Journal of Language
Volume 8, Number 2, pp: 577-587
e-ISSN: 2685-8878 | p-ISSN: 2655-9080
DOI: https://doi.org/10.30743/jol.v8i2.14426

Cleopatra's Motivation and Power in H. Rider Haggard's *Cleopatra*

Jelita Raihanna[1], Purwanto Siwi[2], Asriani[3]
[1,2]Department of English Literature, Faculty of Literature,
Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia
[3]SD Swasta Alif Inayah Medan, Indonesia
E-mail: jelitaraihanna1@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history:
Received: September 28, 2026
Accepted: November 05, 2026
Published: November 10, 2026

Keywords:
character motivation;
intrinsic motivation;
power motivation;
political conflict;
dynastic continuity;
Maslow's hierarchy of needs

ABSTRACT

This article examines the motivations that drive Cleopatra to fight against her brother, Ptolemy, in H. Rider Haggard's *Cleopatra* (1889). The study develops a qualitative literary analysis of the novel through close attention to dialogue, character action, political decisions, and recurring patterns of conflict. The analysis distinguishes between intrinsic motivation and power motivation and then examines how these dimensions intersect rather than operate independently. The findings identify two major intrinsic motives—desire for Egyptian independence and concern for legacy and dynastic continuity—and five major power motives: political ambition, personal rivalry, strategic calculation, manipulation and control, and personal survival. Empirical textual evidence shows that these motives are repeatedly converted into concrete political practices, including mobilizing Egyptians, preparing military forces, seeking alliances, approaching Julius Caesar, challenging Ptolemy's legitimacy, manipulating factions, and protecting Cleopatra's political position. The discussion demonstrates that national sovereignty and personal ambition are not mutually exclusive within the novel: Cleopatra presents the consolidation of her authority as a means of securing Egypt's future, while her pursuit of sovereignty simultaneously strengthens her personal power. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is employed cautiously as an interpretive framework. Recent empirical research challenges the assumption that human needs are universally satisfied in a fixed sequence, supporting a more integrated interpretation of Cleopatra's simultaneous pursuit of security, belonging, esteem, agency, and self-realization.

Corresponding Author:
Jelita Raihanna
Faculty of Literature, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara (UISU), Medan, Indonesia
E-mail: jelitaraihanna1@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Literary characters become analytically significant when their desires are translated into decisions, relationships, risks, and conflicts. A novel does not merely report what happens; it constructs causality by presenting characters whose goals generate actions and whose actions generate further conflict. Research on literary and narrative materials has emphasized the value of examining characters, social relationships, and motivation as interconnected elements of narrative meaning (Rohlfing et al., 2020; Pluymen et al., 2021). Conflict, in turn, creates narrative tension because incompatible goals and interests force characters to make increasingly consequential choices (Anggraini & Wulan, 2020).

Haggard's Cleopatra is especially suitable for a motivational analysis because the central political conflict is inseparable from a family relationship. Cleopatra and Ptolemy are siblings, yet both occupy competing positions within the struggle for Egypt's throne. The conflict consequently combines dynastic legitimacy, political authority, national sovereignty,

personal rivalry, and survival. The novel's Cleopatra is not driven by one simple desire. Her actions repeatedly suggest that political ambition, the independence of Egypt, dynastic continuity, strategic calculation, and self-preservation overlap.

The analysis developed here follows the motivational categories identified in the source thesis but does not cite the thesis as a publication or treat its author as a scholarly authority. Instead, the empirical basis is the primary literary text itself, using the chapter and page locations documented in the source material as textual guides. The analysis therefore treats the novel as the primary evidence and uses secondary scholarship to interpret the motivational patterns. This distinction is important for avoiding self-citation while preserving the empirical material extracted from the original research project.

The theoretical framework combines motivation theory with a cautious use of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Traditional accounts describe physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs as an ordered structure (Altymurat, 2021; Kim & Shin, 2020; Yuanyuan & Selvaratnam, 2023). However, recent empirical work complicates the assumption of a universal sequence. Rojas et al. (2023), using a large representative Mexican dataset, rejected four assumptions commonly associated with Maslow's model, including sequential satisfaction and a single optimal order of needs. Yurdakul and Arar (2023), using mixed methods with 240 participants and 12 interviews, likewise found that need priorities vary according to gender, age, and income. These findings support an interpretive approach in which Cleopatra's security, belonging, esteem, and self-realization motives may operate simultaneously.

The central question is therefore: what motivates Cleopatra to fight against Ptolemy, and how are those motivations represented through observable textual evidence? The article argues that Cleopatra's conflict is best understood as a dynamic motivational configuration. Independence supplies an ideological objective; legacy supplies a future-oriented objective; political ambition supplies a claim to authority; rivalry identifies Ptolemy as an immediate obstacle; strategy supplies mechanisms for changing the balance of power; manipulation supplies techniques for controlling political relationships; and survival supplies urgency.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Motivation, Character, and Conflict

Motivation provides a useful analytical link between characterization and plot. Characters act because they want, need, value, fear, protect, or pursue something. When those goals collide with another character's goals, conflict develops. Anggraini and Wulan (2020) emphasize the role of motivation and opposition in producing narrative tension, while Lovita et al. et al. (2023) demonstrates how motivation can be used as a framework for reading character development in a novel. Li et al. (2018) further illustrate the broader analytical value of tracing motivation as an evolving process rather than as a static attribute.

The source literature also treats novels as representations of social and human complexity. Rohlfing et al. (2020) discuss motivation and interaction in relation to human communication; Pluymen et al. (2021) demonstrate individual differences in social motivation; and Simonton and Garn (2022) connect emotion and motivation with behavioral consequences. Although these studies are not studies of fictional characters, they provide conceptual support for examining motivation as a dynamic relationship among internal states, social environments, and action.

Other studies included in the source literature demonstrate the continuing relevance of motivation in narrative and educational contexts. Prajoko et al. (2023) examine motivation through a novel-based learning context; Suryapranata et al. (2023) examine visual novels and learning motivation; and Hussain et al. (2022) discuss motivation in a different applied context of novel protein adoption. These studies are not used as direct evidence about

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.30743/jol.v8i2.14426

Cleopatra. Rather, they demonstrate the breadth of contemporary motivation research and support the methodological premise that motivation is best interpreted in relation to goals, contexts, and behavior.

2.2 Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation generally refers to action directed by internally valued goals, satisfaction, interest, or personal fulfillment rather than by external reward alone. In the present literary analysis, the category is used to distinguish goals that Cleopatra appears to value as ends in themselves from the techniques she uses to secure power. Her desire for Egyptian independence and her concern for legacy and dynastic continuity are therefore treated as intrinsic dimensions of her characterization.

2.3 Power Motivation

Power motivation concerns the desire to influence, control, direct, or affect other people and political outcomes. The source framework defines it in terms of influence and control, including attraction toward leadership and situations in which an individual can determine outcomes (Lovita et al. et al., 2023). In Cleopatra, power motivation is visible in the refusal of permanent co-rule, the struggle with Ptolemy, strategic alliances, factional manipulation, control of information, and efforts to protect political authority.

2.4 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Its Contemporary Reassessment

Maslow's model remains useful because it offers categories for interpreting security, belonging, esteem, and self-realization. Kim and Shin (2020) demonstrate the continued operational use of Maslovian categories in scale development, while Yuanyuan and Selvaratnam (2023) apply the framework to social-policy analysis. Nevertheless, recent empirical research requires caution. Rojas et al. (2023) found that the four assumptions tested in their large representative dataset were rejected, including the assumption that needs must be satisfied sequentially. Yurdakul and Arar (2023) likewise found that the hierarchy varies across demographic groups. The present article therefore treats Maslow as a heuristic framework, not a deterministic psychological law.

2.5 Haggard's Historical Imagination

Haggard's Cleopatra belongs to historical fiction rather than documentary history. The novel uses ancient Egypt as a setting for political intrigue, romance, religion, power, and cultural conflict. Woodward (2020) situates Haggard's representation of Cleopatra within Victorian literary engagements with Egyptology and Christianity. This contextual perspective is important because the motivations analyzed here belong to Haggard's literary construction of Cleopatra. They should not be treated as direct evidence of the historical Cleopatra's psychology.

3. Research Method

The study adopts a qualitative descriptive literary method. The research procedure is based on close reading of Cleopatra, with attention to dialogue, character actions, interactions, political decisions, and recurring patterns associated with the conflict between Cleopatra and Ptolemy. The source research identifies qualitative analysis as appropriate because literary motivation involves nuances, contextual relationships, and meanings that cannot be reduced adequately to numerical variables.

The empirical data in this article are textual. They consist of passages and events identified in the novel, especially the scenes located in Chapters I, II, VI, VII, IX, and X. The

chapter and page references below follow the textual locations documented in the source material. Analysis proceeds by identifying the immediate textual evidence, interpreting the motive represented by that evidence, and then connecting the interpretation to motivation theory and contemporary scholarship. The method therefore follows an evidence–interpretation–theory sequence rather than treating theoretical categories as substitutes for textual evidence.

The article also makes an explicit methodological distinction between primary and secondary evidence. Haggard's novel is the primary source for claims about Cleopatra's behavior and dialogue. Contemporary journal articles are secondary sources used to contextualize motivation and reassess Maslow's theory. The source thesis supplied the initial extraction and organization of the relevant textual passages, but it is not cited or included in the reference list in order to avoid self-citation.

4. Discussion

4.1 Intrinsic Motivation

4.1.1 *Desire for Independence and National Sovereignty*

The first major motive is Cleopatra's desire to secure Egyptian independence from foreign influence. The strongest textual evidence appears in Chapter IX, pp. 230–231, where Cleopatra emphasizes sovereignty, calls for Egyptian resistance to Ptolemy and his Roman allies, proposes outreach across temples and markets and among different social classes, advocates strengthening military forces, and seeks allies who share the vision of an independent Egypt (Haggard, 1889, Chapter IX, pp. 230–231). The density of these actions matters. Independence is not simply a rhetorical claim; it is represented through a program of political communication, social mobilization, military preparation, and alliance-building.

The sequence of actions reveals how a political ideal becomes behavioral motivation. Cleopatra first identifies foreign domination as a threat, then attempts to construct a collective response. Her appeal to temples, markets, and different social classes indicates that she recognizes popular legitimacy as a political resource. Her reference to military preparation shows that independence requires material capacity, while her search for allies indicates that sovereignty is also a diplomatic problem. The empirical pattern therefore links ideology to organization: Cleopatra's belief in independence produces concrete efforts to mobilize people and resources.

The passage also complicates the distinction between intrinsic and power motivation. Cleopatra's independence project strengthens her own political base. By presenting herself as the leader of resistance, she simultaneously advances a national objective and consolidates personal authority. The evidence therefore does not justify reducing her patriotism to self-interest, nor does it justify treating her political ambition as irrelevant. The novel constructs a situation in which national sovereignty and personal rule become mutually reinforcing.

The risk undertaken in approaching Julius Caesar provides further evidence of motivational intensity. The source text identifies Cleopatra's presentation to Caesar in a bale of rugs as a dangerous and unconventional political act undertaken to secure his support (Haggard, 1889, Chapter I; Chapter II). The action is important not because it proves a particular psychological state, but because the narrative repeatedly represents Cleopatra as willing to accept personal danger when a political objective is at stake. Risk becomes an observable behavioral indicator of the importance she assigns to the objective.

The contemporary empirical literature on needs strengthens this interpretation by questioning rigid sequencing. Rojas et al. (2023) tested Maslow's assumptions using a large representative Mexican database and rejected the idea that needs must be satisfied sequentially. Their results are relevant because Cleopatra's independence motive simultaneously involves security from foreign domination, belonging through Egyptian

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identity, esteem through political legitimacy, and self-realization through the pursuit of her conception of rightful rule. The novel therefore illustrates, at the level of literary characterization, the kind of motivational overlap that contemporary empirical research makes theoretically plausible.

4.1.2 *Legacy and Dynastic Continuity*

The second intrinsic motive concerns legacy and dynasty. In Chapter VI, p. 55, Cleopatra explicitly connects the defeat of her brother with a vision of lasting legacy and dynastic continuity: she wants her political work to endure beyond her reign and regards consolidation of her rule as necessary to that objective (Haggard, 1889, Chapter VI, p. 55). This evidence is particularly important because the motive is expressed prospectively. Cleopatra is not concerned only with winning the present struggle; she is concerned with what political order will remain after her.

The surrounding textual evidence identifies several practices associated with this long-term orientation: investment in arts and architecture, education and preparation of children, cultivation of national pride and unity, political alliance-building, and control of the political narrative. These actions indicate that legacy is represented as multidimensional. It involves material monuments, education, dynastic reproduction, collective memory, and political continuity. The motive consequently extends beyond personal fame into the construction of a durable political identity.

The legacy motive also clarifies why defeating Ptolemy is presented as more than an immediate contest. If Cleopatra understands shared rule as unstable, then Ptolemy represents an interruption to dynastic continuity. Eliminating the rival becomes, within the narrative logic, a way of stabilizing the succession and preserving the political project. The evidence therefore connects personal rivalry with a future-oriented conception of dynasty.

This pattern can be read through esteem and self-realization without assuming that those needs occur only after lower needs have been satisfied. Cleopatra seeks recognition through historical memory, belonging through national unity, and self-realization through the fulfillment of a political identity. Rojas et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of love/belonging and esteem in well-being and argue for an integrated view of needs. Yurdakul and Arar (2023) similarly show empirically that need priorities are not universal across demographic groups. The literary evidence is therefore better interpreted as simultaneous motivational activity than as movement through a fixed hierarchy.

4.2 Power Motivation

4.2.1 *Political Ambition and the Desire for Sole Rule*

Political ambition is the clearest expression of Cleopatra's power motivation. In Chapter I, p. 13, she declares that her ambition is to rule Egypt alone rather than merely as a co-ruler (Haggard, 1889, Chapter I, p. 13). This statement provides a direct motivational proposition: shared authority is insufficient for the political identity she seeks. The conflict with Ptolemy is therefore structurally embedded in her goal because his continued claim to the throne prevents the complete realization of sole rule.

The significance of this evidence becomes clearer when it is compared with Cleopatra's subsequent actions. She seeks Julius Caesar's support, approaches him through an unconventional and dangerous method, and uses personal influence to alter the political balance. The actions show a consistent relationship between objective and means. The objective is sole rule; the means include alliance, risk-taking, persuasion, and interpersonal influence. The recurrence of this pattern across chapters makes political ambition more than a single declaration.

At the same time, the text gives political ambition a public justification. Cleopatra associates strong singular leadership with political stability and with resistance to foreign influence. The argument is therefore not simply "I want power"; it is that Egypt requires a particular form of concentrated authority. This distinction matters analytically because it shows how power motivation can be narrated through political ideals. Her ambition is personal, but it is presented as compatible with a conception of national order.

The result is an unresolved tension between sovereignty and concentration of power. Cleopatra resists foreign domination while seeking highly concentrated domestic authority. The novel does not resolve this contradiction; instead, it makes the contradiction productive. Her pursuit of independence increases the political legitimacy of her rule, while her pursuit of sole rule gives the independence project a specific personal center.

4.2.2 *Personal Rivalry and Competing Claims to Legitimacy*

The rivalry between Cleopatra and Ptolemy transforms political ambition into direct interpersonal conflict. In Chapter X, p. 241, Ptolemy invokes dynastic descent and the legitimacy of his own claim, while Cleopatra challenges his capacity to lead Egypt and contrasts her vision of restoring the country with foreign influence (Haggard, 1889, Chapter X, p. 241). The conflict therefore involves two kinds of legitimacy: inherited dynastic legitimacy and demonstrated political competence.

The following exchange, documented at Chapter X, p. 242, intensifies the contrast. Ptolemy defends the value of shared rule, whereas Cleopatra rejects shared rule as a source of division and argues for a singular leader capable of decisive action (Haggard, 1889, Chapter X, p. 242). This is significant because the disagreement is not only about who should possess the crown. It is also about what political system should govern Egypt.

The rivalry consequently operates on three levels. First, it is familial because the contestants are siblings. Second, it is institutional because both have claims to political authority. Third, it is ideological because they articulate different conceptions of legitimate governance. These three levels reinforce one another. A disagreement over policy becomes a dispute over legitimacy; the dispute over legitimacy becomes a struggle for the throne; and the struggle for the throne becomes a personal rivalry that reduces the possibility of compromise.

This helps explain why Ptolemy is such a persistent motivational object for Cleopatra. He is not merely an opponent outside her political system. He is a rival located within the same dynastic structure and therefore capable of challenging her claim from a position of recognized legitimacy. Her determination to defeat him is consequently understandable within the narrative as an effort to remove a structural competitor rather than simply an expression of personal hostility.

4.2.3 *Strategic Considerations: Alliance, Risk, and Political Calculation*

The empirical evidence for strategic motivation is especially strong because Cleopatra repeatedly evaluates political relationships in instrumental terms. In Chapter II, p. 92, she considers approaching Julius Caesar because his support could neutralize Ptolemy's alliance. The passage presents Caesar as a powerful actor whose interests can be influenced and whose support could change the political balance (Haggard, 1889, Chapter II, p. 92). The underlying reasoning is means-end calculation: identify the threat, identify a counter-resource, and attempt to secure that resource.

Chapter II, pp. 95–96, further associates Cleopatra's strategy with the preparation of forces and the expectation that Roman power, although formidable, is not invincible (Haggard, 1889, Chapter II, pp. 95–96). The strategic pattern therefore combines diplomacy and force.

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Cleopatra does not rely on one instrument. She attempts to construct an advantageous political environment before direct confrontation becomes decisive.

The same logic appears in the later mobilization of Egyptians and the manipulation of factions. Strategic calculation is therefore not a single episode involving Caesar; it is a recurring method. Cleopatra identifies the distribution of political resources and attempts to rearrange that distribution in her favor. This makes strategic motivation a bridge between ambition and action.

The importance of this finding is that it changes how Cleopatra's risk-taking should be interpreted. The approach to Caesar is not simply impulsive courage. It is a calculated risk undertaken because conventional political channels may not provide sufficient leverage. The willingness to accept personal danger is therefore embedded in a broader strategic logic. Risk becomes a resource when the expected political gain is sufficiently important.

Contemporary motivation research supports treating motivation as context-sensitive rather than fixed. Pluymen et al. (2021) demonstrate individual differences in social motivation, while Simonton and Garn (2022) show that motivational and emotional consequences can shape behavior in task contexts. These studies do not validate a psychological diagnosis of Cleopatra, but they support the broader analytical principle that behavior should be interpreted in relation to goals, social context, and perceived consequences.

4.2.4 *Manipulation and Control as Instruments of Power*

Manipulation and control represent the operational side of Cleopatra's power motivation. Chapter VII, pp. 197–198, provides explicit evidence of a strategy based on factional division. Cleopatra proposes weakening Ptolemy's supporters by playing different factions against one another and by forming alliances with Roman actors opposed to Ptolemy's supporters (Haggard, 1889, Chapter VII, pp. 197–198). The strategy shows that Cleopatra understands political power as relational and distributed across competing groups.

The second passage on Chapter VII, p. 198, makes the mechanism more explicit: those who remain loyal to Ptolemy are to be treated harshly, while those who renounce him are offered clemency. Fear and reward are combined to influence allegiance and control the political narrative (Haggard, 1889, Chapter VII, p. 198). This is empirical evidence of a dual mechanism of political control. Coercion discourages opposition, while reward creates incentives for defection.

The strategy also extends into interpersonal relationships. Cleopatra uses charisma and personal influence with powerful figures such as Caesar to secure political advantages. In the narrative logic, interpersonal attraction becomes a political instrument. The important analytical point is not the moral evaluation of that conduct but its functional role: personal relationships are converted into political resources.

Manipulation also reveals how information becomes a form of power. If political actors can influence what different groups believe about their rivals, they can change the perceived distribution of loyalty and legitimacy without immediately changing the underlying material distribution of forces. Cleopatra's use of disinformation and narrative control therefore complements her military and diplomatic strategies.

This dimension is particularly relevant to the article's distinction between intrinsic and power motivation. The ultimate objective may be national independence or dynastic continuity, but the instruments are frequently power-oriented. The same action can therefore have different motivational levels: alliance-building may serve independence, while the technique of securing the alliance reflects power motivation. This layered structure is one reason a single-cause explanation is inadequate.

4.2.5 *Personal Survival and the Security Dimension of Motivation*

Personal survival gives urgency to Cleopatra's political struggle. The source analysis identifies survival as a motive because remaining in power protects Cleopatra from deposition or death in a political environment in which rivals can threaten the ruler's position. The empirical evidence is distributed across the strategic passages: Cleopatra seeks to neutralize threats, secure alliances, mobilize support, and weaken Ptolemy's position (Haggard, 1889, Chapters II, VII, IX).

The security dimension is particularly visible when strategic behavior is interpreted in relation to consequences. If Ptolemy remains politically capable of challenging Cleopatra, then her authority remains unstable. Neutralizing him therefore has both a power function and a security function. This helps explain why compromise becomes difficult: continued rivalry itself is represented as a source of danger.

Maslow's safety category provides a useful vocabulary here, but contemporary evidence again requires caution. Rojas et al. (2023) found no support for a universal sequential pathway in which safety must always precede higher needs. In Cleopatra, security and higher-order motives are simultaneous. She seeks to remain politically secure while pursuing recognition, sovereignty, dynastic continuity, and a vision of herself as the rightful ruler. Yurdakul and Arar (2023) likewise found that need priorities vary by demographic context, reinforcing the argument that motivation should be interpreted dynamically.

The survival motive should also be distinguished from a purely biological conception of safety. In the novel, political survival is inseparable from status, legitimacy, and identity. Losing power may mean losing the capacity to define Egypt's political future, not merely losing office. Thus, "survival" operates simultaneously at personal, political, and dynastic levels.

4.3 Integrated Motivational Structure

The seven motivational dimensions identified in the textual evidence form an integrated system. Independence provides the national objective; legacy and dynasty provide the long-term horizon; political ambition establishes the desired political position; rivalry identifies the immediate competitor; strategy determines how resources can be mobilized; manipulation and control provide instruments for influencing political actors; and survival supplies urgency. None of these dimensions operates in isolation.

The relationship can be seen clearly in Cleopatra's approach to Caesar. The action is strategic because she seeks a powerful ally; it is power-oriented because the alliance strengthens her position; it is survival-oriented because political defeat threatens her security; and it is connected to independence because she needs political leverage against foreign influence and Ptolemy's Roman support. One action therefore activates several motives at once.

The same convergence appears in the mobilization of Egyptians in Chapter IX. Cleopatra's appeal to temples, markets, and social classes advances national independence, creates belonging around Egyptian identity, builds political legitimacy, and expands her personal support base (Haggard, 1889, Chapter IX, pp. 230–231). The evidence demonstrates why intrinsic and power motivation should not be treated as mutually exclusive categories. They describe different levels of the same political behavior.

The conflict with Ptolemy is consequently best understood as a conflict of overlapping motivational systems. Cleopatra does not simply want the throne; she wants a particular political order in which Egypt is independent, her dynasty continues, and her authority is concentrated enough to prevent competing claims. Ptolemy challenges all three components simultaneously. He is a rival for the throne, a competing dynastic claimant, and—through his Roman alliance—a perceived obstacle to Cleopatra's conception of Egyptian sovereignty.

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This integrated interpretation also explains the persistence of conflict. If Cleopatra's objective were merely personal prestige, compromise might be possible. If her objective were only national independence, shared rule might theoretically remain possible. But the narrative combines independence with sole rule, dynasty with political consolidation, and survival with elimination of rivals. Once these motives are interconnected, Ptolemy becomes difficult to accommodate within the political future Cleopatra imagines.

The Maslovian framework is most productive when used to illuminate these overlaps rather than to force them into a hierarchy. Security can coexist with esteem; belonging can reinforce political mobilization; esteem can reinforce dynastic ambition; and self-realization can be expressed through political leadership. Rojas et al. (2023) empirically support an integrated view of needs, while Yurdakul and Arar (2023) show that the priority of needs can vary across social groups. Cleopatra's characterization therefore provides a literary case in which multiple needs are activated by the same political circumstances.

The final implication concerns the relationship between character motivation and narrative conflict. Motivation does not merely explain why Cleopatra acts; it helps explain why the plot develops as it does. Her desire for sovereignty produces mobilization; mobilization produces political confrontation; ambition produces rivalry; rivalry produces strategic alliances; alliances produce counter-maneuvers; manipulation produces further instability; and survival intensifies the stakes. Motivation is therefore structurally constitutive of the plot rather than an accessory to characterization.

The article should nevertheless maintain the distinction between literary interpretation and empirical psychology. The novel provides evidence of how Haggard constructs Cleopatra's motives, not direct measurement of the historical Cleopatra's psychological needs. The value of the analysis lies in showing how the narrative organizes political behavior through a coherent, though internally tense, motivational structure.

5. Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates that Cleopatra's conflict with Ptolemy is driven by an interconnected set of intrinsic and power motivations. The intrinsic dimensions are the desire for Egyptian independence and the desire to establish a lasting legacy and secure dynastic continuity. The power dimensions are political ambition, personal rivalry, strategic calculation, manipulation and control, and personal survival. These categories are analytically distinguishable but empirically intertwined.

The textual evidence shows that Cleopatra repeatedly converts motivation into political action. She mobilizes Egyptians, advocates military preparation, seeks alliances, approaches Caesar through a high-risk strategy, challenges Ptolemy's legitimacy, manipulates political factions, uses fear and reward, and attempts to secure her position. These actions demonstrate that motivation in the novel is not merely internal characterization; it is a mechanism through which the political plot develops.

The analysis also shows that national sovereignty and personal power cannot be separated neatly in Haggard's characterization. Cleopatra's political ambition is repeatedly justified through a vision of Egyptian independence, while her pursuit of independence simultaneously strengthens her personal authority. Her concern for dynasty extends the conflict into the future, while survival gives the struggle immediate urgency. The resulting motivational structure is therefore dynamic rather than linear.

Maslow's hierarchy remains useful as an interpretive vocabulary for discussing security, belonging, esteem, and self-realization, but contemporary empirical research cautions against treating the hierarchy as universal or sequential. The findings of Rojas et al. (2023) and Yurdakul and Arar (2023) support a more integrated interpretation. Cleopatra's

motivations are best understood as overlapping responses to political threat, identity, legitimacy, recognition, sovereignty, and the desire to shape the future of Egypt.

Ultimately, Cleopatra fights Ptolemy because he represents a convergence of threats to the political future she seeks to construct: he is a dynastic rival, a competing claimant to legitimacy, an obstacle to sole rule, and an ally of foreign power. Her response is correspondingly multidimensional. Haggard's Cleopatra is therefore characterized not by a single motive but by the interaction of sovereignty, ambition, dynasty, strategy, control, rivalry, and survival. That interaction is central to both the characterization of Cleopatra and the development of the novel's central conflict.

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Volume 8, Number 2, pp: 577-587
e-ISSN: 2685-8878 | p-ISSN: 2655-9080
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