To the Seminar Group, ESAA08: in **D34** AGAIN!

Dear Colleagues,

These are two passages from *Antony and Cleopatra*, which we will look at on Thursday.

We will start with the SECOND!

Please look at them before the seminar, focusing particularly on:

* rhetorical structure
* metre
* rhythm
* alliteration
* length of syllables
* sound of consonants

Please start with the second, and if you have time, turn to the first.

Good luck and bon courage!

Gerard Kilroy

*Antony and Cleopatra*

II.2 [Enobarbus describes Cleopatra]

ENOBARBUS

I will tell you.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,

Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold;

Purple the sails, and so perfumed that

The winds were lovesick with them. The oars were silver,

Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke and made

The water which they beat to follow faster,

As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,

It beggared all description. she did lie

In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,

O’er picturing that Venus where we see

The fancy outwork nature. On each side her

Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling cupids

With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem

To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,

And what they undid did.

AGRIPPA O rare for Antony!

ENOBARBUS

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,

So many mermaids, tended her i’th’eyes,

And made their bends adornings. At the helm

A seeming mermaid steers. The silken tackle

Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,

That yarely frame the office. From the barge

A strange invisible perfume hits the sense

Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast

Her people out upon her; and Antony,

Enthroned i’th’market place, did sit alone,

Whistling to th’air; which, but for vacancy,

Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,

And made a gap in nature.

V.2 [Cleopatra passes from life to history]

CLEOPATRA

Give me my robe; put on my crown; I have

Immortal longings in me. Now no more

The juice of Egypt’s grape shall moist this lip.

Yare, yare, good Iras; quick – methinks I hear

Antony call. I see him rouse himself

To praise my noble act. I hear him mock

The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men

To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come.

Now to that name my courage prove my title!

I am fire and air; my other elements

I give to baser life. So, have you done?

Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.

Farewell, kind Charmian, Iras, long farewell.

*She kisses them. Iras falls and dies*

Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?

If thou and nature can so gently part,

The stroke of death is as a lover’s pinch,

Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still?

If thus thou vanishest, thou tellst the world

It is not worth leave-taking.

CHARMIAN

Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain, that I may say

The gods themselves do weep.

CLEOPATRA

This proves me base;

If she first meet the curled Antony,

He’ll make demand of her, and spend that kiss

Which is my heaven to have. Come thou mortal wretch,

With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate

Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,

Be angry, and dispatch. O couldst thou speak,

That I might hear thee call great Caesar ass

Unpolicied!

CHARMIAN

O eastern star!

CLEOPATRA Peace, peace!

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,

That sucks the nurse asleep?

CHARMIAN O break! O, break!

CLEOPATRA

As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle –

O, Antony! Nay, I will take thee too.

*She applies another asp to her arm*

What should I stay –

CHARMIAN

In this vile world? So, fare thee well.

Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies

A lass unparalleled. Downy windows, close;

And golden Phoebus never be beheld

Of eyes again so royal! Your crown’s awry;

I’ll mend it, and then play –

GUARD

Where’s the Queen?

CHARMIAN

Speak softly, wake her not.

GUARD

Caesar hath sent –

CHARMIAN

Too slow a messenger.