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CULTURE, MEDIA & FILM | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Finding strategic communication & diverse leadership in the ancient world: The case of Queen Cleopatra VII, the last pharaoh of Egypt

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Abstract: The reign of Queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt offers a rare historical glimpse into ancient communication activities and how communication was used by the world's last pharaoh. This historical research reveals how Cleopatra used public relations and strategic communication activities to advance both her reign as a lone woman sovereign and the interests of the Egyptian empire. Cleopatra was perhaps the first woman sovereign in history to rule alone for a period of over a decade. Her leadership showed skilled use of public communication and diplomacy with which she forestalled the fall of Egypt to Rome. A grounded theory approach allowed data to emerge naturally, surrounding communication activities, and then for a theoretical framework to be imposed that could explain the common themes in that data. This research compares Cleopatra's activities with public relations theory using the classic four models of public relations to classify public communication. Findings show that Cleopatra used research in asymmetrical public relations and symmetrical relationship building, also including public diplomacy, public information, and press agency/pseudo-event mastery. Careful examination of literature sources led to the conclusion that Cleopatra was a truly advanced, research-based, relationship-focused, and international policy-oriented lone woman ruler who was a supremely strategic communicator.

Subjects: Journalism History; Media History; Women's & Gender History

Keywords: history; public diplomacy; ancient public relations; origins of strategic communication; feminist ruler



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Cleopatra is enigmatic and well known, but her skill as a strategic communicator has been overlooked until this research. She is important historically, and as a lone woman ruler, she could be considered a pioneer of public relations. Cleopatra was perhaps the first woman sovereign in history to rule alone for a period of over a decade. Her leadership showed skilled use of public communication and diplomacy with which she forestalled the fall of Egypt to the Roman Empire. The theory of models in public relations is used to classify and describe Cleopatra's ancient communication activities and their stunning parallels to advanced and strategic uses of communication today.

1. Purpose

The history of ancient communication activities often fades as the legacies of the leaders who used them are lessened over the passage of time. More troubling is that fewer female leaders throughout ancient history reigned on their own, without the sanction of marriage, making those records even more scarce, and, as seen in this case, likely to be destroyed by enemies. Therefore, we know little about the strategic communication strategies and public relations activities of female rulers in the ancient world, leading to the question: Who was among the first female lone rulers that historical sources document as using advanced forms of strategic communication, such as the asymmetrical model of public relations based on research, or symmetrical communication to further diplomacy goals?

There is high potential for one of the first female lone rulers demonstrating an adept use of advanced public relations strategy and tactics to be Cleopatra VII of Egypt, the last pharaoh of the Ptolemy dynasty and one of the only female regents in ancient history to be recorded as guiding her own strategy (Volkman, 1958). Although other female rulers of the ancient world undoubtedly used strategic communication, little is known about their methods because most historical records documenting their reigns have been lost. By comparison, details about strategies used in the 22 year reign of Cleopatra, the last pharaoh to rule before Roman annexation of the Egyptian Empire, were relatively well documented and a careful application of theory illuminates her strategic uses of public relations. Further, the women rulers prior to Cleopatra were co-rulers with a male brother or son; Cleopatra ruled as a lone woman for well over a decade, possibly the first queen regnant that historical documentation shows. She used strategy to achieve and maintain that reign, as explained and examined in this research. Further, an objective of this study was to understand the models of public relations and communication that Cleopatra employed, and the evidence herein showed her to be a masterful, advanced, and pioneering strategic communicator.

2. Historical context of a woman ruler

It is debated whether in the thirteenth century BC Merneith ruled Egypt alone as the first female pharaoh or simply acted as a consort regent (Dodson & Hilton, 2004). If she ruled alone, she would be the first queen regnant in recorded history, but clear records are lost, destroyed by enemies, disputed by scholars, or yet-to-be discovered (Dodson & Hilton, 2004). Ahhotep I may have ruled alone during the transitions between her two sons, but much of that record is lost in antiquity and little is known of her rule, if she ruled alone or for how long, or her communication strategy (Wilkinson, 2001). Hatshepsut ruled as co-regent with a child king, but we know little of her strategic communication activities or her role in the decision-making process, as opposed to the role of other advisors (Dodson & Hilton, 2004). The well-known Queen Nefertiti is debated to have ruled briefly after the death of her husband and before the ascension of a male, Tutankhamun (Tarn, 1932).

It is clear that female pharaohs had at least some important role in ruling and several may have reigned alone, at least for short periods, but the historical record is sadly lacking depth and specificity in those rulers, especially with regard to the role of strategic communication. Until the reign of Cleopatra VII, the last pharaoh of ancient Egypt, information is lacking, and accurate records regarding her reign are few and far between. This research seeks to expand what we know about the reign of Cleopatra as pharaoh, specifically with regard to her use of strategic communication.

3. Ancient communication activities

Ancient communications and public relations activities remain an understudied area. Historically, the Catholic church's propagation of the Christian faith during the Middle Ages is commonly given in textbooks (Cutlip, 1995; Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2006) as an example of early public relations. However, more than a thousand years prior, Cleopatra used what is modernly called public relations or strategic communication management (Grunig, 1992): she segmented her publics and spoke differently to different publics, depending on their message needs and the strategic goals of the communication. She used sophisticated forms of research for the ancient era, such as straw polling, establishing an informal communication network, and employing spies to provide both information

and feedback. Cleopatra, as this research will illustrate, was an ancient woman ruler who used many models of public relations to manage international relations with the Roman Empire and the countries of the Ptolemaic Empire under her rule.

We can learn much about the history and origins of modern public relations by exploring the ancient beginning of the mass or public communication field. Ancient Greece is normally cited as the birthplace of early rhetorical argument, but it was a heavily androcentric environment (Heath, 2001). We know little about when and how public oratory advanced into a strategic form of public communication, or when women were allowed to participate publicly as rhetors, or sole leaders in their own right (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2000).

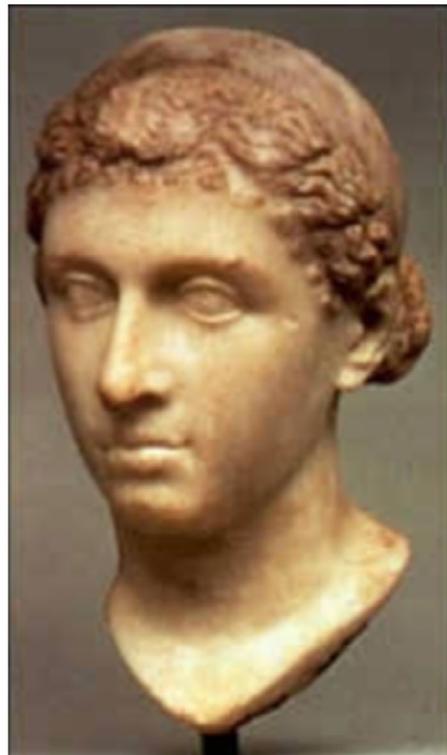
Although there are numerous examples of ancient public relations activities, women are strikingly absent from those examples (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001). Ancient female communicators are little-studied because the paucity of reliable information on the topic makes research exceedingly difficult or impossible. However, archeologists and historians interested in the Ptolemaic Dynasty and Roman Empires have amassed much research on Queen Cleopatra and her contemporaries. A pioneering example of mastery of public relations in the ancient world is provided by examining the reign of Queen Cleopatra VII of Egypt. As a descendant of Alexander the Great (Grant, 2004; Preston, 2009), Cleopatra appeared to hold herself to his standard, and was said by one scholar (Grant, 2004) that she “became a legend, like Alexander himself” (p. 233). Another scholar (Benchley, 2004) concluded that she was the most famous and powerful woman in the world (Figure 1).

4. The impact of patriarchy

Cleopatra has been called “the first feminist” (Levett, 2004). Yet scholars (Bradford, 1972; Hamer, 1996) agree that Roman propaganda was intended to destroy the legacy of this queen by rebranding her from intellectual to wanton hedonist. One scholar wrote, “Women with wills of their own were made outlaws when Augustus (i.e. Octavian) turned Cleopatra into a figure of shame and defeat. After that, it was clear that Egyptian women’s relative independence would meet with savage

Figure 1. Cleopatra bust from Altes Museum in Berlin, Germany.

Source: Public domain.



punishment in Rome” (pp. 88–89). Octavian renamed himself, as ruler, “Augustus” and dated his reign from the day of Cleopatra’s suicide, and reportedly instructed historians to discredit her for challenging Rome (Bradford, 1972; Hamer, 1996). Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is no surviving record of Cleopatra’s last days or death (Skeat, 1953).

Not only did Cleopatra challenge Roman rule militarily, Egyptian gender roles for women stood in stark contrast to those that were acceptable in Rome with its firmly entrenched patriarchy (Meskell, 1997). Hamer (1996) observed that Egyptian culture was ridiculed because women were allotted inheritance rights equally with their brothers, and were allowed to choose their own husbands. One scholar (Grant, 2004) noted that Cleopatra’s feminism and belief that she did not need a husband to rule “terrified” Rome, yielding a history of perverted facts (p. XVI) resulting from her clear threat to Roman patriarchy. Augustus reacted to the cultural threat by eradicating as much of Cleopatra’s influence from historical records as possible and by a concerted effort to manipulate her once-unassailable reputation for intellectual leadership, reinforcing Rome’s ideas of androcentric leadership and patriarchy (Benchley, 2004).

Additionally, Octavian saw Cleopatra as the last obstacle standing in his conquest of wealthy Egyptian territories. As the brother of Mark Antony’s wife Octavia, Octavian held personal enmity for Cleopatra as the mistress of Antony. Octavian praised her death yet worked to obscure the facts surrounding it and began the campaign to rewrite her legacy. The historian Tarn (1932) labeled the despicable propaganda campaign brought to bear against Cleopatra’s imprint and reign as “one of the most terrible outbursts of hatred in history” (p. 98).

When history is “written by the victors” alone (Bradford, 1972, p. 11), in this case the Roman Empire, accurate research becomes more difficult. Under Octavian’s rule, the untold numbers of historical documents related to Cleopatra’s reign vanished, and art, sculpture, and statuary depicting the queen were destroyed. Precious little documentation about her reign remained. Therefore, this case study relies upon consistent historical accounts from a wide range of scholars, across an array of disciplines including classicists, historians, archeologists, feminists, philologists, psychoanalysts, genealogists, and Egyptologists, as described in the method section.

To date, no scholar has seriously examined the reign of Cleopatra from a public relations or strategic communication management perspective, and this article seeks not only to fill that gap, but also to expand our knowledge of the ancient roots, forms, approaches, management strategies, relationship building, diplomacy, and tactics of ancient communication. This research indicates that the public relations discipline may need to update its thinking on ancient public relations activities. Cleopatra’s adroit use of research-based strategy in numerous public relations initiatives shows that strategic thinking in the field is over 2,000 years old, and may have been spearheaded, at least in part, by this lone woman ruler.

5. Method

This research was conducted as a historical case study into the life and reign of Queen Cleopatra VII, her dynasty and competing rulers, the involvement of the Roman Empire in the life of the queen and eventual downfall of the Egyptian Ptolemaic Empire, along with the historical figures connected to Cleopatra. Because of the difficulties described above, the literature reviewed for this historical study was necessarily extensive. A historical case study method (Yin, 1994) was chosen because case studies excel at answering “How” questions (Yin, 1993). Particular emphasis on “How” Cleopatra used communication and its core constructs such as research, dialog, and press agency, were the focus of data collection for this historical case.

5.1. Data collection and open and axial coding

An extensive interdisciplinary literature review was conducted using numerous searches of multiple university databases and key words related to Cleopatra. Only works published in English were selected for this study. Data were then culled from the literature on any concept that initially appeared

to bear some relation to one of the communication disciplines, or any of the concepts associated with strategic communication management, research, or public relations. This enormous data file was then coded with more specificity and rigor using a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) approach of open, axial, and selective coding. Because the historical sources used were not focused on only Cleopatra's communication activities, it was necessary to thoroughly study the life, education, activities, initiatives, legal rulings, interactions, political dealings with other leaders of Cleopatra's life and reign thoroughly in order to classify them accurately. That study resulted in a detailed chronology of the events in Cleopatra's life and reign that was consulted frequently during analyses.

The broad concepts gleaned from the literature that somehow, potentially, related to communication were organized in open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) into a database, along with their source citations. A second pass of coding in the axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) phase was used to catalog by category what form of communication was used or discussed. Axial coding uses broad emerging themes, commonalities, and patterns to search for potential theoretical constructs that can explain the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Emerging axes were strategic communication vs. non-strategic communication, the use of research vs. autocratic decision-making, dialog vs. persuasion, and public vs. small-scale communication. Theoretical memos (Wolcott, 1994) were written that showed a parallel between the communication activities of Cleopatra and several approaches to communication theory. At this point, the theoretical models of public relations were seen to emerge from the data.

5.2. Analyses and selective coding

The third and final form of coding, selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), was used to organize data into groups of the largest themes of Cleopatra's communication activities that fit the theoretical models that could explain their similarities. Because grounded theory allows data to emerge naturally then seeks a theory to explain the data, a comprehensive theory of public relations, strategic communication, and negotiation was needed. Grunig and Hunt's (1984) models of public relations theory were a natural fit for the data, and had the most explanatory power among a range of public relations theories, such as contingency theory (Cameron, Wilcox, Reber, & Shin, 2008) which could not easily explain some of the communication involving pageantry and special event. Selective coding using the four models of public relations (Grunig & Hunt, 1984) revealed to which model of public relations each communicative instance could be ascribed, the strategy of the communication activities, the extent of research that would have been necessary to enable the communication, and the intended resulting outcomes of that strategy.

5.3. Applying public relations theory: Definitions and explanation

Using Grunig and Hunt's (1984) four models of public relations as a theoretical guideline for categories was instrumental in understanding these ancient public relations activities. Grunig and Hunt (1984) offered that public relations activities could be considered along four models. The one-way communication models are output based: the press agency model (to generate public attention and persuade), or the public information model (to inform the public without using persuasion). The two-way models are based on research and dialog, and include the two-way asymmetrical model (research is used to persuade), or the two-way symmetrical model (research is used to building mutual understanding, create collaboration, or negotiate a win/win, mixed-motive solution).

The symmetrical model was argued by Grunig (1992, 2001) to be the most ethical and advanced form of public relations because of its basis in dialog and mutual change, and often includes public diplomacy, win/win negotiation strategies, and strategies of integrative decision-making with the target of achieving some goals of each party, as opposed to a perfect equilibrium. The four models of public relations can be differentiated by the use of research shown in the communication, and whether the intended aim was persuasion or understanding. Finally, it was necessary to catalog many of Cleopatra's activities as a combination of models, consistent with J. Grunig's explanation of the symmetrical model based on mixed motives and a moving equilibrium or give-and-take on both

sides (Grunig, 2001). Many of Cleopatra's initiatives fit more than one model of public relations and were coded as both. For example, her public diplomacy initiatives certainly involved research and were at times both symmetrical and asymmetrical, and also employed press agency through pseudo-events, meaning that Cleopatra used a mixed-motive (Murphy, 1991) or contingency approach (Cameron et al., 2008) in her overall strategic communication activities, an approach that Grunig (2001) argued was ultimately symmetrical give-and-take.

5.4. Data reduction and display: Chronology

To build the necessary understanding and context into this case study, a chronology (Wolcott, 1994) of the life and rule of Cleopatra was developed to help categorize and understand her strategic public relations activities. Because of the exceptionally complicated life history of Cleopatra, the numerous rulers of both Egypt and Rome, the many coups and wars that were waged, intricate international relations between Egypt and Rome, and disputed accounts of facts or dates from various historians, this article will limit the data it reports to that which is directly related to public relations activities, and that which is substantiated by multiple sources.

5.5. Limitations and future study

Although this research attempts to be comprehensive, it is strictly limited to the communication activities of Cleopatra VII rather than all of her ruling endeavors. Space limitations prevent the author from delving into the entire story of relationships between the Egyptian and Roman empires that led to the end of the Ptolemaic Dynasty in 30 BC with the death of Cleopatra and her son Caesarion, before Egypt was ruled by Roman Emperors. Future research should explore those areas in relation to the various aspects of communication and public relations at play, especially with regard to the public relations campaign that historians report Rome used against Egypt.

Any historical case study can only draw conclusions related to the documents and sources at hand. Those destroyed in war or propaganda efforts cannot be included because their content would rely on speculation. A broad range of academic sources were consulted to compensate for this deficit, but research on a deposed ruler is often fraught with holes in the narrative or contradictory accounts from different historians.

6. Results

6.1. Case study overview: Cleopatra VII's reign

Ptolemy I was the founder of Cleopatra VII's dynasty. He ruled as governor and then named himself the King of Egypt with the rank King Ptolemy I Soter, to mean "saviour" (Preston, 2009). Preston (2009) expounded, "Of all her direct ancestors, he was the ruler whom the last Cleopatra—the seventh Ptolemaic queen to bear that name – probably most admired" (p. 11).

In early 69 BC (also known as BCE), Cleopatra VII was born to the then King of Egypt, Ptolemy XII. In 58 BC, the King fled Egypt, potentially with Cleopatra in tow, when his daughter Berenike IV staged a coup (Meadows, 2001). The Roman Empire, the most powerful economic and military power on Earth at the time, restored King Ptolemy to his reign in 55 BC. Ptolemy XII reportedly valued diplomatic relations with Rome and worked to build them for many years before the coup launched by Berenike IV (Meadows, 2001). Scholars (Tarn, 1932; Tarn & Charlesworth, 1965; Volkmann, 1958) believe that his exile was spent in Athens and potentially also in Rome. Berenike IV was executed for treason upon her father's return to the throne (Roller, 2010). In 52 BC, the King named in a will his successors to the Egyptian throne: Cleopatra VII and her younger brother, Ptolemy XIII. According to law and custom of allowing female rule as queen consort, the 10-year-old brother and 17-year-old sister "were pressed into marriage and supposed co-rule. Cleopatra did her best to negate the boy's power, simply ignoring his existence for the most part" (Benchley, 2004, p. 23). After Berenike's unsuccessful coup King Ptolemy XII ruled until his death the following year, in 51 BC, and his joint heirs assumed power (Dodson & Hilton, 2004).

6.2. Ascension and lone rule—As a female

Though the older sibling was Cleopatra, it was not accepted for women to rule alone in the Egyptian Empire, though co-rule was common (Wilkinson, 2001). As was customary to protect royal holdings, lineage, and power, Cleopatra married her brother, King Ptolemy XIII, in 51 BC to keep their royal line in direct ascendance (Grant, 2004). During the scant four-year co-rule with her young brother, Cleopatra used advanced models of public relations to enhance her ability to garner information and to listen strategically (Meadows, 2001), relate to publics, control the affairs of the Egyptian Empire, and conduct international relations through her skilled use of public diplomacy.

Historical records show that Cleopatra challenged her brother-husband Ptolemy XIII for the throne, and she eventually became sole ruler of the Egyptian Empire (Roller, 2010). Ptolemy XIII drowned in the Battle of the Nile, fighting against Julius Caesar in 47 BC (Volkman, 1958). At this point, Cleopatra saw the opportunity to form an alliance with Caesar and rule alone. Cleopatra's alliance with Julius Caesar was solidified with her grand visit to Rome, which Roller (2010) and Preston (2009) both argued was for publicity purposes. In that visit the alliance of Rome and Egypt was reaffirmed and she resided with Caesar (Roller, 2010), yet the problem of one living 11- or 12-year-old brother who could potentially claim power remained.

6.3. Possibly the first lone queen to rule

The death of Cleopatra's co-ruler brother, Ptolemy XIII, was quickly followed by the demise of Cleopatra's 12-year-old younger brother, King Ptolemy XIV, in 44 BC. Historical records upon her departure from Rome were unclear about whether she married the boy or his co-rule was assumed (Roller, 2010). Records surrounding Ptolemy XIV are unclear, speculating on his demise or stating that he disappeared (Chaveau, 2000). However, it is clear that the youngest Ptolemy was dead upon arrival (Roller, 2010) or shortly after his return from Rome to Egypt (Preston, 2009). The ancient historian Flavius Josephus, writing roughly 35 years after Cleopatra's reign, attributed the death of King Ptolemy XIV to likely poisoning by Cleopatra (Preston, 2009). Historians generally acknowledge this speculation, such as Roller (2010) who explained: "A few months later the queen took the matter of succession into her own hands by killing Ptolemy XIV, allegedly with poison, and elevating her son (Caesarian)" (p. 75). Preston (2009) noted, "And if Cleopatra did kill her brother, she was following a long tradition" (p. 127). There were no more consorts or brother-kings.

Queen Cleopatra ruled the Egyptian Empire alone through an era of relative security and prosperity. Her historic reign as a lone female sovereign is largely obscured by history, yet we have numerous ruling documents that she signed into law as solitary sovereign, documenting her pioneering role leading one of the largest and richest empires in the world.

For more than a decade, Cleopatra was the undisputed and lone female ruler of the Egyptian Empire and its territories. Cleopatra proved to be a skilled and strategic ruler. Her relationship with the Roman Empire, including her relations with both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, indicated her skill in both public and private diplomacy. These Romans formed agreements to offer protection of Egypt as an ally, but increasing expansionism of Rome would be the central tension of her rule, and ultimately ended the dynasties of the Egyptian pharaohs. See Table 1 for an overview of major events surrounding the life and reign of Queen Cleopatra.

6.4. Communication activities: A strategic public relations ruler

Through the brief timeline of events and discussion of culture and power in ancient Egypt, one can see a clear role emerge for the strategic use of public relations and public relations-type activities. Through examining research direction and intent, Cleopatra's communication activities could be categorized into the four models (Grunig & Hunt, 1984) prevalent in modern public relations theory: public information, press agency, two-way asymmetrical or two-way symmetrical communication. To ascertain if her communication was two-way, it was necessary to catalog the amount of research that Cleopatra would have needed to create her strategy, though that research was informal rather than the social-scientific variety that is relied upon heavily in modern public relations. As explored in

Table 1. Chronology of events in the life of Queen Cleopatra VII

| Brief Timeline: Life of Queen Cleopatra VII | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Year B.C. (BCE) | Age of Cleopatra | Time line—Key activity |
| 69 | – | Cleopatra born to Ptolemy XII; mother regnant Queen |
| 51 | 18 | Ptolemy XII dies and his will leaves the throne to Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIII as co-rulers |
| 48 | 21 | Caesar arrives in Alexandria, first meeting of Cleopatra & Caesar; Alexandria War starts |
| 47 | 22 | A. War ends, Ptolemy XIII drowns; Cleopatra & Ptolemy XIV joint rulers; Nile trip, Caesarion born |
| 46 | 23 | Cleopatra & Ptolemy XIV go to Rome given Monarch status, Caesar puts statue of Cleo. in Forum |
| 44 | 25 | Caesar assassinated, Cleopatra & Ptolemy XIV return to Alexandria, Ptolemy XIV eliminated |
| 41 | 28 | Antony & Cleopatra meet in Tarsus, Antony confirms Cleopatra as Egypt ruler, Antony to Egypt |
| 40 | 29 | Antony leaves Egypt, Cleopatra give birth to twins of Antony (Alexander Helios/Cleopatra Selene) |
| 37 | 32 | Antony & Cleopatra meet in Antioch, Cleopatra given territories by Antony |
| 36 | 33 | Cleopatra gave birth to 4th child (Ptolemy Philadelphus); Cleopatra travels in new territories |
| 34 | 35 | Antony & Cleopatra hold ceremony in Alexandria, making their children rulers; Rome outraged |
| 32 | 37 | Octavian declares war on Cleopatra; Antony & Cleopatra go to Greece, spend winter in Patrai |
| 31 | 38 | Cleopatra & Antony engage Octavian's forces battle of Actium, Cleopatra & Antony flee to Egypt |
| 30 | 39 | Octavian invades Egypt, Antony commits suicide, Cleopatra follows with her own suicide |

more detail below, in applying a grounded theory analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), all of the theoretical concepts that are used in discussing modern public relations were demonstrated in her ancient communication activities.

The reports of historians, classicists, Egyptologists, and the numerous sources consulted for this case study indicate that Cleopatra used public relations in many forms: press agency, particularly through her magnificent pseudo-events (events staged to garner attention and make an impression on publics, generating word of mouth communications), public information or communicating in the public interest in the governance of her peoples, two-way asymmetrical public relations based on strategic persuasion and information gained through informal research, and two-way symmetrical public relations in her public diplomacy and relationship building and maintenance strategies. Each of the following sections explores examples and historical accounts related to one of those tenets of the modern public relations discipline.

6.5. Symmetrical model and research in relationship building

Cleopatra carried on lengthy, give-and-take, symmetrical relationships with leaders, setting up trade agreements, and managing lease arrangements within her territories. One such leader with whom Cleopatra maintained a long-term, symmetrical relationship was Herod the Great. Cleopatra leased Jericho back to its original owner, Herod, along with the local lands growing “date palms and the medicinal herb balsam” (Roller, 2010, p. 94) for their mutual benefit. The two leaders had a common interest in maintaining productive trade routes and mercantile production in the area. She

recognized the mutual benefit of the relationship with Herod as King of Judea despite her personal dislike for him. Records indicate that Cleopatra valued the leaders throughout her kingdom, offering them support of various kinds in order to maintain equitable relationships with them and their peoples. In an expansive empire such as hers, covering much of the African continent and Asia minor, Cleopatra used mutual benefit of her leaders and their territories, as well as benefit to Egypt, in her symmetrical relationship building. Her empire was one that continued to grow through the territories given to her by Antony in 37 BC—Cleopatra used relationship maintenance strategies to help build a cohesive empire, reinforced with one-way strategies such as issuing her own coinage.

Another example of Cleopatra's use of the symmetrical model was in her relationship with Cicero during the period in which she held court in Rome, 46–44 BC. According to Volkmann (1958), Cleopatra provided manuscripts to Cicero that he called *philologa*, or connected to learning. Cicero wrote to his friend Atticus that the documents Cleopatra provided “were quite consistent with my position: I would not have hesitated to speak of them in the public assembly” (Volkmann, 1958, p. 88). While Caesar lived, Cleopatra continued to use symmetrical relationship building in Rome to consolidate her power. Cleopatra was, at times, also asked to use her influence with Caesar on behalf of other Roman officials who came to her court. She regularly held court and appeared to take great satisfaction in offering the learned assistance of Egyptian scholars and experts to Rome. That satisfaction is an indicator of symmetrical dialog, as argued by Cooper (2015): “A person's aesthetic satisfaction in their work may be enhanced and take on a new tone when the work is done in cooperation, communion and perhaps intimacy with other people” (p. 5).

Cleopatra may have found satisfaction in her symmetrical relationships, but she was also aware of the give and take nature of negotiation and dialog in two-way symmetrical public relations. An example of Cleopatra using this strategy was to build her relationship with Antony's most important General, Publius Canidius (Crassus). In exchange for his loyalty, Cleopatra issued a royal ordinance granting Crassus tax easements, including duty-free export of 10,000 sacks of wheat from Egypt and to import 5,000 amphoras of wine from Cos each year, also tax-free. Cleopatra wrote, in Greek, “make it happen” in her own handwriting on the royal ordinance (Ashton, 2001, p. 180).

Cleopatra's knowledge of the territories she ruled was extensive, and fed by a great deal of research on the rulers, laws, and assets of the territory to assist her in negotiations. Additionally, her knowledge of the languages of the people she negotiated with would have helped her interactions and in building long-term, symmetrical relationships with those people and their regions. For example, Roller (2010) observed: “Knowing the Arabian language may have assisted Cleopatra in diplomatic and mercantile negotiations, and she may have acquired some Arabian territory in the 30s BC” (p. 47).

These and numerous other historical actions show that Cleopatra was well aware of the importance of symmetrical relationship building and maintenance. She used this strategy in numerous ways to both further and solidify her own political ends, while also providing benefits to other parties in the relationship. The queen appeared to be quite adept at building and maintaining relationships with those in key positions of power or influence.

6.5.1. *Public diplomacy*

Royals were considered deities in Egyptian civilization who believed that they were “divinely ordained” (Orland, Orland, & Orland, 1990, p. 173). In a radical break with royal protocol that normally involved intermediaries and a deified, lofty, separated ruler, Queen Cleopatra related directly to her publics. She spoke to the peoples she governed herself, in their own native languages (Volkmann, 1958). Cleopatra was adroit at speaking to dignitaries and audiences, alike, whether her goal was to persuade or to find areas of mutual agreement. Historians (Roller, 2010) report that she was the first ruler of Egypt to speak to the citizens she ruled in their native languages, and that she was fluent in at least 10 languages. Roller (2010) cited the ancient historian Plutarch (46–120 AD) in saying that Cleopatra was a great orator, “gripping in her conversation and persuasive in her discussion” (p. 46).

Cleopatra conducted these talks to facilitate understanding and to help build relationships with publics in her empire. Cleopatra was extremely well educated and was the first Ptolemy to learn the language of her subjects (Benchley, 2004). As another scholar noted: “That Cleopatra was the first of her line to take the trouble to learn to speak the Egyptian language is perhaps indicative as much of her concern for internal stability within the kingdom as of linguistic ability” (Meadows, 2001, p. 23). In other words, she conducted her communication strategically, using the symmetrical model of public relations in her public diplomacy efforts, to enhance the satisfaction of publics in her empire, integrate those new to her rule, and to foster international relations. Broughton (1942) assessed the ancient historian Plutarch’s account of Cleopatra’s oratory basis for relationship building: “She could speak to them in their own language, and was sympathetic toward the native religion” (p. 328). The dialog and respect illustrated in these data show the use of the symmetrical model of public relations.

There is no doubt that Cleopatra’s ability with as many as 10 languages was a skill that assisted her greatly in her diplomacy efforts, adding to her credibility (Gass & Seiter, 2009) both with internal (Egyptian) publics and external (Roman and other nationality) publics. Roller (2010) agreed: “Cleopatra VII was an accomplished diplomat, naval commander, administrator, linguist, and author, who skillfully managed her kingdom in the face of a deteriorating political situation and increasing Roman involvement” (p. 1). Cleopatra used two-way symmetrical negotiation and conflict resolution in order to successfully manage public diplomacy throughout her own territories and with the increasingly strong presence of the Roman Empire. While she resided in Rome, Cleopatra formed diplomatic relations with many dignitaries, assisting them when possible, gaining and providing information, and providing an exotic and charming court (Roller, 2010). These examples illustrate the use of strategic relationship building in her individual diplomacy efforts, a concept also prevalent in modern public relations theory (Heath & Li, 2010) and public diplomacy research (Golan, Yang, & Kinsey, 2014).

6.6. Research and asymmetrical strategy

Cleopatra’s efforts at conducting research were perhaps unrivaled in ancient times. She used her linguistic skill and communication ability to maintain relationships with people, gathering local perspectives in the native language for a better understanding of the situation, and furthering her own identification with publics. Her ministers provided rudimentary accounts of public opinion and what issues were prevailing in various Egyptian territories (Chaveau, 2000). Her network of spies was vast, providing informal research on the rulers of far away nations, such as Imperial Rome, and the activities of her brother the King (Ptolemy XIII), his Generals, and her other siblings (Ptolemy XIV became King briefly when Ptolemy XIII died).

Cleopatra knew that knowledge was power. She used the information garnered from her spy network and those loyal to her and made informed, strategic decisions rivaling (and at times, defying) the power of her brothers, the successive Kings of Egypt, and Pompey, the Roman General in charge of the region. Further, Cleopatra’s informants were authorized to act on her behalf, to react to dynamic new information, and to conduct communications in accordance with a back-and-forth flow of information from spy to crown to spy. For example, one eminent scholar (Benchley, 2004) explained that Cleopatra:

...kept close watch on Antony by way of a web of undercover agents she had placed in Rome, and later in Greece. Antony’s every move was reported to the Queen, who not only planted those who would provide information, but also those who could act, surreptitiously, on her behalf. The most oft-reported example of this is the incident of the soothsayer whom Cleopatra apparently commissioned to tell Antony that the stars were warning him to stay far away from Octavian. (pp. 76–77).

The spy would report back to the queen about any reactions or remarks, and the strategy was then adjusted by Cleopatra accordingly (Benchley, 2004). Cleopatra’s listening to what was happening in

Rome, no doubt, helped her to anticipate and counter events with communication that was strategically geared to support Egyptian independence and her alliance with Caesar and, later, Antony.

Mercantile strategy was not foreign to Cleopatra. She studied the production of goods in the various regions of her territories, and created taxation strategies accordingly. She also inserted her image onto the coinage used in her kingdom. Many different coins and production years have been found and discussed by scholars, bearing images of the queen (Brett, 1937). Creating and authorizing these coins with her likeness may have been one of the best ancient public relations tactics used by Cleopatra. Coins can familiarize publics with the appearance of the queen, indicate wealth, communicate who is in command, and exhibit a certain control over the economy (Brett, 1937; Walker, 2001). Cleopatra knew these tactics of empire building well, and when she obtained new territories she minted new coins to circulate in each local economy.

Cleopatra made extensive use of two-way communication based on research in ruling her mercantile empire. According to Preston (2009), “The head man of each village supervised the farmers, reporting to a hierarchy of Greek and Macedonian officials, at whose apex was Cleopatra – the country’s greatest farmer, industrialist, and merchant” (p. 138). Information obtained through these channels was transcribed by her scribes, read by the queen, and then information Cleopatra wanted to disseminate was written by scribes and transmitted back through these same channels. This use of her communication network is a perfect illustration of an ancient method of two-way communication.

Cleopatra’s extensive network of spies also brought her information about visiting leaders, troop movements, and the activities of her brother, the King Ptolemy XIII. Undoubtedly Cleopatra had a well-developed spy network to bring her information (Roller, 2010). For example, Cleopatra’s network conducted research on Julius Caesar to find out about his likes and dislikes, intellectual ability, illness, schedule, and when he would be alone in his chamber. When Cleopatra’s brother the King denied her a meeting with Caesar, she used the information to plan a secret entrance to meet Caesar. Cleopatra’s aide Apollodorus rowed her by boat to a dock near the Royal Palace, rolled her into a carpet and tied it, and carried her past the guards and her brother’s spy Pothinus directly to Caesar’s chamber (Bevan, 1927). When the knots were untied, the 21 year old Cleopatra sprang to her feet in front of Caesar, risking her life for the meeting, but starting it on admirable footing (Bevan, 1927) of bravery and adventure (Volkman, 1958). In the analysis offered by Bradford, Cleopatra’s secret entrance, “was just the kind of gesture that would have appealed to him, revealing originality, independence of character and fiery courage” (Bradford, 1972, p. 69).

6.7. Public information

To illustrate her use of the public information model, or information disseminated one-way for the purpose of informing rather than persuading, records indicated that Cleopatra made use of this model of public relations during her reign. The queen signed decrees in which she provided public information on agriculture and commerce for use by the general populace of Egypt, such as information on the growing and irrigation of crops, and methods of response to flooding of the Nile (Alfano, 2001). Cleopatra authored a document in late 50 BC that decreed protection of those transporting grain from the extortion of local officials (Roller, 2010).

To solidify her ascendance to the throne, Cleopatra’s first act as queen was to travel 400 miles down the Nile to attend the public ceremony of the sacred Buchis Bull of Hermontis (Preston, 2009). The event was a public information event so that people could see the new queen. As argued by Preston, “What more striking way for the living goddess Cleopatra to show herself to her people than to accompany the sacred bull?” (p. 27).

In the act of displaying herself publicly to this region of her empire 14 miles south of Thebes, her first act as queen was public information about her persona and valuing the sacred bull ceremony, in what would later lead to her use of massive press agency events. Preston (2009) explained,

“Cleopatra, it seems, was already aware of the seductive power of spectacle” (p. 27). Preston (2009) indicated that in an age of illiteracy, spectacle was an important means of disseminating information through public information, and press agency was used as the medium of mass communication. It could even be argued that the spectacles of Cleopatra became two-way communication when the queen’s agents reported crowd reactions back to her with all varieties of feedback.

6.8. Press agency and pseudo-event mastery

Historical records reveal that what was perhaps Cleopatra’s greatest public relations strength was her excellence in conducting the pseudo-event. Grunig and Hunt (1984) credited the historian Daniel Boorstin for coining the term pseudo-event (p. 18), as an event staged primarily to gain notoriety, attention, or interest. Cleopatra conducted numerous fascinating, exotic, and strategic pseudo-events that were ultimately successful in creating support for her or her interests and intended goals. In fact, the pseudo-events created by Cleopatra were so remarkable and memorable that they played a major role in changing the course of history and altering the fates of entire empires and their populations.

In modern times, a pseudo-event is designed to harness the attention of the media, bloggers, commentators, politicians, and other influential figures. Lay persons sometimes refer to pseudo-events as publicity stunts. In Cleopatra’s day, however, a pseudo-event could be designed to influence both leaders and a populace, and Cleopatra conducted many for her own people as well as for the leaders of rival empires. Her pseudo-events were well-planned spectacles, displaying wealth, ingenuity, creativity, and power. Perhaps no leader has ever rivaled her imagination in creating the impressive event, with astute skill in planning and strategy behind each tactic she employed. Benchley (2004) argued, “She was a contemplative planner when called for, and patiently plotted before acting” (pp. 40–41). She knew the power of word-of-mouth publicity and created events to parlay conversation to create support for her rule. Pope (2004) concluded that Cleopatra was “a brilliant self-publicist” (p. 8).

The queen used well-planned pseudo-events to ally herself, both romantically and politically, with the two successive leaders of Rome. The seductions of both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony were described by Benchley (2004) as, “meticulously planned, goal oriented encounters” (p. 98) in which the queen used a “knowledge of seductive strategy” (p. 97) combined with the formidable intellect, wit, and political acumen to accomplish her objectives. Her diplomacy with both of these rulers was supported by lavish public events with each General.

In 47 BC, Julius Caesar toured the Nile with Cleopatra aboard her royal barge. According to historical records, the pseudo-event and pageantry Cleopatra arranged were awe-inspiring. Bradford (1972) observed: “It was a magnificent exercise in the art of propaganda, and Cleopatra’s hold over her subjects was immensely reinforced by being seen at the side of this all conquering Roman” (p. 81). Cleopatra’s entrance into Rome in 46 BC is another instance of a successful pseudo-event. She visited for public diplomacy purposes to sign a treaty for Roman protection of Egypt, and also to present her infant son to his father Julius Caesar (Bradford, 1972). The queen arrived on a perfumed barge, following a long procession of chariots, acrobats, dancers, horses, archers, musicians, soldiers, rare African animals, and gifts of food and flowers for the crowd.

Her entrance into Rome was a grand spectacle, sparing no expense, which was intended to please the Roman citizens, impress her royal stature upon its Senators, and demonstrate the grandeur and wealth of Egypt. Cleopatra knew that Romans were no-easy crowd to impress, as they were accustomed to gladiator events, staged naval battles, and other public spectacles that rulers held to gain public favor and support, and she planned her strategy accordingly. Preston (2009) argued that the arrival of Cleopatra was just as interesting as the Roman spectacles of bloody gladiators and so on. As one scholar wrote: “The arrival of the Egyptian queen with all her retinue of slaves, eunuchs, elaborately dressed bodyguards and courtiers, must in itself have caused something of a sensation in the city - as well as a scandal” (Bradford, 1972, p. 91). According to Grant (2004), “A Coptic bishop

of the seventh century AD, John of Nikiu, declared that it was impossible to think of any monarch or woman who had ever surpassed her” (p. 233)

Shortly after her arrival, Julius Caesar erected a gilt monument to Cleopatra in the Temple of Venus on Rome’s Sacred Way, cementing her place in the culture of Rome (Alfano, 2001). Her place in Roman culture was of immense importance, because Rome reportedly considered Egyptian culture as of lesser stature than its own. As a relationship-building move, Cleopatra brought to Rome a court of Egyptian scholars, artists, astronomers, engineers, and mathematicians who helped redesign Rome’s canals, aqueducts, and even overhauled the calendar during her two-year stay (Grant, 2004). Rome’s leaders at the time followed public opinion closely and treated Cleopatra as a visiting queen and ally, reinforcing her position with Rome. According to Preston (2009), “Politicians on their way up—or indeed on their way down—crowded the mansion where Cleopatra held court, hoping to persuade her to use her influence with Caesar on their behalf” (p. 101). Cleopatra used these sessions to collect information of her own, as well as to provide Egyptian expert counsel from her court when appropriate. Due to Cleopatra’s skilled use of public diplomacy, Egypt’s alliance with Rome was secure for many years, long after the assassination of Julius Caesar.

After Caesar’s assassination, Cleopatra aligned herself with the new leader of Rome’s Eastern Empire, Mark Antony, beginning her romantic assignation through another elaborate series of pseudo-events. They began with “Cleopatra’s legendary meeting with Antony in Tarsus in 42 BC” (Walker, 2001, p. 145). Cleopatra invited Antony to feast aboard her golden barge, which was decorated with royal purple sails, silver oars, and every form of luxury that she shared with Antony, whom historians record as a coarse soldier (Volkman, 1958). The meeting was laden with religious symbolism, with Cleopatra dressed as Isis (Bradford, 1972). Many historians recorded the lavishness of the event, which included novel lighting structures, golden vessels, jewel-encrusted plates, couches, and a floor carpeted entirely in rose petals. Reportedly, the queen asked Antony “to accept from her, as a gift, everything he saw” (Volkman, 1958, p.99).

Cleopatra also made gifts to Antony and his officers of her prized Arabian horses, complete with silver bridles (Grant, 2004). These events recurred on a grander scale still over many nights. A scholar lauded: “The Queen’s arrival at Tarsus created such an impression that over two thousand years later it still lingers in human memory” (Bradford, 1972, p. 143). Cleopatra won his protection of her throne and Caesarion, her son with Caesar.

Each expansion provided Cleopatra with a new opportunity to use the press agency model of public relations, creating awareness of her rule, word of mouth among publics in new territories, and a method of “onboarding” or socializing new citizens into the Egyptian empire. This historical example of her Syrian acquisition illustrates her use of press agency:

Antony undertook a reallocation of these territories, as the *imperium* he held over the East legally permitted him to do. The substantial territorial enlargement he granted to Egypt was intended to reinforce the effectiveness of the system in the context of the ambitious expedition being planned against the Parthians. Cleopatra’s propaganda trumpeted these concessions as a victory on the part of the queen; she thus inaugurated a new era and was hailed as the “Youngest Goddess” (*Thea Neotera*) by the Syrian cities over which she was now sovereign. (Chaveau, pp. 26–27).

As this example shows, Cleopatra made skilled use of press agency, creating new eras for her reign as a deity, and generating much name recognition, attention, speculation, awareness, and renown, as are the common goals of a press agency model of public relations.

Though the press agency model in modern times assumes a mass media and a literate public, the ancient activities discussed above clearly used one-way communication and a persuasive and attention-gaining model of public relations. Partially through Cleopatra’s strategic use of the press

agency model, and her artful use of pseudo-events, the Egyptian empire was expanded to create a prosperous and peaceful period for her territories, and Egypt was protected for more than another decade.

6.9. The end of the ptolemaic dynasty

Cleopatra was the last Ptolemy pharaoh, and indeed the last pharaoh. Under the reign of Cleopatra VII, Egypt experienced independence and relative security (Roller, 2010) through the alliances Cleopatra forged with Rome, during the rule of both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony (as triumvirate ruler of the Eastern Empire). Through Cleopatra's exceptionally strategic and skilled use of all four models of public relations as well as a mixed-motive symmetrical approach to public diplomacy, she secured independence and prosperity in the Egyptian Empire at a time when Roman expansion was at an unprecedented level.

The years of alliance ended when Octavian, with his growing military support, became wary of the threat of civil war posed by a united Antony and Cleopatra. After Octavian's victory at Actium, he invaded Egypt and was met by Antony's forces. Though Antony had a few victorious battles, the majority of his troops defected to join Octavian's battalions. Antony, no doubt seeing his empire at an end was then despondent and attempted suicide by falling on his sword (Volkman, 1958). The wound was ultimately fatal but Antony did not die immediately; Cleopatra had him brought to her. Antony perished and was embalmed by Cleopatra herself (Roller, 2010). Although Cleopatra was a skilled negotiator, versed in the use of public diplomacy, her efforts were lost on Octavian. Octavian was the great-nephew of Caesar, and he sought to permanently end the influence of Egypt and eliminate any threat from Cleopatra or his possible rival for the title of Caesar, Julius Caesar's son with Cleopatra, Caesarion (Bradford, 1972). As the son of Caesar, Caesarion had a legitimate tie to Roman rule, and Octavian was well aware that the boy could pose a future threat.

Despite Cleopatra's efforts to negotiate and to ally herself with Rome, even sending her crown and scepter to Octavian, the Roman army continued to move down the coast of Egypt (Roller, 2010). In August of 30 BC, Cleopatra committed suicide rather than be taken into Roman custody, as her sister had once been paraded in chains through Rome (Bradford, 1972). However, Octavian viewed Caesarion as a threat and too dangerous to be left alive. According to Preston (2009), "Octavian's adviser Arus had counseled him that 'Too many Caesars is not a good thing'" (p. 280). Octavian ordered Caesarion to be hunted and executed by the Roman forces, ending Egyptian independence and the Ptolemaic Dynasty (Preston, 2009).

7. Discussion

Without the aid of a true counsel in public relations, Cleopatra was her own best strategist, press agent, orator, public information provider, symmetrical negotiator, public diplomat, and asymmetrical persuader. It is arguable that Cleopatra pioneered many of these activities because she did not have the sanction and credibility of a solo-male pharaoh, or the unstoppable military might of Rome. Because necessity is the mother of invention, this lone female ruler cultivated her own means of gaining influence, building public support, and building symmetrical relationships with other leaders that male rulers at the time simply had not needed to use because social convention gave them overt authority.

Cleopatra used many pioneering means of strategic communication to build her influence to counter the overt authority of the males around her, from her brothers the successive Kings of Egypt, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV, to the male leaders of the Roman Empire. As noted earlier, it is impossible to say if this is the first time such public relations activities were used with such strategic skill by a female lone ruler. However, Cleopatra's reign it is arguably the first time history made record of such extensive public relations activities by a woman ruler.

8. Implications

Little is known about ancient public relations. This research illustrates that ancient public relations activities were more common than have been documented in either the academic literature or the textbooks of the field. The use of a grounded theory approach allowed data to emerge naturally, surrounding communication activities, and then for a theoretical framework to be imposed that could explain the common themes in those data. The theoretical constructs of the models of public relations, with their grounding in the communication direction (one-way or two-way) and purpose (persuasion or understanding) show that ancient public relations was indeed strategic, based on research, planned, and used as part of ruling and diplomacy initiatives.

The importance of public relations in the reign of the pharaoh and the security of the empire can be seen through Cleopatra's skillful use of many public relations strategies, including:

- *Research* (informal research, including spying) conducted by maintaining relationships with many contacts in many languages; speaking with leaders of territories to understand local problems, alliances, and issues; and, learning the structures and persons of power and influence in both allies and foes.
- *Relationship maintenance* with her peoples in many languages; with dignitaries and foreign leaders; with international publics; and with internal publics or Egyptians, through the leaders of the territories in her own empire.
- Forging international *strategic partnerships* with Rome, including publics in Rome, Roman leaders, and her personal alliances with the most powerful Roman leaders of her day, Julius Caesar and Mark Antony.
- Using *public diplomacy* to build understanding among the citizens of different cultures, providing Egyptian scholars to help build Roman infrastructure, knowledge, and society and public acts to reinforce the peace treaty with Rome; maintaining diplomatic relations with her territory in the Kingdom of Judea, despite her dislike for Herod. Cleopatra's respect for the religious traditions of other peoples was specifically noted by historians.
- Adroit use of press agency, such as creating coinage, and creation of some of the most impressive *pseudo-events* in recorded history. Those events were used to build public understanding and support among various peoples, providing influence and credibility with third party influence. Numerous scholars noted that her pseudo-events still inspire awe more than two-thousand years after they took place.

As communicators, our terminology and theories to explain the field are new, but our strategies are not. Understanding of these ancient uses of strategic communication should be incorporated into the foundation of the public relations field. No longer do we see public relations as arising in the activities of those who would declare the American colonies' independence from England, or the 1880s' press agency of P.T. Barnum, as so many texts offer. It is apparent that the history of strategic public relations runs deep, to ancient, dynamic, and diverse seats of power.

9. Conclusions

Cleopatra VII fostered a mutually beneficial relationship with Rome in which the Romans benefitted from the leading intellects of Egyptian scholars and engineers, while Egypt benefitted in protection via Rome's military might. That beneficial relationship lasted for about two decades, due no small in part to the strategic communication activities of queen Cleopatra VII. Until Octavian felt threatened by Caesar's son with Cleopatra, Caesarion, and the independence of Egypt, Cleopatra was successful in maintaining relationships with Rome that allowed Egypt to remain independent and prosperous. The enormous role of public relations in Cleopatra's reign as the last queen of Egypt is undeniable. History shows her as perhaps the first recorded queen regnant, ruling alone without a husband or brother-king for over a decade. Cleopatra was arguably the only ancient woman lone ruler who was forced to use strategic communication to forestall the end of a dynasty and delay the collapse of a sovereign empire to an invading army.

We know precious little about ancient communication strategies, especially those that were driven and determined by a woman monarch. The role of men in ancient communication, such as Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, is well studied (Heath, 2001). Although a balancing of historical accounts is not the goal of the research, offering a more unusual view into the communication strategy of an iconoclast (Orland et al., 1990) and feminist (Levett, 2004) woman pharaoh offers insight and diversity to the literature and ancient history of our field.

Scholars can learn much about the ancient use of strategic communication and public relations through studying Cleopatra's employing of what we now can see as models of public relations, based upon their traits as one- or two-way communications, and whether the intent of the communication was to persuade or to build understanding. However one interprets the data presented above, one can see that strategic communication played an important role in both ancient rule and daily life providing relative peace for Egypt, even during Rome's greatest period of military expansionism.

Facing a patriarchal and androcentric Roman culture, Cleopatra stunned the ancient world with her use of strategy, research, and communication skill. She was among a handful of ancient women rulers to do so—and perhaps the first woman to rule alone leaving enough records of her strategy to be analyzed. Cleopatra was successful at using inventive and strategic means to provide more than two decades of prosperity and Roman protection for her empire until her death in August of 30 BC. This historical case study concludes that Cleopatra VII was a truly advanced, research-based, strategic, and diplomacy-oriented lone woman ruler—who was an effective strategic communication pioneer in her own right.

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