptolemy X, which included the phrase “his mother makes him to appear on the throne of his father.” Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205, n. 123; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy IX,” “Ptolemy X.”

²⁸³ The depiction of Kleopatra III as the evil and conniving mother fits into the ancient *topos*, previously analyzed, of politically active queens being depicted as bad women. See also pg. 329, below.

²⁸⁴ This is congruent with the argument I make in the introductory paragraphs of this chapter that the rivalry between Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III was assumed based on the characteristics Kleopatra III would attain once she became dominant co-ruler with her sons, rather than the young woman and queen she was when she was the junior co-ruler with her mother and father/uncle/husband. On the issues she would later have with Ptolemy IX, see note 308, below.

and Kleopatra III to the new trio of Kleopatra II, Kleopatra III, and Ptolemy IX (*P.Dem. Ryl.* 3.20).

Ptolemy IX, thus, succeeded his father as pharaoh, but it was an unusual situation because the power to assign the succeeding monarch had been conferred on Kleopatra III, rather than the throne automatically passing to the eldest son and crown prince.²⁸⁵ If Ptolemy IX and X had been minors, the granting of Kleopatra III with regnal power would not have been unusual, since the position of *basilissa*-regent had a precedent in Kleopatra I. By 116 BCE, however, both Ptolemy IX and X were adults, over twenty years old.²⁸⁶ Thus, the appointment of Kleopatra III as the regnal authority represents a break with previous practice and demonstrates the personal influence and power she had accumulated over both Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II by this point. That Ptolemy VIII granted Kleopatra III seniority after his death has, as with many other issues discussed in the previous chapter, almost exclusively been ascribed to the rivalry between brother and sister and mother and daughter, but, as I have repeatedly contended, the unquestioning attribution of all their actions to a supposed enmity has often obscured the true events.²⁸⁷ This instance is a perfect example of that trend.

That Ptolemy VIII chose Kleopatra III as his succeeding ruling power demonstrates that she had gained ruling experience over the last twenty-four years (140/139-116 BCE) in which she had co-ruled with her husband and mother. She was also, I argue, uncontested by

²⁸⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 204.

²⁸⁶ If Ptolemy IX was born in c. 142 BCE, he would have been about twenty-six years old at his father's death. Ptolemy X, if he was born in 140/139 BCE, would have been around twenty-four to twenty-three. See note 269, above, on the birthdates of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III's children. Also, this is in contrast to historians that have previously claimed a regency for Kleopatra III without realizing her sons were adults at this time. See, for example, Penrose, who said Kleopatra III "became regent for her son Ptolemy IX Soter II in 116 BCE." Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 217.

²⁸⁷ Hölbl, for instance, indicates that Ptolemy VIII left his kingdom to Kleopatra III to spite his sister, but that Kleopatra III was thwarted from appointing her chosen son, Ptolemy X, as pharaoh by Kleopatra II, "her mother and rival." Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205.

Kleopatra II, who retained her position of respect and authority after Ptolemy VIII's death. Kleopatra II, at almost seventy years old in 116 BCE, was perhaps coming to the end of her own desire to rule and was resigned to letting the younger Kleopatra III take the reins. A ruling triad was created after Ptolemy VIII's death, consisting of Kleopatra III, Kleopatra II, and Ptolemy IX, which is first attested to in *P.Dem. Ryl.* 3.20. The dating protocol in this papyrus lists the (female) Pharaoh Kleopatra II, the (female) Pharaoh Kleopatra III, and the Pharaoh Ptolemy IX, who has also been granted the epithet, Philometor Soter (the Mother-loving, Savior).²⁸⁸ While Kleopatra II's placement in the first position of the dating protocol would usually indicate that she held the most power in the arrangement, Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo instead propose that Kleopatra II's inclusion at the head of the dating protocol was purely honorary, a reference to the prestige she had earned during her long years as queen and her period as *basilissa*-regnant.²⁸⁹

The bestowal of the epithet Philometor Soter, the masculine version of the epithet used by Kleopatra II, on Ptolemy IX should also be interpreted as an act of respect.²⁹⁰ The epiklesis referenced the achievements of Ptolemy's grandmother, by copying the title she used as *basilissa*-regnant, while also alluding to his love for his own powerful mother, so it was germane because it honored both Kleopatra II and III.²⁹¹ Additionally, Kleopatra II

²⁸⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 162; Bielman-Sánchez, "Stéréotypes et réalités du pouvoir politique féminin: la guerre civile en Egypte entre 132 et 124 av. J.-C.," 94, n. 39; Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, *Inventer le pouvoir féminin: Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II, reines d'Egypte au IIe s. av. J.-C.*, 395-396; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205.

²⁸⁹ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 162, 170.

²⁹⁰ *Contra* Hölbl, who insists that Kleopatra II forced Kleopatra III to bestow this title on Ptolemy IX, in an attempt to thwart her daughter. He also later states that the use of the *Theoi Philometores Soteres* epithet was done to maintain dynastic continuity. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205, 286.

²⁹¹ Bevan cites that this adoption of Kleopatra II's epithet was the result of a lack of imagination at the Ptolemaic court, since later monarchs would adopt it as well. This view is too simplistic. The Ptolemies did not take on epithets without meaning. Bevan, for example, notes that this perceived lack of imagination began with Ptolemy VIII's adoption of the Euergetes epithet, but Ptolemy VIII adopted that title with the purpose of

survived Ptolemy VIII by only a few months, as demonstrated by her disappearance from the dating protocols by late 116/early 115 BCE (see, for example, *P.Dem. Cairo* 30602, 30603).²⁹² After her death, although she was dropped from the dating protocol, the calculation of regnal years did not change, indicating that they were calculated based on the reigns of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, which is a further indication that Kleopatra II's inclusion in that trio was honorary.²⁹³

Earlier scholars have insinuated, however, that Kleopatra II was murdered by Kleopatra III after Ptolemy's death.²⁹⁴ The focus on their perceived rivalry and the idea that Kleopatra would scheme to murder her mother relates to another concept I have previously addressed: the *topos* that politically active queens were either good or evil.²⁹⁵ Kleopatra III is regularly described as an overly ambitious, cruel, and scheming woman, usually because of the way she later controlled her sons' and daughters' actions.²⁹⁶ With that characterization in mind, it has been easy for past historians to also assume she had unkind feelings, and even murderous intentions, towards her mother. This is another instance of interpolating contention, as with the events immediately following Ptolemy VIII's death, and it judges

connecting himself to his lauded ancestor, just as, I argue, Kleopatra III did in adopting her mother's. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 327.

²⁹² As Bennett points out, there has been previous debate on Kleopatra II's death date. In 1984 Cauville and Devauchelle argued that at Ptolemy VIII's death, Kleopatra III was expelled and Ptolemy IX ruled with Kleopatra II, until they were both removed by Kleopatra III and Ptolemy X in 107. This theory has been thoroughly refuted and is not accepted by most historians. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra II"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205, n. 125.

²⁹³ Bielman-Sánchez and Lenzo, "Deux femmes de pouvoir chez les Lagides- Cléopâtre I et Cléopâtre II (IIe siècle av. J.-C.)," 170.

²⁹⁴ See, for example, Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 208.

²⁹⁵ See note 218, above. See also Bartels, who argues that contention between mothers and daughters was also a Roman *topos*. He specifically references the judgement in sources of Kleopatra III for replacing her mother as Ptolemy VIII's wife and the treatment of her children. Jens Bartels, "The King's Daughters: Justin's Story," in *Femmes influentes dans le monde hellénistique et à Rome: IIIe siècle av. J.-C. - Ier siècle apr. J.-C.*, Anne Bielman, Isabelle Cogitore, and Anne Kolb, eds. (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2016), *passim*, 66-67, 76,

²⁹⁶ Bartels provides an example from Thompson, who described Kleopatra III as "the villainess of the piece." Bartels, "The King's Daughters: Justin's Story," 77, n. 75.

Kleopatra III's earlier actions based on events historians knew were coming later in her life. Historians have used the concept of Kleopatra as the "bad mother" and "power hungry woman," designations I will challenge further below, to assume the worst of her in all her actions. Since there is no ancient evidence that she murdered her mother, this is an outrageous claim, and it is one that is indicative of sensationalist, rather than accurate, historical writing.²⁹⁷

Consequently, the theory that she murdered her mother can be safely dismissed as another outcome of the unquestioning acceptance of their supposed rivalry and Kleopatra's negative characterization. Instead, Kleopatra II's presence in the ruling trio and as the first listing in the dating protocol, thoroughly refutes the idea that mother and daughter were rivals. Kleopatra III, in 116 BCE, seems to have held uncontested power. If she truly hated her mother and was desirous of murdering her, she would not have allowed her inclusion in the ruling triad, let alone in the first position, since it would have been easy to overrule her elderly mother, who may have already been in decline since she died soon after. It would also be strange for a daughter who hated her mother to grant her son an epithet that directly referenced her achievements, even if in doing so the epithet also referenced Kleopatra III's own power. Rather, it seems that Kleopatra III was attempting to show respect for her mother, the longest reigning Ptolemaic queen, and the exemplar of Kleopatra III's own rulership. If this notion of a rivalry is dismissed, and her mother's geriatric state is considered, Kleopatra II's death soon after the death of Ptolemy VIII is less suspicious, and

²⁹⁷ Parallel cases of unsubstantiated accusations of murder can be seen in the alleged murder of Coenus by Alexander or of Claudius by Agrippina. Agrippina's depiction in the literary sources, as a ruthless and conniving wife and mother, can also be paralleled to descriptions of Kleopatra III. On Coenus and Alexander, see Frank Holt, "The Death of Coenus: Another Study in Method," *Ancient History Bulletin* 14.1-2 (2000): 49-55.

her brief inclusion in the new ruling triad can be seen instead as an honorary and respectful action.

After Kleopatra II's death the joint reign of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX was established. They retained the epithets used during their brief tri-rule; Kleopatra was titled the *Thea Philometor Soteira* (and sometimes the *Thea Euergetis*, see *OGIS* 175, 739, or *Thea Euergetis Philometor Soteira*, see *P.Dem. Recueil* 5 = *UPZ* 1.132), Ptolemy IX was the *Theos Philometor Soter*, and together they were the *Theoi Philometores Soteres* (The Mother-loving, Savior Gods, *OGIS* 738, 739).²⁹⁸ Similarly to the joint-reign of Kleopatra I and her son Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra III was listed in the first position of the dating protocols, indicating that she was the dominant of the two monarchs (*P.Dem. Cairo* 30602, 30603; see Appendix C).²⁹⁹ In other documents, which did not include the full dating protocol, Kleopatra and Ptolemy IX were referred to as βασιλεῖς (“kings” in the nominative plural).³⁰⁰ Kleopatra III, as explained above, however, was not a *basilissa*-regent, as Kleopatra I had been, because Ptolemy IX, who was at least twenty-six years old, was not a minor. They had more of a co-rulership relationship, similar to that of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, but, in an unprecedented exercise of power, Kleopatra III, rather than Ptolemy IX, took the dominant role. They both saw to the pharaonic duties and maintenance of Ma'at, but it seems Kleopatra III was more active in the administration, since decrees were issued primarily by her and petitions were addressed to her as a joint king.

²⁹⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205. Kleopatra III would retain these epithets during her reigns with both her sons, as demonstrated by *OGIS* 739, which is dated to 112/111 BCE, and *OGIS* 175, which is dated to 104 BCE. See also, Appendix D.

²⁹⁹ See note 91, above.

³⁰⁰ Hazzard cites *C. Ord. Ptol.* 57-61, which open with the statement βασιλέων προσταξάντων..., “By the decree of the Kings...” Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 140.

Since his mother directed the administrative responsibilities, Ptolemy IX may have focused more on the religious duties within the kingdom. For instance, from 117 to 107 BCE he held the office of priest of Alexander and head of the Ptolemaic dynastic cult.³⁰¹ Previously, the priest of Alexander had been appointed by the king, but it was not a position that had ever been held by him. It was one of the most, if not the most, powerful positions in the kingdom, after the Pharaoh, so, perhaps, Kleopatra III allowed him to take on the position to placate him in lieu of the pharaonic duties she had taken for herself. He may have also had some oversight of the military. Since he had served as *strategos* and *nauarchos* of Cyprus prior to his father's death (Paus. 1.9.1; *OGIS* 143), he would have already been familiar with the Ptolemaic navy, and he may have had some control over the army as well. For instance, Josephus (*AJ* 13.278) indicates that Ptolemy IX sent six-thousand soldiers to Antiochos IX Kyzikenos in Syria, an action that would have repercussions that will be examined in greater detail below. His ability to send soldiers to a fellow monarch demonstrates that he held some authority in military decisions.

While Ptolemy IX was granted parcels of power, Kleopatra strove to emphasize her own personal power, perhaps because she was in such an unusual position: a queen who was jointly ruling the kingdom with her adult son. Traditionally, her son should have been the dominant partner, with her in the secondary, more advisory role. By reversing that arrangement and taking dominant power for herself, Kleopatra III risked upsetting the balance of Ma'at. In an effort to combat the irregularity of their arrangement, she emphasized the devotion of her son by retaining the epithet describing him as Mother-loving, and also

³⁰¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205-206, 280, 287. Hölbl also cites a second example of Ptolemy's religious activity, a visit by Ptolemy alone to Elephantine to make sacrifices to the Great God Nile during an inundation festival.

through his Egyptian Two Ladies name, which included the phrase “his mother makes him to appear on the throne of his father.”³⁰² She also used the mother-loving titular herself, perhaps as a way of referencing the powerful queens that had come before her and held dominant ruling power, including both Kleopatra I and II.³⁰³

Kleopatra III also established several new priestesses for herself, the most ever established for a queen to this point (see Appendix D). By 116/115 BCE, when Kleopatra initiated the joint-rule with her son, she established three additional priestesses in her own name: the *stephanephoros* (garland/diadem-bearer), *phosphoros* (light-bearer), and *hiereia* (priestess), each of the *basilissa* Kleopatra *Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros* (Queen Kleopatra, the mother-loving, savior goddess, mistress of justice, bringer of victory; see, for example, *P.Dem Cairo* 30602, 30603; *P.Dion.* 21).³⁰⁴ Hölbl points out that the new epithets Kleopatra adopted for herself, as mistress of justice and bringer of victory, represented all the ideal characteristics of the *basileus*.³⁰⁵ She must have established these priestesses in support of her dominant position in the joint-rulership; the position usually reserved for the king, but now exercised by a queen. The titles were a way of indicating that she could exercise all the male characteristics of the *basileus*, while ruling as a *basilissa*. Kleopatra III’s various priestesses, just in sheer number, would have also had the effect of elevating her over every preceding royal figure, male and female. They would have correspondingly increased her visibility among both the elite class, who would desire to

³⁰² See note 282, above. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205, n. 123.

³⁰³ Hölbl argues that Kleopatra III suppressed Kleopatra II, whom he calls “the great adversary of her daughter,” from the dating protocols because of their rivalry. I would counter that because Kleopatra III took on her mother’s title, Kleopatra II was very present in the protocol, even if in a more honorary association. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 287.

³⁰⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205, 287; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra III.” The three cults are last attested to in 105/104 in *P.Köln* 2.81, when Kleopatra III took the position of eponymous priest herself.

³⁰⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 287-288.

attain new high-ranking priestly positions, and the people of Alexandria, who would worship her in her various guises of divinity.

Kleopatra III's rule with Ptolemy IX (116-107 BCE) seems to have been a peaceful one, lasting about nine years. During this time, Ptolemy was married to his sister, Kleopatra Selene I, but she was relegated to the position of *basilissa*-consort, much like the earliest queens of the dynasty, Berenike I and Arsinoë I, who had little influence or power and were not mentioned in the dating protocols.³⁰⁶ While Kleopatra Selene was occasionally called “Kleopatra, the sister” in dedicatory inscriptions (see, for example, *OGIS* 168, *SEG* IX.5), only Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX were included in the dating protocols as monarchs. Accordingly, the protocols demonstrate that the state was headed by a mother-son co-rulership, rather than a mother, son, daughter-wife triad.³⁰⁷ By 107 BCE, however, the literary sources (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.1; Paus. 1.9.2) report that Kleopatra III removed her oldest son from power, by inciting the Alexandrians against him, so that she could instead place his younger brother on the throne with her.³⁰⁸ The papyri evidence corroborates the basic events outlined in the literary sources: the last papyrus mentioning the joint-rule of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX is *BGU* 3.996, dated to 107 BCE, and the first listing Kleopatra III and Ptolemy X is *P.Grenf.* 2.23a, also dated to 107 BCE.

³⁰⁶ Prior to becoming king, Ptolemy IX was married to his other sister, Kleopatra IV, but Kleopatra III forced him to divorce her before his ascension. Both Ptolemy IX's wives, Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene I, are subsequently covered in greater detail in Part III, chapters 12.1 and 12.2. His prior marriage to Kleopatra IV would also have consequences for his children, which are covered in greater detail in chapter 11.

³⁰⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 206.

³⁰⁸ Bennett notes that Otto and Bengtson previously argued that papyri evidence indicated Kleopatra III had also tried to overthrow her eldest son in favor of her younger son in both 110/109 (evidenced, they argue, by *P.Rein* 22 = *P. Dion.* 18) and 109/108 (*P.Adler* 5), but that theory has been refuted by Boswinkel and Pestman. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra III.” This debate is mentioned by Whitehorne and Hazzard as well. Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 136; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 140.

The exact reasons for this sudden change, after nine peaceful years of ruling together, are unclear, but it is usually attributed to Kleopatra's lust for power.³⁰⁹ By this point, Ptolemy IX was thirty-five years old, and, perhaps, desirous of ruling the kingdom on his own after almost a decade as junior co-ruler. If he strove to act against his mother, she may have removed him in favor of her younger son, who was also in his early thirties, but may have been more tractable due to his desire to be king of Egypt, even if as co-ruler.³¹⁰ Unfortunately, the governing documents of the period shed little light on any conflict within the royal family, so that leaves the literary sources as the only avenue for learning about why this change in regime occurred. As previously highlighted, however, the literary sources are fraught with stereotypes and *topoi* that must be acknowledged when they are used as the sole source of information for a period.³¹¹ Thus, before moving on to Kleopatra III's period of reign with her younger son, it is important to analyze briefly what the sources have to say about the queen and what biases might be present within their interpretations of her life.

The two main surviving sources on this period are Pausanias and Justin. Both were writers who lived under the Roman Empire in the second century CE, well after the events they describe. Pausanias is matter-of-fact in his descriptions of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, and he simply states that Ptolemy's epithet, Philometor, was ironic, since no other king was "so hated by his mother" (1.9.1). Justin, on the other hand, described the situation with his usual dramatic flair. In summing up Kleopatra III's life and death he wrote that she "well deserved so infamous an end, since she had driven her mother from the bed of her father, had

³⁰⁹ See, for example, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 207-208; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 136.

³¹⁰ If Ptolemy IX was born in c. 142 BCE, he would have been about twenty-six years old at his father's death. Ptolemy X, if he was born in 140/139 BCE, would have been around twenty-four to twenty-three. See notes 269, 286 above, on the birthdates of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III's children.

³¹¹ On the stereotypes, see notes 218, 230, 295 above.

made her two daughters widows by alternate marriages with their brothers, had made war upon one of her sons after sending him into exile, and plotted against the life of the other after depriving him of his throne” (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.6). In this summary, Kleopatra III is presented as a disrespectful daughter, a conniving wife, and an abusive mother. Bartels, however, places this description in context: Kleopatra was the antithesis of a good Roman woman. In the Roman view, she took power for herself that should have been given to her son, she meddled in affairs, such as the marriage of her children, that, according to Roman sensibilities, should have been handled by the male head of the household, and she allegedly inspired rivalry between her two sons over the position as her co-ruler.³¹² The concept that a mother would rule as the dominant partner to her adult sons would have been unthinkable to a Roman author, who thusly depicted her negatively as a transgressor.

The only contradictory account to Justin is by Porphyry (third century CE), which was preserved by Eusebius (fourth century CE), and it indicates that “in the tenth year of [Ptolemy IX’s] reign he murdered his parents’ friends, and was deposed by his mother because of his cruelty, and fled to Cyprus” (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.163-164, ed. Schoene). In this account, it is Ptolemy’s murderous actions that occasioned his exile. Unfortunately, there is currently no known evidence to corroborate his murdering of any of his “parents’ friends,” so this account is generally disregarded and omitted, since it is from a later period than the other two sources and only fragmentarily preserved.³¹³ Porphyry’s account, however, provides a second tradition of events here that deserves more attention. Justin, as a confirmed sensationalist writer, should not be the used as the *de facto* authority on this period

³¹² Bartels, “The King’s Daughters: Justin’s Story,” 76-77.

³¹³ I do hope, at some point, that a future scholar might undertake a prosopographical study to see if there is any merit to this claim.

just because he was writing earlier, especially since Porphyry provides a more impartial reason for why Kleopatra would have suddenly deposed her son. Whereas Justin strives to fit Kleopatra into a mold that would have generated a reaction among his audience, Porphyry provides a matter-of-fact statement that seems more logical.

Due to the reliance on Justin as a source for Kleopatra's reign, however, this concept of her as the power-hungry and controlling mother continued into the early modern literature, similarly to the previous concepts of sibling and mother-daughter rivalry between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II and III. Mahaffy, for example, repeated both Pausanias and Justin almost verbatim. He commented that Kleopatra's dislike of Ptolemy was "notorious," and he titled the header of the section describing Kleopatra's III co-rulership with her first son as the "Machinations of Cleopatra III."³¹⁴ Bouché-Leclercq similarly referenced Pausanias in noting Kleopatra's possible aversion to her son, but he later described their rule as one of cooperation, noting that "la reine mère s'habitua sans doute à supporter son fils aîné, et celui-ci paraît lui avoir rendu la tâche facile par sa déférence."³¹⁵ Macurdy began her section on the queen by defending her against some of Mahaffy's comments, indicating his judgement of Kleopatra as "daring and unscrupulous" was unjust, and she even rebukes him for defending Ptolemy VIII's early grooming of the girl.³¹⁶ Nevertheless, she then falls into the same repetition of the ancient sources, almost echoing some of the points made by Mahaffy, with statements like "Cleopatra III had spread war and ruin among her children," and "she has the reputation of being a worse woman than the earlier Cleopatras, chiefly because she was a meddling despot."³¹⁷ Bevan seems to be the most even handed of the early historians. His

³¹⁴ Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 211-212;

³¹⁵ Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.90, 92.

³¹⁶ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 162.

³¹⁷ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 165, 169-170.

description of the events assuredly relies on Justin for the details, but he seems to utilize the ancient sources only for a basic outline, leaving out moral judgements.³¹⁸ It is Mahaffy and Macurdy, rather than Bevan, that more recent historians seem to follow, unfortunately, and they regularly characterize Kleopatra III as a power-hungry, meddlesome female who overstepped her role, much to the detriment of her children.³¹⁹

Of the modern historians, Hazzard proposes the only somewhat convincing reason for the break between mother and eldest son. He identifies two pieces of evidence that could indicate tension between Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX. The first is an inscription from Kyrene (*SEG* 9.5), which is addressed to “King Ptolemy and queen Kleopatra, his sister,” and seems to leave Kleopatra III out completely. Hazzard posits that, since the king’s name and title appear before the queen’s, this would have caused issues as he was placed in the dominant role.³²⁰ His argument for this piece of evidence is flawed, however. If this inscription did cause tension, it would have been because Kleopatra III was left out completely, not because Ptolemy IX’s name was placed before that of his wife, Kleopatra Selene, who was more of a *basilissa*-consort anyway. Additionally, since this inscription was produced by the priests at Kyrene, the omission of Kleopatra III and the placement of Ptolemy in the dominant role was likely a scribal error, rather than a concerted effort by Ptolemy to undermine Kleopatra. While it could have angered the queen, that anger would have been directed towards the Kyrenaian priests, not necessarily exclusively at her son.

The second piece of evidence Hazzard cites is a passage by Josephus in which the ancient author described that Ptolemy IX sent six-thousand troops to Antiochos IX

³¹⁸ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*,

³¹⁹ See, for example, note 309, above.

³²⁰ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 140-141. See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288.

Kyzikenos “without his mother's consent, who had then in a manner turned him out of his government” (*AJ* 13.278). This, in my view, is the most convincing piece of evidence for why Kleopatra III would have replaced her eldest son with the younger, not necessarily because Ptolemy IX sent the troops without her permission and “enraged” her, as Hazzard indicates, but instead because he sent the troops to the wrong contender.³²¹ Ptolemy, who had the authority to direct troop movements, since he had been given some oversight of the military by Kleopatra, sent the soldiers to Antiochos Kyzikenos, when, by previous actions, the Ptolemies backed Antiochos Grypos in the Seleukid civil war.³²²

Antiochos Grypos was the chosen son of Kleopatra Thea; he had been married to Tryphaina by Ptolemy VIII (*Justin Epit.* 39.2.3), and later Kleopatra III would also marry another daughter, Kleopatra Selene, to him (*Justin Epit.* 39.4.4; see below). Kyzikenos, on the other hand, was the son of Kleopatra Thea from her third marriage, and he married Kleopatra IV, the daughter of Kleopatra III, without her mother’s permission after she fled Egypt following her forced divorce from Ptolemy IX (*Justin Epit.* 39.3.3-4; see also, Appendix B).³²³ Thus, if Ptolemy IX was attempting to communicate or deal with Antiochos Kyzikenos, a *persona non grata*, this could have angered Kleopatra III enough to remove him from the throne as her co-ruler, especially if she thought Ptolemy was somehow plotting behind her back with the Seleukid would-be-king. This could also be where Porphyry’s account of the events fits in, since Ptolemy IX could have killed partisans of the queen in

³²¹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 141.

³²² For the first mention of Ptolemaic intervention in the Seleukid civil war, see pg. 317, above.

³²³ For more in-depth information on Tryphaina, Kleopatra IV, and Kleopatra Selene, see chapter 12. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 206-207, 208; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra Thea,” “Tryphaena,” “Cleopatra IV,” “Cleopatra Selene”. Dumitru even suggests that Ptolemy IX may have sent the troops partially as a gift to his former wife, Kleopatra IV, who was now married to Kyzikenos and who he had been in love with when his mother forced their divorce. Their love is told of by Justin (*Epit.* 39.3.2), so it must, of course, be considered skeptically. It does seem uncoincidental, however, that Ptolemy IX sided with the contender to whom his former wife fled. Dumitru, “Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side,” 257, 259.

attempting to deal with Antiochos Kyzikenos or in retaliation for his mother's anger at his sending the soldiers.

Whatever really happened between Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, it is clear that by 107 BCE he fled Alexandria, and Ptolemy X was placed on the throne and in the dating protocol as the new junior co-ruler to Kleopatra III (*P.Grenf.* 2.23a). Similarly to Ptolemy IX, Kleopatra's actions in elevating her younger son to the throne were attested to in his Horus name: "Godlike in his mother's love, who is associated with the living Apis upon his birthbrick, the perfect youth, pleasant in his popularity, who his mother placed upon the throne of his father..."³²⁴ Hölbl notes that this was a "revolutionary step," for a woman to banish one son and elevate the other in his place.³²⁵ While her managing of her children in this way was definitely an unprecedented action in the Ptolemaic dynasty, her wielding of authoritative power was not unexpected when considered alongside the prior exercises of power by the women of the previous several decades, such as: Kleopatra I's regency over her young son, Ptolemy VIII's reign being predicated on his marriage to Kleopatra II, Kleopatra II's period of sole-rule, and Kleopatra III being granted dominant ruling power by Ptolemy VIII at his death. Furthermore, in order to emphasize her sustained power as lead co-ruler, Kleopatra continued to date her own rule from the beginning of her co-rulership with Ptolemy IX in 116 BCE (making 107 BCE her Year 11 in the dating protocol), and, alongside her year count, Ptolemy X's first year as co-ruler of Egypt was written as his Year 8, thus including his years as king of Cyprus (See Appendix A).³²⁶

³²⁴ See note 282, above. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy X"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 207.

³²⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 207.

³²⁶ See, for example, *PSI IX 1022*, which is headed: "In the reign of Kleopatra and King Ptolemy her son, surnamed Alexander, the Mother-Loving Savior Gods, year 11 which is also 8, Pharmouthi 21..."

Ptolemy X was also inducted into the dynastic cult at the time of his ascension, and the same epithet used for his mother and brother was retained, the *Theoi Philometores Soteres* (see Appendix D). This provided the new junior co-ruler with the same epiklesis that recalled the powerful women of the dynasty and referenced his own idealized devotion to his mother. Also, analogously to his brother, Ptolemy X was appointed by Kleopatra in 107-105 BCE as the eponymous priest of Alexander.³²⁷ This may have been done for the same reason Ptolemy IX was selected as Alexander Priest, to provide him with royal duties as the second highest-ranking person in the kingdom. Nonetheless, all the actions Kleopatra III undertook in 107 BCE also strove to demonstrate that she was the superlative power in this new relationship. Her name was listed before her son's in the dating protocol, her year count was longer than his, and he was added into her epithet as a mother-loving god.

Finally, she created a fifth and final priesthood dedicated to herself, the “priest during the lifetime (ἱερεὺς διὰ βίου) of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor” (see Appendix D).³²⁸ This priesthood, similarly to the earlier *hieropolos*, was conducted by a male priest and evoked her personal divinity by connecting her to Aphrodite. All of these actions, as with those she undertook when she appointed her elder son as her co-ruler, seem to strive to reinforce her own assumption of traditionally male powers and to suppress any issues this may have caused with the Ma'at of the kingdom. Just as her earlier established priesthoods referenced the ideal characteristics of the *basileus*, so too did this new priesthood that was dedicated to the reigning monarch.³²⁹ In the cultic listings of eponymous priesthoods, the

³²⁷ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy X”; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 208.

³²⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288. When this priesthood was created it was done so in honor of Kleopatra III as Aphrodite, but afterwards was adapted to the current ruling monarch, since it was the “priest during the lifetime of the [current monarch].” See *OGIS* 172, for an example of the priest during the lifetime of Ptolemy IX.

³²⁹ See note 305, above.

hiereos dia bios further elevated Kleopatra III over the preceding royal figures, including her own previously established priesthoods, since this new office was placed directly after that of the priest of Alexander (see Appendix D).

In addition to religious duties, Kleopatra may have also granted Ptolemy X some oversight of the military. Rather than granting him control of the entire military, as she may have done for Ptolemy IX, Ptolemy X, it seems, was only given purview of the navy. This was an assignment that would have been a logical choice for Kleopatra, since her younger son had served for so many years as the King of Cyprus (114/113-107 BCE), where the Ptolemaic navy was based. Ptolemy X may have already been established as a leader of the Ptolemaic fleet. Bennett observes, for instance, that Helenos, the *strategos* of Cyprus for the period of 116-106 BCE, was not correspondingly named *nauarchos* in several documents, as the *stratego*i of the island usually were.³³⁰ This title may be missing for Helenos if Ptolemy X had assumed naval control himself, a duty which could have then carried over into his tenure as junior co-ruler of Egypt in 107 BCE. Kleopatra then retained command of the land army herself, which would result in additional prestige for her as dominant co-ruler. Furthermore, that Kleopatra retained command of the land army and only gave Ptolemy X authority over the navy, may be another indication that the removal of the elder son as co-ruler was somehow entwined with the issue of the six-thousand soldiers (Joseph. *AJ* 13.278).

Both Kleopatra's and Ptolemy X's military leadership are attested by 103 BCE. At this time, the Seleukids were not only embroiled in a civil war between two brothers, Antiochos VIII Grypos and Antiochos IX Kyzikenos, but they were also at war with the Hasmonaean Jewish kingdom (103-101 BCE), which by 104/103 BCE was led by Alexander

³³⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX." It seems he was only called *nauarchos* in one document, *P.Ashm.* 1.22 = *P.Brussels* E.7155. On Helenos, see pgs. 350-351, below.

Iannaios (Joseph. *AJ* 13.324-364).³³¹ Ptolemy IX, as king of Cyprus, engaged and defeated Alexander Iannaios in 103 BCE, but Ptolemy's plundering of territories in Phoenicia was seen as a threat to Egypt by Kleopatra III. Subsequently, she sent Ptolemy X at the head of the Ptolemaic fleet to Phoenicia, and she led the land forces north to Ptolemais where she besieged the city in late 103 BCE (Joseph. *AJ* 13.348-351).³³² Kleopatra III successfully sieged the city of Ptolemais, and Ptolemy IX was able to defeat the retreating army of his brother at Pelusium, after which Ptolemy IX returned to Cyprus and Alexander Iannaios agreed to a treaty with Kleopatra III (Joseph. *AJ* 13.352-355).³³³

Allowing Ptolemy X to lead the Ptolemaic fleet would have provided him with some responsibility in the defense of the kingdom, a traditionally pharaonic role, and her own leadership of troops associated Kleopatra with the greatest queens of the Diadochic and Ptolemaic periods, who had also led armies.³³⁴ In this way, Ptolemy was given some authority, and Kleopatra, in retaining control of the land forces, could earn her own military prestige. Nevertheless, if Ptolemy IX had previously been given oversight of the entire military, Ptolemy X's control of only the navy, half of the Ptolemaic military, may have seemed like an obvious placation to an otherwise powerless co-ruler.

Subsequently, just as Kleopatra's older son had become dissatisfied with his position as junior co-ruler, so too did Ptolemy X grow frustrated with his subordinate role. After their return from Syria, Kleopatra III was murdered by her son in 101 BCE. Similarly to the previous situation, the details of why he and his mother broke are unclear. The ancient

³³¹ For an overview of the strife in Syria, see Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 267-278.

³³² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 209.

³³³ Hölbl notes that, while this was an excellent opportunity to make Judaea a Ptolemaic territory, Kleopatra did not do so since Judaea had become a Roman ally in 161 BCE. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 209; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 140.

³³⁴ See, for example, Part I, chapter 1.2, on the women of the Diadochic period, such as Olympias and Adea Eurydike, and Part II, chapter 7, on Arsinoë III.

sources indicate that Ptolemy X was upset at Kleopatra's cruelty to and treatment of Ptolemy IX during the engagements in Syria, and that Ptolemy X on his return to Alexandria after the strife put her to death because she was plotting his own demise (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.3-5; Paus. 1.9.3; Athen. 12.550A). This characterization, however, fits well with the aforementioned *topos* of Kleopatra III as the antithesis to the proper woman and mother, so it must be taken with a grain of salt.³³⁵

Unfortunately, the reliance on Justin's description has, here again, led historians to blame her conflict with her second son and her subsequent murder on her domineering personality, with some almost hinting that these perceived personality flaws were justification for her murder by a long-suffering son. Overall, attributing the strife between mother and younger son to Kleopatra's treatment of her older son seems a bit too simplistic. Since Ptolemy X led the naval fleet that defeated his brother, Ptolemy X was just as responsible for Ptolemy IX's defeat as his mother. Rather than their conflict arising from her being a generic 'bad mother,' as the sources would frame the situation, it could have derived from the building up of resentment within Ptolemy X from many slights Kleopatra perpetrated against him over the course of their co-rulership, making the concept of her domineering personality correct in this instance, but for different reasons than the literary sources might indicate.

Here it is helpful to briefly elucidate some of these slights. First, Kleopatra had previously allowed both Ptolemy IX and X to hold the position of priest of Alexander. In 105/104 BCE she took the position for herself (*P.Koeln* 2.81); she was the only woman to ever act as an eponymous priest.³³⁶ This would have elevated Kleopatra's personal power to

³³⁵ See note 311, above.

³³⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 208, 287; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra III".

the greatest extent thus far, but it would have done so at the expense of her son, stripping from him his main avenue to royal prerogative and power. Without his position as priest of Alexander, Ptolemy was co-ruler in name and title only.

Furthermore, losing his religious duties would have made any military endeavors of even greater significance. Whitehorne, for example, proposes that after the siege of Ptolemais, Ptolemy headed to Damascus to engage in additional military actions, but, before he arrived, he was forced to turn around and defend the Egyptian frontier at Pelusium.³³⁷ While that defense earned him a victory against his brother, it negated an even greater possible victory against the divided Seleukids, a full defeat of the Hasmonaeans, and/or the Ptolemaic reconquest of Koile-Syria. Whitehorne convincingly suggests that Ptolemy X would have seen his mother's quick treaty with Alexander Iannaios and the reluctance to capture Judea as another slight to his own ambitions.³³⁸ Further insult could have been added to this grievance when Kleopatra III forced Ptolemy to divorce his wife, Kleopatra Selene I, in order to send her as an alliance bride to Antiochos Grypos (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.4) around the same time that she required Ptolemy X to turn from his march on Damascus.³³⁹

Although he was forced to turn from possible greater victories, Ptolemy X had been the commanding strength behind the defeat of his brother and the protection of Egypt; he may have seen that as an opportunity to take on more ruling activity after gaining some favor in his military capacity. His mother, having led troops in the siege of Ptolemais, however, took credit for the overall victory herself, and she would have also been seen as the driving

³³⁷ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 140-141. That Ptolemy "left for Damascus" is evidenced in a papyrus, which Dumitru identifies as *P. Heid. Dem.* 142B + 781 + unnumbered fragment. Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 257, n. 23.

³³⁸ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 144.

³³⁹ Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 257, n. 24.

force behind the peace with the Jewish kingdom and Rome (Joseph. *AJ* 13.352-355). Subsequently, if it seemed to Kleopatra that Ptolemy was striving to attain more power, especially by currying military favor, she may have been plotting his removal or death, and he, after all these slights, may have also been plotting hers in return. Ptolemy was the successful plotter, and Kleopatra's death is confirmed by the papyri evidence. The last papyrus, *P.Adler* 11, which includes her in the dating protocol is dated to October 101 BCE, Year 17 of her rule.³⁴⁰

All of this evidence presented regarding her relationships with her sons indicates that Kleopatra III was, in fact, an authoritative mother and queen. She likely broke with both of her sons over military issues and her own desire to hold on to power. This concept, then, of her “domineering personality” and “power-hungriness” raises two final points regarding her rulership with and treatment of her children. First, why is her domineeringness characterized negatively? Obviously, one reason is because of how the ancient literary sources framed her. As explained above, she did not fit with the Roman ideals of womanhood, so those sources could only characterize her according to the norms of their day.

Similarly, the historians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were interpreting the ancient evidence with their own cultural norms in mind, during a period where women were still restricted from holding most major positions of public authority, although some headway had been made. The attitudes and moral judgements of the ancients and early moderns have carried into more modern historians' writings, but why do we continue to see her in this negative light when our cultural norms have drastically changed? Ptolemy VIII, for example, was just as power-hungry and made many more detrimental

³⁴⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra III”.

decisions regarding his children in order to hold on to power, including murdering several of them, but he is not characterized as a bad father. If Kleopatra III were a man, her desire to rule, her managing of her children, and the measures she took to hold on to power would not be looked at askance. But, because she was a woman, she is seen as withholding rightful power from her sons, rather than wielding her own rightfully inherited power, power that was willed to her by her husband, that would then pass to her sons at her natural death.

While some recent historians have identified Kleopatra III's important standing within the dynasty as one of the most active queens, her activity is usually couched in terms of negativity, that she gained and held her power in an underhanded way. Modern historians, however, should recognize historical biases and not simply repeat the double standards of the ancient and early modern sources. Rather than being characterized as an overly ambitious and heavy-handed queen, Kleopatra III should be lauded as one of the most effective and longest-ruling queens of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

These considerations then lead to the second question: if Kleopatra III obviously wanted to hold autocratic power on her own, why did she deign to co-rule with her sons in the first place? Her decision must lie in the legacy of her mother and the greatest lesson she learned from her. Kleopatra II tried to rule without a man by her side, and she could not hold on to power because tradition and the Ma'at of the kingdom required a king and queen on the throne together. Just as the king was restricted by the belief in Ma'at, so too was the queen, no matter how powerful. Thus, Kleopatra III could rule as the dominant partner, but she had to keep her sons as co-rulers to uphold the Ma'at of the kingdom and to reassure the elites of the court that she was doing her pharaonic duty. This is an aspect that the succeeding kings and queens would also emulate. For instance, as will be shown in the next chapter, when

Ptolemy IX returned to the throne, his daughter Berenike III was needed to participate in religious ceremonies as his co-ruler, even though she was not included in the dating protocol as his official co-ruler until the last year of his reign. Similarly, Kleopatra VII was always, officially, co-ruler with either a brother-husband or, eventually, her son by Caesar, but her co-rulerships were for appearance's sake, since she was the true power on the throne.

Kleopatra VII is considered such a *basilissa*-regnant that it is often omitted that she did co-rule during the entirety of her reign.

10.3 Kleopatra III's *philo*i, masculine imagery, and religious associations

Before continuing with the more historical narrative of Ptolemy X and Berenike III in the next chapter, some important aspects of Kleopatra III's reign must be briefly addressed. In order to demonstrate what an effective queen she was, this chapter will finish by briefly exploring her creation and utilization of a support network, her use of masculine imagery, and her religious associations and depictions. The examination of these facets will demonstrate that she utilized the traditions of queenship that she inherited from her predecessors, while also building on them further to fit the unique features of her own reign as a queen who ruled as a king.

Just as her mother and grandmother had, Kleopatra III cultivated a network of partisans, many of whom had also served her mother. Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VI had permitted a group of Jews led by Onias IV to settle in Egypt. Onias' sons, Chelkias and Ananias, held high-ranking military positions under Kleopatra III (Joseph. *AJ* 13.348).³⁴¹ They were responsible for leading portions of the army during the siege of Ptolemais, which was a great victory for Kleopatra and Egypt, and they also acted as advisors to the queen. For

³⁴¹ On Onias see pg. 287 and note 178, above. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 190, 209.

example, Josephus writes that after Ptolemais had been successfully besieged, some of the queens *philoï* advised her to conquer the area in order to retake Koile-Syria, but it was Ananias who warned her of the repercussions such an action would instigate (*AJ* 13.352-355).³⁴² These two men were of great importance to the queen, not only for their military expertise and protection, but also as representatives of and to the Jewish communities in Egypt. Whitehorne even indicates that Ptolemy X may have succeeded in having his mother murdered because Chelkias had died during the Syrian campaign (*Joseph. AJ* 13.351), leaving Kleopatra bereft of one of her two main military supporters and allowing him to perhaps capitalize on his own popularity within the army.³⁴³ The excerpt from Josephus describing her heeding advice from Ananias, however, also exposes that she had additional military advisors, some of whom were native Egyptians. For instance, a granodiorite statue from Karnak by the Egyptian general Petimuthes recounts the role he played in Ptolemais' siege as well.³⁴⁴ Perhaps he was one of the *philoï* Josephus mentions that encouraged Kleopatra to retake Koile-Syria.

In addition to military men, Kleopatra III also continued to utilize the bureaucratic *philoï* her mother had cultivated. A papyrus from 105/104 BCE attests that Theodoros, son of Seleukos, who had served as governor and *nauarchos* of Cyprus under her mother, served as the *hiereos dia bios* of the queen Kleopatra (ἱερέως διὰ βίου βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς Εὐεργέτιδος τῆς καὶ Φιλομήτορος Δικαιοσύνης Νικηφόρου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Σελεύκου, “Theodoros, son of Seleukos, priest during the lifetime of the queen Kleopatra, the Thea

³⁴² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 209. See also, note 333, above, on Kleopatra's reasons for not conquering Judaea.

³⁴³ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 145.

³⁴⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 209, n. 150. This statue is currently held in Turin at the Museo Egizio, Cat. 3062.

Euergetis and Philometor Dikaiosyne Nikephoros,” *P.Koeln* 2.81).³⁴⁵ The same year, his son, Demetrios served as Kleopatra’s *hieropolos* (ἱεροῦ πάλου Ἰσιδος μητρὸς θεῶν μεγάλης Δημητρίου τοῦ Θεοδώρου, “Demetrios, son of Theodoros, the hieropolos of Isis, the great one, mother of the gods,” *P.Koeln* 2.81), and Olympias, who was Seleukos’ daughter, Theodoros’ sister, and Demetrios’ aunt, served as the priestess of Arsinoë Philopator (ἱερείας Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπάτορος Ὀλυμπιάδος τῆς Σελεύκου, “Olympias, daughter of Seleukos, priestess of Arsinoë Philopator,” *P.Koeln* 2.81) This was the same year Kleopatra took the position of priest of Alexander for herself, so it was important that she have her own courtiers in the subordinate priestly positions in order to support her holding of a traditionally male priesthood.³⁴⁶

Kleopatra may have even shared some *philoï* with her sons. The successor of Theodoros, Helenos, son of Apollonios, was the *strategos* of Cyprus in 117 BCE, and when Ptolemy IX was appointed as the new *strategos*, prior to the death of his father (Paus. 1.9.1; *OGIS* 143), Helenos became the *tropeus* (“caretaker,” or “tutor”).³⁴⁷ As the second-in-command to her eldest son, Helenos was a connection Kleopatra would have cultivated in order to oversee Ptolemy IX’s actions in Cyprus. Helenos was then reappointed as *strategos* for the period of 116-106 BCE, including serving under Ptolemy X while he was King of Cyprus (114/113-107; see Appendix A).³⁴⁸ Here again, he would have been a good contact for Kleopatra to use for regular information about her younger son. Helenos also served as

³⁴⁵ On Seleukos and Theodoros, see pgs. 288-289 and notes 178, 281, above

³⁴⁶ On Kleopatra III as the Priest of Alexander, see note 336, above.

³⁴⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy IX.” Hölbl indicates that Helenos acted as the second in command, the “caretaker,” to Ptolemy IX, but Bennett outlines the arguments for whether the statue bases that provide Helenos that title indicate he was the “tutor” to Ptolemy IX or X. Bennett also overviews the debate concerning whether Helenos succeeded Theodoros as *strategos* or if Ptolemy IX succeeded Theodoros and Helenos became *strategos* only in 116.

³⁴⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 205.

the first *hiereos* (*dia bios*) of the queen when the position was initially established in 107 BCE (ιερέως βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας Θεᾶς Ἀφροδίτης τῆς καὶ Φιλομήτορος Ἑλένου τοῦ Ἀπολλωνίου, “Helenos, son of Apollonios, priest of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor,” *P.Ashm.* 1.22 = *P.Brussels* E.7155).³⁴⁹ This indicates he must have been a person Kleopatra trusted, since she was attempting to buffer her own claims of traditionally male power by establishing her various priesthoods and staffing them with those loyal to her.

Kleopatra used her *philo*i to great effect to ensure the smooth operations of her kingdom, but she must have also been aware that she was in an unusual position as a queen who held and wielded power like a king. Accordingly, in order to emphasize her legitimacy and right to wield that power, the sculptural imagery of the queen was often produced with masculinized features. This is similar to what Hatshepsut did during her reign so many centuries earlier. Hatshepsut used kingly iconography, most notably during her later period of rulership by depicting herself as a male, to bolster her own power and support her legitimacy as ruler.³⁵⁰ It is uncertain whether Kleopatra III was following in the footsteps of Hatshepsut intentionally or if she and her advisors came to a similar, unique decision to masculinize her sculptural imagery. Either way, the use of masculine imagery must have been done with a similar purpose of bolstering her position as a dominantly ruling queen. There are only two examples of Kleopatra III’s masculinized sculpture that have survived into the modern era. Similarly again to Hatshepsut, much of whose sculpture was destroyed after her death, such a small number of this type of sculpture survive for Kleopatra III because she was ultimately succeeded by her son who might have wanted to remove reminders of the traditionally male

³⁴⁹ The cited papyri also lists him as *strategos*, high priest (ἀρχιερέως), and *nauarchos* of Cyprus. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy X.”

³⁵⁰ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 46.

powers his mother had exercised. The two busts are still significant to the understanding of this queen, however.

The first sculpture is a marble bust of Kleopatra III, now held in the Louvre Museum (see Fig. 6).³⁵¹ The sculpture is masculinizing, with a stern expression on the queen’s face and a dynamic pose, as the queen’s head turns sharply upwards on her neck; the bust was originally carved to be inserted into a statue.³⁵² The action and indicated movement of the head positioning is noteworthy, since it was meant to be inserted into a statue body that would have been in a correspondingly dynamic pose, as action poses were often reserved for male figures, and queens



Fig. 6. Masculinizing Bust of Kleopatra III. Paris, Musee du Louvre Ma 3532. Photo by the author.

were traditionally depicted in more reserved or stationary positions. Ashton argues that the masculine imagery of the sculpture reflects the growing power of the first three Kleopatras: “as there was no iconography available at this time for expressing a queen’s political power, the royal women adopted male physical characteristics, often of their consort, in order to

³⁵¹ There has been some argument over which Kleopatra this sculpture is depicting. For instance, Cheshire identifies it as Kleopatra I, Kyrieleis attributed it to one of the first three Kleopatras, but Ashton confidently attributes it to Kleopatra III. They all agree, however, that whomever this sculpture depicts, it assuredly reflects the growing power of the queens of this period. I am following Ashton in identifying this statue as Kleopatra III. Cheshire, “Cleopatra ‘the Syrian’ and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda,” 373; Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer*, 120-121; Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 92; Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 59, cat. no. 25.

³⁵² Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 59, cat. no. 25.

promote their status.”³⁵³ As mentioned above and similarly to Hatshepsut, Kleopatra needed a way to express her authority in a traditionally male position, so she had to take on traditionally male attributes in her depictions. This must have been done at the behest of the queen or her main advisors because this sculpture was produced in a major royal workshop.³⁵⁴

Pomeroy also notes that the growing power of the Kleopatras is demonstrated by additional iconographic changes, such as the transition from queens being depicted wearing a *stephane* (“crown”) and veil, both traditionally associated with Aphrodite, to the *tainia* (“headband”) or diadem, a traditionally kingly headpiece.³⁵⁵ Earlier queens of the dynasty, including Arsinoë II and Berenike II, were often depicted veiled with a melon-bun coiffure, especially on their coins. Arsinoë II was usually depicted wearing a *stephane* on her coins, and Berenike II was the first queen to be depicted with the diadem, although she did retain the veil. As described in chapter 8, however, Kleopatra I initiated the stylistic move away from the melon-bun hairstyle to the face-framing, cork-screw curls, which corresponded to a religious de-emphasizing of Aphrodite and a new prominence for queenly assimilation to Isis.³⁵⁶ That emphasis would reach its height under Kleopatra III, who was directly assimilated to Isis through her *hieropolos* of “Isis, the great one, mother of the gods” (ἱερός πῶλος Ἰσιδος μητρὸς θεῶν μεγάλης).³⁵⁷ In the Louvre bust, Kleopatra III wears the cork-

³⁵³ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 92. Ashton sees a similarity of this statue to the later coinage of Kleopatra VII, in which she took on the more masculine characteristics of Mark Antony, but also a statue of Kleopatra VII from Cherchel and another from the same site of her daughter, Kleopatra Selene II. See also, Sally-Ann Ashton, “Ptolemaic Royal Sculpture from Egypt: The Greek and Egyptian Traditions and their Interaction,” (Dissertation, King’s College London, 1999), 65, cat. 56.

³⁵⁴ Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 92.

³⁵⁵ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 24.

³⁵⁶ See pgs. 248-249 and note 66, above.

³⁵⁷ See pg. 321 and note 270, above. See also pg. 355 below.

screw hairstyle with diadem, and there is a hole in the top of the head into which, presumably, an additional Isaic crown would have been fitted.³⁵⁸

Another sculpture attributed to Kleopatra III echoes these points. This basalt head from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna depicts a mature woman, wearing a similar cork-screw curls and diademed hair-style as that of the Louvre bust, with deep-set masculine features.³⁵⁹ The basalt bust is also strikingly similar to a sardonyx intaglio in the British Museum (BM GR 1877.8-25.1).³⁶⁰ The hairstyle on both the bust and intaglio denote that this is a royal female connected to Isis, but the masculinized features indicate these are additional artifacts that depict Kleopatra III taking on more kingly imagery. The basalt bust is in an Egyptian style and material, and, when whole, it may have depicted Kleopatra in the frontal, power position of traditional Egyptian official portraiture, again, emphasizing her assumption of traditionally male power.³⁶¹ While the face and position are indicative of masculine power, the hair-style emphasizes her connection to Isis and the feminine role of queenship. Thusly, Kleopatra III was attempting to utilize a combination of traditional iconographic features to bolster her rule. She adopted traditional male attributes, since that was the iconographic language of power, but she also made sure to accentuate her connection to Isis, a traditionally queenly aspect of power.

The importance of Kleopatra III's assimilation to Isis connects to the third and final aspect of her queenship: her religious associations and depictions. Of all the previous

³⁵⁸ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 59; Cheshire, "Cleopatra 'the Syrian' and a Couple of Rebels: Their Images, Iconography, and Propaganda," 373. The crown would have perhaps resembled the one worn in a ring depicting the queen, see note 372, below.

³⁵⁹ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 60, cat. no. 26.

³⁶⁰ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 66, cat. no. 42.

³⁶¹ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 60; Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 139-141, Fig. 25. Minas-Nerpel, after Albersmeier, connect this statue to the period when Kleopatra held the position of Priest of Alexander, another traditionally male position. Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 69.

Ptolemaic queens, Kleopatra III had the most priesthoods established in her name, beginning during her childhood and lasting until her death. When she was still a royal daughter of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, Kleopatra III was granted a priestesshood at Ptolemais, the “priestess of the daughter of the king,” and it was the first eponymous cult established for a daughter of the royal family who was living and not yet queen.³⁶² After her marriage to Ptolemy VIII and her inclusion as one of the *Theoi Euergetai* (II), she was also granted an individual priestesshood at Ptolemais in 141/140 BCE of “Kleopatra, the Wife.” The priestess of her as the daughter of the king was retained, and shortly after her priestess of the wife was duplicated in Upper Egypt, which Hölbl argues was done to enhance her status in comparison to her mother.³⁶³

Around 130 BCE, Kleopatra was deified as Isis, the great one, mother of the gods (Ἰσιδος μητρὸς θεῶν μεγάλης), and this priestesshood was administered by a *hieropolos* (ἱερός πῶλος), the only male priest dedicated to a queenly cult (prior to the establishment of her final priesthood, the *hiereos dia bios*).³⁶⁴ And after her assumption of joint rule with her son, Ptolemy IX, she established three additional priestesshoods, with the final priesthood inaugurated during her reign with her youngest son.³⁶⁵ In total, Kleopatra III had seven priesthoods established in her name: her *hiereia* as a royal daughter, her *hiereia* as wife of Ptolemy VIII, her *hieropolos*, her *stephanephoros*, *phosphoros*, and *hiereia* of basilissa

³⁶² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 192, 285; Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 65. Earlier in the dynasty, both Philotera, the sister of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II, and Berenike Parthenos received priestesshoods as Ptolemaic royal daughters, but they were granted only after their deaths.

³⁶³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 285; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 123-124. See also, Chauveau, “Un été 145,” 159, n. 96.

³⁶⁴ See pgs. 321, 353, above.

³⁶⁵ On the establishment of the *stephanephoros*, *phosphoros*, and *hiereia* of basilissa Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros, see note 304, and on the *hiereos dia bios*, see note 328, above.

Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros, and, finally, her *hiereos dia bios* (see Appendix D).

Through these various priesthoods that were eponymously created for Kleopatra, she was also assimilated to many well-established deities, as was common practice for the queens that came before her. Her most important association was to Isis, which began well before she was assimilated to the goddess via eponymous priesthood during the civil war. Since her marriage to Ptolemy VIII was arranged for the purpose of producing additional royal children, her act of birthing a new heir, the new Horus, would have instinctually associated her with Isis, the wife and mother. In addition to that aspect and since the son she bore shared his birthday with the Apis bull, “she was also the goddess in her manifestation as the ‘Isis cow’, the mother-of-Apis.”³⁶⁶

Her subsequent assimilation to Isis via eponymous cult had several additional important connotations. First, it was administered by a priest, just as the cult of the goddess was, rather than a priestess, as the cults of the previous queens had been. The *hieropolos* became the second (and later third) highest ranking priest in Alexandria, just under the priest of Alexander and the royal cult.³⁶⁷ Second, the omission of Kleopatra’s name from the title of the priest was also significant.³⁶⁸ All of the previous Ptolemies that had been granted eponymous priesthoods had been incorporated with their name, epiklesis, and the title God or Goddess (e.g. Berenike, *Thea Euergetis*, see Appendix D). By leaving out Kleopatra’s personal name and the word goddess, her title “Isis, the great one, mother of the gods,”

³⁶⁶ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 124-125. See pgs. 282-283 on the fertility aspect of the marriage between Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III, and see note 159 on Ptolemy IX birthdate coinciding with that of the Apis bull.

³⁶⁷ The *hieropolos* was the second highest ranking priest in the kingdom until the establishment of Kleopatra’s final eponymous priesthood, the “priest during the lifetime (ἱερεὺς διὰ βίου) of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor.” See notes 364, 365, above. When the *hiereos dia Bios* was established it became the second highest ranking priest, with the *hieropolos* as third, see Appendix D.

³⁶⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 286; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 129.

presented her as a direct incarnation of the goddess, instead of a manifestation of divinity.

This meant that any statue of Isis also depicted Kleopatra III and vice versa, which placed her image everywhere throughout the kingdom in one fell swoop.³⁶⁹ In this way, Kleopatra III could also take on all the assimilations of Isis herself, including her Egyptian connotations as a patron of wives and mothers, as the wife of Osiris and mother to Horus, her associations with Aphrodite as a goddess of love and marriage, and her integration with Demeter as a goddess of fertility.³⁷⁰ Thus, as a goddess incarnate she was elevated above all the preceding queens and kings, who had merely represented manifestations of divinity.

Her additional assimilations are also evidenced in papyri and artifacts. For instance, her final priesthood, the “priest during the lifetime (ἱερεὺς διὰ βίου) of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor” was established for Kleopatra as Aphrodite, which in the demotic sources was transliterated to Hathor.³⁷¹ A gold ring in the British Museum (BM GR 1917.5-1.96), similar to the gold ring attributed to her grandmother (BM GR 1917.5-1.97), also shows an assimilation to Isis and Hathor.³⁷² The ring depicts Kleopatra III with cork-screw curls and the queenly headdress of a solar disc and cow’s horns resting on ears of grain, which would associate her with the Egyptian goddesses Isis and Hathor and with the Greek goddess Demeter. This ring also demonstrates the characteristics mentioned above, where Kleopatra is depicted wearing a diadem and taking on masculine features.³⁷³

In addition to her free-standing depictions, Kleopatra III was also represented in monumental architecture. There was extensive building activity under Ptolemy VIII, so

³⁶⁹ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 68.

³⁷⁰ Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 129.

³⁷¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288.

³⁷² Similarly to the Louvre bust, Cheshire also argues that this ring depicts Kleopatra I, but it is confidently attributed to Kleopatra III. See note 68, above.

³⁷³ Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 67, cat. no. 43.

images of Kleopatra III as ‘the wife’ to Ptolemy VIII are abundant. In this role, she was always placed in the third position, behind her husband and mother, and when offering to the gods she was shown in the traditional queenly stance of offering flowers, holding a sistrum, or with her hands raised in greeting.³⁷⁴

With her sons, however, depictions of the queen are a bit rarer. Although Ptolemy VI and VIII were extensive builders and went to great effort to publicize their lineages in the forms of ancestor lines (hieroglyphic inscriptions listing all the Ptolemaic *synnaoi theoi*), building activity lessened under the subsequent Ptolemies. Few ancestor lines are available from the reign of Ptolemy IX, and none survive for Ptolemy X.³⁷⁵ Hölbl posits that the reduction in building activity and relief, especially in the southern parts of Egypt during the latter Ptolemaic period, can be attributed to the “confused situation in Alexandria.”³⁷⁶ He notes that many of the cartouches included in reliefs of the worship of or rituals to the gods were left blank, allowing priests to symbolically represent the pharaoh in those rituals.³⁷⁷ The blank cartouches could also be an indication of the confusion on the part of the priests for how to depict a queen holding dominant power, however.

In traditional Egyptian cosmology and ritual, the king was the chief priest and communicator with the gods, so, although both Ptolemy IX and X were the junior co-rulers in the arrangement with their mother, on the monumental scale, they were shown in the

³⁷⁴ In the previous chapter, an example of Kleopatra III being depicted as third behind Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II at the Temple of Isis at Philae was cited. See note 208, above. See also at note 206, above, on the traditional stance of the queen in monumental depictions.

³⁷⁵ Minas-Nerpel, “Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power,” 64. On the building activities of Ptolemy IX and X, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 271-279.

³⁷⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 275.

³⁷⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 272, 274, Fig. 9.9, 275. Minas posits that the cartouches are blank because the names were originally painted, rather than carved. Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 144.

traditional pharaonic position of offering alone to the gods. Since Kleopatra III held ruling power in reality, scenes of her, either together with her currently co-ruling son or making an offering alone (see below), were placed in the immediate vicinity of the carvings of her sons as pharaoh. Minas identifies that in some scenes, such as at the Temple of Horus at Edfu, Kleopatra III, who is clearly identified by her royal titulary, is accompanied by a male figure listed with only the proper name Ptolemy, without a specifying throne name.³⁷⁸ In the same temple, she is titled “ruler” (*hk3.t*; see Appendix E) and “mother of the gods” in a scene where she alone shakes sistra before Horus, the newly crowned and victorious incarnation of the pharaoh.³⁷⁹ These scenes thus strive to emphasize her personal power, through title and imagery, and the male pharaoh is only alluded to via the presence of a vaguely titled Ptolemy or Horus. In this way, Kleopatra could include her male counterpart, although she is obviously the authority in the scene. The ambiguity of Ptolemy in these depictions could reflect the fluctuating rulership of Ptolemy IX and X, but it also demonstrates that while Kleopatra III held the dominant power, she acknowledged that she had to retain a male pharaoh next to her. She could not dispense with her sons, who were her essential male counterparts that helped her maintain her legitimacy to rule and the Ma’at of the kingdom.

Her acknowledgement of this constraint on her rulership, however, did not stop her from emphasizing that she held dominant, traditionally male power in her own monumental religious imagery. Kleopatra II had innovated with her monumental depictions by depicting herself alongside and behind her husband making a specific offering to the gods.³⁸⁰ Kleopatra III then built on her mother’s innovation in two significant ways. First, she was depicted

³⁷⁸ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 146-147, Fig. 15; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 272.

³⁷⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 273; Ashton, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, 111.

³⁸⁰ See note 207, above.

standing before her son in their joint depictions so that their monumental imagery reflected the same order as that of the dating protocols in papyri. For instance, Kleopatra III is depicted in the *mammisi* (the birth-house) of the temple of Deir el-Medina, and in the relief Ptolemy IX stands behind Kleopatra III as they offer to the Theban triad of Amun-Re, Mut, and Khonsu. In the scene, Ptolemy makes the offering of Ma'at to the godly triad, while Kleopatra III is depicted holding flowers, a more traditional queenly offering.³⁸¹ Although Kleopatra is placed first, in the dominant position, it seems the offering of Ma'at, which was a traditional demonstration of pharaonic legitimization, was retained as a male prerogative.³⁸² In the accompanying inscription, Ptolemy IX bears the traditional five-part royal titular of the pharaoh, which would normally indicate his position as foremost ruler, but his name and titular, echoing the imagery, is placed after his mother's name and titular. She is named the female Horus (*Hr.t*), similarly to Berenike II and Kleopatra I (see Appendix E).³⁸³ Just as those earlier queens had been granted a Horus name to provide them with a religious status equal to that of their husbands, so now too did Kleopatra III need a title that would identify her as being equal in religious importance to her co-ruling son. This title was all the more important for her, since she was placing herself before her son who bore a five-part royal titular.

Kleopatra III's greatest variation to religious imagery, however, was being depicted offering to the gods alone. While her mother had been depicted offering to the gods alongside

³⁸¹ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 141, Fig. 10. For this scene, see also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 206, n. 133.

³⁸² Minas notes that Kleopatra "remained ultimately subordinate in ideology, even though it was she, who ruled in reality." Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 69. On the offering of Ma'at, see pg. 298, above.

³⁸³ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 142; Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 68.

her husband, making specific offerings alone before the gods had previously been the purview of the male pharaoh during the Ptolemaic period. Arsinoë III may be an exception to this rule (see chapter 7). In three temple scenes in the temple of Arensnuphis, Arsinoë was depicted alone offering to Hathor, but is unclear if she makes a specific offering or offers praise and worship, a traditional queenly act of obeisance.³⁸⁴ Either way, she may have served as a precursor to Kleopatra III's later imagery because at the Temple of Nekhbet at El-Kab, Kleopatra III is depicted on both sides of the main door making an offering to the vulture goddess alone.³⁸⁵ This must have been Kleopatra's way of drawing on kingly iconography to emphasize the pharaonic duties she had assumed, and she, here again, may have been also emulating Hatshepsut, who had been similarly depicted offering to the gods at Karnak.³⁸⁶ The inscription that accompanies the carvings once more designates Kleopatra as the female Horus (*Hr.t*), but with a masculine Horus name ("strong bull").³⁸⁷ In both iconography and title she was assuming kingly prerogatives. In fact, Kleopatra III was shown offering to the gods alone in seven unique scenes, more times than any other queen prior to Kleopatra VII.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁴ On these scenes, see Part II, chapter 7, note 347. As mentioned in that chapter, these scenes need greater analysis to determine what they can tell us about the power Arsinoë wielded, since it is likely that a *damnatio memoriae* was carried out against the queen. See also note 206, above. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 80-81.

³⁸⁵ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 143, Fig. 11; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 275.

³⁸⁶ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 46. See also note 207, above. Hölbl indicates, that similarly to Hatshepsut, Kleopatra III also took the title *Rait* or "Female sun," which connected her to not only the famous queen, but also furthered her connection to Isis and Hathor. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 280.

³⁸⁷ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 143; Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 69; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 280. Hölbl lists Kleopatra's full titulary in this scene as "strong bull, female Horus, lady of the two lands."

³⁸⁸ Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 81.

Even in the scenes where she appeared alone, however, Kleopatra III could not completely subsume her role as queen into that of a king, nor dispense with her co-ruler. For example, in the doorway scenes at El-Kab, Kleopatra is holding *sistra*, rather than a specific offering to Nekhebet. Also, in the accompanying inscription, Ptolemy IX's royal titulary is inscribed after her own, even though he is absent in the carved imagery.³⁸⁹ Ptolemy IX was depicted in this same temple offering to the goddess alone, but whereas he was shown on the entrance gate, Kleopatra was depicted on the main doorway into the sanctuary, the position of greater prominence.³⁹⁰ Kleopatra's depiction with a traditionally queenly gesture and the overt reference to her son in the inscription demonstrate that she could not completely take over the role of king, but her being alone, her being placed first in the inscription, and her more prominent position in proximity to the goddess's sanctuary also validate and emphasize her dominance, even as a queen. Similarly, at Kom Ombo in the Temple of Sobek and Haroeris (Horus), Kleopatra III was shown offering to the gods alone, but in these scenes she holds a specific offering. This scene of the queen is accompanied by a mirrored scene of her son.³⁹¹ Here again, that Kleopatra could make a specific offering to the goddess alone emphasizes the kingly privileges she assumed, but that she was placed in a mirrored scene with her son indicates that they were co-rulers who both, at least iconographically, participated in those kingly duties.

Ultimately, although Kleopatra III was able to take on many kingly prerogatives during her lifetime, she never could fully break through to become a *basilissa*-regnant. The

³⁸⁹ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 143.

³⁹⁰ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 144.

³⁹¹ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 144, Fig. 12, Fig. 13; Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 69, Fig. 7.

association with her son, which she was forced by tradition and her own political acumen to engage in, led to her death when he murdered her in order to make way for his own ruling dominance. Ironically, even though Kleopatra was murdered by a person who was hungry for sole power, Kleopatra III is the one remembered as being power hungry. She is also characterized as the bad wife and bad mother, even though she never murdered anyone in her family, as her step-father/uncle/husband and son both did. It seems she experienced a partial *damnatio memoriae*, not necessarily at the hands of her son, who, for instance, would continue using the *Philometor* (Mother-loving) epithet throughout the period of his second reign (see next chapter), but her *damnatio*, similarly to Kleopatra VII, was carried out by the Roman authors who later wrote about her life and characterized her as a Ptolemaic villain queen. That characterization has carried into the modern period to the detriment of all her achievements.

Accordingly, here, it is necessary to explicitly sum up those achievements that have been stripped from her by millennia of bad press. Kleopatra III reigned as queen of Egypt for thirty-nine years, second in longevity only to her mother, Kleopatra II. During the first period of her reign, Kleopatra III was the third of three co-rulers. She was the person with the least power, whose image was used in dynastic propaganda and whose presence was permitted in the ruling trio for the production of heirs. Yet, she must have used that time to learn from her senior co-rulers and to accumulate her own supporting networks of military personnel and bureaucrats. During the ensuing fifteen years that she reigned as dominant co-ruler, she was an effective queen. She saw to the maintenance of her kingdom, and she even protected it by personally leading troops in battle. She successfully navigated the political climate of her period by knowing when to make war on the surrounding kingdoms but also perceiving when

to stop so as not to incur Roman intervention. Within Egypt itself, she was a master of Ptolemaic policy and propaganda. Instead of attempting to rule alone as a *basilissa*-regnant, flouting centuries of Ptolemaic tradition that required a joint king and queen, she fused both kingly and queenly iconography in order to retain her position as queen, but as a dominant, jointly ruling queen. Finally, while she is normally criticized for the way she dominated and maneuvered her children, Kleopatra III used her children to form successful alliances that protected and supported her dynasty and kingdom, just as the other successful male monarchs of the period did. The real problem with Kleopatra III, it seems, is not that she was a bad queen, but rather that she was an effective king, who also happened to be a woman.

11. The Forgotten *Basilissai*: Kleopatra Berenike III, Kleopatra V Tryphaina, and Berenike IV

Kleopatra III and VII were such monumental figures, that the royal women who came directly after the third Kleopatra and before seventh are often overlooked or neglected. For example, Errington skips almost directly from Kleopatra III to VII, with only a few sentences dedicated to the actions of the intervening queens.³⁹² Hölbl similarly dedicates small paragraphs to both Berenike III and IV, with only a few sentences on Kleopatra V, before moving on to Kleopatra VII.³⁹³ These three queens, however, were key figures as the immediate predecessors of Kleopatra VII, and their lives and actions are in need of deeper analysis. Berenike III and IV specifically must be identified as two figures who were finally able to capitalize on the gains of their predecessors. These Berenikes served as the first two officially recognized *basilissai*-regnants of all of Egypt.

11.1 Kleopatra Berenike III

Kleopatra Berenike III, born c. 115/114 BCE, was the daughter of Ptolemy IX and, according to *OGIS* 174, a Kleopatra. That Kleopatra could have been either Kleopatra IV or, more likely, Kleopatra Selene I (see Appendix B).³⁹⁴ She was called Berenike during her youth, perhaps because of the abundance of Ptolemaic females at the time also named

³⁹² Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World*, 300-305.

³⁹³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 210, 213, 222-223, 227-228.

³⁹⁴ Bennett notes that Kleopatra Berenike must have been the daughter of either of these two women as Pausanias (1.9.3) describes her as the only legitimate child of Ptolemy IX. He argues that her mother was most likely Kleopatra Selene; although, most other recent writers, including Hölbl, cite her mother as Kleopatra IV. Bennett provides a thorough overview in his third note of the debate concerning which of the two women might be her mother, which I will not repeat in its entirety here. Nonetheless, I will note that I find Bennett's argument for Kleopatra Selene the most convincing. He posits that Pausanias' claim makes the most sense if her mother was Kleopatra Selene because Kleopatra IV was Ptolemy's wife before his ascension to the throne and was subsequently divorced, while Kleopatra Selene became his wife when he was co-pharaoh of Egypt. This issue will be examined in greater detail in correlation to all of Ptolemy IX's children, Berenike III, Ptolemy XII, and Ptolemy of Cyprus, and why Berenike III was chosen as his immediate successor. See pgs. 378-382, below. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III." See also, Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 256. For Kleopatra IV as the mother of Berenike III, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 210.

Kleopatra, but after her marriage to Ptolemy X (see below), she adopted the name Kleopatra as well.³⁹⁵ She will be referred to in this work as Kleopatra Berenike III or Berenike III. The addition of Kleopatra to her regularly used name is supported by *P. Dem Turin* 6085 and *P. Dem Berlin* 3107, which call her “Kleopatra, known as Berenike.” As queen of Egypt, she may have taken the name in reference to her grandmother (Kleopatra III) and great-grandmother (Kleopatra II). As mentioned in the introduction to this Part, just as Ptolemy became a dynastic name of strength and legitimacy for the male members of the royal family, so too did the name Kleopatra take on a similar connotation for the women.³⁹⁶ Appropriately, Kleopatra Berenike III may have adopted it as a throne name in order to demonstrate continuance from her grandmother and to inspire a belief in the dynastic stability of the new ruling couple, especially since Kleopatra III had been murdered by Berenike’s husband.

Kleopatra Berenike was married to her uncle, Ptolemy X, after the murder of Kleopatra III in c. 101 BCE, when she would have been about fourteen years old. Chauveau proposes, based on *OGIS* 174, that they could have married as early as 107 BCE, since he estimates an earlier birthdate for Berenike as well, but Ptolemy X was married to Kleopatra Selene I until at least 103 BCE.³⁹⁷ As has been shown throughout this dissertation, the Ptolemies, after Ptolemy I, did not engage in polygamous marriages, so an earlier marriage date is unlikely.³⁹⁸ Ptolemy X may have also waited until after his mother’s death to marry a second time since she had a propensity for arranging divorces for her children.

³⁹⁵ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.”

³⁹⁶ See note 2, above.

³⁹⁷ See chapter 12.2 on Kleopatra Selene I. For the argument concerning *OGIS* 174 by Chauveau, see Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.”

³⁹⁸ See pg. 285, above, on the argument against Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III engaging in a polygamous marriage, for example.

Following their marriage, Ptolemy X's name was coupled with Berenike III's in official documentation, with his name listed first and hers listed second (*P. Adler* 12; *P. Tebt.* 1.106; *OGIS* 180 = *IGPhilae* 35; *OGIS* 740).³⁹⁹ Thus, Ptolemy X succeeded his mother as the ruling *basileus*, and Berenike was listed as his nominal co-ruler in the second position of the protocol, since it was tradition by this point for the male and female of the ruling couple to both be included in official documents (see Appendix C). She was not, however, included in every protocol; *BGU* 3.998 (dated to 101 BCE) and *P. Tebt.* 1.104 (dated to 92 BCE) provide two examples of documents in which only Ptolemy X was listed.

The papyri provide insight into several additional aspects of this early period of Berenike's queenship as well. *P. Adler* 12, which is dated to October 101 BCE, Year 14 of Ptolemy X, refers to Berenike III as Ptolemy X's sister, although she was biologically his niece (see also, C. Ord. Ptol. 62, 63; *OGIS* 740). As noted in chapter 6 on Berenike II, and chapter 8 on Kleopatra I, the naming of the *basilissa*-consort as "sister" was a common practice that had developed over the course of the Ptolemaic dynasty. It had fallen out of use while Kleopatra III was ruling with her sons, but it could now be resumed. The same papyrus also indicates that she was incorporated into the dynastic cult as one half of the *Theoi Philometores* (or, more rarely, as the *Theoi Philometores Soteres*) and both used personal divine epithets, the mother-loving god for Ptolemy X, and the brother-loving goddess for Kleopatra Berenike (see Appendix D). Their joint epithet of *Theoi Philometores* was the same one that had been used by Kleopatra III with both of her sons, so this was perhaps

³⁹⁹ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 331; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 210, n. 153. *OGIS* 180 = *IGPhilae* 35 reads: βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου τοῦ καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου...καὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης καὶ τῶν τέκνων..., "King Ptolemy, called Alexander... and the queen and their children..." So here, Berenike is mentioned only by her title "basilissa," rather than by name. This inscription has also previously been used as evidence that the couple had multiple children, since it uses the plural form of *tekna*, "children." But that is probably a reference to Berenike adopting Ptolemy X's son by his first wife; see pgs. 385-386, below, where this issue is explored in greater detail. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III."

another way Ptolemy X hoped to promote continuity and stability in the wake of his mother's murder.

Finally, the papyri from this period demonstrate the great confusion in the correct organization of the dating protocol, which had resulted from the multitude of priesthoods implemented by Kleopatra III. Many of the papyri from this period dispensed with the Alexander Priests' *synnaoi* royal couple listing altogether, relying instead on short set phrases⁴⁰⁰, such as:

- ἐφ' ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν γραφομένων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ, “the priest of Alexander and the others being as written at Alexandria...” (*P. Tebt.* 1.106).⁴⁰¹
- ἐφ' ἱερέων καὶ ἱερείων καὶ κανηφόρου τῶν ὄντων καὶ οὐσῶν, “the priests and the priestesses and the kanephoros being those in office...” (*P. Adler* 12; *BGU* 3.999).⁴⁰²
- No mention of priest list at all (*C. Ord. Ptol.* 62; *C. Ord. Ptol.* 63)

The same confusion is seen in the demotic documents. For example, *P. Dem. Turin Botti* 34A opens with the phrase: “Under Pharaoh Ptolemy who is called Alexander, the one who loves his mother, Kleopatra, who is called Berenike, and Alexander, her son, the beneficent gods, and after the rest of the protocol of the pharaohs.”⁴⁰³ Here, instead of the list of cultic

⁴⁰⁰ The two phrases cited in these bullets were first used prior to Ptolemy IX and Berenike III's reign (see the two following notes for examples), so they were not specifically invented after Kleopatra III's implementation of new priesthoods. I would argue, however, that these shorter types of phrases came into increasing use after her rule as the dating protocol became longer, more intricate, and prone to errors; whereas, previously they were used sparingly and the written-out list of *synnaoi* was more common. See Appendix C.

⁴⁰¹ The only other use of this line I have found prior to this period is in *BGU* 14.2389, dated to 172 BCE during the reign of Ptolemy VI, after the death of his mother, but before his association with both his brother and sister on the throne. Examples of this phrase are also evidenced in the dating protocols of succeeding monarchs. See, for example, *P. Tebt.* 1.104; *SB* 6.9405.

⁴⁰² This phrase came into use by the end of Kleopatra III's reign, as it is also seen in *P. Grenf.* 2.23a, which is dated to 107 BCE. It is seen later in *P. Amh.* 2.51a; *BGU* 3.998. See Appendix C and *Sel. Pap.* 1.28.

⁴⁰³ Ikuyo Kato, “A Re-examination of P. Tor. Botti 34 A: A Demotic Document made by Agents of Hathor for Elders of the Temple of Hathor from the Archive of Twtw (2nd century BC, Djeme),” in *New Approaches in Demotic Studies: Acts of the 13th international conference of Demotic Studies*, Franziska Naether, ed. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 147-148. Similarly to *OGIS* 180, mentioned in note 399, above, Ptolemy XI Alexander II is

synnaoi, the set phrase of “and the rest of the protocol of the pharaohs” is utilized. The specific names of those holding the positions of priests and priestesses, which were often included in the protocols of third and early second century, were increasingly left out as well. Therefore, it is unclear if Kleopatra Berenike ever followed in her grandmother’s footsteps to hold the position of Priest of Alexander herself.

Although Kleopatra Berenike III was immediately incorporated into most of the dating protocols as Ptolemy X’s co-ruler, it does not seem she personally wielded much power yet, as demonstrated by her exclusion in the two documents cited above (*BGU* 3.998; *P. Tebt.* 1.104). She likely acted more as a *basilissa*-consort during the initial period of their reign. This could have been because she was very young at the time of her marriage, or it could be because Ptolemy X was tired of sharing power, as he had with his mother for so many years prior. Rather, Kleopatra Berenike may have grown in her role as *basilissa*-consort over the thirteen-year period she ruled with her husband (101-88 BCE). This assessment is evidenced by the progression in Greek inscriptions, only seven of which survive from the period of Ptolemy X’s rule with Berenike.⁴⁰⁴ *OGIS* 176-179, each of which was issued “on behalf of king Ptolemaios, called Alexandros...,” make no mention of Berenike. *OGIS* 180 lists king Ptolemy and his queen, leaving out Berenike’s proper names.⁴⁰⁵ *OGIS* 740 and a similar inscription restored by Schuman, were issued “on behalf of king Ptolemaios, called Alexandros, and queen Kleopatra, his sister, and their children.” It

listed as the (step-)“son” of Berenike III in this papyrus, for more analysis of that issue, see pgs. 385-386, below.

⁴⁰⁴ Bevan notes that only four survive (*OGIS* 176-179) to which I have added *OGIS* 180, 740, and an inscription restored by Schuman. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 332; Verne B. Schuman, “Two Unpublished Inscriptions from the South Temple Area of Karanis,” *Hesperia* 16, No. 4 (1947), 267-271.

⁴⁰⁵ See note 399, above.

seems, over time, Berenike grew in importance and visibility, especially after she bore a royal daughter sometime c. 100-95 BCE.⁴⁰⁶

It is also clear that she engaged in the duties of rulership. C. Ord. Ptol. 62 demonstrates that Kleopatra Berenike accompanied her husband to Memphis in 99 BCE to see to the religious duties of the kingdom.⁴⁰⁷ This claim is further supported by her monumental depictions. Kleopatra Berenike, similarly to Kleopatra III, was depicted in temple scenes, both accompanying her husband and offering before the gods alone. For instance, on the outside enclosure wall of the Temple of Edfu, she is shown offering wine and milk before Hathor and Harsomtus. Minas interprets this scene as an indication that Kleopatra Berenike, although subordinate to her husband, retained some of the influence of queenly power that had been gathered by Kleopatra III.⁴⁰⁸ In an inscription from the same temple, she is titled “ruler” (*hk3.t; THI 264*), just as her grandmother and great-grandmother had been (see Appendix E), which emphasizes the need for the queen to have a cultic titular equality to her husband. It would have been Berenike’s duty as queen to help ensure the religious balance of her kingdom, so even if her husband attempted to restrict her administrative activity, she had necessary religious duties that needed to be accomplished.

Hazzard similarly deduces that Ptolemy X did not change what were by this point the “traditional rights of the queen,” and documents, which did not include the full dating

⁴⁰⁶ The initial inscriptions make no mention of Ptolemy X’s wife or children, so they must have been produced earlier in his reign. The other three inscriptions mention both his queen and children, so they were most likely issued later in his reign, after Berenike bore their daughter. On Berenike III bearing Ptolemy X a daughter, see FGrHist. 260 F2.8; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 210; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.” I have identified this daughter as Kleopatra V Tryphaina. See, Appendix B and Chapter 11.2. On the plural use of children in the inscriptions, see note 399, above.

⁴⁰⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 281.

⁴⁰⁸ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 147-148. According to Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, there is only one surviving scene where Berenike III appears before the gods alone. Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, “Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight,” 81.

protocol, continued to utilize the same phrase that had been used during his co-rule with his mother, βασιλέων προσταξάντων..., “By the decree of the Kings...” (*P. Yale* 1.56; *C. Ord. Ptol.* 63).⁴⁰⁹ That petitions were addressed to both “kings” indicates that Kleopatra Berenike III was expected to play a part, even if a small one, in the administration of the kingdom. For Kleopatra III, being depicted offering to the gods alone and being addressed as a one of the “kings” or “rulers” had indicated that she wielded traditionally male power. That the iconography and phraseology that Kleopatra III developed for herself carried into the succeeding reign is another indication of her power and success as a monarch.

In the marriage of Ptolemy X and Kleopatra Berenike III, however, he was certainly the dominant power. Consequently, on the one hand, Berenike being depicted offering to the gods and being addressed as a plural king could be evidence of the continued use of established iconography and phrases; but, on the other hand, even if these prerogatives were granted to Berenike in order to show continuity from the rule of her grandmother, they would have allowed her to grow into the power with which she was depicted. Her representations and titles demonstrate that, by this point, it was accepted and expected for the queen to participate in the rulership of the kingdom. Ptolemy X may not have wanted to share his power, but the pattern of queenly participation in royal administration and religious duties indicated that he would have to. That expectation would have opened the door for Berenike to grow from a young and inexperienced *basilissa*-consort into a true co-ruler, setting the stage for her later period as *basilissa*-regnant.

Ptolemy X and Kleopatra Berenike III ruled together from 101-88 BCE, until he was expelled from the city by the Alexandrians in 88 BCE and his older brother, Ptolemy IX,

⁴⁰⁹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 142-143, n. 202.

Berenike's father, was reinstated as pharaoh (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.165-166, ed. Schoene; Paus. 1.9.3; Just. *Epit.* 39.5.1). Ptolemy IX ruled Egypt for the second time from 88 BCE until his death in 81 BCE. This seven-year period, however, is the most obscure period of Berenike's life. She perhaps remained with her husband in exile, until his death in 88/87 BCE, after which time she returned to Alexandria; although, the date of her return is unconfirmed.⁴¹⁰ She must have returned prior to her father's death in 81 BCE, since she ultimately succeeded him on the throne. She most likely returned to Egypt almost immediately following her husband's death because she had no place else to go.

Unlike Kleopatra II, who had been able to flee to her daughter at the Seleukid court during her exile, Kleopatra Berenike III had no utilizable connections to other Hellenistic courts, since her only Ptolemaic relatives outside of Egypt were not in positions to help her. Kleopatra Selene I, Berenike's mother/aunt, was in a similarly tenuous position in Syria, having just lost her third husband (sometime between 92-88 BCE).⁴¹¹ Berenike also had two, perhaps three, half-brothers, Ptolemy XI, XII, and Ptolemy of Cyprus (see Appendix B), but they had been sent to Kos in 103 BCE by Kleopatra III (Joseph. *AJ* 13.348-351; App. *Civ.* 1.102; App. *Mith.* 4.23).⁴¹² These young men were then captured in the spring of 88 BCE by Mithridates VI of Pontus, and they were kept at his court afterwards (App. *Civ.* 1.102; App.

⁴¹⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III." That Kleopatra Berenike joined Ptolemy X in his exile might be taken from Porphyry, preserved in Eusebius, who wrote that he took "refuge with his wife and daughter" (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.165, ed. Schoene). See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 211.

⁴¹¹ Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 265-266. Hölbl argues that Ptolemy X fled to Syria after his expulsion from Alexandria to raise an army to bring against his brother, a task which ultimately failed and led to Ptolemy X's death. Rather than going to his sister, Kleopatra Selene I, for help, Ptolemy X had to ask the Romans for money and aid. This is another indication that she may not have been in a position to aid her Ptolemaic relatives at this time. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 211. See also, chapter 12.2 on Kleopatra Selene I.

⁴¹² On the war between Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX that caused Kleopatra to send her grandchildren away, see pgs. 342-343, above. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 209.

Mith. 4.23, 16.111).⁴¹³ It is safe to assume that Berenike was not with her brothers in Kos during the period of her exile because they were captured shortly before her own expulsion from Egypt. Berenike could have stayed in Cyprus for a time, but her father, now king of Egypt, had been king of Cyprus for the previous seventeen years (see Appendix A). Cyprus would have been filled with his associates; whereas, in Alexandria, he was newly crowned, and she was the familiar face at the court. She had probably cultivated a *philoï* network, in the same way her predecessor queens had; but, because non-royal personal names were increasingly left out of documents during the late second and first centuries BCE and because there are few dedicatory inscriptions mentioning her that survive, it is impossible to trace who those *philoï* might have been.

Berenike's father, Ptolemy IX, may have even requested her return to Egypt, as he was unmarried and needed a Ptolemaic royal female by his side in order to rule Egypt.⁴¹⁴ As has been previously expressed, the Ma'at of the kingdom was dependent on having a king and queen on the throne, and this expectation restricted both kings and queens alike. Just as Kleopatra III had needed one of her sons to rule alongside her, so too would Ptolemy IX have needed a royal female at his side for appearance's sake. Thus, Berenike III most likely arrived in Egypt in 87 BCE, soon after her husband's death. The uncertainty of the events during this period, however, has led to the development of three areas of scholarly contention concerning Ptolemy IX's second rule in Egypt and Berenike's possible participation in that rulership.

⁴¹³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 212. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XI," "Ptolemy XII," "Ptolemy of Cyprus." Ptolemy XI later escaped to Rome, see at note 453, below.

⁴¹⁴ Ptolemy IX was divorced from his second wife, Kleopatra Selene I, by their mother, Kleopatra III, in 107 (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.1). He ruled Cyprus during the period of 106/5-88 BCE, and there are no indications that he took a third wife during that time. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX."

First, most scholars assume a co-rulership existed between Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Berenike III for the entirety of Ptolemy IX's second reign because that was the precedent set by the immediately preceding reigns, including Berenike's reign with her first husband.⁴¹⁵ Bennett, however, argues that there is no evidence for an extended co-rulership between the pair, and rather, she was probably only appointed as Ptolemy IX's co-ruler the last year of his reign before his death (82/81 BCE).⁴¹⁶ Ptolemy IX would have needed a queen by his side during important religious ceremonies, which necessitated Berenike's return to Egypt and her remaining at court, but administratively he retained all of the power in his own hands, as demonstrated by the protocols of his second reign.⁴¹⁷

The dating protocols for the period of 88-81 BCE list only Ptolemy IX as sovereign (see, for example, BGU 14.2374).⁴¹⁸ In these protocols Ptolemy IX was known only as Soter, rather than his previously used epithet, Philometor Soter, perhaps in an effort to remove reminders of his mother.⁴¹⁹ Similarly to his brother, Ptolemy IX may have been reluctant to openly share power with his daughter because of his experience ruling with his mother, even if he did need Berenike iconographically and religiously. Unlike Ptolemy X, however, Ptolemy IX did not bow to the expectation that a queen would participate alongside him in the administration of the kingdom, as demonstrated by her exclusion from the protocols.

Accordingly, and in concurrence with Bennett, the co-regency of Ptolemy IX and Berenike III most likely was put into place for the year of 81 BCE. This is evidenced by the inscription *iGFayum* 3.198, which is dated to 28 Epeiphi year 36 = year 1 (5 August 81

⁴¹⁵ See, for example, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 212; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144, n. 205.

⁴¹⁶ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX," "Berenice III"; Chris Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 139 (2002), 145-146.

⁴¹⁷ Important religious ceremonies such as his coronation and/or his *Sed*-festival. See at notes 431, 432, below.

⁴¹⁸ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144, n. 205; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX."

⁴¹⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 212.

BCE), meaning the thirty-sixth year of Ptolemy IX (since he counted his reign from his first period of rulership with his mother) and Kleopatra Berenike's first year as his co-ruler.⁴²⁰ *P. Grenf.* 2.38 is then dated to year 2 = year 1 (80 BCE), which Bennett attributes to year 2 of Berenike III and year 1 of Ptolemy XII.⁴²¹ This papyrus and three others (*O. Tait* 1.52; *O. Dem. Mattha* 268A; *P. Tebt.* 1.202) are dated to the period after Ptolemy IX's death in 81 BCE and after the brief period of Berenike III's sole reign and even briefer co-rulership with Ptolemy XI (80 BCE), which will be explored in greater detail below.

That the papyri are dated to Berenike's year 2 (80 BCE) indicates that her year 1 (81 BCE) overlapped with her father's final year. Dual date listings, which marked the last year of a prior king and the first year of the succeeding king, had been used previously in the papyri of Ptolemy VI/Ptolemy VIII and Ptolemy X/Ptolemy IX.⁴²² So, Ptolemy XII, in dating his first year of rulership as equal to the final year of Berenike III's rule was attempting to show dynastic continuity and participating in an established dynastic custom. This may have been an important factor for his administration to emphasize since he inherited the throne after the murder of Berenike and her husband.

Finally, a Demotic Apis stele from Memphis lists year 37 (December 81 BCE) of "the kings, living forever."⁴²³ Rather than including a double date (years 36 = year 1, as in *iGFayum* 198), this stele provides a plural use of the word "kings/rulers" indicating the implementation of a co-rulership. This can be correlated to the usage of the phrase βασιλέων

⁴²⁰ This inscription is also often attributed to Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, but Bennett convincingly argues it should be attributed to Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Berenike III. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX," "Berenice III." See also, Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 145.

⁴²¹ Similarly to the inscription, *P. Grenf.* 2.38 has been attributed to both Berenike IV and Kleopatra VII, but Bennett argues it should be attributed to the transition between Berenike III and Ptolemy XII. He argues a similar attribution for three additional papyri: *O. Tait* 1.52, *O. Dem. Mattha* 268A, and *P. Tebt.* 1.202. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX," "Berenice III." See also, Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 143-144, 145, 148.

⁴²² Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 145.

⁴²³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy IX," "Berenice III"; Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 146.

προσταζάντων..., “By the decree of the Kings...” seen in the papyri to mark the co-rules of Kleopatra III and her sons and Ptolemy X and Berenike III.⁴²⁴

The misconstrued concept that Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Berenike III co-ruled for the entire period of his second reign inspired the second area of scholarly contention, in which some scholars postulate that father and daughter were married. This idea probably derives from the similar contention surrounding possible father-daughter marriages during the Pharaonic period between Amenhotep III and Satamun and Ramses II and his daughters, Bint-Anath, Meritamun, and Nebettawy.⁴²⁵ For the Ptolemaic period, Macurdy, Fraser, Whitehorne, and Minas conclude that Ptolemy IX and Berenike III were married, but they offer little to no evidence in support of that claim.⁴²⁶ Ogden also states that they were married, and he cites a demotic stele (*iBucheum* 11) that ostensibly refers to Berenike III as Ptolemy IX’s wife.⁴²⁷

In the opposing camp, Hölbl contends that Ptolemy IX did not remarry after his divorce from Kleopatra Selene I, which indicates that he does not agree that a marriage between Ptolemy IX and Berenike III occurred.⁴²⁸ Bennett also argues against the union. He points out that there is no mention of such a marriage in any of the ancient literary sources, and he proposes that the name of Ptolemy X on the stele (*iBucheum* 11) cited by Ogden was overwritten with the name of Ptolemy IX after his brother’s expulsion.⁴²⁹ The reference to Berenike as the ‘wife’ was left in place either accidentally or to avoid additional re-carving

⁴²⁴ See notes 300, 409, above.

⁴²⁵ Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 29-30. See also Whitehorne and Ogden, who both cite the example of Akhenaten and Ramses II. Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 94, n. 153.

⁴²⁶ Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 173; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 124; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175; Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 94, n. 152.

⁴²⁷ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 94, n. 152.

⁴²⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 212.

⁴²⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy IX,” “Berenice III.”

of the stone. Bennett's argument is the most convincing in this case. A father-daughter marriage certainly would have been commented on by the ancient authors, who were keen to expose the perceived immoralities and extravagancies of the Ptolemaic court.

The idea of a father-daughter marriage for the pair has perhaps arisen, not only from comparisons to the Pharaonic period, but also from the idea that Berenike would have had to marry Ptolemy IX in order to be his co-ruling consort. Since Berenike did not co-rule with her father until the last year of his reign, however, this is a moot point. More importantly, there was an established pattern of co-ruling couples that were not married. Kleopatra I had co-ruled as regent for her young son without marrying him, Kleopatra II had co-ruled with Ptolemy VIII after their divorce, and Kleopatra III co-ruled with both her sons consecutively without marrying either of them. Finally, perhaps a marriage is also assumed for them because Kleopatra Berenike succeeded her father, but she was able to do so because she was the best option for heir, not because she was his wife.

The topic of Kleopatra Berenike III succeeding her father brings up the final of the three areas of scholarly contention: why was she, rather than her half-brothers, appointed as Ptolemy IX's successor? The core of the matter seems to be an issue of both popularity and availability. When Ptolemy IX came to the throne for the second time, Egypt was experiencing a second period of native rebellion in the Thebaid. This rebellion had resulted in Ptolemy X's expulsion, and it was then ruthlessly repressed by Ptolemy IX, whose army badly damaged the city of Thebes (Paus. 1.9.3).⁴³⁰ Ptolemy IX then needed to popularize himself with the people, lest he be similarly ousted. He celebrated his coronation and *Sed*-festival, a celebration of thirty years of rule, that would have been presented to the people

⁴³⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 210-211; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175.

with great pomp.⁴³¹ As part of this celebration, he had his daughter by his side, who was extremely popular with the Alexandrian people, according to Cicero and as evidenced by the events after her death (Cic. *Alex.* F9; Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene; App. *Civ.* 1.102; on her death, see below).⁴³²

For Ptolemy IX's coronation and *Sed*-festival, he would have needed a queen by his side to present the image of a balanced monarchy, so Berenike III aided his endeavors in multiple ways. Although she was restricted from participating in the administrative duties for the majority of Ptolemy IX's second reign, as demonstrated by the dating protocols, Berenike was presented as Ptolemy IX's queen in the religious sphere. She would have been the logical choice for successor once Ptolemy IX came to the end of his reign, just as Ptolemy X had been the successor to Kleopatra III. Ptolemy IX's appointment of Berenike as his official co-ruler in 81 BCE evidences this point, but it also recalls earlier Ptolemaic practice in which heirs were appointed as their fathers' co-rulers during the latter part of their reigns, in order to acquaint them with the duties of rulership and to facilitate a smooth transition at the death of the king.

While the appointment of Kleopatra Berenike as Ptolemy's co-ruler adhered to long-standing Ptolemaic practice, it also broke with tradition somewhat, since previously appointed co-ruling heirs had always been male. Although Ptolemy IX had two sons, they were disadvantaged as successors by issues of legitimacy and availability. Pausanias (1.9.3) claims that Berenike was Ptolemy IX's only legitimate offspring. Cicero (*Leg. Agr.* 2.42)

⁴³¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 212; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175.

⁴³² Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 175. Although Whitehorne is using the *Sed*-festival as evidence for Berenike's possible marriage to her father, which I have disagreed with in the previous paragraph, his point about Ptolemy IX using her popularity to his own benefit is salient. That she was present for Ptolemy IX's coronation and *Sed*-festival also fits with the theory I proposed above that she would have returned to Egypt almost immediately following her husband's death; see note 417.

also states that Ptolemy XII was *neque genere, neque animo regio esse* (“neither of the royal family nor of any royal disposition”). Both of these passages are used by historians to argue that Berenike was chosen as Ptolemy IX’s heir because Ptolemy XII must have been illegitimate. It is clear from Justin (Justin *Epit. Prol.* 40) and Porphyry (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene), however, that his father was Ptolemy IX.

Ptolemy XII’s confirmed paternity, then, necessitates greater analysis of the Cicero passage. Cicero’s words are usually accepted at face-value because he was contemporary to the events and probably met the king. Yet, Ptolemy XII was, unquestionably, “of the royal family,” if he was born of Ptolemy IX, and it is unlikely that he would have been considered for the throne without at least one royal parent. This seems to imply that the king was considered a bastard in the traditional sense of the word, a son born of a royal father, by a non-royal mother. Here, though, the wider context of Cicero’s statement should also be considered. In the passage (*Leg. Agr.* 2.41-42), Cicero is addressing the possible will of Ptolemy X Alexander I, which had left Egypt to the Roman Republic at his death as collateral for a loan.⁴³³ Furthermore, rather than irrefutably confirming Ptolemy XII’s bastardry, or even Cicero’s own opinion on the matter, Cicero states he is repeating the words spoken by other senators, most notably those of men like L. Philippus, who desired for Egypt to be annexed as a Roman territory. It would have been to their advantage, and pursuant to their political platform, to establish Ptolemy XII as an illegitimate monarch in order to justify the annexation of the territory.

⁴³³ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 211. The full passage reads: *eum, qui regnum illud teneat hoc tempore, neque genere, neque animo regio esse, inter omnis fere video convenire*, which is translated as “I see that is agreed upon by all men, that he, who is at this present moment in possession of the kingdom, is neither of the royal family nor of any royal disposition.” See the translation at the Perseus Digital Library.

The problem of Ptolemy XII's legitimacy, accordingly, rests on the identification of his mother, rather than his father. The ancient sources, which provide relatively complete genealogical information for the Ptolemies, from Ptolemy I through Ptolemy X, afterwards provide only the paternal origins for Kleopatra Berenike III, Ptolemy XI Alexander II, Ptolemy XII, Berenike IV, and Kleopatra VII. This has led many historians to state, often without presenting convincing supporting evidence, that both the sons of Ptolemy IX, Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus, were born of an unknown mistress or concubine.⁴³⁴ Similar assumptions are made for most of the later Ptolemies, but the omission of maternal parentage for these figures in the sources does not incontrovertibly indicate their illegitimacy. These sources, as Bennett points out, are not always reliable, mutually consistent, or complete, especially the two accounts for these later Ptolemies by Pompeius Trogus and Porphyry, both of which survive in fragmentary states in the works of the compilers Justin and Eusebius.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, as previously pointed out in this work, these ancient authors were also from a later period and biased by Roman social norms, which derived from a much more patriarchally-focused society than Ptolemaic Egypt. For Roman authors, maternity did not matter nearly as much as paternity, and that did not mean these figures were born of extra-marital unions, it simply meant that their maternity was not important enough to the Roman authors or audience to make note of.

Rather, I propose, in agreement with Bennett, that Ptolemy XII was born of two royal parents, but was considered less legitimate than Berenike III because of a Ptolemaic

⁴³⁴ See, for example, Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 344; Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.114; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 95-96; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 222; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 177; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144.

⁴³⁵ Chris Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," *Ancient Society* 28 (1997), 39.

precedent. Kleopatra Berenike III was the daughter of Kleopatra Selene I, and Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus were the sons of Kleopatra IV. Thus, Kleopatra Berenike would be seen as a fully legitimate daughter, as the offspring of a ruling *basileus*-pharaoh and his *basilissa*-consort; whereas, the male children were considered partially illegitimate because they were born to Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra IV before he became co-ruler of Egypt with his mother in 116 BCE.⁴³⁶

Previously, most of the royal children, both male and female, who had ascended to the throne had been the offspring of a ruling pharaoh and his *basilissa*-consort, with the exception of the Berenike II and Kleopatra I, who both married into the dynasty (see Appendix B). Even in those exogamous marriages, however, both Berenike II and Kleopatra I were presented as the daughters of the previous ruling couple and sisters to their husbands. The use of real and symbolic incest as a legitimization method was likely a result of the contention that erupted between the rival branches of Ptolemy I's offspring (see Part I, chapter 3.3). Ptolemy I's children by his *basilissa*-consort, Berenike I, became his chosen heirs, rather than his children by Eurydike I, who he had married when he was only a general and satrap. Ensuring the legitimacy of any children born of their union is also the reason, as I have proposed, that Ptolemy II and Berenike II postponed their wedding until after his ascension.⁴³⁷ These well-established dynastic precedents would have certainly had implications for the legitimacy of the children of Ptolemy IX and could have prompted the statement by Pausanias (1.9.3).

⁴³⁶ For Bennett's extended argument, see Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XII," "Ptolemy of Cyprus"; Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 45-52.

⁴³⁷ See Part II, chapter 6.1, pgs. 142-143.

The male children's perceived illegitimacy, accordingly, was not an issue of extra-marital affairs, but of a dynastic tradition in which the children of a ruling couple (Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Selene I) would be considered more legitimate than the children of a non-ruling couple (Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra IV). This could also be the reason Trogus refers to Ptolemy XII as Ptolemy *Nothus*, or the Bastard, in the prologue to his book 39, but then confirms him as the son of Ptolemy IX in the prologue to the subsequent book (Justin *Epit. Prol.* 39, 40).⁴³⁸ Finally, Bennett echoes this point by identifying that “no other king in the history of the dynasty married his sister before his accession to the throne,” and, it seems, later Ptolemaic princes who were not king of Egypt did not marry at all.⁴³⁹ The polygamy of Ptolemy I had caused such issues during the early period of the dynasty that it became a Ptolemaic policy to ensure the legitimacy of the throne-inheriting children by necessitating that they were born of a reigning *basileus/basilissa*-consort couple.

Moreover, Justin (39.4.1) wrote that Ptolemy IX had two, unnamed children by Kleopatra Selene I, which has confused the legitimacy matter further. Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus, although born of Kleopatra IV, could have been the two children accredited by Justin to Kleopatra Selene I, since there was also a Ptolemaic precedent for the current ruling queen to adopt either the children of their husband by a prior marriage or children who married into the dynasty. As Ptolemy IX's *basilissa*-consort during his first period as co-ruler of Egypt, Kleopatra Selene may have adopted his children from his first

⁴³⁸ Especially since these types of nicknames were often given to the kings by the people, including Ptolemy VIII being called Kakergetes and Physkon or Ptolemy IX being called Lathyros. The people, who would have been aware of Ptolemy XII's lesser status as the son of a non-*basilissa*-consort, could have ironically termed him *Nothus*, both in reference to his maternity and his being unpopular.

⁴³⁹ Bennett indicates that Ptolemy VIII, as king of Cyrene, had a recognized mistress, but did not marry. Later Ptolemies also did not marry when they were not king of Egypt: Ptolemy Apion, Ptolemy X or IX during their tenures as king of Cyprus, nor Ptolemy of Cyprus. Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 44.

marriage, just as Arsinoë II had done for Ptolemy II's children by Arsinoë I and for Berenike II.⁴⁴⁰ Arsinoë II's adoption of Berenike II also removed the stigma of her having an adulterous biological mother, and the same purpose could have been served here in Kleopatra Selene's adoption of Ptolemy IX's sons, since their mother, Kleopatra IV, fled to the Seleukid court and contracted an unapproved marriage after her divorce from Ptolemy IX.⁴⁴¹

Although Ptolemy IX's sons were considered illegitimate as a matter of precedence, rather than maternity, a final contributing reason that Ptolemy IX chose Berenike III as his successor was because she was in Egypt and had been groomed for rulership, and his sons were not and had not. Ptolemy XI and Ptolemy of Cyprus had been sent to Kos in 103 BCE by Kleopatra III (Joseph. *AJ* 13.348-351; App. *Civ.* 1.102; App. *Mith.* 4.23). They were subsequently captured in the spring of 88 BCE by Mithridates VI of Pontus and kept at his court until after Ptolemy IX's death (App. *Civ.* 1.102; App. *Mith.* 4.23, 16.111).⁴⁴² Berenike III, having lived in Alexandria for the entirety of her life and served as *basilissa*-consort once already, had experience with the Ptolemaic government, propaganda, and religious institutions that her brothers, who had not been in Egypt since their infancy, did not. Kleopatra Berenike III was thus Ptolemy IX's only available and most appropriate choice for legitimate successor.

⁴⁴⁰ On Arsinoë II adopting the children of Arsinoë I, see Part II, chapter 4.2, note 23. That Kleopatra Selene I was not the boys' biological mother is also supported by her later action of sending her sons by Antiochos X to Rome to challenge for the throne of Egypt (Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.61). If she was Ptolemy XII's biological mother, she could have returned to Egypt, rather than challenging his authority through Rome.

⁴⁴¹ On Kleopatra IV fleeing to the Seleukid court, see note 323 above, and Chapter 12.1, below. On the stigma of Berenike's mother, see Part II, chapter 6, pgs. 131-132, 165.

⁴⁴² The fact that the boys were kept on Kos as grandsons of Kleopatra III and then marriages were arranged to daughters of Mithridates (App. *Mith.* 16.111) also speaks to their legitimacy in the traditional sense of having two married parents. If their illegitimacy was an issue of being unacknowledged by their father, rather than an issue of Ptolemaic policy where both parents were ruling monarchs, I do not think they would have been kept in Kos with the royal children nor seen as viable marriage candidates for Mithridates daughters. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XII," "Ptolemy of Cyprus."

Once her availability and appropriateness as successor was acknowledged, Berenike III was appointed as Ptolemy IX's co-ruler for the last year of his reign (81 BCE), probably for a period of about five months, from July/August to December, in order to prepare her for rulership, as was commonly done for previous male heirs.⁴⁴³ At the death of her father, Kleopatra Berenike III became *basilissa*-regnant of Egypt in December 81 BCE (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene), and she took on the epithet *Thea Philopator* ("Father-loving goddess," see *BGU* 8.1736; *P.Berlin* 16241; Appendix D).⁴⁴⁴ She ruled for about four to six months on her own before she married Ptolemy XI Alexander II, the son of her previous husband, Ptolemy X Alexander I, in 80 BCE (see Appendix B).⁴⁴⁵ Unfortunately, since her period of sole rulership was so short, it is only specifically referenced in the literary sources, and the papyri evidence seems to skip directly from Ptolemy IX to Ptolemy XII.

Even Porphyry stated that:

they do not attribute the next 6 months after the death of the elder brother [Ptolemy IX], which make up the complete 36 years, to Cleopatra, the daughter of the elder brother and wife of the younger brother [Ptolemy X], who took over control of the kingdom after the death of her father. Nor do they formally attribute to Alexander [III] the 19 days in which he jointly reigned with her (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene).

As argued above, however, the period of her rulership is also evidenced by four papyri that are from the reign of Ptolemy XII; but, because of a possible precedent set by the transition in rulership between Ptolemy VI to Ptolemy VIII and Ptolemy IX to Ptolemy X, Berenike's

⁴⁴³ Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 144.

⁴⁴⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 213; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III," "Ptolemy IX." The two papyri cited are both King's Oaths from the reign of Ptolemy XII in which Berenike's epithet is included as part of the list of *synnaoi*, see Appendix C.

⁴⁴⁵ Porphyry credits six months of rulership to Berenike (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene), but Bennett has convincingly calculated a four-month sole rulership, if Ptolemy IX died in December of 81 and Berenike III married Ptolemy XI in April of 80 BCE. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III," "Ptolemy IX"; Bennett, "The Chronology of Berenice III," 145.

second year of rule (meaning the four to six months she ruled alone in 80 BCE) is notated in Ptolemy XII's year 1 papyri.⁴⁴⁶ From these references in the papyri, it is clear that Berenike served as *basilissa*-regnant. Yet, she built no monuments during her period of sole rule, nor do any possible decrees or inscriptions on her behalf survive, so it is impossible to know what her actions as *basilissa*-regnant were before her life was cut short by her new husband and co-ruler.⁴⁴⁷

As with the period of Berenike's co-rulership with her father, there are two areas of contention surrounding her marriage to and brief co-rulership with Ptolemy XI Alexander II. The first dispute concerns the relation of Kleopatra Berenike III to Ptolemy XI. Kleopatra Berenike III is usually cited as being the stepmother of Ptolemy XI (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene), since she was married to his father Ptolemy X, but she may have also been his half-sister. Kleopatra Berenike III, as proposed, was likely the daughter of Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Selene I.⁴⁴⁸ Ptolemy XI was the son of Ptolemy X, and although some historians, such as Hölbl, list his mother as "unknown," Bennett convincingly posits that his mother was also Kleopatra Selene I, born during her marriage to Ptolemy X, sometime between 106 to 104 BCE (see Appendices A and B).⁴⁴⁹

Accordingly, in papyri issued during Berenike's marriage to Ptolemy X, Ptolemy XI is listed as her (step-)son. For example, *P. Dem. Turin Botti* 34, 36, 37, which are dated to 101/100 BCE, open with the phrase: "King Ptolemy Philometor (X), called Alexander (I),

⁴⁴⁶ See notes 421, 422, above.

⁴⁴⁷ The exception to this might be *OGIS* 174, which is a dedicatory inscription naming "Berenike, daughter of king Ptolemy and queen Kleopatra, the *theoi philometores*." Bennett argues that since this inscription is dedicated only to Berenike and makes mention of her parentage, it could date from the period of her sole-rule, but it is a contested artifact. Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 53.

⁴⁴⁸ See note 394 and pgs. 378-382, above.

⁴⁴⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 213; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Berenice III," "Ptolemy XI"; Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 55-56.

and Kleopatra, known as Berenike (III), and Alexander (II), her son.” Berenike III, as the second wife of Ptolemy X and the current *basilissa*-consort in Ptolemaic ideology, was thus listed as the mother of Ptolemy X’s son by his first wife, Kleopatra Selene I, especially since there was a precedent for this arrangement set by Arsinoë II adopting the children of Arsinoë I and perhaps also by the adoption of Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus by Kleopatra Selene I when she was the wife of Ptolemy IX.⁴⁵⁰ That he was adopted as the son of the current *basilissa*-consort also makes it more likely that he was a legitimate offspring of a royal female and prior *basilissa*-consort, rather than the child of a mistress or concubine.⁴⁵¹ Then, after Berenike III inherited the throne, Ptolemy XI would have been considered a viable marriage candidate since she was not, in reality, his mother, and they were instead half-siblings.

The second area of contention concerns the purpose for Berenike’s marriage to Ptolemy XI. Kleopatra Berenike successfully ruled Egypt for four to six months before her marriage, but Ptolemaic propaganda required both a king and queen on the throne. Just as Kleopatra III, Ptolemy X, and Ptolemy IX had needed to have a spouse or co-ruling child at their side, so too did Kleopatra Berenike. She may have tried, in the style of her father, to rule without a co-ruler for a time, but even he had not fully escaped the need for a co-ruler,

⁴⁵⁰ On the possibility that Kleopatra Selene I had adopted the children of Ptolemy IX by Kleopatra IV, see pgs. 382-383, above.

⁴⁵¹ Bennett makes this statement *contra* to Van’t Dack et al., who argue that, if Ptolemy XI was the illegitimate son of Ptolemy X, Berenike was called his mother in order to legitimize him as king. Bennett calls this an “unnecessary inference,” and I concur. Since Berenike III succeeded her father as the pharaoh and would have been the dominant partner in her co-rule with her husband, his legitimacy was not necessarily a matter of primary concern. It seems more likely that she was called his step-mother because he was a legitimate offspring of a prior *basilissa*-consort.

Bennett also notes that, although this phrase has previously been used by Pestman as evidence to argue that Berenike III was Ptolemy XI’s biological mother, the formula “her son” had been utilized for the previous fifteen years under Kleopatra III and was likely an error of continuity by the scribe who wrote all three of these papyri. Rather than being a scribal error, however, I would argue it was a purposeful use of the term “her son,” since there was a precedent for Berenike III to adopt her husband’s children by a previous wife. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy XI.”

since he had needed her at religious ceremonies and officially recognized her as co-ruler in his final year. As with the rule of Kleopatra III, it must have become clear to Kleopatra Berenike that, while she could hold dominant power, she needed a male consort to fulfill the iconographic necessities of rulership.

The decision to marry, however, is not normally credited to Kleopatra Berenike. Hölbl, citing Porphyry, for example, states that Ptolemy XI was called to Alexandria because “obviously, Cleopatra Berenike III’s attempt to rule alone had met with opposition.”⁴⁵² But Porphyry simply states that Ptolemy XI “was summoned back to Alexandria because there were no men of the royal family left in Egypt” (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene). He makes no mention of any opposition. Appian similarly offers that Sulla sent Ptolemy XI to Egypt “because the governor of Alexandria was destitute of a sovereign in the male line, and the women of the royal house wanted a man of the same lineage, and because he expected to reap a large reward from a rich kingdom” (*Civ.* 1.102). Both of the ancient authors are correct that there were no royal men in Egypt, since Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus were still held in the court of Mithridates, and Ptolemy XI, after capture by Mithridates, had escaped to Rome with Sulla in 84 BCE (App. *Civ.* 1.102).⁴⁵³ The lines about the governor of Alexandria and royal women also do not indicate that Berenike met with opposition, and, in fact, the events that occurred after her untimely death (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene; App. *Civ.* 1.102; see below) instead indicate that her rule was extremely popular. Rather, the decision to marry may have been at Kleopatra Berenike’s own

⁴⁵² Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 213.

⁴⁵³ On Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus in Kos and the court of Mithridates, see notes 412, 413, 442, above. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy XI.”

behest. She could have been one of the royal women Appian mentions, and the governor of Alexandria may have been looking for a royal male at her instigation.

It is only in the choice of her marital partners that the decision seems to have been somewhat taken out of Berenike's hands. If Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus were still in the court of Mithridates and engaged to be married to his daughters (App. *Mith.* 16.111), that would leave only Ptolemy XI as a viable royal marriage partner. Additionally, as Appian mentions, Sulla would have been fully aware of the influence he could gain in Egypt were his client to become king (*Civ.* 1.102). Hölbl, for example, posits that Ptolemy could give Sulla "insight" into the Ptolemaic court, but, as Hazzard conversely points out, Ptolemy was in Kos during his childhood, then at the court of Mithridates, and then in Rome.⁴⁵⁴ He would have had no real experience of the Ptolemaic government that he could impart to his Roman patron. Consequently, although Sulla is usually credited with forcing this marriage, it seems more likely that Berenike initiated the search for a husband, and Sulla put forth the only acceptable candidate. Their marriage also coincided with Sulla's resignation of dictatorial powers and his final year as Roman consul in 80 BCE, so, rather than being the mastermind behind a marriage that would allow him to intervene in Egyptian politics, it seems Sulla's goal was to propose a co-ruler who would be sympathetic to Rome in general.

Whatever Sulla's intentions, Berenike III and Ptolemy XI ruled together for 18 (*P. Oxy* 19.2222) or 19 days (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene; App. *Civ.* 1.102), at which point Ptolemy murdered her. He was subsequently murdered by the Alexandrian mob (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene; App. *Civ.* 1.102; Cic. *Alex.* F9), and his name was

⁴⁵⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 213; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144.

thereafter left out of all hieroglyphic inscriptions.⁴⁵⁵ Similarly to the period of her sole rule, there is little evidence from the brief co-rulership Berenike III shared with her second husband. Pomeroy and Hazzard state that during their short marriage Berenike’s name preceded Ptolemy XI’s in official documentation, as evidenced by a papyrus and inscription.⁴⁵⁶

The papyrus, *P.Dem. Cairo 30752*, lists “Berenike, his mother (or sister) and wife” before the name Ptolemy Alexander. Bennett argues that this papyrus is dubious proof of Berenike’s dominant position because it could be attributed to either Ptolemy X or Ptolemy XI, and because it is unclear if the title after the name Berenike should be reconstructed as “his mother and wife” or as “his sister and wife.”⁴⁵⁷ If the papyrus belonged to the period of Ptolemy X, however, Berenike’s name would not have come before that of Ptolemy X, as it was previously demonstrated that she was the junior partner in that co-rulership. The papyrus should thus be attributed to the reign of Berenike III and Ptolemy XI, and it evidences that she was the dominant co-ruler in that relationship. Additionally, either reconstruction, mother or sister, would also work for Berenike III and Ptolemy XI because she was known as his adoptive mother when she was married to Ptolemy X, and she was also likely his sister.⁴⁵⁸

The inscription, SEG 41.1608, reads βασίλισσα Βερενίκη ὑπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου τοῦ αὐτῆς ἀνεψίου καὶ ἀνδρός, “Queen Berenike on behalf of King Ptolemy, both her cousin and husband.”⁴⁵⁹ Bernard attributes the inscription to Kleopatra Berenike III, but it has been paleographically dated to the mid-third century, which would identify this Berenike as

⁴⁵⁵ He was also left out of the few subsequent eponymous priest lists, such as *BGU 8.1736*, which dates to the reign of Ptolemy XII. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 214; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy XI.”

⁴⁵⁶ Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, 24; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.”

⁴⁵⁷ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.”

⁴⁵⁸ On Berenike III as Ptolemy XI’s adoptive mother and half-sister, see pgs. 385-386, above.

⁴⁵⁹ The translation is my own.

Berenike II, the wife and cousin of Ptolemy II.⁴⁶⁰ The papyrus is thus the only convincing piece of evidence that credibly demonstrates that her name would have come first.

That Kleopatra Berenike III was the dominant partner in her brief marriage and co-rulership, however, is further supported by her murder. Ptolemy XI was raised in more strictly patriarchal environs, first at the court of Mithridates and then in Rome. He may have been shocked when he arrived in Egypt, and “expecting to rule under Sulla’s protection, he discovered instead that he was a junior associate.”⁴⁶¹ Since Sulla retired from power shortly after helping to arrange this union, Ptolemy may have felt he had to take matters into his own hands. His wife, who had served as *basilissa*-consort, daughter to the king, and co-ruler for the previous twenty years, was familiar with Ptolemaic policy, ideology, and governance in a way he could never be, and she likely had a supporting network of advisors, *philoï*, and military personnel. Accordingly, Ptolemy XI may have taken a page from Ptolemy X’s book and murdered his female senior co-ruler in order to take power by force. This was a miscalculated action on his part, however, since he was murdered shortly thereafter. Unlike Ptolemy X, who had ruled in conjunction with his mother for many years and had a support network of his own, Ptolemy XI was new to Alexandria and had no protection from the *philoï* of Berenike nor the people of Alexandria, who wanted revenge for her murder.

Before her life was cut short, Kleopatra Berenike III was on a path to becoming as powerful as her grandmother, Kleopatra III. She served as co-ruler to her first husband, then to her father, and finally became a sole-ruler and dominant co-ruler in the relationship with her second and final husband. Unfortunately for her, it seems the ambitions of her

⁴⁶⁰ Andre Bernand, “Une inscription de Cléopâtre Bérénice III,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 89 (1991), 145; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Berenice III.”

⁴⁶¹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 144.

grandmother hampered her ability to gain power. Berenike was restricted from more overt political action by her first husband, who had ruled as the junior co-ruler with his mother and then murdered her to gain dominant ruling power of his own. She was then further restricted by her father, who, after the experience of his subordinate joint-rule with Kleopatra III, attempted to rule as a sole *basileus*-pharaoh, utilizing Berenike only for religious ceremonies and duties. Towards the end of her father's rule, however, Kleopatra Berenike was appointed as his publicly acknowledged heir and co-ruler, a significant appointment, since she was the first Ptolemaic female heir. She then successfully ruled as a *basilissa*-regnant for several months.

Berenike's decision to marry, in deference to Ptolemaic policy and ideology, ultimately culminated in her death at the hands of her second husband, who may have also been threatened by the precedent set by Kleopatra III. Accordingly, because Kleopatra Berenike III's life was cut short, it is impossible to know how she would have proceeded as *basilissa*-regnant and dominant co-ruling queen. What can be said is that her brief period of rulership, although less than a year, continued the trend of expanding female power. Kleopatra Berenike III was the first Ptolemaic queen to rule the entirety of Egypt, uncontested, for any length of time. Her immediate successors would follow in her footsteps and have the example of both her life and death to look to and learn from.

[11.2 Kleopatra V Tryphaina](#)

After the murders of both Berenike III and Ptolemy XI, the people of Alexandria— or, more likely, the governing advisors in the capital— sent for Ptolemy XII to rule Egypt (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene). Porphyry identifies that Ptolemy XII was the son of Ptolemy IX and brother to Kleopatra Berenike, but he was also considered partially

illegitimate, as a consequence of his being born from Ptolemy IX's first wife, Kleopatra IV.⁴⁶² By this point, however, he and his brother, Ptolemy of Cyprus, were the only remaining male heirs of the direct Ptolemaic line (see Appendix B), so Ptolemy XII became king of Egypt and his brother was appointed king of Cyprus.⁴⁶³

Soon after his ascension to the throne, Ptolemy XII married Kleopatra V Tryphaina in late 80 or early 79 BCE.⁴⁶⁴ Similarly to Ptolemy XII, it is often assumed that she was also illegitimate, and most scholars speculate that she was an additional child of Ptolemy IX by an unknown mistress, making her the sister/half-sister of Ptolemy XII and an acceptable marriage partner. Although, as Ogden points out, her illegitimacy is presumed “for want of other information,” and in correlation to what is assumed of Ptolemy XII.⁴⁶⁵ In fact, her parentage is not mentioned in any of the surviving literary sources, but neither is she designated as being illegitimate. In Egyptian sources (for example, *O. Joach.* 1; *SB* 6.9405), she is called the “sister” of Ptolemy XII, but that title does not indicate accurate filiation, since it had been granted to all the previous Ptolemaic wives.

Consequently, rather than being a daughter of Ptolemy IX and an unknown woman, it is probable that Kleopatra V was the daughter of Kleopatra Berenike III and Ptolemy X.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶² See pgs. 378-382, above. This concept of his illegitimacy, I argue, stems from him being born of Kleopatra IV, Ptolemy IX's wife prior to his ascension to the throne, rather than him being born of a mistress or concubine.

⁴⁶³ The only other male children of a side-branch of the Ptolemaic line at this time were the sons of Kleopatra Selene I by Antiochos X, whom she sent to Rome to challenge for the throne of Egypt. Their claim was rejected (*Cic. Verr.* 2.4.61). Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 222; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy XII,” “Ptolemy of Cyprus.”

⁴⁶⁴ For the purpose of this dissertation, I have numbered Kleopatra Tryphaina, the wife of Ptolemy XII, as Kleopatra V. In other works, she is often called simply Kleopatra Tryphaina (or Tryphaena, in the Latin spelling), or Kleopatra VI by those historians who label Kleopatra Selene I as Kleopatra V Selene or Kleopatra Berenike III as Kleopatra V Berenike III. See, for example, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 222; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 93, 96.

⁴⁶⁵ Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 96; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 222; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra V”; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 346.

⁴⁶⁶ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 346; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra V.”

Porphyry indicates that Kleopatra Berenike bore Ptolemy X a daughter prior to their flight from Alexandria in 88 BCE (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.165, ed. Schoene). After being mentioned in relation to the passage by Porphyry, however, this daughter is forgotten by most historians. If she is mentioned thereafter, it is usually with a vague assumption that she died or was married off. It seems more likely that either of these scenarios, if they had occurred, would have been mentioned in the sources, literary and/or inscriptional. It is unlikely that the death of a royal Ptolemaic daughter, even one of a dethroned king, would not elicit some commentary from either the ancient authors or the Egyptian priesthood. If she was married into one of the surrounding kingdoms or into an elite family in Egypt, this would have merited comment as well, not only because she was one of the few Ptolemaic females left at this point, but also because of the tense political climate at the time among the Hellenistic kingdoms and Rome and within Egypt itself in the wake of the recent rebellions in the Thebaid.⁴⁶⁷

Rather, this daughter, who could claim legitimacy from both her ruling mother (Kleopatra Berenike III) and father (Ptolemy X), was a more direct heir to the throne even than Ptolemy XII. Nevertheless, the advising bodies in Alexandria, having just experienced what could happen when an unmarried female heir inherited the throne and then married an untested male relation, were likely more desirous of seeing a married couple on the throne, instead of a lone king or queen. They may have even seen the chaos that erupted following

⁴⁶⁷ For instance, the marriages of Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene I into the Seleukid kingdom had both been preserved in the literary sources. There is also the example of a possible, recently discovered additional daughter of Ptolemy VIII, a Berenike, who was married to the Egyptian High Priest of Memphis. Their union was preserved on Stele Vienna 82. So, while this union was unremarked on by the ancient literary sources, it was still commemorated in Egypt among the priestly class. The absence of this evidence for the daughter of Berenike III and Ptolemy X does not absolutely confirm that she never married outside or inside Egypt, but it is suspicious because she was the only daughter of the couple; whereas, Ptolemy VIII had three (perhaps 4, counting this new Berenike) all of whom are historically traceable. Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 40, n. 3. See also, note 494, below.

Berenike III's marriage as being a result of the imbalance in Ma'at from both Ptolemy IX's and Berenike's periods of sole-rule, so it would have been important to establish a royal couple on the throne.

If Kleopatra V was born soon after Ptolemy X and Berenike III's marriage in 101 BCE, she would have been of marriageable age in 80/79 BCE.⁴⁶⁸ Kleopatra V would have been the ideal candidate for the wife of Ptolemy XII, and she would have been a bride whose own legitimate birth and rightful inheritance of queenship could bolster his own acceptability as *basileus*-pharaoh. If he was considered somewhat illegitimate, as the son of Kleopatra IV and Ptolemy IX, Kleopatra V's own legitimacy, as the daughter of a ruling "brother-sister" pair (truly, niece and uncle), would grant additional legitimacy to their own union.

Accordingly, perhaps her parentage from two ruling monarchs was not emphasized in the sources, neither literary nor Egyptian, because her father had been deposed and her mother murdered, which also caused the administrators dating the reigns to skip directly from Ptolemy IX to Ptolemy XII, as previously mentioned.⁴⁶⁹ Kleopatra V's status as a legitimately born Ptolemaic princess could still have been utilized to bolster Ptolemy XII's own claims without the identities of her parents being accentuated, especially since the adoption of royal children, in order to fit them into the brother-sister mold, was a well-established practice in the Ptolemaic line.

⁴⁶⁸ If Kleopatra V was born between 100 to 94 BCE, she would have been anywhere from twenty to fourteen years old at the time of her marriage to Ptolemy XII. She had to have been born in the time frame after her parent's marriage (101) and before their flight from Egypt (88). I cut the date range off at 94 BCE since any birthdate between 94-88 would make her too young for bearing children herself, and she likely bore Ptolemy XII a child, Berenike IV, by the mid-70s BCE. Bennett similarly estimates her birthday to c. 100/95. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra V"; Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 55.

⁴⁶⁹ See the passage from Porphyry (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.166, ed. Schoene) and the analysis of the papyri evidence on pgs. 384-385, above.

That Kleopatra V served as a legitimizer for Ptolemy XII is also supported by a clay seal, now in the Royal Ontario Museum (906.12.202).⁴⁷⁰ The seal depicts a jugate bust of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V, which Hazzard argues demonstrates her “inferior status.”⁴⁷¹ While the jugate presentation does present Ptolemy as the dominant partner in the relationship (making Kleopatra the junior partner, not the negatively connotated “inferior”), I would also point out that jugate imagery had been used during the third century to emphasize the deification and unity of the early ruling couples.⁴⁷² Rather than an attempt to make Kleopatra V look inferior to her husband, this artifact instead demonstrates her necessity in legitimizing and strengthening their rule, and it provides additional evidence that the administration was striving to return to a united couple on the throne, rather than the sole-rules of the immediately preceding reigns.

With the imagery of the seal, Kleopatra V was being presented as an essential half of the royal couple, the royal cult, and a key part of the future stability of the dynasty. It is telling that jugate imagery was utilized for this couple, when it had fallen out of use since the reign of Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III.⁴⁷³ The early couples of the dynasty had needed to emphasize their rightful place as the new rulers of Egypt and the stability of that rulership, since they were in the process of establishing their dynasty and cult, but by the reign of Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III the dynasty was entrenched. That this type of imagery resumed for Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V thus seems to indicate that they needed to return to the

⁴⁷⁰ This seal is similar to another in the British Museum (BM GR 1956.5-19.1), which might also depict Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V. Walker and Higgs, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, 158, cat. no. 157, 158.

⁴⁷¹ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 145.

⁴⁷² Rather than, as Hazzard notes, “to suggest the dominance of Ptolemies I, II, and IV over their female consorts.” Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 145, n. 211. On the jugate coinage of Ptolemy II, see Part I, chapter 3.3.

⁴⁷³ One of the last extant images of a jugate Ptolemaic couple from the third century is a semiprecious stone depicting Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 145, n. 211

recognizable iconographic practices of the early dynasty to promote their own legitimacy and stability. The seal also demonstrates that the queen played a key role in that endeavor.

With these points in mind, Kleopatra V being the daughter of Ptolemy X and Berenike III appears the more likely of scenarios. The uncertainty surrounding Kleopatra V's parentage, however, is the hallmark of her entire life. She is one of the most obscure Ptolemaic queens of the dynasty, similar to Arsinoë I (see Part II, chapter 4.2), whose ancestry was at least clear. From the few surviving primary sources (papyri, inscriptions, etc.), there are certain features of Kleopatra V's life that can be discerned. Upon her marriage to Ptolemy XII, Kleopatra V was immediately included in the dating protocols as co-ruler, and they were both incorporated into the dynastic cult as the *Theoi Philopatores kai Philadelphoi* or the "Father-loving and Sibling-loving Gods" (*O. Joach.* 1; *P. Mert.* 1.6; *SB* 6.9405, 9092; *OGIS* 182; Appendix D).⁴⁷⁴ That the couple was married concomitantly with Ptolemy XII's ascension and that Kleopatra was directly included in the dating protocols and royal cult are additional indications that Kleopatra's legitimacy may have bolstered Ptolemy's own. In a more general sense, Ptolemy XII needed to marry, but, more importantly, the new royal couple needed to begin producing legitimate offspring, since the Ptolemaic line was dwindling. This was a duty Kleopatra began fulfilling soon after their marriage, and by the mid-70s BCE, Kleopatra V bore Ptolemy XII a daughter, Berenike IV.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁴ Ptolemy XII is also often referred to as Ptolemy Auletes, an epithet preserved in Strabo (17.1.11), or as Ptolemy Neos Dionysos. The New Dionysus title is attested in Porphyry (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene), and from his account it would seem the new king took the epithet immediately. However, the epithet is not attested to in papyrus until year 64/63 (*P. Oxy.* 2.236; *P. Oxy.* 14.1644). Hölbl also cites the stele of Psherenptah III (BM 886 = *THI* 253), which states he was given the title at his coronation in 76 BCE, but the stele itself dates the reign of Kleopatra VII, after the priest's death in 41 BCE. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XII," "Cleopatra V"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 222, 223, 283-284.

⁴⁷⁵ Berenike IV is usually cited as the daughter of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V because of a line in Strabo (17.1.11), which states she was the only legitimate daughter of Ptolemy XII. This may be an error in Strabo,

Additionally, as emphasized throughout this work, the traditional belief in Ma'at required that there be both a king and queen on the throne in order to maintain the balance and fertility of the kingdom. The kingdom had seen evidence of the chaos that resulted from an imbalance in Ma'at during the previous two reigns. The unmarried, sole ruler Ptolemy IX attempted to deal with native rebellions, and the reign of Kleopatra Berenike III ended in a double murder. Thus, the immediate marriage of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V, the inclusion of both the monarchs in the dating protocol, and their direct induction in the royal cult may have been an attempt to return the monarchy to tradition and normalcy.

While Kleopatra was immediately presented as Ptolemy XII's co-ruler, as evidenced by her inclusion in the dating protocols, her level of power, or even access to it, as co-ruler is unclear. Her inclusion in the second position of the dating protocol and the use of the plural “βασιλευόντων” (see Appendix C) should indicate her participation in governance, as it had for previous queens. They may have also issued joint prostagma (*BGU* 8.1730 = C. Ord. Ptol. 73).⁴⁷⁶ Additionally, she and her husband were addressed as βασιλεῖς (“kings” or “rulers” in the nominative plural) in petitions (*SB* 3.6236, 6154).⁴⁷⁷ They were also jointly commemorated in dedicatory inscriptions. At Hermoupolis, the Apolloniate mercenaries dedicated a sanctuary to Apollo and Zeus in honor of King Ptolemy and Queen Kleopatra Tryphaina (*OGIS* 182 = Hermoupolis Magna 6; a similar dedication is found in Hermoupolis

however, copying the line in Pausanias (1.9.3) about Berenike III. Rather the best evidence that Berenike IV was a legitimate daughter of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V is that she was born before Kleopatra V was removed as co-ruler and that she was later accepted as *basilissa*-regnant. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra V,” Berenice IV”; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 95, 100.

⁴⁷⁶ Scholars debate whether this should be dated to the reign of Ptolemy XII or XIII. Hölbl ascribes it to Ptolemy XIII and Bennett to XII. I agree that it should be dated to the reign of Ptolemy XII (79 BCE) because if it was dated to the reign of Ptolemy XIII and Kleopatra VII (50 BCE) she should be listed first. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 231, n. 50; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy XII.”

⁴⁷⁷ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 145, n. 212. These petitions are dated to 70 and 69 BCE, respectively.

Magna 5). These pieces of evidence point to Kleopatra V's active participation in government as co-ruler.

Similarly to Berenike III, however, the utilization of the plural “βασιλευόντων” in the protocols and “βασιλεῖς” in petitions could have been used as a matter of tradition, since those were the formulas that had been employed during the reign of Kleopatra III and that had also been withdrawn during the second reign of Ptolemy IX.⁴⁷⁸ If the administration was seeking a return to balance and normalcy, it would want to retain the successful aspects of the previously secure period under Kleopatra III. Accordingly, the uncertainty presented by the possible interpretation of these protocols and inscriptions necessitates that they be analyzed in conjunction with additional evidence, in order to assess whether Kleopatra V acted more as a *basilissa*-consort or a true co-ruler.

In contrast to the papyri evidence, Kleopatra V's temple depictions might be a more accurate representation of her position vis-à-vis ruling power. There is one confirmed surviving temple image of Kleopatra V from the period of her rule with Ptolemy XII.⁴⁷⁹ In the temple of Edfu, in the passage between pylons, a scene depicts Ptolemy making an offering to Horus, he is followed by the goddess Seshat, and Kleopatra V stands behind both her husband and the goddess in the traditional queenly regalia and gesture of hands raised in greeting.⁴⁸⁰ In the scene, while she is being depicted as a co-ruler to her husband and is granted the title “ruler” (*hk3.t*; see Appendix E), she is in the position of least power. Her

⁴⁷⁸ See notes 300, 424, above.

⁴⁷⁹ There is a second image that might also be Kleopatra V, but it does not include a name or cartouche. This image is examined in greater detail below, see pg. 400.

⁴⁸⁰ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 148-149, Fig. 16; Jan Quaegebur, “Une scène historique méconnue au grand temple d'Edfou,” in *Egitto e storia antica dall'ellenismo all'eta araba: bilancio di un confronto: atti del colloquia internazionale*, Bologna, 31 agosto-2 settembre 19, L. Criscuolo and G. Geraci, eds. (Bologna: CLUEB, 1989), 600, Fig. 2. On the traditional stance of the queen in temple scenes, see at note 206, above.

representation with the title ruler would have granted her a titular equality to her husband since she was needed to ensure the religious balance of the kingdom. Nevertheless, she is clearly in a reduced position of power from that of Kleopatra III and Kleopatra Berenike III, who had both been shown making specific offerings to the gods on their own.⁴⁸¹ Kleopatra is in the third position, with a goddess interposed between the two members of the royal couple, and she has been returned to the generic queenly greeting stance, rather than shown in a position of power in which she offers directly to the gods. Thus, Kleopatra V was utilized in iconography and presented as one-half of the ruling couple, but it does not appear that she had a great deal of personal power initially, similarly to Berenike III during her marriage to Ptolemy X.

Rather, and again analogously to Berenike III, Kleopatra V may have slowly grown in authority over her eleven years of marriage and co-rule with Ptolemy XII (80-69 BCE). At the outset of their marriage, Ptolemy XII may have wanted to restrict Kleopatra V from access to ruling power because he was succeeding a *basilissa*-regnant, Berenike III, by whom Kleopatra V was raised at the Ptolemaic court.⁴⁸² Ptolemy XII, on the other hand, and comparably to Ptolemy XI, was raised outside of Alexandria and in foreign courts, and would have been less experienced in Ptolemaic governance and religion than his spouse. He could have felt threatened by a wife whose claim to the throne was considered stronger than his own and whose experience was greater than his own. That she grew in power over time is supported by the fact that she was ultimately removed as Ptolemy XII's co-ruler.

⁴⁸¹ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 149.

⁴⁸² Since it is noted that Berenike III took her daughter with her during her flight from Egypt (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.165, ed. Schoene), it is also assumed that she returned with her mother and would have lived her life at the Ptolemaic court. There is no indication that she was, for example, sent to Kos with her brother-cousins or kept in Pontus, as suggested by Macurdy. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra V"; Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 563-64; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 176.

The last mention of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V together is an inscription, *OGIS* 185, dated to 69 BCE, and it hints at the situation within the royal household. Unlike the earlier cited *OGIS* 182, which mentions the queen by name, *OGIS* 185 commemorates a dedication at Philae to Ptolemy Philopator Philadelphos “and the queen and their children” (τῆς βασιλίσσης καὶ τῶν τέκνων). The next preserved inscription, from 69/68 BCE is addressed to Ptolemy alone (βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίωι θεῶι Φιλοπάτορι καὶ Φιλαδέλφωι; SB 3.6155). It is then clear from the lack of references to Kleopatra V Tryphaina after 69 BCE (until 58 BCE) that she was removed from favor.

The nature of Kleopatra V’s removal has been hotly contested by scholars. It was originally thought that she had died in 69 BCE, but her brief reappearance in 58 BCE when Ptolemy XII was deposed (see next chapter) disproved that theory.⁴⁸³ That she instead remained alive but fell out of favor is evidenced by additional carvings at the Temple of Edfu. In these scenes, Ptolemy is shown offering to the gods, followed by a queen, but she bears no royal insignia, no crown or uraeus, and is presented without a name and blank cartouches. In the traditional manner, this scene was carved of Ptolemy with his queen, because she was necessary to his success as pharaoh, but that all titles and insignia have been left unfinished for her might indicate that this is Kleopatra V either right before or after her banishment from court.⁴⁸⁴ Quaegebeur posits that these carvings were plastered over soon after their completion, providing additional evidence of Kleopatra’s fall from favor.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ These earlier arguments were further confused by the misdating of an inscription at Edfu. The original dating placed the carvings of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V at the Temple in 57 BCE, the time during which Ptolemy XII was in exile in Rome. Quaegebeur has since re-dated those carvings to 70 BCE. Quaegebeur, “Une scène historique méconnue au grand temple d’Edfou,” 595; Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 57, 59.

⁴⁸⁴ Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 149.

⁴⁸⁵ That these scenes were not vandalized by later Christians, as other scenes on the temple were, indicates that they were plastered over in antiquity. Quaegebeur, “Une scène historique méconnue au grand temple d’Edfou,” 595; Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 59-60.

That Kleopatra V disappeared from the records for an eleven-year span (69-58 BCE) is certain from the papyri evidence alone. During that time, her name was removed from the dating protocol, and Ptolemy made use of a singular opening statement in prostagma, βασιλέως προστάξαντος (By the decree of the King...; *C. Ord. Ptol.* 71 = *BGU* 4.1185).⁴⁸⁶ What is unclear about the situation is why she fell from favor and was removed. The ancient sources, since they do not mention her removal from court at all, give us no indication for why her exclusion would have occurred in the first place. The only major event that coincides with Kleopatra V's disappearance in 69 BCE is the birth of Kleopatra VII, which would seem to indicate that her fall from favor had to do with the birthing of heirs.

By the first century BCE the Ptolemaic line was diminishing in members. Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V needed to bear children and quickly if the dynasty hoped to survive, but by 69 BCE, after over ten years of marriage, Kleopatra V had only birthed two female children (see below). Female children in Ptolemaic Egypt were not as undervalued as in some other cultures or in later periods in history, but they had to be accompanied by male children as well in order to supply the next generation's royal brother-sister union. If it appeared that Kleopatra V was failing in her duty as *basilissa*-consort, failing to ensure the fertility and stability of the dynasty as one half of the royal unit, Ptolemy XII would have had ample reason to remove her from the throne and consolidate power in his own hands. This, I argue, is the reason Kleopatra V disappears from the records.

Previous historians have not made this connection because it is always assumed that Ptolemy XII's other children, after Berenike IV, were illegitimate. Consequently, here it is important to briefly address the legitimacy/illegitimacy of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V's

⁴⁸⁶ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 145. See also *P. Oxy* 14.1644 for the singular use of βασιλεύοντος in the dating protocol.

children. Strabo (17.1.11) wrote that Ptolemy XII had 3 daughters (thought to be Berenike IV, Kleopatra VII, and Arsinoë IV) and two infant sons (Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV). He mentions that of those children, only the eldest, whom he does not name, but who is assumed to be Berenike IV, was legitimate. This, however, is likely an error in Strabo, who may have been copying the line from Pausanias about Berenike III.⁴⁸⁷ Other than this brief mention in Strabo, the legitimacy or illegitimacy of Ptolemy XII's other children is not commented on by any other source. This is strange, since the sources drew such attention to Ptolemy XII's own perceived bastardry (Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2.42; Justin *Epit. Prol.* 39), which, as argued above, was in all likelihood an issue of politics and a Ptolemaic concept of illegitimacy, rather than an issue of true extra-marital union.⁴⁸⁸

Furthermore, if Kleopatra VII had been a bastard of Ptolemy XII, it is inconceivable that the Roman propagandists would not have seized on that fact in the subsequent character assassination of the queen undertaken after her death.⁴⁸⁹ Instead, it seems that historians assuming illegitimacy for the children of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V falls into the same pattern of the assumed illegitimacy of Kleopatra V.⁴⁹⁰ Just because she is not explicitly declared as their mother does not mean she was not, especially since the sources on the later Ptolemies have a habit of only mentioning paternity.

⁴⁸⁷ See note 475, above. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.145, n. 1; Bennett, s.v. *PD* "Ptolemy XII."

⁴⁸⁸ See pgs. 378-382, above.

⁴⁸⁹ This factor is also commented on by Bennett. Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 60, n. 105. He also points out that other historians, such as Roller, have argued that if Ptolemy married an Egyptian woman of high enough rank, such as the daughter of a High Priest, that they might have acknowledged her legitimacy. Since the Romans had even less respect for the native Egyptians than the Greeks did, I find this argument unsustainable. Maybe the Roman propagandists would not have called her a bastard in this instance, but they certainly would have commented on and probably disparaged her maternity by a native Egyptian. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XII."

⁴⁹⁰ For this argument, see pgs. 392-393, above.

Rather, as Bennett has argued, a case can be made for all five of Ptolemy XII's children being born of Kleopatra V, with the probable birth dates of: Berenike IV (c. 79-75 BCE), Kleopatra VII (c. 70/69 BCE), Arsinoë IV (c. 68-61 BCE), Ptolemy XIII (c. 62/61 BCE), and Ptolemy XIV (c. 60/59 BCE).⁴⁹¹ That Kleopatra V was the mother of all five children is the most logical scenario, since they would all later either hold the throne or fight over their right to hold the throne. If they were legitimate, however, that indicates that Ptolemy XII continued having sexual relations with Kleopatra V after her banishment, since their three youngest children were born after 69 BCE.

The awkwardness of this arrangement, a king continuing to produce children with an out of favor queen, has led previous historians to argue against such a possibility, especially since he did not bother to rehabilitate her reputation once she did produce a male heir. For instance, one camp of historians has proposed that Ptolemy XII had a second wife, and they cite the funerary stele of Psherenptah III (BM 886 = *THI* 253) as evidence, since it details that the king visited Memphis with his “wives.”⁴⁹² This mention of plural wives must have been either a scribal error or a now lost connotation, however, because polygamy was not utilized by the Ptolemies after Ptolemy I. Furthermore, if Ptolemy XII had engaged in a polygamous marriage, this is certainly an act the Roman sources would have commented on in their general attempt at exposing the moral shortcomings and extravagances of the king.

Bennett notes the unusualness of the Psherenptah stele inscription, since these “wives” are listed, not directly after the king, but lower on the stele, after the officials of the

⁴⁹¹ Bennett, s.v. *PD* “Ptolemy XII,” “Berenice IV,” “Cleopatra VII,” “Arsinoë IV,” “Ptolemy XIII,” “Ptolemy XIV”; Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 60.

⁴⁹² E. A. E. Reymond and J. W. B. Barns, “Alexandria and Memphis Some Historical Observations,” *Orientalia* 46, no. 1 (1977), 29; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 284, n. 145; Bennett, s.v. *PD* “Ptolemy XII”; Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 61, n. 107, 109. On the stele, see also note 466, above.

court, with the wives of the High Priest of Memphis. He posits that these women being listed so low on the stele indicates they were of low status and were perhaps women who participated in the Dionysiac and Osirian religious feasts that were held during the king's visit.⁴⁹³ Moreover, if Ptolemy XII had married another woman, either polygamously or after divorcing Kleopatra V, this woman should have at least been mentioned in Egyptian records of the period, be they the dating formula, inscriptions, or dedications, rather than in the ambiguous way "wives" are mentioned on the stele. Had the *basileus*-pharaoh married a member of the Memphite high priesthood, for example, it is likely that they would have explicitly commemorated such a union, in order to increase the prestige of the family and of the Memphite priesthood as well.⁴⁹⁴ Consequently, there is no concrete evidence that Ptolemy XII married a second woman.

A second proposed theory is that Ptolemy had the additional children by a mistress.⁴⁹⁵ This seems unlikely as well because, as explored above, his children, especially Kleopatra VII, were not contemporarily considered illegitimate. Also, the missing references to possible mistresses is telling. Although the queen was one half of the ruling unit and presented as the king's loving partner in royal and religious propaganda, mistresses in previous periods were acknowledged, such as Bilistiche, the mistress of Ptolemy II, Agathokleia, the mistress of Ptolemy IV, or Eirene, the mistress of Ptolemy VIII. While the absence of a reference to a

⁴⁹³ Bennett, s.v. *PD* "Ptolemy XII."

⁴⁹⁴ For instance, when Psherenptah II, the grandfather of Psherenptah III, married Berenike, a woman of high rank at the Ptolemaic court, her name and the marriage were specifically commemorated in the funerary stele of their son, Pedubast III (Stele Vienna 82) because the connection to the court brought prestige to the priestly family. See note 467, above. There is also some contention surrounding the Berenike mentioned in the inscription. Some scholars have proposed she was a high-ranking woman of the court, and others have proposed she was another daughter of Ptolemy VIII. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 198, n. 87, 223, n. 10; Bennett, s.v. *PD* "Berenice," "Psherenptah II."

⁴⁹⁵ Hölbl proposes that Ptolemy XII had an extramarital union with a woman of the Egyptian elite, who birthed his four children after Berenike IV. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 223.

mistress does not mean that Ptolemy XII did not have one, if such a woman had borne children that went on to rule Egypt, some specific mention of their bastardry would have been made, especially for Kleopatra VII and the brothers she married.

Instead, it appears that Kleopatra V was removed from all forms of power, but she was expected to continue bearing children for the dynasty. Although this seems the most likely scenario, it still leaves the matter of the awkwardness of such an arrangement and Kleopatra's unrehabilitated image unaddressed. Unfortunately, any theory for why exactly she was removed from power or what happened to her after that removal is purely speculative. Scenarios could include that she was sick, mentally or physically, and became an embarrassment. Or, as the legitimizer of Ptolemy XII's kingdom, perhaps she felt she was owed a stronger say in governing matters, and Ptolemy removed her in order to hold power more securely in his own hands.

Here, however, it may be helpful to take the wider context into consideration. Based on Ptolemy's youth in the Mithridatic court and his later desire to be recognized by Rome, his removal of Kleopatra from power could have been his attempt to fit in with the contemporary male-centered empires with which he dealt diplomatically. He was not brought up in the Egyptian tradition, which would have emphasized the necessity of his queen, but, rather, he was familiar with the Pontic and Persian traditions, which were more firmly patriarchal. He also may have wanted to demonstrate his power to Rome, a society in which women were excluded from politics. Thus, Ptolemy XII could have removed Kleopatra V from any administrative duties and relegated her to what the Romans would have seen as the proper queenly position, that of child-bearer.

Furthermore, while her removal from the dating protocols has usually been interpreted as a banishment from court, that is also an assumption. Kleopatra V may have physically remained at court, as would have been necessary for a continued physical relationship between the royal couple, but she became a consort who was seen but not heard, generative but not publicly active. Any rehabilitation of her reputation after bearing a son would have necessitated returning some public notability to the queen, which Ptolemy would not have wanted to do, if he was striving to emulate the male-dominated empires of the wider Mediterranean. Coupled with that frame of mind, if Ptolemy saw the bearing of sons as Kleopatra's queenly responsibility, he may not have found it necessary to praise her for doing her duty. And ultimately, his attitude and efforts of excluding his queen may have caused later backlash in Egypt. Ptolemy may have tried to break with Ptolemaic tradition for a time, but he was overthrown in favor of his daughter (see next chapter) and, after his return, was required to recognize his second daughter as a co-ruler by the end of his reign.

This scenario seems to fit best with the events that occurred during this period, but it is also speculative, since Ptolemy would not have advertised that he acted with the intent of pleasing Rome. It also seems, however, that this is the only course of action that the Roman authors would not have commented on, since they might have taken for granted that what was normal behavior for them was not normal in Ptolemaic society. After all, the literary sources often only preserve the exceptional events or outlandish behavior, not the normal and expected conduct. What can be confirmed about this period, is that Ptolemy XII went on to rule for another eleven years (69-58 BCE) by himself.

Although Kleopatra V is one of the most obscured queens of the Ptolemaic dynasty, she is an important figure for understanding the final phase of Ptolemaic power. She was

utilized as a legitimizing figure, along the same lines as the early queens of the dynasty, but she had the legacies of the powerful second century queens from which to draw inspiration. While she was removed from power by her husband, probably on account of his upbringing outside of the Ptolemaic court, she still impacted the succeeding reigns. Kleopatra V was the mother of the most powerful queens of the dynasty, Berenike IV and Kleopatra VII. Her situation must have inspired some of their drive and ambition, and that speaks to her own character as well.

11.3 Berenike IV

Berenike IV, the eldest daughter of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V Tryphaina, became queen of Egypt in 58 BCE when her father was deposed by the people of Alexandria because of rising taxation, the loss of Cyprus (Dio Cass. 39.12; Suet. *Jul.* 54.3; Plut. *Vit. Pomp.* 49.6-7; *Cic. Rab. Post.* 3; Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene = *FGrHist* 260 F2.14), and his flouting of Ptolemaic policy.⁴⁹⁶ Ptolemy XII had increased taxation steadily since 65 BCE, in order to pay bribes to Roman politicians in hopes that his kingship would be recognized by the senate, and the Alexandrian people began protesting the high taxation as early as 61 BCE, since they knew their king was sending large sums of money to Rome.⁴⁹⁷ Suetonius (*Jul.* 54.3) records that in 60 BCE, Ptolemy sent the First Triumvirate 6,000 talents, the annual revenue of Egypt, in return for being recognized as rightful king, on account of the will of Ptolemy X Alexander I.⁴⁹⁸ He was confirmed as king and made an *amicus et socius populi Romani* in 59 BCE (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.107; *Cic. Rab. Post.* 3; *Cic. Att.* 2.16.2), but, shortly after,

⁴⁹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 226. If Ptolemy XII was ruling without his wife, as proposed in chapter 11.2, the people could have seen this as an intentional break with pharaonic and Ptolemaic duties that would endanger the Ma'at of the kingdom.

⁴⁹⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 224, 225.

⁴⁹⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 221, 225.

Cyprus, which was ruled by his brother, was annexed by Rome under the pretense that Ptolemy of Cyprus had assisted pirates (Plut. *Vit. Cat. Min.* 34; Livy, *Per.* 104.6; Strab. 14.6.6). This was the last straw for the people of Alexandria, who were angered that their king did not attempt to protect an Egyptian territory, which was ruled by a member of the royal family that they had selected.

According to Dio Cassius (39.13), the people then chose his daughter, Berenike IV to take his place as sovereign. Porphyry writes that Berenike IV co-ruled with another of Ptolemy XII's daughters, Kleopatra Tryphaina, for one year until Tryphaina's death, after which Berenike IV ruled for another two years on her own (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene = *FGrHist.* 260 F2.14). This is either a transcription mistake in Porphyry, or Ptolemy XII could have had a fourth daughter. Most historians agree, however, that it was an error, and the co-rulership was constituted between mother and daughter, rather than between two sisters.⁴⁹⁹ Additionally, the other sources describe only Berenike IV as queen from 58-55 BCE (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.57.1), and do not mention a co-rulership with either her mother or a possible sister.⁵⁰⁰

Porphyry was correct in his attestation of joint rule in 58 BCE because the papyrus *BGU 8.1762* mentions a co-rulership between the “queens,” but by late 57 BCE the dating protocols list only Berenike (*P. Oxy 55.3777*). It is unclear why, if Kleopatra V Tryphaina was still alive in 58 BCE, the people chose Berenike, rather than Kleopatra V to succeed as sovereign. Bennett argues that a joint-rulership between mother and daughter allowed

⁴⁹⁹ Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.145, n. 1; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 178; Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 354-355; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 125; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 223, 227, n. 24; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 182-3; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes, and Death*, 100; Bennett, s.v. *PD* “Berenice IV.”

⁵⁰⁰ Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 62, n. 112.

Berenike to use Kleopatra V as a “legitimizing figure-head,” which seems to fit in with the role she played throughout her life.⁵⁰¹ She had acted as a legitimizer for Ptolemy XII, and now she acted as one for the regime of her daughter. No dating protocols survive from the period that would indicate who the dominant partner in the relationship was, so it is often assumed that Berenike was the senior co-ruler, because of what is written in the contemporary sources and since Berenike ruled for three years on her own after her mother’s death. Conversely, it is possible that Kleopatra V was the dominant co-ruler, due to her age and greater experience, and Berenike succeeded as sole ruler upon her mother’s death. Much like the event surrounding Kleopatra V’s removal from court, this period of Berenike’s life is shrouded in mystery as well.

What can be confirmed is that Berenike IV ruled Egypt as a *basilissa*-regnant for a four-year period, from 58 to 55 BCE, making her the longest ruling, officially acknowledged *basilissa*-regnant of the dynasty. Both Kleopatra III and Kleopatra VII wielded more actual power and ruled for longer periods of time, but they were, officially, co-rulers for the entirety of their reigns, even though they acted more like *basilissai*-regnants. Much like Kleopatra II’s short period as *basilissa*-regnant, however, Berenike IV sole rulership is often overlooked or downplayed in scholarship, both ancient and modern. This could be because the period is not well documented in Egyptian sources, since Berenike was subject to a subsequent *damnatio memoriae* when her father returned to power (see below). Alternatively, much of the scholarship for this period focuses more on the Roman reaction to the events in Egypt, as many of the contemporary sources were written by Roman authors. Since these events are often used as context for the rule of Kleopatra VII and the ensuing

⁵⁰¹ Bennett, “Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies,” 62.

annexation of Egypt by Rome, Berenike IV's rulership is subsumed in the interest of describing Ptolemy XII's flight to Rome, the delegation sent from Alexandria to protest his rule, Ptolemy XII's actions while in Rome, and his return to Egypt.

Accordingly, very little is known about Berenike IV's reign, but several key factors can be teased out. Much like the royal women who came before her, Berenike IV must have been educated. Her education would have given her the ability to negotiate the court politics during her tenure as *basilissa*-regnant, and, although no sources specifically attest to Berenike's education, there are several sources that mention the extensive education received by her sister, Kleopatra VII (see, for example, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 27; Cic. *Att.* 15.15). It logically follows that Berenike would have received a similar education. Berenike also cultivated a network of *philoï*, which she would have utilized to contract her marriages and see to her interests, but none of their names are preserved in conjunction with the queen's. It can be convincingly argued that Dion of Alexandria was a partisan of the queen, since he led the delegation that opposed the reinstatement of her father. Hazzard argues that the delegation led by Dion to Rome (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.13.1-14.4) would have had the purpose of not only justifying their removal of the king, but also representing the interests of Berenike, and it may have been organized with her support in order to open diplomatic channels with Rome.⁵⁰²

Upon becoming queen, she followed the example of Berenike III and added Kleopatra to her name, as demonstrated by a surviving graffito from Medinet Habu.⁵⁰³ Kleopatra was a significant dynastic throne name that would have connected her to the

⁵⁰² Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 147.

⁵⁰³ *Graffito Medinet Habu* 43; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 227, n. 25; Bennett, s.v. *PD* "Berenice IV."

powerful females that preceded her and which would have provided additional legitimacy for her being chosen to take her father's place. It may have also been a symbolic act of respect after the death of her mother, once Berenike truly took on sole authority. She was included in the dynastic cult as the *Thea Epiphaneia* ("Manifest Goddess"; *P. Oxy 55.3777*; *SB 3.6156*; Appendix D) by 57 BCE. Although she was later removed from the dynastic cult when her father returned to power, her immediate inclusion would have been another important legitimizing factor at the outset of her rule. As queen, she dated documents with her own series of regnal years, indicating her sovereign power (*P. Oxy 55.3777*; *P. dem. Louvre 3452*).⁵⁰⁴

Hölbl posits that, soon after being made queen, the people would have begun pressuring Berenike to find a husband, as the Romans could choose to challenge Ptolemy XII's removal since the kingdom was being led by an unmarried woman.⁵⁰⁵ Berenike's need for a husband was not only based on the desire to maintain Roman goodwill, but rather, as has been expressed throughout this work, it was part of the Ptolemaic Egyptian tradition. The throne needed both a king and queen to preserve Ma'at, and this may have been all the more important for Berenike due to her father breaking with tradition and ruling without his wife. Accordingly, upholding Ptolemaic tradition and reassuring the people that she was cognizant of her pharaonic duties would have been a more pressing reason for Berenike to arrange a marriage. Nevertheless, many modern historians are preoccupied with emphasizing Roman interference during the latter period of Ptolemaic history because we know more about their intentions and attitudes.

⁵⁰⁴ Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 147.

⁵⁰⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 227.

The Roman sources also take agency away from Berenike in this matter, stating that “the people” sought a husband for her. This is a habit of the Roman authors, to credit active participation in events to generic bodies of men, rather than to a woman, as was similarly done to Kleopatra II in regards to the death of her son.⁵⁰⁶ Berenike must have been one of the driving forces behind arranging her own marriage, however. Not only would she have wanted to uphold Ptolemaic policy, but she must have also realized that having a king by her side could only strengthen her hold on the throne. She also had the example of Berenike III to learn from, and she would have been desirous of finding a husband who could bolster her own queenship, without taking power away from her or murdering her.

The marriages she would arrange present one of the most unique features of her queenship. Berenike IV was the only Egyptian queen to contract exogamous marriages and remain in Egypt. To truly uphold Ptolemaic tradition, Berenike should have married one of her two brothers, Ptolemy XIII or XIV, but, as Strabo notes (17.1.11), in 58 BCE both of Ptolemy XII’s sons were still infants.⁵⁰⁷ Thus, Berenike had to search outside of Egypt for a suitable royal groom, and she considered several Seleukid princes. She finally contracted a marriage to Seleukos Kybiosaktes (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.57.1), who was, perhaps, the second son of Kleopatra Selene I by Antiochos X Eusebes.⁵⁰⁸ If he was the son of Kleopatra Selene I, this would have made him an appropriate match for Berenike, as he was also of Ptolemaic stock and could fit into the dynastic propaganda that required royal marriages between close family relations.

⁵⁰⁶ See pgs. 310-312 and note 243, above.

⁵⁰⁷ See note 491, above, on the possible birthdates of Ptolemy XII’s children. In 58 BCE, Ptolemy XIII would have been around three years old, and Ptolemy XIV would have been a little over a year old.

⁵⁰⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 227; Bennett, s.v. *PD* “Berenice IV,” “Cleopatra Selene.” Strabo and Dio Cassius indicate that Seleukos was a pretender, but Bennett counters that any marriage candidate would have been thoroughly vetted. Rather, the questioning of his parentage may be the result of subsequent anti-Berenikean propaganda.

Seleukos, however, died soon after their marriage; Dio Cassius and Strabo specify that he was murdered on the orders of Berenike for being coarse and generally disliked (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.57.1). Bennett, citing Porphyry (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.261, ed. Schoene), posits that he may have died naturally shortly after their marriage, and he argues that the sources describing his murder may be repeating subsequent anti-Berenikean propaganda.⁵⁰⁹ Whatever his fate, Seleukos was not Berenike's husband for long, and she married again in 56 BCE to Archelaos. Strabo states that he claimed to be the son of Mithridates Eupator (17.1.11), but he was actually the son of a Pontic nobleman, also named Archelaos. Archelaos the son had served as a general of Mithridates, but he defected to Rome and was later appointed as High Priest of Ma/Bellona at Komana by Pompey (Strab. 12.3.34; App. *Mith.* 9.64, 17.114; Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 22.3-5, 23.2).

Berenike and Archelaos were married for at least six months (Strab. 12.3.34) from 56-55 BCE, but otherwise little is known about their marriage. It was previously argued that Archelaos co-ruled with Berenike because of papyri which include the statement "year two, which is also year one" (year 2 = year 1), but Bennett has reassigned those papyri to the rule of Kleopatra Berenike III.⁵¹⁰ Instead, he has attributed a series of papyri and ostraca to Berenike IV, which demonstrate that the administration of the kingdom continued under the queen, with no reference to her husbands.⁵¹¹ These papyri are all general administrative papyri from her reign, which do not include dating protocols, so it is unclear if the dating protocols changed to reflect her marriage or if they continued to list only her as queen.

⁵⁰⁹ Bennett, s.v. *PD* "Berenice IV."

⁵¹⁰ Chris Bennett and Mark Depauw, "The Reign of Berenike IV (Summer 58-Spring 55 BC)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 160 (2007), 211, n. 1. See note 421, above. For the papyri being credited to Berenike IV, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 227; Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy*, 147, n. 224.

⁵¹¹ Bennett and Depauw, "The Reign of Berenike IV (Summer 58-Spring 55 BC)," 213.

Archelaos, it seems, was a supporter of his wife's queenship, however, since he met his end defending her.

By 57 BCE, the Syrian proconsul, Gabinius, was pressed by Pompey to return Ptolemy XII to his throne in Alexandria (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.58). Archelaos was defeated and killed by Gabinius (Strab. 12.3.34; Dio Cass. 39.58.3; Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 3.5), and Ptolemy XII, after being reinstated as king, put Berenike to death (Strab. 17.1.11; Dio Cass. 39.58.3; Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167, ed. Schoene = *FGrHist.* 260 F2.14). Because Berenike was executed by her father, Minas argues a *damnatio memoriae* was carried out against her, and she is not attested to in any Egyptian temple scene or documented hieroglyphically.⁵¹² There are two extant ancestor lines for Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos from Kom Ombo and a Buchis stele, neither of which mention Berenike or her brief inclusion in the dynastic cult.⁵¹³ On account of the *damnatio memoriae* she suffered, no monumental depictions or titles survive for Berenike IV. Although, it seems likely that she would have been granted the title "ruler" (*hk3.t*), as previous queens had been, and she may have even utilized a female Horus name, as the other actively ruling queens of the dynasty had as well (see Appendix E).

This supposition that Berenike would have been granted a Horus name can be supported by the singular surviving Greek stele attributed to Berenike (CG 40727). On the lunette of the stele, a small roughly carved Egyptian-style bust of Berenike is engraved in which she wears a *nemes* headdress and false beard.⁵¹⁴ The imagery seems to emphasize the traditionally male powers she had taken for herself, and it connects her to previous queens,

⁵¹² Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 149.

⁵¹³ Minas-Nerpel, "Cleopatra II and III: The queens of Ptolemy VI and VIII as guarantors of kingship and rivals for power," 64. On the building activities of Ptolemy XII, see Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 272, 275, 276, 278.

⁵¹⁴ R. S. Bianchi, ed., *Cleopatra's Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1988), 188.

such as Hatshepsut and Kleopatra III, who had used masculine imagery to take on kingly attributes and bolster their positions as a dominantly ruling queens. The piece may also provide further evidence that she continued as the dominant ruler even after her marriages.

Although Berenike IV was the longest-ruling, officially acknowledged *basilissa*-regnant of the dynasty, almost nothing is known about her queenship. The preservation of details about her life and rule was hindered by both the *damnatio* against her after her death and the general bias for and in the contemporary Roman sources. While the details of her life are lacking, however, she can still be identified as a key figure of the period. Not only did she capitalize on the efforts of her predecessor queens, but she also set a precedent for her own sister's queenship by demonstrating that a royal female could inherit the throne and successfully rule in lieu of a male heir.

12. The Briefly-Basilissai: Kleopatra IV, Kleopatra Selene I, and Arsinoë IV

Before concluding this analysis of Ptolemaic queens, several of the ‘briefly-*basilissai*,’ women who were queens of Egypt for short periods of time and exercised little power, should be quickly highlighted, specifically Kleopatra IV, Kleopatra Selene I, and Arsinoë IV. Since they lived during the latter part of the dynasty, these queens exhibit some of the actions that had become the norm for royal females by this point, but they were also restricted from wider access to power by their contemporary and actively ruling female relations, namely Kleopatra III and Kleopatra VII.

Because Kleopatra III held on to power so actively, it does seem she restricted her daughters, Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene I, somewhat. Her daughters were married to both their brothers, Ptolemy IX and Ptolemy X (see Appendix B), but, because their mother was the dominant ruling power in the family, both Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene were restricted to the position of *basilissai*-consorts. For example, in temple reliefs, where the *basilissa* was usually shown alongside her husband and consort, Kleopatra IV and Kleopatra Selene were left out, since the position of actively ruling queen was held by their mother. Instead, their husbands, Kleopatra III’s sons, were depicted as her co-rulers, in the subordinate position that was usually reserved for the wives of the pharaoh.⁵¹⁵ Similarly, Arsinoë IV was restricted from power by her two older, more powerful sisters. There are no records that indicate what Arsinoë’s life was like during the rule of Berenike IV, and, although Arsinoë was later proclaimed queen in opposition to Kleopatra VII, the events of

⁵¹⁵ Minas, who refers to Kleopatra Selene as Kleopatra V, notes that “In den ägyptischen Tempelreliefs spielen Kleopatra IV. und V. kaum eine Rolle, Kleopatra III. dafür eine um so größere...” There is one scene from Philae, which depicts Ptolemy IX followed by two unidentifiable Kleopatras. One may be his mother and the other could be one of his wives, either Kleopatra VI or Kleopatra Selene, but thus far the scene is a bit of an enigma. Minas, “Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln,” 141, 145, Fig. 14.

her life during that period are dominated by the narrative of her sister, the most famous queen of the dynasty.

Furthermore, all three of these figures are plagued by an issue of restricted source material. Since they were queens in Egypt for short periods of time, primary sources, such as papyri and inscriptions, are rare for these women. That leaves the later literary sources as the main avenue by which the events of their lives might be discerned. As Ager notes, however, the literary sources on these queens are incomplete, non-contemporary, and “they prefer the melodramatic and biographic approach to history, they are not primarily interested in the doings of women, they perceive women ‘in power’ as bizarre by definition, they restrict female motivation to emotions such as sexual jealousy, and so on.”⁵¹⁶ Thus, the literary sources can be used to ascertain some of the major events that these queens lived through, but they must be analyzed with the knowledge that they often exaggerate, conflate events, and depict their female subjects in an overly emotional, immoral, or negative light. This is, unfortunately, a concern that impacts many of the Ptolemaic queens examined in this work, but it is especially damaging to these queens since there are not as many primary sources that can be used to comparatively draw out the parcels of truth that are hidden in the narratives of the literary sources.

[12.1 Kleopatra IV](#)

Kleopatra IV was the daughter of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III (see Appendix B). She was the fourth of their five children, born sometime during the period of 138-135 BCE.⁵¹⁷ As with most of the royal women discussed in this work, Kleopatra IV was likely

⁵¹⁶ Sheila L. Ager, “‘He Shall Give Him the Daughter of Women’: Ptolemaic Queens in the Seleukid House,” in *Seleukeia: Studies in Seleucid History, Archaeology and Numismatics in Honor of Getzel M. Cohen*. Ed. Roland Oetjen (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020).

⁵¹⁷ See note 269, above. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra IV.”

provided with a royal education and cultivated a network of *philoï* once she reached an age to do so. That she was an intelligent, educated woman is exemplified by her later exploits in the Seleukid court, and she must have been aided by friendly courtiers in her journey to that court (see below). Other than these brief assumptions, little is known about Kleopatra IV's early life.

In her late teens, c. 119/118 BCE, Kleopatra IV married her brother Ptolemy IX, prior to his appointment as co-ruler with his mother, during the period he was sent to Cyprus as heir to the throne.⁵¹⁸ She likely bore him two sons, Ptolemy XII and Ptolemy of Cyprus, as argued in chapter 11.1. It is unclear why this marriage was constituted, since no other royal Ptolemaic male heir had married prior to his ascension to the throne.⁵¹⁹ The only hint of a reason is preserved in Justin (39.2.2), who records that Ptolemy IX loved Kleopatra IV very much. Justin was a sensationalist writer whose claims are often exaggerated, but, in this instance, he may have it right. There seems to be no other reason, besides love, that Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra IV would break with several centuries of tradition and relegate their children to the subsequent legitimacy issues they experienced.

After the joint reign with his mother was constituted, however, Ptolemy IX was forced to divorce Kleopatra IV in 116/115 BCE in favor of his younger sister Kleopatra Selene I (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.2).⁵²⁰ Whitehorne argues that Kleopatra IV's later activity in the Seleukid kingdom, which speaks to a character of similar strength to that of her mother, was

⁵¹⁸ Bennett argues this date for the marriage based on the birth date of Ptolemy XII. He also places the date of their marriage during Ptolemy IX's tenure as *strategos* and *nauarchos* of Cyprus, and he argues that Kleopatra IV's "ability to raise a fleet in Cyprus after her divorce (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.3) indicates that she was already well known there." Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra IV"; Bennett, "Kleopatra V Tryphaena and the Genealogy of the Later Ptolemies," 44.

⁵¹⁹ See note 439, above.

⁵²⁰ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 206; Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 255.

the reason Kleopatra III forced the divorce, lest her own daughter strive to overthrow her.⁵²¹ Their divorce and Kleopatra IV's later actions in Syria are only attested to in the ancient sources, which have a bad habit, as has been previously explained, of relying on the common *topos* of the conniving woman. Kleopatra III is also universally lambasted as a power-hungry queen (see chapter 10), so Whitehorne's reasoning seems to be derived from both of those narrative traditions. Rather, Kleopatra III may have required that Ptolemy IX divorce his current wife and remarry another sister so that he could maintain Ptolemaic tradition that the *basileus*-pharaoh did not marry until after his ascension. This decision ultimately caused problems for the next generation, since Ptolemy IX's only male children were born to his first wife (see Appendix B), but it may have seemed like a good idea at the time that would promote the stability of the dynasty and the maintenance of Ptolemaic tradition.⁵²²

According to the literary sources, after her divorce, Kleopatra IV raised an army from Cyprus, which she convinced to go with her to Syria, where she married her cousin, Antiochos IX Kyzikenos, the son of Antiochos VII and Kleopatra Thea (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.3). She became embroiled in the ongoing civil war between her new husband and his half-brother, Antiochos VIII Grypos, another son of Kleopatra Thea. Both her second marriage and her involvement in the civil war were actions she likely undertook without her mother's blessing, since Kyzikenos was not the brother with which the Ptolemies ostensibly sided.⁵²³ That Kleopatra IV acted against her mother's wishes after her divorce could be interpreted as

⁵²¹ Whitehorne, *Cleopatra*, 134.

⁵²² On the legitimacy issues of Ptolemy IX's children, see pgs. 378-382, above.

⁵²³ See pg. 339, above. Justin (*Epit.* 39.3) also states that Tryphaina was angered at his sister for "bringing a foreign army to decide the disputes between the brothers, and with having married out of Egypt, when she was divorced from her brother, contrary to the will of her mother."

additional evidence in support of the theory that her and Ptolemy IX's marriage was a love match.

Kleopatra IV was married to Kyzikenos for about two years (c. 114-112 BCE), and she probably bore him one son during that time, Antiochos X Eusebes.⁵²⁴ While she was married to one brother, her sister, Tryphaina, was married to the other, Antiochos Grypos (see Appendix B). Tryphaina was the eldest daughter of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III, and she had been sent as an alliance bride to Antiochos Grypos by Ptolemy VIII in 124 BCE (Justin *Epit.* 39.2).⁵²⁵ According again to Justin, after defeating his brother in battle, Grypos besieged Antioch, and Tryphaina ordered the death of her sister once the city was taken, an act that Grypos protested but Tryphaina, due to her “envy” and “cruelty,” insisted upon (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.5-11). Tryphaina would then be killed in an act of revenge shortly after when Antiochos Kyzikenos retook the city (Just. *Epit.* 39.3.12).⁵²⁶

Unfortunately, although Tryphaina is obviously being fit into the “conniving and cruel female” stereotype and Kleopatra IV is being made the victim, Justin's account is the only source available concerning both of their later lives outside of Egypt.⁵²⁷ As Bartlett has pointed out, most modern scholars parrot Justin's narrative, perpetuating the concept of Tryphaina as the “evil queen” and Kleopatra IV as a victim.⁵²⁸ Although the narrative provided by Justin obviously fits these women into set molds of sisterly rivalry and revenge, the scheming vs. victimized woman, the coinage data confirms the basic events of the story

⁵²⁴ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra IV.”

⁵²⁵ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Tryphaena”; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 203.

⁵²⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 206-207.

⁵²⁷ On the stereotypes, see notes 218, 229, 295 above. For a thorough analysis of both Tryphaina and Kleopatra IV as presented in Justin, see Brett Bartlett, “The Fate of Kleopatra Tryphaina, or: Poetic Justice in Justin,” in *Seleukid Royal Women: Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley, eds. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016), 135-142; Dumitru, “Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side,” 255-256.

⁵²⁸ Bartlett, “The Fate of Kleopatra Tryphaina, or: Poetic Justice in Justin,” 136-137, n. 6.

that Antiochos VIII took the city of Antioch in 112-110 BCE, during which time Kleopatra IV was killed, and the city was retaken by Antiochos IX in 110/109 BCE, at which point Tryphaina was put to death.⁵²⁹

Kleopatra IV fit well into the Ptolemaic pattern of educated, active, and ambitious women. She was one of the few Ptolemaic royal daughters who seemed to live life on her own terms, from contracting a possible love-match with her brother-husband, to arranging her second marriage to spite her mother, and then engaging in the activities of a Seleukid civil war. Although she was restricted from wielding power within Egypt, it seems she derived from her ancestry of powerful female figures a drive to determine her own goals and activities.

[12.2 Kleopatra Selene I](#)

Kleopatra Selene I was also a daughter of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III and sister to both Tryphaina and Kleopatra IV. She was the fifth and last of their children, born sometime during the period of 135-130 BCE.⁵³⁰ Kleopatra Selene I also probably received an education and cultivated a network of *philoï*. Similarly to her sister, Kleopatra Selene would have needed both an education and friendly courtiers to engage in the politics of both the Egyptian and later Seleukid courts as she did.

Kleopatra Selene married Ptolemy IX in 116/115 BCE, after his divorce from their older sister, at the instigation of their mother. As argued in the previous chapter, this was likely done in order to fit Ptolemy IX into the previous Ptolemaic tradition that kings did not marry until they ascended to the throne. Consequently, Kleopatra Selene became Ptolemy

⁵²⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Tryphaena.”

⁵³⁰ See note 269, above. Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra Selene.”

IX's *basilissa*-consort, but she did not co-rule with him since the position of dominant co-ruler was exercised by Kleopatra III. Kleopatra Selene's position is demonstrated by a stele from Elephantine (*OGIS* 168), which describes the dedication of a stele for Ptolemy IX, Kleopatra III, and Kleopatra "the sister" (βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς ἀδελφῆς, i.e. Kleopatra Selene) in the sanctuary of Khnum. The stele itself was issued by Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, as sovereigns, with Kleopatra Selene included only as part of the dedication as Ptolemy IX's wife and sister.⁵³¹ As *basilissa*-consort, Kleopatra Selene bore one child to her brother-husband shortly after their marriage, Berenike III.⁵³²

Kleopatra Selene and Ptolemy IX were married for over eight years, until she was divorced from him by their mother when Ptolemy IX was exiled from Egypt in 107 BCE (*Just. Epit.* 39.4.1). She was subsequently remarried to her younger brother, Ptolemy X, when he was promoted to Kleopatra III's junior co-ruler.⁵³³ Similarly to her first marriage, Kleopatra Selene did not co-rule with her second husband, since the throne was held by mother and son. Kleopatra Selene again served as *basilissa*-consort, and she bore her second brother a child, Ptolemy XI, during the period of 106-104 BCE.⁵³⁴ Very little is known about Kleopatra Selene's life during the period she served as consecutive *basilissa*-consort to her brothers. She is cited in only one other inscription (*SEG* 9.5), and she is not included in any papyri.⁵³⁵ Other than the brief mentions of her marriages and divorces, she is left out of the literary sources as well.

⁵³¹ Bennett notes that the identification of Kleopatra "the sister" in this stele is somewhat contested, but he argues solidly for an identification of Kleopatra Selene. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra Selene." Even if the sister is Kleopatra IV, it still demonstrates that Kleopatra III did not permit either daughter to hold political power while she co-ruled with her sons. See also, *SEG* IX.5.

⁵³² See note 394, above.

⁵³³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra Selene"; Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 256-257.

⁵³⁴ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra Selene," "Ptolemy XI." See also, note 449, above.

⁵³⁵ On the inscription, see pg. 338, above.

Kleopatra Selene remained married to her second brother for at least four years, until they too were forced to divorce by Kleopatra III in 103/102 BCE, and she was sent as an alliance bride to Antiochos Grypos, her sister Tryphaina's former husband (Just. *Epit.* 39.4.4; App. *Syr.* 11.69).⁵³⁶ Selene was used as the traditional princess marriage alliance pawn, being married successively to both her brothers and then the Seleukid contender that her mother wanted to ally with, and she only broke this mold after the deaths of her mother (101 BCE) and third husband (97/96 BCE).⁵³⁷ She subsequently arranged marriages for herself with Antiochos Kyzikenos (97/96-96/95 BCE) and Antiochos X Eusebes (95-89/8 or 83 BCE), the son of her former husband, Kyzikenos (App. *Syr.* 11.69), by her sister, Kleopatra IV.⁵³⁸

Kleopatra Selene had no children by either Grypos or Kyzikenos, but with Eusebes, she bore two sons (Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.61), Antiochos XIII Asiaticus and a second son, possibly identified as Seleukos Kybiosaketes, a later suitor of Berenike III.⁵³⁹ She may have also attempted to establish herself as regent to her infant son in Antioch, as demonstrated by a bronze coin (ANS 1948.100.2) that bears a jugate bust of Kleopatra Selene and her son on the obverse with the legend "Basilissa Kleopatra Selene and Basileus Antiochos Philometor" on the reverse, but both the date at which the proposed regency might have occurred and how long it lasted are contested.⁵⁴⁰

After her fifth and final marriage, Kleopatra Selene I was only referenced in the ancient sources twice more. First, she was mentioned by Cicero (*Verr.* 2.4.61), who stated

⁵³⁶ See pg. 339, above.

⁵³⁷ For an overview of her life after her marriage into the Seleukid royal family, see Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 259-271; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 166-173.

⁵³⁸ On the death date of Eusebes, see Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 264-266.

⁵³⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra Selene"; Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 267-270. On Kybiosaketes, see note 508, above.

⁵⁴⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra Selene"; Dumitru, "Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side," 266-267.

that her two sons came to Rome to challenge for the throne of Egypt on behalf of themselves and their mother, probably in the mid-70s BCE.⁵⁴¹ Bennett proposes that Kleopatra Selene must have been ruling the Syrian possessions of her sons while they were away in Rome, a supposition that is corroborated by the final mention of the queen in the ancient sources.⁵⁴² According to Strabo and Josephus, Kleopatra Selene, who “ruled then over Syria” (Joseph. *AJ* 13.420), was murdered by Tigranes in 69 BCE (Strab. 16.2.3) when he conquered parts of the kingdom.⁵⁴³

Along with the queens Arsinoë I and Kleopatra V, Kleopatra Selene I is one of the most obscure queens of the dynasty; only the most basic events of her life are discernable. During her early life, it seems, she was used as a pawn in an intricate plan of marriage alliances devised by Kleopatra III. After her mother’s death, she was finally able to take her life into her own hands, contracting two marriages for herself and ruling as a queen of the Seleukid kingdom over the territories inherited by her sons. Similarly to her sister, she must have drawn strength from her Ptolemaic heritage and the strong line of female monarchs that came before her. Although little can be confirmed about the time she ruled in Syria, her active rulership there fits her into the pattern of assertive Ptolemaic royal females who saw to both their own interests and those of their offspring.

[12.3 Arsinoë IV](#)

Arsinoë IV was the third daughter of Ptolemy XII and, I argue, Kleopatra V Tryphaina.⁵⁴⁴ As a royal Ptolemaic daughter, she would have received an education,

⁵⁴¹ See notes 440, 463, above.

⁵⁴² Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra Selene.”

⁵⁴³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra Selene”; Dumitru, “Kleopatra Selene – A Look at the Moon and Her Bright Side,” 270.

⁵⁴⁴ See note 491, above.

comparable to that of her two older sisters, Berenike IV and Kleopatra VII. She must have also had a small network of *philoï*, which allowed her to participate in the Alexandrian War in 48 BCE. For instance, Pseudo-Caesar (*BAlex.* 4) references her *nutricium* (eunuch-nurse) Ganymedes, who she appointed as the commander of her army, and Dio Cassius (42.40.1) mentions the “followers of Arsinoë.”

Arsinoë’s childhood is undocumented but, as with many of the women discussed throughout this work, features of her life can be teased out. She was the youngest daughter of Ptolemy XII (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 4) but was born before his two boys, which provides a birth date range between 68 to 62 BCE.⁵⁴⁵ Most previous scholars have estimated her birth date as being between 68-65 BCE, which would make her at least seventeen during the Alexandrian War.⁵⁴⁶ Bennett, however, argues for a younger date range, between 63-62 BCE, since she is described by pseudo-Caesar (*BAlex.* 23) as being a *puella*, or “young girl,” probably around fourteen years old, during the war.⁵⁴⁷ As he comments, all of these estimates are circumstantial, but I think a birth date between 65-63 BCE fits best when all concerns are taken into account. Arsinoë’s mother, Kleopatra V, was removed from the court in 69 BCE, and if she had fallen out of favor due to her inability to bear a son (see chapter 11.2), there would likely be a gap in birth years while she was out of favor with Ptolemy XII. Then, if they tried again and she birthed yet another daughter, there might be another gap between the

⁵⁴⁵ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoë IV.” Kleopatra VII was born in 70/69, so Arsinoë was born after that year. Bennett argues that since Dio Cassius (42.35.5) describes Caesar as awarding Cyprus to “Arsinoë and Ptolemy the Younger,” she was the older sibling, and must have been born before him (prior to 62/61 BCE).

⁵⁴⁶ Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*, 356; Bouché-Leclerq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.179, n. 1; Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 187; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 223. This argument derives, according to Bennett, from the belief that she would have needed to be older at the time of the war and able to wield the authority necessary to command the death of Achilles (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 4; Dio Cass. 42.40.1). Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoë IV.”

⁵⁴⁷ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoë IV.” Other historians agree with this younger date or refrain from making a specific statement of her age. Mahaffy comments that she was “a girl hardly grown up,” and Fraser simply identifies her as “the young sister of Cleopatra.” Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt Under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 243; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 126.

birth of Arsinoë and Ptolemy XIII, where Kleopatra V was once more out of favor.

Furthermore, a birth date range of 65-63 BCE would mean Arsinoë was a teenager during the Alexandrian War, which would indicate she was of an age to participate in the events, while still substantially depending on her *philos/nutricium* Ganymedes. As a teenager, she was also old enough to be considered a threat that Caesar deemed needed to be removed from the city at the end of the conflict (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 33).

If Arsinoë was born between 65-63 BCE, as proposed, she would have likely remained with her mother in Egypt during Ptolemy XII's exile to Rome. It is uncertain what happened to her after her mother's death in 57 BCE, but Ganymedes may have helped raise her, since his is called a *nutricium* (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 4) and was obviously held in high esteem by the princess. There are no records that indicate if she was at the court during Berenike IV's tenure as *basilissa*-regnant, and her reaction to her oldest sister's subsequent execution is also not preserved. By 52 BCE, Ptolemy XII named his remaining children, Kleopatra VII, Arsinoë IV, Ptolemy XIII, and Ptolemy XIV, the *Theoi Neoi Philadelphoi*, or the New Sibling-loving Gods (*OGIS* 2.741 = *SB* 5.8933), perhaps as a method of promoting solidarity among them.⁵⁴⁸ When Arsinoë's older sister, Kleopatra VII, and younger brother, Ptolemy XIII, ascended to the throne in 51 BCE (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.108; Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 33), she may have been at court, but there is no record of her early participation in the civil war that ensued and climaxed by 48 BCE. Yet, it seems she was at court by the time of Julius Caesar's arrival (see Appendix A), since the first mention of Arsinoë in the literary sources is in conjunction with Caesar's attempts to deescalate the conflict.

⁵⁴⁸ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 230.

After Julius Caesar arrived in Egypt, Arsinoë was appointed as joint ruler of Cyprus with her brother, Ptolemy XIV (Dio Cass. 42.35), in an attempt to end the civil strife.⁵⁴⁹ Either she, her *philoï*, the army, or all involved were unhappy with this arrangement because she was proclaimed queen in place of Kleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIII in September of 48 BCE (Dio Cass. 42.39; Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 4). She was not crowned as queen, however, and it is likely she was acclaimed so by the army, rather than being officially recognized by the Alexandrian administration.⁵⁵⁰ Although a young woman, she may have been a preferable ruler in the eyes of the army as the only royal sibling who was not seeking Roman favor, and she began to direct the war with the Alexandrian general Achillas (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.112).⁵⁵¹ They began to disagree (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.112), so Arsinoë ordered Achillas' death and placed her *philos* Ganymedes in charge of the army (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 4; Dio Cass. 42.40).

When Ptolemy XIII was released to the Egyptian forces in October of 48 BCE, he and Arsinoë were proclaimed king and queen, in opposition to Kleopatra (Dio Cass. 42.42-43; Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 23-24). In the battle that ensued, Ptolemy XIII drowned in the Nile (Dio Cass. 42.43; Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 31; Strab. 17.1.11). Arsinoë was captured to be exhibited in Caesar's subsequent triumphal procession in Rome (Dio Cass. 43.19; App. *Civ.* 2.101) and then exiled to Ephesus (Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 33; Joseph. *AJ* 15.89; alternately Miletus in App. *Civ.* 5.9). Ptolemy's death and Arsinoë's capture occurred in January of 47 BCE, so they would have ruled as militarily proclaimed king and queen for about three months.⁵⁵² Here

⁵⁴⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoë IV"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 235. Bennett notes that only Dio Cassius mentions this event, so it has been called into question by previous historians. See, Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides*, II.193, n.1.

⁵⁵⁰ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoë IV."

⁵⁵¹ Penrose, *Postcolonial Amazons*, 220. After all, Ptolemy XII had been removed as pharaoh in 58 BCE on account of his pandering to Rome, and now both Ptolemy XIII and Kleopatra VII looked to be following in his footsteps by courting Roman favor and opinion.

⁵⁵² Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoë IV," "Ptolemy XIII." See also, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 237, n. 70.

again, they were not likely recognized as king and queen in Alexandria, since Caesar and Kleopatra held power there.

Arsinoë's life after the Alexandrian War is not well documented. Caesar's triumph occurred sometime in 46 BCE.⁵⁵³ It is not known if Arsinoë was kept as a prisoner during the intervening period, similarly to Vercingetorix as a rival, but inferior, sovereign, or if she was treated as a captive guest, as the children of conquered areas were, such as Juba of Mauretania or Kleopatra VII's children by Antony. Only Dio Cassius (43.19) notes that Arsinoë's treatment during the triumph, being displayed as a captive among the trophies taken from Egypt, displeased the people, so she was released afterwards. Additionally, it is not clear if she was either held at Rome for a time before being released, sent to Ephesus immediately following the triumph, or permitted to go to Cyprus, as Caesar had originally planned for her. Most scholars, due to the lack of documentation, simply state that she was immediately exiled to Ephesus, where she acted as a devotee of Artemis/Diana until her death.⁵⁵⁴ Strabo (14.6.6), however, briefly mentions that Antony gave Cyprus to Kleopatra and "her sister Arsinoë." Most scholars assume this is an error by Strabo, but Bicknell has convincingly argued that Arsinoë was made the ruler of Cyprus by Caesar after his triumph.⁵⁵⁵ She ruled the island under the suzerainty of her sister and with the guidance of Kleopatra's *philos*, Serapion, who was *strategos* of the island (App. *Civ.* 4.61).

Bicknell further posits that Arsinoë was expelled from the island by Kleopatra after Caesar's death, at which time she fled to Ephesus, and which is why the passage by Appian (*Civ.* 5.9) indicates that she was welcomed as a queen there (ὕποδεξάμενόν ποτε τὴν

⁵⁵³ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe IV"; Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 237.

⁵⁵⁴ See, for example, Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 237.

⁵⁵⁵ Peter J. Bicknell, "Caesar, Antony, Cleopatra and Cyprus," *Latomus* 36, no. 2 (1977), 332.

Ἀρσινόην ὡς βασιλίδα).⁵⁵⁶ Arsinoë was subsequently murdered by Antony at Ephesus around 41 BCE, after he met with Kleopatra at Tarsus (Joseph. *AJ* 15.89; Joseph. *Ap.* 2.5; App. *Civ.* 5.9; erroneously cited as brothers in Dio Cass. 48.24.2). The Roman authors claim that Kleopatra requested her sister's death, but this is likely the result of Roman propaganda that strove to depict the immorality of the queen. Kleopatra ordering her sister's death would have also provided a convenient parallel to the earlier story of the death of Kleopatra IV at the hands of Tryphaina (See chapter 12.1), which would have allowed the Roman authors to include Kleopatra VII in the “evil queen” *topos*.⁵⁵⁷ Instead, both Bennett and Bicknell postulate that the decision was likely Antony's, done out of political considerations, especially if Arsinoë had served as a queen in Cyprus.⁵⁵⁸

Arsinoë's death has also inspired modern scholarly contention, concerning the possible identification of her tomb. A large octagonal tomb in Ephesus was first excavated in 1926, and it was found to hold the remains of a female skeleton, initially estimated to be around twenty years old.⁵⁵⁹ By 1990, after reexamining the tomb and the remains, Thür proposed that the tomb belonged to Arsinoë IV, on account of its grandeur and Egyptian decoration elements, and she proposed an age range of sixteen to eighteen years old for the skeleton.⁵⁶⁰ Additional testing, including carbon dating of the bones, which provided a date range between 200-20 BCE, and skeletal and DNA analysis by Kanz, which estimated an age

⁵⁵⁶ Bicknell, “Caesar, Antony, Cleopatra and Cyprus,” 332-333. Bicknell claims Arsinoë may have also sought to aid Brutus and Cassius. Serapion also collaborated with Cassius, fell out of favor, and was subsequently murdered during this period (App. *Civ.* 9.5).

⁵⁵⁷ See pgs. 420-421, above.

⁵⁵⁸ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoe IV”; Bicknell, “Caesar, Antony, Cleopatra and Cyprus,” 334-338. If Arsinoë had aided Brutus and Cassius, see note 556, above, this could have been another of the reasons Antony had her murdered. He could label her as a traitor in order to justify removing a political rival to Kleopatra.

⁵⁵⁹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Arsinoe IV.”

⁵⁶⁰ Hilke Thür, “Arsinoë IV, eine Schwester Kleopatras VII, Grabinhaberin des Oktogons von Ephesos? Ein Vorschlag,” in *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 60 (1990), 43, 52.

range between fifteen to eighteen years old, seemed to further support Thür's conclusions.⁵⁶¹

There are, however, several flaws inherent in the theory, which are exacerbated by poor methodology.

In Thür's estimate, if the tomb owner was between sixteen to eighteen years old at the time of her death, that would make Arsinoë between nine and eleven years old during the events of the Alexandrian War. This seems highly unlikely, given her reported active participation in the events. Conversely, if Arsinoë was born between 65-63 BCE, the skeleton should be that of a woman at least twenty-two to twenty-four years of age. The older date range, I argue, is more plausible for a woman who not only participated in a war, but also later served as queen of Cyprus and a priestess in Ephesus. The tomb identification is also tenuous. It is not confirmed to be Arsinoë's tomb via inscription or confirmable attribution, but rather a vague conclusion that it had some Egyptian elements and might resemble the lighthouse at Alexandria, which is an unsubstantiated assertion in itself, since scholars are still not positive what that structure looked like. Finally, the analysis of the skeleton was questionable. The head of the skeleton went missing during World War II, and the bones had been handled so many times between 1926 and the 1990s that the DNA tests came back inconclusive.⁵⁶² Thür also based some of her skeletal assertions on the 1926 excavation notes, which is dubious since they were composed well before both standardized archaeological and forensic practices were implemented.⁵⁶³ While it would be exciting to

⁵⁶¹ Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe IV."

⁵⁶² Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe IV."

⁵⁶³ On the whole, Thür's conclusions seem to only be accepted by the popular media, while archaeologists and Classicists find her assertions and methodology questionable. See, for example, the blog post by Classicist David Meadows, who also cites a skeptical Times article by Mary Beard. David Meadows, "Cleopatra, Arsinoe, and the Implications," *The Rogue Classicism* (blog), March 15, 2009, <https://rogueclassicism.com/2009/03/15/cleopatra-arsinoe-and-the-implications/>. Bennett concedes that the identification seems plausible, but it is inconclusive. Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Arsinoe IV." My above analysis also does not wade into the ethnicity debate addressed by Thür concerning Kleopatra's and Arsinoë's possible African maternity, but I will note that Thür's

positively identify the only surviving remains of a Ptolemaic royal figure, I do not think that can be conclusively done with the skeleton or tomb in Ephesus.

Arsinoë's death in Ephesus is the last mention of the queen in the literary sources. This leaves modern readers with the image of her as the victim of Kleopatra and Antony's machinations. Not only in death but also in the events of her life, Arsinoë is overshadowed by her famous sister, with all Arsinoë's decisions and actions being credited as reactions against those of Kleopatra. Arsinoë's choices may have been inspired by a much longer tradition, however, since she came from a line of strong Ptolemaic queens. Although not an officially recognized *basilissa*, Arsinoë reserved a place for herself among the powerful women of the Hellenistic period by being proclaimed as sovereign by the army and then leading them in combat. This connected her to the other militarily involved women of the dynasty, including Arsinoë II, Arsinoë III, and Kleopatra III, and allowed her to achieve levels of authority some of the males of the dynasty did not attain. Although the sources relegate her to the role of victim in death, in describing her life, Arsinoë IV is one of the few women of the period that the Roman sources do not dismiss as a passive participant, but instead comment on her active military leadership. She was a powerful Ptolemaic royal woman on her own, who drew from the heritage of her foremothers, and, consequently, she should not be characterized only as the impetuous little sister of the most famous Kleopatra.

methodology there is also poor, since she bases her assertions on pseudo-scientific practices that have long since been proven as inaccurate and racist.

[Concluding Points: Kleopatra VII, not the oddity after all](#)

The purpose of this dissertation has been to provide an overview and analysis of the Ptolemaic queens who have been passed over in scholarship and to demonstrate that the power they accumulated over the generations of the Ptolemaic Dynasty made the achievements of Kleopatra VII possible. While Kleopatra VII is the most well-known Ptolemaic queen, she was not the oddity of feminine rulership that she is often represented as, and, instead, her power was predicated on a long line of female achievement. Kleopatra VII has had hundreds (if not thousands) of books and articles written about her, so I will not repeat all the well-known information about her here.⁵⁶⁴ Rather, I will highlight several points of her rulership that demonstrate how she fit into and built on the patterns established by previous queens.

Just as with the royal women who came before her, Kleopatra VII received a Greek style education, which allowed her to interact in and excel at the politics of her day. In fact, she is the Ptolemaic queen whose education is the most explicitly referenced in the ancient sources (see, for example, Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 27; Cic. *Att.* 15.15). She also must have built an extensive network of *philoï* who helped her govern the kingdom over the course of her long reign. For instance, her *philos* Apollodorus is named by Plutarch, but he also indicates that she had many others when he says that Apollodorus was the only person “among her friends” (τῶν φίλων) that Kleopatra permitted to go with her to Caesar at their first meeting (Plu. *Vit. Caes.* 49).

⁵⁶⁴ For good sources on Kleopatra VII, see Susan Walker and Peter Higgs, eds., *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001); Sally-Ann Ashton, *Cleopatra and Egypt* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008); Michel Chauveau, *Egypt in the Age of Cleopatra* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); Margaret M. Miles, ed., *Cleopatra: A Sphinx Revisited* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Prudence Jones, *Cleopatra: A Sourcebook* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006).

Similarly to her predecessors, Kleopatra was referenced in the dating protocols utilized during the various periods of her rule, and they also shed light on her induction into the dynastic cult and the various epithets she adopted. Kleopatra ascended to the throne at the death of her father in 51 BCE (*iBucheum* 13; Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167-168, ed. Schoene; Strab. 17.1.11), and thereafter took on the epithet *Thea Philopator* (see Appendix D), in honor of him.⁵⁶⁵ She may have been appointed as Ptolemy XII's co-ruler during the last year of his reign, from 52-51 BCE, in the same pattern as Kleopatra Berenike III and Ptolemy IX, so the transition from father to female-heir was a smooth one, at first.⁵⁶⁶ Although Kleopatra and Ptolemy XIII ostensibly inherited the throne together, as a ruling pair, the documents of the year 51 BCE list only Kleopatra's name, and the dating protocol makes use of the feminized form of the verb "to reign" (βασιλευούσης; see Appendix C), demonstrating that she was the dominant ruling figure (*iBucheum* 13; *iGFayum* 205; *PSI* 10.1098). Her brother, with the help of his *philoï*, contested her rule in 50/49 BCE, and she was expelled for a time in 48 BCE (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.103).⁵⁶⁷

In 47 BCE, Kleopatra was placed back on the throne with her younger brother, Ptolemy XIV, by Caesar after the events of the Alexandrian War (Strab. 17.1.11; Porph. in Eus. *Chron.* 1.167-169, ed. Schoene; Ps.-Caes. *BAlex.* 33.1-2; Dio Cass. 35-44; Suet. *Jul.* 35.1; App. *Civ.* 2.90).⁵⁶⁸ In an effort to uphold Ptolemaic tradition, they likely married at this time (Dio Cass. 42.44) and were inducted into the dynastic cult as the *Theoi Philopatores kai Philadelphoi* (Appendix D). From 47 BCE until her brother-husband's death in 44 BCE,

⁵⁶⁵ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 231; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra VII."

⁵⁶⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 231; contra Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Ptolemy XII."

⁵⁶⁷ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 231; Bennett, *PD* s.v. "Cleopatra VII," "Arsinoë IV." According to Hölbl, Ptolemy gaining control of Egypt for a time might be evidenced by *BGU* 8.1730, which is a prostagma issued by the "king and queen." I have previously argued, however, that it should be attributed to Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V, rather than Ptolemy XIII and Arsinoë IV, see note 476, above.

⁵⁶⁸ On the events of the war, including Ptolemy XIII's death, see chapter 12.3.

Kleopatra was again the dominant co-ruler, as demonstrated by papyri and the dating protocols in which Kleopatra's name was placed before that of Ptolemy XIV (*P. Oxy.* 14.1629; Appendix C). Afterwards, from 44 BCE until her death, she co-ruled with her son, Ptolemy XV Caesarion (*OGIS* 194; *BGU* 14.2376; *SB* 4.7337 = *THI* 5), but again, in this arrangement, she served as the dominant co-ruler.

Her role as dominant queen was also demonstrated by the hieroglyphic titles she was presented with on temples. At the temple of Montu at Hermonthis, accompanying scenes of the birth of Ptolemy XV, Kleopatra was granted the title *hk3.t* (“ruler”) and two female Horus names (see Appendix E).⁵⁶⁹ The title “ruler,” which had been utilized by many of her predecessor provided her with cultic visibility and authority. Her Horus names, which had previously only been granted to the most powerful queens of the dynasty, including Berenike II and Kleopatra III, acknowledged both her assumption of kingly prerogatives and her standing as one of the most politically active and authoritative queens of the dynasty.

In her monumental depictions, Kleopatra VII unquestionably emulated the powerful women that came before her. The stele *iGFayum* 205 (= Louvre E. 27113), which is dated to July 51 BCE, depicts Kleopatra VII offering to Isis, and in the carving, Kleopatra is portrayed as a male pharaoh in a pointed kilt and pharaonic double crown. Bianchi points out that this is likely because the stele was carved for Ptolemy XII before his death and then repurposed for Kleopatra VII, but it also neatly fits Kleopatra in with the masculinized imagery utilized by Hatshepsut, Kleopatra III, and Berenike IV.⁵⁷⁰ It also demonstrates Kleopatra's early intentions to rule as a dominant power and to take on kingly attributes, as she did throughout the course of her reign.

⁵⁶⁹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 280, n. 121; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Cleopatra VII.”

⁵⁷⁰ Bianchi, *Cleopatra's Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies*, 188-189, cat. no. 78.

Much like Kleopatra III, Kleopatra VII was depicted making offerings to the gods alone in temple scenes, including at Kom Ombo where she is depicted presenting Ma'at to the gods.⁵⁷¹ In fact, of all the Ptolemaic queens, Kleopatra VII was depicted twenty-five times alone before the gods, more than any of her predecessors.⁵⁷² And, although previous queens had been depicted offering to the gods alone, the presentation of Ma'at had hitherto only been conducted by male pharaohs, even when they were junior co-rulers.⁵⁷³ Accordingly, in these scenes, Kleopatra was using the example of previous queens, but she also built on their achievements by taking that traditionally male motif, the offering of Ma'at, on herself, demonstrating her superior power.

This combining of queenly and kingly prerogatives is echoed in the scenes where Kleopatra VII appeared with Ptolemy XV, and, again similarly to Kleopatra III, her image was carved before that of her son, such as on the mammisi of Hermonthis.⁵⁷⁴ In these scenes, although depicted with kingly powers, Kleopatra was also depicted with the traditional queenly headgear of Ma'at plumes and solar disk that assimilated her to Isis and Hathor. In fact, many of the scenes at Hermonthis, both those of her alone and with her son, strive to associate Kleopatra with Isis and Hathor in their roles as mother and child-bearer. So, it seems she was aware of both the kingly attributes she was portraying and the queenly traits she wanted to emphasize in order to put forth the strongest image of her rule. In other scenes, including at Dendera, Kleopatra VII is depicted wearing Arsinoe II's unique queenly

⁵⁷¹ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 272.

⁵⁷² Bielman-Sánchez and Joliton, "Marital Crises or Institutional Crises? Two Ptolemaic Couples Under the Spotlight," 81.

⁵⁷³ See note 382, above.

⁵⁷⁴ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 276, 278; Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 150-151. In other scenes, such as at the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, Kleopatra was carved behind her son, see Fig. 9.11 in Hölbl.

crown.⁵⁷⁵ This not only shows her attempt to associate herself with one of her most powerful predecessors, but it can also be interpreted as her attempt to take for herself the kingly attributes with which Arsinoë had been depicted.

Overall, Kleopatra VII's greatest achievement is that she co-ruled for the entirety of her reign, but, because of the extensive authority and dominant power she wielded, she is remembered as a *basilissa*-regnant. That she is remembered this way, even after the character assassination undertaken by later Roman authors, speaks to the incredible authority she wielded and the powerful imagery she built for herself, since many of her greatest achievements were later covered up or twisted by propaganda.

With that said, I would like to conclude with three points. First, Kleopatra VII was not an oddity, and she was not the first Ptolemaic queen to rule on her own. Several earlier Ptolemaic queens ruled successfully on their own, albeit for much shorter periods of time, but the trend was there for Kleopatra VII to follow and build upon, as all her predecessors had done. Second, she was not the whore queen, as she has previously been depicted. Did Kleopatra VII use her body to help protect and maintain her kingdom? Absolutely. But, many of the men of her day did likewise, and they are not judged to be overly sexual or immoral. That she is considered a loose and immoral woman is a bias of past days and past scholarship that needs to be both pointed out and removed from the way she is described.

While she did have sexual relationships with both Caesar and Antony, that was only one method in her arsenal of queenly tactics. If anything, the fact that she could convince these two Roman men to work in her favor should speak to her overall intelligence, charisma, and empowerment. All of which are traits she inherited from the long line of powerful

⁵⁷⁵ Minas, "Macht und Ohnmacht. Die Repräsentation ptolemäischer Königinnen in ägyptischen Tempeln," 150, Fig. 19.

women who came before her and were depicted for hundreds of years with kingly attributes. The queens of her past were regularly shown in conjunction with their kings and paired as royal, dynastic units who wielded power efficiently and equally. Kleopatra VII's brothers were both too young and too weak to rule beside someone with her ambition. So, Kleopatra VII found herself consorts and partners, first Caesar and then Antony, who would more effectively support her plans and ambitions for Egypt. The concept of Kleopatra's sexuality is another example of the wider issue mentioned throughout this dissertation, that the stereotypes put forth by the ancient literary source have been unquestionably repeated for Ptolemaic queens.

Finally, and much like the point that concluded the chapter on Arsinoë IV, Ptolemaic queens should be analyzed, not only as the precursors to the famous Kleopatra, but also for what they can tell us about Ptolemaic history and the study of ancient women in general. Understanding the roles these women played in the Ptolemaic monarchy, religious imagery, and dynastic building processes can help historians better understand the dynasty and Ptolemaic history as a whole. Furthermore, these queens were some of the most powerful women in the ancient world, and they disprove many of the stereotypes that are commonly accepted as generically pertaining to 'all' ancient women. Yet, they are still often excluded from or badly generalized in history textbooks, courses on the ancient world or women, and even in Hellenistic-specific works. What is worse, is the egregious repetition of ancient literary *topoi* and the moral judgements of these women as fact. Accordingly, it is my hope that this dissertation, which had endeavored to collect all the pertinent data related to these queens, both Egyptian and Greek, literary and material, will dismiss some of the more

flagrant *topoi* about their lives and relationships and provide easily accessible source material that will allow for wider study and inclusion of these remarkable women.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ptolemaic Chronology

Monarchs

Regnal Dates

Ptolemy I Soter [*basileus*-regnant]¹

305/4-282 BCE,

Berenike I [*basilissa*-consort]

All following dates BCE

- Notable events:
- *Διάδοχοι* and dynasty founder
 - Satrap of Egypt, 323-305
 - Appointed Ptolemy II co-ruler in 285/4
- Three prior marriages/liaisons with Thais, Artakama, and Eurydike

Ptolemy II Philadelphos [*basileus*-regnant]

285/4-246

Arsinoë II Philadelphos [*basilissa*-consort]

- Ptolemy II first married to **Arsinoë I** [*basilissa*-consort] c. 285 to mid-270s
- Ptolemy II's second marriage to **Arsinoë II**, c. 275/4- 268, first incestuous marriage of the dynasty
- Institution of dynastic cult (272/271)
- Pithom and Mendes Stele

Ptolemy III Euergetes [*basileus*-regnant]

246-222

Berenike II Euergetis [*basilissa*-consort]

- Third Syrian War (246-241)
- First native uprising
- Canopus Decree (238)

Ptolemy IV Philopater [*basileus*-regnant]

222-204

Arsinoë III Philopater [*basilissa*-consort]

- Fourth Syrian War (219-217)
- Battle of Raphia; Raphia Decree (217)

Ptolemy V Epiphanes [*basileus*-regnant]

204-180

- Ascended throne, aged 6
 - Advisors, Sosibios, Agathokles, Tlepolemos, Sosibios the Younger, Aristomenes, and Polykrates
- Fifth Syrian War (202-195)
- Married Seleukid Princess, **Kleopatra I Syra** [*basilissa*-consort] (194/3)
- Thebaid Rebellion (206-186)
- Rosetta Stone (196), Philae Decrees (186, 185)

¹ For the titles in brackets, see the Introduction, Terminology section, Table 1.

Kleopatra I Epiphanes [<i>basilissa</i> -regent] ²	180-177
Ptolemy VI Philometor [<i>minor-basileus</i>]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kleopatra I became 1st dominant co-ruling royal female as the <i>basilissa</i>-regent of her young son (Ptolemy VI, aged 6) 	
Ptolemy VI Philometor [<i>minor-basileus</i>]	177-170
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascended throne, aged 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advisors, Eulaios and Lenaios, <i>philo</i>i of Kleopatra I • Married to Kleopatra II [<i>basilissa</i>-consort] (175) 	
Ptolemy VI Philometor [Co-ruler]	170-164
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II/Physkon [Co-ruler]	
Kleopatra II Philometor [Co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth Syrian War (170-168) 	
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II/Physkon [<i>basileus</i> -regnant]	164-163
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King of Kyrene 163-145 	
Ptolemy VI Philometor [Co-ruler]	163-145
Kleopatra II Philometor [Co-ruler]	
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II/Physkon [Co-ruler]	145-132/1
Kleopatra II Euergetis [Co-ruler]	
Kleopatra III Euergetis [Co-ruler]	From 140-132/1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ptolemy VIII divorced Kleopatra II, c. 141/140, and married Kleopatra III, they continued to rule as a trio 	
Period of civil war and dual claimants to the throne	132/1-127

Kleopatra II Thea Philometor Soteira [*basilissa*-regnant]

- Ruled Alexandria and parts of southern Egypt: Thebes, Edfu, Herakleopolis, Dios Polis, and Hermonthis, 131/130-127
- Retreated to the court of her daughter, Kleopatra Thea, in Syria 127-125/4

Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II/Physkon [Co-ruler]

Kleopatra III Euergetis [Co-ruler]

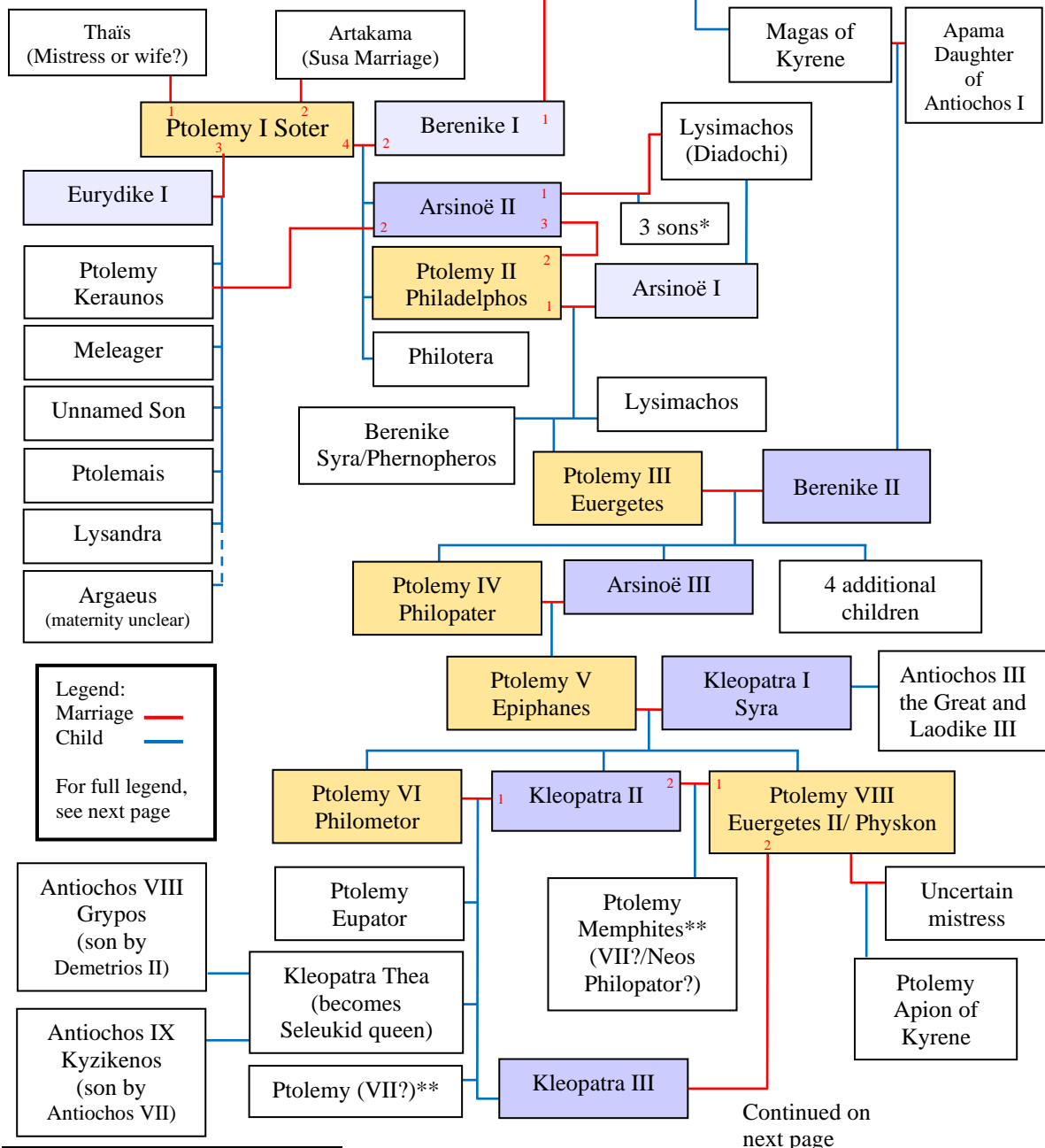
- First retreated to Cyprus (131), then returned to Egypt (late 130), and slowly began to take back portions of the country from a base in the Fayum and Memphis.

² From this point of the list on, the order in which the monarchs are listed follows the dating protocols of the period. Prior to Kleopatra I, the queen was only listed in the dating protocol vis-à-vis her role in the parentage of the current king and her religious affiliations (via her cultic epithet or personal eponymous priesthood (see Appendix E). After Kleopatra I's regency for her son (180-177 BCE), queens were regularly included as co-ruling monarchs in the protocols, indicating officially recognized female participation in governance.

Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II/Physkon [Co-ruler]	127-116
Kleopatra II Euergetis [Co-ruler]	From 125/4-116
Kleopatra III Euergetis [Co-ruler]	From 127-116
• Great Amnesty Decrees (118)	
Kleopatra II Euergetis [Co-ruler]	Only for the year 116
Kleopatra III Euergetis Philometor Soteira [Co-ruler]	116-107
Ptolemy IX Philometor Soter II/Lathyros [Co-ruler]	
• Ptolemy IX married Kleopatra IV (119/8-115); Kleopatra Selene I [<i>basilissa</i> -consort] (115-107)	
• Deposed in 107 by Kleopatra III; King of Cyprus (106/5-88)	
Kleopatra III Euergetis Philometor Soteira [Co-ruler]	107-101
Ptolemy X Alexander I [Co-ruler]	
• Ptolemy X, King of Cyprus (114/113-107)	
• Ptolemy X married Kleopatra Selene I [<i>basilissa</i> - consort] (107-103)	
• Kleopatra III murdered in 101	
Ptolemy X Alexander I [<i>basileus</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	101-88
• Married Kleopatra Berenike III [<i>basilissa</i> - consort, co-ruler] (101-88)	
• Second Thebaid Rebellion (90-88)	
Ptolemy IX Soter II [<i>basileus</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	88-81
• Co-rule with daughter, Kleopatra Berenike III [co-ruler] (81)	
Kleopatra Berenike III Philopator [<i>basilissa</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	80
• Married Ptolemy XI Alexander II [<i>basileus</i> - consort, co-ruler] (80)	
• Murdered by Ptolemy XI (80)	
Ptolemy XI Alexander II [<i>basileus</i> -regnant]	80
• Murdered by Alexandrians angered by death of Berenike III	
Ptolemy XII Philopator Philadelphos, Neos Dionysos [<i>basileus</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	80-58
Kleopatra V Tryphaina [co-ruler]	80/79-69
• Kleopatra V removed as co-ruler (69)	
• Replaced by his daughter and wife (58)	

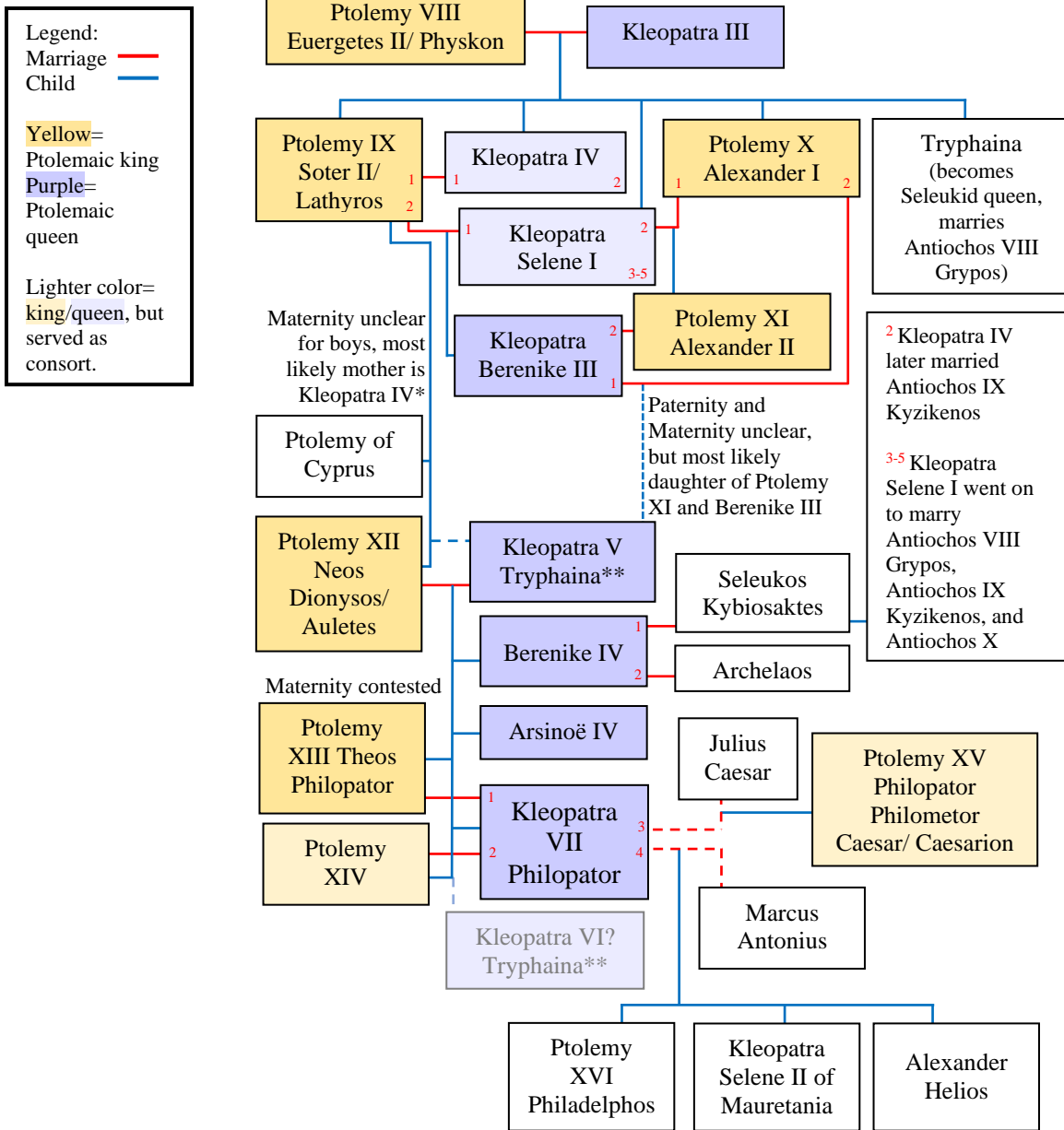
Berenike IV Epiphaneia [<i>basilissa</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	58-55
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint rule with mother 	
Kleopatra V Tryphaina [co-ruler]	58-57
Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos/Auletes	55-51
[<i>basileus</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstated by Rome • Possible joint rule with Kleopatra VII [co-ruler] 	52-51
Kleopatra VII Philopator [<i>basilissa</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	51-48
Ptolemy XIII Philopator [<i>basileus</i> -consort, co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ptolemy XIII deposes Kleopatra VII (Spring 48) • Arrival of Julius Caesar (July 48) 	
Ptolemy XIII Theos Philopator [co-ruler]	48-47
Arsinoë IV [co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ptolemy XIII drowned (47) • Arsinoë IV exhibited in Caesar's triumph in Rome and then sent to Cyprus or exiled to Ephesus (46) 	
Kleopatra VII Philopator [<i>basilissa</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	47-44
Ptolemy XIV Philopator Philadelphos [<i>basileus</i> -consort, co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kleopatra journeys to Rome with Caesarion (46) • Kleopatra visits Rome a second time, Julius Caesar assassinated (44) 	
Kleopatra VII Philopator [<i>basilissa</i> -regnant, co-ruler]	44-30
Ptolemy XV Caesarion [Minor- <i>basileus</i> , co-ruler]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kleopatra meets Antony at Tarsus (41) • Donations of Alexandria (34) • Battle of Actium (31) • Suicides of Antony and Kleopatra (30) 	
Ptolemy XV Philopator Philometor	30 BCE
Caesar/ Caesarion [<i>basileus</i> -regnant]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruled for 11 days 	

Appendix B: Ptolemaic Genealogy



* Arsinoë II had three sons by her first husband Lysimachos. Two of them were killed during her second marriage to her half-brother Ptolemy Keraunos. The third may be identified with the elusive Ptolemy “the Son,” who was the heir of Ptolemy II for a short time. The identity of this Ptolemy is heavily debated. See Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy ‘the Son’” and Part I, chapter 3.3, note 147.

**Ptolemy VII has been identified as either the son of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, called Ptolemy, or as Ptolemy Memphites, son of Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II. Various historians have labeled both men by this number, depending on what they determine as a possible period of co-rulership with his father/mother. *P.Dem. Ryl.* 3.16 confirms the existence of a second son for Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II because Ptolemy Eupator is named the “eldest son.” This boy is likely the son Justin mentions was murdered by Ptolemy VIII after his marriage to Kleopatra II (Just. 38.8.4). Ptolemy Memphites is the son Ptolemy VIII murdered during the civil war with Kleopatra II (38.8.12), usually identified with Ptolemy Neos Philopator. Neither will be referred to as Ptolemy VII in this work, since neither co-ruled with their fathers or mother. See Part III, chapter 9.1, note 129.



* Justin (39.4.1) indicates that Ptolemy IX had two children/sons, which has led historians to assume they were children by Kleopatra IV or Kleopatra Selene, who later died, since Pausanias (1.9.3) notes that only his daughter, Kleopatra Berenike III was legitimate. Some authors, like Hölbl, indicate that she was the daughter of Kleopatra IV, but Bennett makes the most convincing argument for her being the daughter of Kleopatra Selene I. I argue that Ptolemy of Cyprus and Ptolemy XII were children of Kleopatra IV, Ptolemy IX's first marriage, and were considered illegitimate because they were born of Ptolemy's first wife prior to his ascension to the throne. See Part II, chapter 11.1, pgs. 378-382.

** Kleopatra V/VI Tryphaina is another uncertain figure in Ptolemaic genealogy. Hölbl and some other historians identify Kleopatra V with Kleopatra (V) Selene I when she was queen of Egypt, and he lists Kleopatra VI as the sister and wife of Ptolemy XII. In this genealogy Kleopatra Selene I retains her full name, and Kleopatra V Tryphaina is listed the wife of Ptolemy XII, who was either the daughter of Kleopatra Berenike III and Ptolemy X or another daughter of Ptolemy IX with an unidentified mother. Kleopatra VI Tryphaina may be an additional daughter of Ptolemy XII, but it is unlikely that she existed. See Part III, chapter 11.2, 11.3, esp. pg. 408.

Appendix C- Ptolemaic Dating Protocols, showing change over time

The basic Ptolemaic dating protocol followed this general pattern:

Βασιλεύοντος/βασιλευόντων... the current rulers' names and epithets... (ἔτους _), ἐφ' ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ... list of current *synnaoi* royal couple epithets... καὶ... list of current eponymous priests...dating information (μηνὸς [month name] [numeral day]).

During (Year _ of) the rule of ... the current rulers' names and epithets...The priest of Alexander, and ... list of current *synnaoi* royal couple epithets..., and... list of current eponymous priests...dating information (the [numeral day] of the month [month name]).

The full dating protocol, which was not always identically reproduced by scribes, would look approximately as such at these points during the Ptolemaic dynasty's rule:

Dating protocol, c. 250 BCE, reign of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II:

βασιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου Σωτήρος...ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου⁵

During the rule of Ptolemy (II), son of Ptolemy (I) Soter...The priest of Alexander, and of the Theoi Adelphoi; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos⁶

Example: *P.Cairo Zen. 2.59289*

Dating protocol, c. 243 BCE, reign of Ptolemy III and Berenike II:

Βασιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ Ἀρσινόης θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν...ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου

During the rule of Ptolemy (III), son of Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoë (II), the Theoi Adelphoi ...The priest of Alexander, and of the Theoi Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetes; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos

Example: *BGU 10.1982*

Dating protocol, c. 215/4 BCE, reign of Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III:

βασιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ Βερενίκης θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν...ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Σωτήρων καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων, ἀθλοφόρου Βερενίκης Εὐεργετίδος, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου

During the rule of Ptolemy (IV), son of Ptolemy (III) and Berenike (II), the Theoi Euergetai ...The priest of Alexander, and of the Theoi Soteres, and of the Theoi

⁵ The translations of these protocols are my own.

⁶ The dating protocol, especially during the third century, might also include the year of the current ruler, and the names and parentage of the current priests. In *P.Cairo Zen. 2.59289*, for example, it lists “ἔτους λε,” or “year 35,” and that Ptolemaios, son of Andromachos is the Priest of Alexander and Bilistiche, daughter of Philon, is the kanephoros.

Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetes, and of the Theoi Philopatores; the athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos

Example: *BGU* 6.1264

Dating protocol, c. 180 BCE, reign of Kleopatra I and Ptolemy VI:

βασιλευόντων⁷ Κλεοπάτρας τῆς μητρὸς θεᾶς Ἐπιφανοῦς καὶ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου θεοῦ Ἐπιφανοῦς... ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Σωτήρων καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων καὶ θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν, ἀθλοφόρου Βερενίκης Εὐεργέτιδος, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου, ἱερείας Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπάτορος

During the rule of Kleopatra (I), The mother, the Thea Eiphanes, and of Ptolemy (VI), son of Ptolemy (V) the Theos Eiphanes... The priest of Alexander, and of the Theoi Soteres, and of the Theoi Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetai, and of the Theoi Philopatores, and of the Theoi Eiphanais; the athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos; and the hierieia of Arsinoë Philopator

Example: *P.Freib* 3.22

Dating protocol, c. 160 BCE, reign of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II:

Βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας τῆς ἀδελφῆς τῶν Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν ... ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Σωτήρων καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων καὶ θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλομητόρων, ἀθλοφόρου Βερενίκης Εὐεργέτιδος, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου, ἱερείας Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπάτορος

During the rule of Ptolemy (VI) and Kleopatra (II), his sister, children of Ptolemy (V) and Kleopatra (I), the Theoi Eiphanais ... The priest of Alexander, and of the Theoi Soteres, and of the Theoi Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetai, and of the Theoi Philopatores, and of the Theoi Eiphanais, and of the Theoi Philometores; the athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos; and the hierieia of Arsinoë Philopator

Example: *BGU* 14.2390

Dating protocol, c. 140 BCE, reign of Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III:

βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου θεοῦ Εὐεργέτου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν, καὶ βασιλίσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς ἀδελφῆς, καὶ βασιλίσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς γυναικός, θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν, ἐφ' ἱερέως τοῦ ὄντος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Σωτήρων καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων καὶ θεῶν Ἐπιφανῶν καὶ θεοῦ Φιλομήτορος καὶ θεοῦ εὐπάτορος καὶ θεῶν εὐεργετῶν, ἀθλοφόρου Βερενίκης Εὐεργέτιδος, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου, ἱερείας Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπάτορος

During the rule of Ptolemy (VIII), Theos Euergetes (II), son of Ptolemy (V) and Kleopatra (I), the Theoi Eiphanais, and of Queen Kleopatra (II), the sister, and of Queen

⁷ This is the first appearance of the plural βασιλευόντων.

Kleopatra (III), the wife, the Theoi Euergetai (II)... The priest being in Alexandria of Alexander, and of the Theoi Soterēs, and of the Theoi Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetai, and of the Theoi Philopatores, and of the Theoi Epiphaneis, and of the Theos Philometor, and of the Theos Eupator, and of the Theoi Euergetai; the athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos; and the hierēia of Arsinoë Philopator

Example: *P.Grenf.* 2.15⁸

Dating protocol, c. 113 BCE, reign of Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX:

βασιλευόντων Κλεοπάτρας καὶ Πτολεμαίου θεῶν Φιλομητόρων Σωτήρων... ἱερεὺς τοῦ ὄντος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν Σωτήρων καὶ θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν καὶ θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων καὶ θεῶν Επιφανῶν καὶ θεοῦ Εὐπάτορος καὶ θεοῦ Φιλομήτορος καὶ θεοῦ Φιλοπάτορος Νέου καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν (θεοῦ Εὐεργέτου) καὶ θεῶν Φιλομητόρων Σωτήρων; ἱερέως διὰ βίου βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας, θεᾶς Ἀφροδίτης καὶ Φιλομήτορος; ἱεροῦ πάλου Ἴσιδος μητρὸς θεῶν μεγάλης; στεφανηφόρου βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς Φιλομήτορος Σωτείας Δικαιοσύνης Νικηφόρου; ἀθλοφόρου Βερενίκης Εὐεργέτιδος; φωσφόρου βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς Φιλομήτορος Σωτείας Δικαιοσύνης Νικηφόρου; κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου; ἱερείας βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς Φιλομήτορος Σωτείας Δικαιοσύνης Νικηφόρου; ἱερείας Ἀρσινόης Φιλοπάτορος

During the rule of Kleopatra (III) and of Ptolemy (IX) the Theoi Philometores Soterēs ... The priest being in Alexandria of Alexander, and of the Theoi Soterēs, and of the Theoi Adelphoi, and of the Theoi Euergetai, and of the Theoi Philopatores, and of the Theoi Epiphaneis, and of the Theos Eupator, and of the Theos Philometor, and of the Theos Neos Philopator, and of the Theoi Euergetai (or Theos Euergetes), and of the Theoi Philometores Soterēs; the priest during the lifetime of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor; the hieropolos of Isis, the great one, mother of the gods; the stephanephoros of queen Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros; the athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis; the phosphoros of queen Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros; the kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos; the hierēia of queen Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros; and the hierēia of Arsinoë Philopator

Example: *P.Dion.* 21

In 107/6 BCE the last eponymous priesthood of the Ptolemies was established by Kleopatra III (See Appendix D), so from that point on, no additional priesthoods were added to the protocol, only new deified royal couples were added to the Priest of Alexander's *synnaoi* list. Since the protocol had become so long and intricate by the end of Kleopatra III's reign, however, it was not always fully reproduced by scribes through the end of the dynasty.

⁸ For an example of the protocol during the civil war period, see *PSI* 9.1016 for Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III and *UPZ* 2.217 for Kleopatra II. Both these papyri also demonstrate that the secondary dynastic cult, which was established at Ptolemais (see Appendix D), might also be referenced in the protocol: ἐφ' ἱερείων καὶ ἱερείων τῶν ὄντων καὶ οὐσῶν ἐν Πτολεμαίῳ, "and the priests and priestesses being those in office in Ptolemais..." (*PSI* 9.1016).

Oftentimes, set phrases were utilized instead of the entire list of the Alexander Priest and eponymous priesthoods⁹:

1. Βασιλευόντων... current rulers' names and epithets... ἐφ' ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν γραφομένων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι... date information...

During the rule of ... current rulers' names and epithets... the priest of Alexander and the others being as written at Alexandria... date...

Examples: *BGU* 14.2389, 172 BCE; *P. Tebt.* 1.106, 101 BCE; *SB* 6.9405, 75 BCE

2. Βασιλευόντων... current rulers' names and epithets... ἐφ' ἱερέων καὶ ἱερειῶν καὶ κανηφόρου τῶν ὄντων καὶ οὐσῶν... date information...¹⁰

During the rule of ... current rulers' names and epithets... the priests and the priestesses and the kanephoros being those in office... date...

Examples: *P. Grenf.* 2.23a, 107 BCE; *P. Adler* 12, 101 BCE; *BGU* 3.998, 101 BCE; *BGU* 3.999, 99 BCE; *P. Amh.* 2.51, 88 BCE

3. Βασιλευόντων... current rulers' names and epithets... τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῶν κοινῶν ὡς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι γράφεται... date information...¹¹

During the rule of ... current rulers' names and epithets... and the rest of the formula as written in Alexandria... date...

Examples: *P. Oxy.* 14.1628, 73 BCE; *P. Oxy.* 14.1644, 63/62 BCE; *P. Oxy.* 55.3777, 57 BCE; *P. Oxy.* 14.1629, 44 BCE

There are few examples of the protocol, even with the shortened phrases, from the reigns of Berenike III, Ptolemy XII, Kleopatra V, Berenike IV, and Kleopatra VII:

Dating protocol, c. 88 BCE, reign of Ptolemy X and Berenike III:

βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου τοῦ ἐπικαλουμένου Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας τῆς ἀδελφῆς θεῶν Φιλομητόρων Σωτήρων... ἐφ' ἱερέων καὶ ἱερειῶν καὶ κλεοφόρου τῶν ὄντων καὶ οὐσῶν...

During the rule of Ptolemy (X), called Alexander (I), and of Cleopatra (Berenike III), the sister, the Theoi Philometores Soteres... the priests and priestesses and the kanephoros being those in office...

Example: *P. Amh.* 2.51

⁹ On these phrases, see also Part III, chapter 11.1, pg. 368.

¹⁰ This phrase may have been adapted for use with the Alexandrian priesthood after the phrase was originally developed to reference the priests and priestesses of the secondary dynastic cult at Ptolemais, see note 8, above.

¹¹ This phrase is only used from the reign of Ptolemy XII to the end of the dynasty. It seems that it might be an even further abbreviating of phrase #2.

Dating protocol, c. 73 BCE, reign of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V Tryphaina:

βασιλευόντων Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας τῆς καὶ Τρυφαίνης θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων
Φιλαδέλφων...τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῶν κοινῶν ὡς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι γράφεται...

During the rule of Ptolemy (XII) and of Kleopatra (V), the one called Tryphaina, the
Theoi Philopatores and Philadelphoi...and the rest of the formula as written in
Alexandria...

Example: *P. Oxy.* 14.1628; see *SB* 6.9405 for an example of phrase #1

Dating protocol, c. 57 BCE, reign of Berenike IV:

βασιλευούσης¹² Βερενίκης θεᾶς Ἐπιφανοῦς...τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῶν κοινῶν ὡς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι
γράφεται...

During the rule of Berenike (IV), the Thea Epiphaneia... and the rest of the formula as
written in Alexandria...

Example: *P. Oxy.* 55.3777

Dating protocol, c. 51 BCE, reign of Kleopatra VII:

βασιλευούσης Κλεοπάτρας θεᾶς φιλοπάτορος...ἐφ' ἱερέως Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων
τῶν γραφομένων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι...

During the rule of Kleopatra (VII), the Thea Philopator... the priest of Alexander and the
others being as written at Alexandria...

Example: *PSI* 10.1098

Dating protocol, c. 44 BCE, reign of Kleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIV:

βασιλευόντων Κλεοπάτρας καὶ Πτολεμαίου θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων...τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῶν κοινῶν
ὡς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι γράφεται...

During the rule of Kleopatra (VII) and Ptolemy (XIV), the Theoi Philopatores... and the
rest of the formula as written in Alexandria...

Example: *P. Oxy.* 14.1629

Dating protocol, c. 36/35 BCE, reign of Kleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesarion:

Βασιλευόντων Κλεοπάτρας Θεᾶς Νεωτέρας Φιλοπάτορος καὶ Φιλοπάτριδος καὶ
Πτολεμαίου τοῦ καὶ Καῖσαρ Θεοῦ Φιλοπάτορος καὶ Φιλομήτορος...ἐφ' ἱερέως τοῦ ὄντος
ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν γραφομένων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι

During the rule of Kleopatra (VII), the Thea Neotera Philopator and Philopatriis, and
Ptolemy (XV), called Caesar, the Theos Philopator and Philometor... the priest of
Alexander being in Alexandria and the others being as written at Alexandria

Example: *BGU* 14.2376

¹² Notice here the feminized form of the verb “to reign.” This feminized form is seen in the papyri of Kleopatra II, during her period of sole-rulership (*UPZ* 2.217), the papyri of Berenike IV (*P Oxy* 55.3777), and the papyri of Kleopatra VII (*PSI* 10.1098).

Instead of the full dating protocols being used in papyri, full lists of the *synnaoi* royal couple epithets are often only seen in King's Oaths by the second and first century BCE.¹³ See for example:

King's Oath, c. 78 BCE, reign of Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V Tryphaina:

ὄμνῳ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν καὶ Τρύφαιναν θεοὺς Φιλοπάτορας καὶ Φιλαδέλφους καὶ θεὰν Φιλοπάτορα καὶ θεὸν Σωτῆρα καὶ θεὰν Εὐέργετιν καὶ θεὸν Εὐεργέτην καὶ θεὸν Νέον Φιλοπάτορα καὶ θεὸν Εὐπάτορα καὶ θεὸν Φιλομήτορα καὶ θεοὺς Ἐπιφανεῖς καὶ θεοὺς Φιλοπάτορας καὶ θεοὺς Εὐεργέτας καὶ θεοὺς Ἀδελφοὺς καὶ θεοὺς Σωτῆρας καὶ τὸν Σάραπιν καὶ τὴν Ἴσιν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους θεοὺς πάντα καὶ πάσας.

I swear by King Ptolemy (XII) and by Queen Kleopatra (V), the one called Tryphaina, the Theoi Philopatores and Philadelphoi, and by the Thea Philopator, and the Theos Soter, and the Thea Euergetis, and the Theos Euergetes, and the Theos Neos Philopator, and the Theos Eupator, and the Theos Philometor, and the Theoi Epiphaneis, and the Theoi Philopatores, and the Theoi Euergetai, and the Theoi Adelphoi, and the Theoi Soteres, and Serapis and Isis and all the other gods.

Example: *BGU* 8.1736; 20.2843

King's Oaths were very popular during the reigns of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II (see, for example, *P. Col.* 3.18, *BGU* 6.1257; *P. Dem. Testi Botti* 7) and Ptolemy III and Berenike II (see *P. Cair. Zen.* 3.59324; *P. Eleph.* 23). Some examples are also available from the succeeding reigns¹⁴:

Sovereign(s)	Translation	Papyri	Date (BCE)	<i>Synnaoi</i> list (Y/N)
ὄμνῳ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσα Πτολεμαῖον τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν ἀδελφὴν	I swear by King Ptolemy (VI) and by King Ptolemy (VIII), the brother, and by Queen Kleopatra (II), the sister	<i>P. Genova</i> 3.92	165	N
ὄμνῳ Βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον	I swear by King Ptolemy (VIII)	<i>JJP</i> 41.75	163	Y
ὄμνῳ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν	I swear by King Ptolemy (VI) and by Queen Kleopatra (II)	<i>P. Tebt.</i> 3.1.809	156	N
ὄμνῳ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν [Κλ]εοπάτραν	I swear by King Ptolemy (VI) and by Queen Kleopatra (II)	<i>SB</i> 26.16698	152	Y
ὄμνῳ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν ἀδελφὴν καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν γυναῖκα	I swear by King Ptolemy (VIII) and by Queen Kleopatra (II), the sister, and by	<i>P. Tebt.</i> 3.1.810; <i>P. Tebt.</i> 3.1.811	134	Y

¹³ On King's Oaths, see Part I, chapter 3.1, note 114.

¹⁴ Some documents might include both a dating protocol and a King's Oath, such as *P. Oxy.* 55.3777.

	Queen Kleopatra (III), the wife			
ὄμνῶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν	I swear by Queen Kleopatra (II)	<i>UPZ 2.217</i>	131	Y
ὄμνῶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν καὶ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον	I swear by Queen Kleopatra (III) and by King Ptolemy (IX)	<i>P. Tebt. 1.78</i>	110-108	N
ὄμνῶ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον τὸν καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον...καὶ βασίλισσαν Βερενίκην τὴν ἀδελφὴν	I swear by King Ptolemy (X), the one called Alexander, and by Queen Berenike, (III) the sister	<i>BGU 8.1735</i>	98	Y
ὄμνῶ βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον καὶ βασίλισσαν Κλεοπάτραν τὴν καὶ Τρύφαιναν	I swear by King Ptolemy (XII) and by Queen Kleopatra (V), the one called Tryphaina	<i>BGU 8.1736</i>	78	Y
		<i>BGU 20.2843</i>	72	Y
		<i>BGU 8.1738</i>	72/71	N
		<i>BGU 8.1739</i>	72/71	Y
ὄμνῶ βασίλισσαν Βερενίκην	I swear by Queen Berenike (IV)	<i>P. Oxy. 55.3777</i>	57	N

Appendix D- Eponymous Priesthoods and Cultic Titles

By 107/6 there were nine eponymous priesthoods in Alexandria. Here they are listed in descending order of power and prestige¹⁵:

- 1) The priest of Alexander (established from 290), of the Theoi Soteres (Ptolemy I and Berenike I, added in 215/4), of the Theoi Adelphoi (Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II, 272/1), of the Theoi Euergetai (Ptolemy III and Berenike II, 243), of the Theoi Philopatores (Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, 221/0), of the Theoi Epiphanes (Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I, 194/3), of the Theos Eupator (Ptolemy Eupator, 152), of the Theos Philometor (Ptolemy VI, 178/7), of the Theos Neos Philopator (Ptolemy Memphites, 118), of the Theoi Euergetai (Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III, 145/4, 142/1), and of the Theoi Philometores Soteres (Kleopatra II, Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, 116, and, then, Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX or X, 116, 107).¹⁶
- 2) The priest during the lifetime of the queen/king (from 107/106)
- 3) The hieropolos of Isis, the great one, mother of the gods (Kleopatra III, from 130)
- 4) The stephanephoros of queen Kleopatra III (from 116)
- 5) The athlophoros of Berenike Euergetis (from 215/4)
- 6) The phosphoros of queen Kleopatra III (from 116)
- 7) The kanephoros of Arsinoë Philadelphos (from 267/6)
- 8) The hiereia of queen Kleopatra III (from 116)
- 9) The hiereia of Arsinoë Philopator (from 199/8)

The chart below lists all the cult titles attributed to various Ptolemaic monarchs. Some were included as part of the Alexander Priest's title (PA), others indicate individual eponymous priesthoods (EPA/EPP- eponymous priesthood in Alexandria/eponymous priesthood in Ptolemais¹⁷), and some are individual deification epithets (DE) attributed in surviving papyri.

Chart of Dynastic Cult Titles and Priesthoods				
King and/or Queen	Year title attested (BCE)	Type	Cultic title	Translation
Alexander the Great	290	PA	<i>Hiereos</i>	Priest of Alexander
Ptolemy I and Berenike I	280 (Added to PA in 215/214)	DE, PA	<i>Theoi Soteres</i>	Savior Gods

¹⁵ This list is adapted and expanded from Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 288.

¹⁶ Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 287, 288, lists the Theoi Euergetai (II) as being only Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II, and the Theoi Philometores Soteres as being only Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX, but I see no reason that the priestly title would not indicate the rule of three, as they had done when the monarchs were alive. See Part III, chapter 9.

¹⁷ Ptolemy IV instituted a second college of eponymous priests of the Ptolemaic royal cult in the city of Ptolemais in 215/214 BCE. The eponymous priests of Ptolemais disappear from the records after the reign of Ptolemy VIII. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 170, 286.

Ptolemy I	215/214	EPP	<i>Hiereos</i>	Priest of Ptolemy, the founder of Ptolemais ¹⁸
Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II	272/271	PA	<i>Theoi Adelphoi</i>	Sibling/ Brother-Sister Gods
Arsinoë II	c. 270-268	DE	<i>Thea Philadelphos</i>	Brother-loving goddess
Priestess of Arsinoë II	c. 268-266	EPA, EPP from 185/4	<i>Kanephoros</i>	Basket-bearer
Ptolemy III and Berenike II	243	PA	<i>Theoi Euergetai</i>	Benefactor Gods
Berenike II	243	DE	<i>Thea Euergetis</i>	Benefactor Goddess
Priestess of Berenike II	215/214	EPA	<i>Athlophoros</i>	Prize-bearer
Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III	221/220; 216	PA	<i>Theoi Philopatores</i>	Father-loving Gods
Priestess of Arsinoë III	199/198	EPA	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess (of Arsinoë Philopator)
Ptolemy V	199/198	PA	<i>Theos Epiphanes (Eucharistos)</i>	Manifest (and Beneficent) God
Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I	194/193	PA	<i>Theoi Epiphaneis (Eucharistoi)</i>	Manifest (and Beneficent) Gods
Kleopatra I	186/185	DE	<i>Thea Epiphanes</i>	Manifest Goddess
Priest of Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I	177-169	EPP	<i>Hiereos</i>	Priest (of Ptolemy and Kleopatra, the mother)
Priestess of Kleopatra I	165/164	EPP	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess (of Kleopatra the mother, the manifest goddess)
Ptolemy VI	178/177	PA	<i>Theos Philometor</i>	Mother-loving God
Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II (and Ptolemy VIII)	175 from 170-164	PA	<i>Theoi Philometores</i>	Mother-loving Gods
Priestess of Kleopatra II	171-141/140	EPP	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess (of Queen Kleopatra II)
Ptolemy VIII	164	DE	<i>Theos Euergetes (II)</i>	Benefactor God (II)

¹⁸ The deified royal couple's names were added to the Ptolemais eponymous priesthood of Ptolemy Soter, the founder, in the same way they were added to the Alexander priest's title, so all of the royal couples with (PA) by their title were also included in the Ptolemais cult. Papyri, such as *BGU* 3.996, for example, includes the phrase “ὄντων ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ, ἐν δὲ Πτολεμαίδι τῆς Θηβαίδος ἐφ' ἱερείων” “at that time, the priests being in Alexandria and in Ptolemais in the Thebaid” to denote that the royal, defied couples listed for the Alexander priest were also included in the Ptolemais cult.

Ptolemy Eupator	152	PA	<i>Theos Eupator</i>	God of Distinguished Lineage
Kleopatra III	146/5	EPP	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess of the daughter of the king
Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II and Kleopatra III	145/144 142/141	PA	<i>Theoi Euergetai (II)</i>	Benefactor Gods (II)
Kleopatra II	141/140	EPP	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess (of Kleopatra, the sister)
Kleopatra III	141/140	EPP	<i>Hiereia</i>	Priestess (of Kleopatra, the wife)
Kleopatra II	131/0-127	PA	<i>Thea Philometor Soteira</i>	Mother-loving, savior Goddess
Kleopatra III	130	EPA	<i>Hieropolos</i>	Priest of Isis, the great one, mother of the gods
Ptolemy (Memphites) ¹⁹	118	PA	<i>Theos Neos Philopator</i>	New father-loving God
Kleopatra II, Kleopatra III, and Ptolemy IX	116	PA	<i>Theoi Philometores Soteres</i>	Mother-loving, savior Gods
Kleopatra III and Ptolemy IX	116	PA	<i>Theoi Philometores Soteres</i>	Mother-loving, savior Gods
Kleopatra III	116	DE	<i>Thea Philometor Soteira OR Thea Euergetis Philometor Soteira</i>	Beneficent, mother-loving, savior Goddess
Ptolemy IX	116	DE	<i>Theos Philometor Soter</i>	Mother-loving, savior God
Kleopatra III	116/115	EPA	<i>Stephanephoros, phosphoros, and hiereia of basilissa Kleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira Dikaiosyne Nikephoros</i>	Diadem-bearer, light-bearer, and priestess (three distinct positions) of queen Kleopatra the mother-loving, savior goddess, mistress of justice, bringer of victory
Kleopatra III and Ptolemy X	107	PA	<i>Theoi Philometores Soteres</i>	Mother-loving, savior Gods

¹⁹ There is a Ptolemy that was incorporated into the dynastic cult by the year 118 BCE as the Neos Philopator (New Father-loving God; *P.Dem. Berlin* 3101), but scholars identify him as either the son of Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VI or Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII. Chauveau has convincingly argued that Neos Philopator was a cult initiated for Ptolemy Memphites, so that is how he is identified here and in Appendix B. Chauveau, “Un été 145,” 154–5; Bennett, *PD* s.v. “Ptolemy Memphites.”

Kleopatra III	107	EPA	<i>Hiereos dia Biou (Bios), basilissa Kleopatra Thea Aphrodite kai Philometor</i>	The priest during the lifetime of the queen Kleopatra, Thea Aphrodite and Philometor
Ptolemy X and Kleopatra Berenike III	101	PA	<i>Theoi Philometores Soteres</i>	Mother-loving, savior Gods
Kleopatra Berenike III (with Ptolemy X)	101	DE	<i>Thea Philadelphos</i>	Brother-loving Goddess
Ptolemy IX	88	DE	<i>Theos Soter</i>	Savior God
Kleopatra Berenike III	81	PA	<i>Thea Philopator</i>	Father-loving Goddess
Ptolemy XII and Kleopatra V	79	PA	<i>Theoi Philopatores kai Philadelphoi</i>	Father-loving and Sibling-loving Gods
Ptolemy XII	64/63	DE	<i>Theos Neos Dionysos</i>	The New Dionysus God
Berenike IV	58/57	PA	<i>Thea Epiphaneia</i>	The Manifest Goddess
Kleopatra VII, Arsinoë IV, Ptolemy XIII, Ptolemy XIV	52	DE	<i>Theoi Neoi Philadelphoi</i>	The New Sibling-loving Gods
Kleopatra VII	51	PA	<i>Thea Philopator</i>	Father-loving Goddess
Ptolemy XIII	c. 51?	DE	<i>Theos Philopator</i>	Father-loving God
Kleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIV ²⁰	47	PA	<i>Theoi Philopatores kai Philadelphoi</i>	Father-loving and Sibling-loving Gods
Ptolemy XV Caesarion	c. 43/41?	DE	<i>Theos Philopator Philometor</i>	The Father-loving and Mother-loving God
Kleopatra VII	37/36	PA	<i>Thea Neotera Philopator Philopatris</i>	New Father-loving and Country-loving Goddess

²⁰ Hölbl posits that Kleopatra VIII and Ptolemy XIII used this same joint epithet during their rule together, but it is not attested in any extant sources and cannot be confirmed. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 237.

Appendix E: Egyptian Queenly Titulary of Religious or Rulership Significance

<u>Queen</u>	<u>Titulary</u> ²¹
Berenike I	None extant
Arsinoë I	None extant
Arsinoë II	- Throne/Cartouche Name (<i>nsw bitj</i>) “Who is united in the heart of Truth, beloved of the Gods” (CG 22183, the Pithom Stele) - Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Sakkara Stele)
Berenike II	- Female Horus (<i>Hr.t</i>) “The daughter of the ruler, created by the ruler” ²² (Temple of Philae; Canopus Decree; Temple of Khonsu at Karnak) - Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Khonsu at Karnak) - Vizier (<i>t3tj.t</i> ; Temple of Philae; Canopus Decree) - Female pharaoh (<i>Pr- ‘3.t</i>) ²³
Arsinoë III	- Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Horus at Edfu)
Kleopatra I	- Female Horus (<i>Hr.t</i>) “The young girl, daughter of the ruler, created by the ruler, beloved of the Gods of Egypt, adorned by Khnum, the regent of Thoth whose might is great, who pleases the two Lands, who gives the people in perfection to the Two Ladies, who Neith, the Lady of Sais, makes strong, who Hathor praises for her popularity” (Temple of Horus at Edfu) - Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Philae Decree) - Vizier (<i>t3tj.t</i> ; Temple of Edfu) - Female pharaoh (<i>Pr- ‘3.t</i>)
Kleopatra II	- Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; BM EA 612) - Female pharaoh (<i>Pr- ‘3.t</i>)

²¹ This list is adapted and expanded from Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*, 178-179.

²² For a translation of the extended title on the Canopus Decree, Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186), see Lorber, *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 148, n. 163.

²³ The title of female pharaoh (*Pr- ‘3.t*) was used exclusively in Demotic papyri for each of the queens for which it is listed. The other titles are usually found on monumental architecture in hieroglyphics.

Kleopatra III	- Female Horus (<i>Hr.t</i>) “Mistress of the two lands, Mighty/strong Bull” (Hemispheos at El-Kab; Mammisi at Deir el-Medina; Temple of Philae) - Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Horus at Edfu; BM EA 612) - Female pharaoh (<i>Pr-‘3.t</i>)
Kleopatra IV	None extant
Kleopatra Selene I	None extant
Kleopatra Berenike III	- Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Horus at Edfu; Temple of Montu at Armant/Hermonthis)
Kleopatra V/VI Tryphaina	- Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Horus at Edfu)
Berenike IV	None extant
Arsinoë IV	None extant
Kleopatra VII	- Female Horus (<i>Hr.t</i>) “The great Lady of perfection, excellent in counsel” and “The great one, sacred image of her father” (Temple of Montu at Armant/Hermonthis) - Ruler (<i>Hk3.t</i> ; Temple of Montu at Armant/Hermonthis)

Appendix F- Ptolemaic Decrees of the Third and Second Centuries BCE

Selected Ptolemaic Decrees			
Decree	Issued under	Year	Preserved on/Translated in
Chremonides Decree	Chremonides of Athens	268/7 BCE	- <i>IG II</i> ² 686-687 - <i>IG II</i> ³ 1.912 - <i>SIG</i> ³ 434-435
Decree of Ptolemy II at Mendes	Ptolemy II and deified Arsinoë II	c. 265/4 BCE	- Mendes Stele (CG 22181) - <i>Urk.</i> II.28-54 - <i>THI</i> 204
Decree of Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II visit to Pithom	Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II	264 BCE	- Pithom Stele (CG 22183) - <i>Urk.</i> II.81-105 - <i>THI</i> 258
Adulis Decree	Ptolemy III	c. 245-241 BCE	- <i>OGIS</i> 54
Alexandria Decree	Ptolemy III	243 BCE	- El-Masry, Altenmüller, Thissen, <i>Das Synodaldekret von Alexandria aus dem Jahre 243 v. Chr</i> (2012)
Canopus Decree	Ptolemy III and Berenike II	238 BCE	- <i>OGIS</i> 56 - Stele of Kôm el-Hisn (CG 22186) - <i>Urk.</i> II.124-154
Raphia Decree	Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III	217 BCE	- Memphis Stele (CG 31088) - Pithome Stele, No. II (CG 50048) - <i>THI</i> 259
Memphis Decree	Ptolemy V	196 BCE	- Rosetta Stone (<i>OGIS</i> 90) - Stele of Nubayrah/Annobeira (CG 22188) (Dated to 182) - <i>Urk.</i> II.166-198
Second Philae Decree	Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I	186 BCE	- <i>THI</i> 260 - <i>Urk.</i> II.214-230
First Philae Decree*	Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I	185/4 BCE	- <i>THI</i> 261 - <i>Urk.</i> II.199-214
Decree of the Priests at Memphis	Ptolemy V and Kleopatra I	182 BCE	- <i>THI</i> 262 - CG 44901
Great Amnesty Decrees of 118	Ptolemy VIII, Kleopatra II, and Kleopatra III	118 BCE	- <i>C. Ord. Ptol.</i> 53-55

* The naming of these two Decrees is modern, going back to Lepsius. Historians still use the titles he provided but the “Second” Decree is now securely dated prior to what was originally titled the “First.” See Hölbl 2001, 175, n. 52.

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- AIO* Attic Inscriptions Online, <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/>.
- ANS MN* *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* (New York).
- ANS PCO* American Numismatic Society, Ptolemaic Coins Online, <http://numismatics.org/pco/>.
- Bennett, *PD* Chris Bennett, *The Ptolemaic Dynasty*, <http://www.instonebrewer.com/TyndaleSites/Egypt/ptolemies/ptolemi es.htm>.
- BIFAO* *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* (Cairo).
- BM British Museum, London.
- CG Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
- CPE* *Coins of the Ptolemaic Empire*, Catherine Lorber (New York, 2018).
- FGrH* *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. by F. Jacoby (Berlin, 1923-).
- IG II²* *Inscriptiones Graecae II et III: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriors*, ed. by J. Kirchner (Berlin, 1913-1940).
- OGIS* *Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae. Supplementum Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. by W. Dittenberger, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1903-1905).
- PHI* Searchable Greek Inscriptions, the Packard Humanities Institute, Cornell University, <https://epigraphy.packhum.org/>.
- SIG* *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. by W. Dittenberger (Leipzig, 1883; 1898-1901²; 1915-1924³).
- SEG* *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (Brill), <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum>.
- Sel. Pap.* *Select Papyri: Private Documents*, trans. by A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar (Loeb Classical Library, 1932).

- SNG* *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* (Copenhagen).
- Sv.* J. N. Svoronos, Τὰ νομίσματα τοῦ Κράτους τῶν Πτολεμαίων (*Ta Nomismata Tou Kratous Ton Ptolemaion*), 4 vols. (Athens, 1904-1908)
- THI* *Translations of Hellenistic Inscriptions*,
<http://www.attalus.org/docs/other/index.html>.
- Urk. II* *Urkunden des aegyptischen Altertums II: Hieroglyphische Urkunden der griechisch-römischen Zeit*, ed. by K. Sethe (Leipzig, 1904).
<http://www.egyptologyforum.org/EEFUrk.html>

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Papyrological abbreviations follow John F. Oates, William H. Willis, et al., eds., *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets*. The list is regularly updated in the online version at <http://www.papyri.info/docs/checklist>.

For major Egyptian inscriptions, see Appendix F.

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Aelian. *Varous History*. (Ael. *VH*)

Aeschylus. *Eumenides*. (Aesch. *Eum.*)

Anthologia Palatina. (Anth. *Pal.*)

Apollonius Rhodius. *Argonautica*. (Ap. Rhod. *Argon.*)

Appian. *Civil Wars*. (App. *Civ.*)

----- *Syriaca*. (App. *Syr.*)

----- *Mithridatic Wars*. (App. *Mith.*)

Arrian. *Anabasis*. (Arr. *Anab.*)

Athenaeus. *Deipnosophistae*. (Athen.)

Caesar, Julius. *Bellum Civile*. (Caes. *BCiv.*)

Pseudo-Caesar. *De Bello Alexandrino*. (Ps. Caes. *BAlex.*)

Catullus. *Carmina*. (Catull.)

Cicero. *De lege agraria*. (Cic. *Leg. agr.*)
 ----- *De Rege Alexandrino*. (Cic. *Alex.*)
 ----- *Epistulae ad Atticum*. (Cic. *Att.*)
 ----- *In Verrem*. (Cic. *Verr.*)
 ----- *Pro Rabirio Postumo*. (Cic. *Rab. Post.*)

Dio Cassius. *History of Rome*. (Dio Cass.)

Diodorus Siculus. *Library of History*. (Diod. Sic.)

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Florus. *Abridgement of All the Wars Over 1,200 Years*. (Flor.)

Galen, *Hippocratis Epidemiorum et Galeni in illum Commentarius*. (Galen, *Comm. II in Hipp. Librum XVII Epidemiarium*)

Herodotus. *The Histories*. (Hdt.)

Hyginus. *Fabulae*. (Hyg. *Fab.*)
 ----- *Poetica Astronomica*. (Hyg. *Poet. astr.*)

Josephus. *Antiquitates Judaicae*. (Joseph. *AJ*)
 ----- *Contra Apionem*. (Joseph. *Ap.*)

Justin. *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus' Philippic Histories*. (Just. *Epit.*)

Kallimachos, *Aetia*, "Comma Berenices." (Callim. *Frg.* 110)
 ----- *Aetia*, "Victoria Berenices." (Callim. *Vict. Ber.*)
 ----- *Epigrammata*. (Callim. *Epigr.*)
 ----- *Lyrical*. "Apotheosis Arsinoes." (Callim. *Frg.* 228)

Livy. *Ab Urbe Condita*. (Livy)
 ----- *Periochae*. (Livy, *Per.*)

Lucan. *De Bello Civili/Pharsalia*. (Luc. *Phar.*)

Major Rock Edict 13

Orosius. *Historiarum Adversum Paganos*. (Oros.)

Pausanias. *Description of Greece*. (Paus.)

Pliny. *Natural History*. (Plin. *HN*)

- Plutarch. *Parallel Lives*. (Plut. *Vit.*)
----- *Moralia*, “De Iside et Osiride.” (Plut. *Mor.*, *De Is. et Os.*)
- Pollux, Julius. *Onomasticon*. (Pollux)
- Polybius. *Histories*. (Polyb.)
- Polyainos. *Strategemata*. (Polyainos)
- Porphyry. *Chronica*. (Porph. *FGrHist.*)
----- In Eusebius. *Chronicle*. Schoene-Petermann edition. (Porph. in Eus. *Chron.*)
----- In St. Jerome. *Commentary on Daniel*. (Jer. *Comm. Dan.*)
- Posidippos, *Epigrammata*. (Posid.)
- Propertius. *Elegies*. (Prop.)
- Sophocles. *Oedipus Tyrannus*. (Soph. *OT*)
- Strabo. *Geography*. (Strab.)
- Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* (Suet. *Aug.*)
----- *Divus Iulius*. (Suet. *Jul.*)
- Theokritos. *Idylls*. (Theoc. *Id.*)
----- *Epigrammata*. (Theoc. *Epigr.*)
----- Scholia. (Schol. Theoc.)
- First and Third Maccabees*. (*1 Macc.*; *3 Macc.*)
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