

Cilt / Volume 2, Sayı / Issue 3, 2019, pp. 61-70

E - ISSN: 2667-4688

URL: <https://www.ratingacademy.com.tr/ojs/index.php/homeros>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33390/homeros.2.008>

Araştırma Makalesi/Research Article

A TALE OF TWO STATES: DEEP AND PARALLEL STATES IN SHAKESPEARE'S JULIUS CAESAR

Fehmi TURGUT *

* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, TURKEY,
E-mail: feturgut@ktu.edu.tr, feturgut@yahoo.com
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2445-9065>

Geliş Tarihi: 4 Temmuz 2019; Kabul Tarihi: 23 Temmuz 2019
Received: 4 July 2019; Accepted: 23 July 2019

ABSTRACT

Re-reading of Shakespeare has undergone significant transformations in the last few decades, for Shakespeare's plays always have something to say about the time they are read. The strong relationship between drama and political sciences is another factor for Shakespeare adaptations and appropriations. Instead of speaking about specific events describing the way they occur, Shakespearean plays reveal truths behind the so-called and perceived truths, not what is visible but what is invisible, not what happens but what could happen, focusing on historical, political and sociological probabilities and prophecies. Shakespeare's plays are a storehouse for such probabilities and prophecies. In his Roman tragedies, Shakespearescripted many ideas, probabilities and prophecies about the concepts of state and politics, which seem to belong to our own modern times. This study aims to reread Shakespeare's Julius Caesar on the basis of political context with reference to two contemporary political concepts: deep state and parallel state.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, politics, deep state, parallel state.

1. INTRODUCTION

To the conventional ways to approach a Shakespearean play- namely those dwelling on his genius as a poet and dramatist, his unequalled and seminal command over the dramatic style and the English language that perfectly decorates this style, the power of imagination he exercised over his verse, his aplomb and skill in creating eternally complex characters and plots, social research has added a new one: politics. This is neither accidental nor strained. According to Eyre and Wright (2000), politics fascinates Shakespeare very much. They put it that Shakespeare depicts a world of secular power with an enthusiastic curiosity, with a very highly developed sense of the workings of bureaucratic body of the governments and power struggles to rule these governments. Bloom and Jaffa (1964) consider Shakespeare as a political dramatist and claim that modern society and modern researchers need to recognize his ideas and beliefs in order to find both sources of and solutions to moral, social and political problems of contemporary world. The premise was that political and philosophical approach help provide a necessary perspective and agenda in order to understand the problems of man and the contemporary world with reference to Shakespearean heroes and the worlds they lived in. Kidnie defines the nature of the necessary perspectives as follows: "... a play for all that it carries the rhetorical and ideological force of an enduring stability, is not an object at all, but rather a dynamic process that evolves over time in response to the needs and sensibilities of its users" (2009: 2). Thus, this study aims to provide one of these perspectives that will help political minds with their understanding of what is performed on the stage of politics in *Julius Caesar*.

Shakespeare's interest in politics and state affairs became a focal point especially in the nineteenth century when social and political sciences started to coin new terms and concepts to look for in the political worlds Shakespeare created on his stage. With the introduction of New Historicism and Cultural Materialism into literary criticism, and with the use of Critical Discourse Analysis in dramatic texts, it has become clear to the critical minds that the plays hide political, ideological and sociological codes not only of their time but also of the modern times. Contemporary Shakespeare criticism deals with these codes with reference to words, terms and concepts that have been recently coined to define these codes. Murley and Sean explain the very political nature of Shakespeare's plays as follows:

Political science is becoming ever more reliant on abstract statistical model and almost divorced from human judgement, hope, and idealism. William Shakespeare offers the political scientists an antidote to this methodological alienation, this self-imposed exile from the political concerns of citizens and politicians. Shakespeare... presents his characters as rulers, citizens, and statesman of the most famous regimes, governed by their respective law and shaped by their respective political and social institutions. The actions, deliberations, mistakes, and successes of his characters reveal the limitations and strengths of the regime, whether they be Athens, Rome, and England. (2006: 268)

It is for this reason that with each new political, sociological and economic, philosophical and ideological term and concept, critics have invented a new Shakespeare: Shakespeare the royalist, Shakespeare the republican, Shakespeare the capitalist, the libertarian, the stern moralist, the sentimentalist, the champion of women's rights, the scourge of the Spanish, the lover of all mankind, the lover of men... Marxist Shakespeare, classist Shakespeare, aesthetic and pathetic, Ricardian, Stoppardian – Shakespeare the radical preacher, the Sunday-school teacher, the Technicolor multiplex Hollywood feature (Taylor, 1991).

To understand both the ancient, and thus the modern world and life, the twentieth and twenty-first century literary criticism saw an immense upsurge in the interest in the olden texts, which brought an avant-gardist perspective to literary criticism since it led historians and critics

of political thought, and also sociologists, to turn their faces to old great works of drama. It is for this reason that those who study Shakespearean texts employ a considerable number of modern political, sociological, ideological, and even psychological terms and concepts in their analyses. Two of these concepts which this study aims to uncover are 'deep state' and 'parallel state'. The study tries to reinvigorate Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* with a focus on these two contemporary political terms, which have been used to define some invisible, informal and illegal structures and power networks in what Althusser (1971) calls as state apparatus. This implies that Shakespeare's plays do not just include only some frozen and archaic terms and concepts as the inheritances of past cultures, but also some other terms and concepts that help define and explain the very nature of the contemporary politics. Such appropriations and adaptations provide the contemporary scholars with a broad view of political practices that accommodate some foundational questions as to how power struggles happen within state spheres, and with the opportunity to understand, absorb and represent the conventional political events of the known political world and the assumed written and unwritten rules and principles governing that world.

2. CONCEPTS OF DEEP STATE AND PARALLEL STATE

Concepts of 'deep and parallel state' are not among those relevant strategic concepts used in modern formal state constitution but are some very specific but hidden and informal articulations of structural elements and entities that find their so called legitimacy in some political, economic and judiciary imaginaries in a state system (Lofgren, 2016). Grandin (2017) argues that the term was first used by Francis Bacon who referred it to God's command over man in the world, which implies the deepest of deep states, one that is obscure and invisible. Glennon (2015) calls it double government and disguised republic. Actually, it was first coined as a concept in politics and governmental affairs in Turkey: *derin devlet*, to refer to any underground organizations, groups and crime elements serving and acting as a means to eliminate any threat to the establishment (Blunden, 2014; Filkins, 2012). From Bacon's era to modern times, during which very few things have remained unchanged, one can see that there is hardly any difference in the definition, understanding and conception of deep state. Friedman (2017) explains the term as follows:

There is something ominous-sounding in the deep state. It implies that beneath constitutionally ordained systems and principles, there is a deeper and more potent power in control of the nation. It implies a unified force deeply embedded in the republic that has its own agenda and the means to undermine the decisions of elected presidents and members of its power derives from control of the mechanisms of power and being invisible. The deep state is, in fact, a very real thing. It is, however, neither a secret nor nearly as glamorous as the concept might indicate. It has been in place since 1871 and continues to represent the real mechanism beneath the federal government, controlling and frequently reshaping elected officials' policies. This entity is called the civil service, and it was created to limit the power of the president. (1-2)

This comprehensive definition guarantees a very successful analysis of the existence of any deep state in any given country. This study rereads Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* through the lenses planted in Friedman's words.

3. DEEP AND PARALLEL STATES IN JULIUS CAESAR

In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare depicts Rome not only as London of his time or any other city or country but as a symbol of a microcosm as well. In this microcosm, from international relations to domestic and individual relations, from love and hate to hypocrisy and loyalty, all human actions are made apparent by Shakespeare. Shakespeare lets his characters play a political balance game in which every player must take his steps very carefully. The play is a

good example of what happens to a country whose leaders are trapped into a political conflict and a state of confusion where the game of politics is not played with the rules of politics. Unscrupulous power competitions, low-quality political criticism, envy of one another's power and authority, political manipulations and polarizations, egotism, false alliances, power-hunger, conspiracies and plots, all appear in any society very much similar to how Shakespeare depicts them in *Julius Caesar*. Moreover, what makes the play timeless and universal is the fragile dynamics and nature of politics. This fragility is due to such groups of politicians who often go unnoticed since they want to exercise power discreetly, just standing behind a veil of propaganda that weakens and undermines the state's legitimate authority. The very first scene of the play includes the very first signs of such a group:

When commoners say they meet in the street to rejoice Caesar's triumph, Marullus and Flavius, two conspirators against Caesar, say:

Marullus

Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?
What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!
O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The livelong day, with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome:
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
To hear the replication of your sounds
Made in her concave shores?
And do you now put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? Be gone!
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude.

Flavius

Go, go, good countrymen, and, for this fault,
Assemble all the poor men of your sort;
Draw them to Tiber banks, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the lowest stream
Do kiss the most exalted shores of all. (I.I. 32-60)

This is also the first sign of a very influential corporate faction with no constitutional authority whatsoever that aims to exercise power against or in parallel to the existing state power, which is a type of de facto power (Brisco, 2008). Marullus and Flavius' offensive insolence to the plebeians is also the sign of corporate elitism, which is one of the characteristics

that go through Deep and Parallel States. This dialogue can be taken as an extension of an invisible authority that wants to penetrate and reside in social groups.

Claiming to be binary choice for the ruling, political and military elites-whether be they elected or unelected- try hard to control almost all mechanisms in a political system (Lofgren, 2016). For a group like this that exercises the power of deep and parallel state within the normal state structure to gain societal and political legitimacy, a campaign to discredit the existing government or power is of vital importance. The role Marullus and Flavius play in *Julius Caesar* is of this kind: a perception operation claiming that Julius Caesar wants to be an emperor, a threat against the republican characteristics of the Rome. Cassius, who is very good at probing into the minds and hearts of his fellow men to understand and provoke their hidden motives, believes that the real guards of the republic are the noble men of the Rome. He also dislikes his subservient role in the Roman establishment and believes that he is as bold, patriotic and efficient as Caesar:

Cassius

I was born free as Caesar; so were you:
We both have fed as well, and we can both
Endure the winter's cold as well as he:
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,
The troubled Tiber chafing with her shores,
Caesar said to me 'Darest thou, Cassius, now
Leap in with me into this angry flood,
And swim to yonder point?' Upon the word,
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in
And bade him follow; so indeed he did.
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;
But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Caesar cried 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink!'
I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar. And this man
Is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature and must bend his body,
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him.
He had a fever when he was in Spain,
And when the fit was on him, I did mark
How he did shake: 'tis true, this god did shake;
His coward lips did from their colour fly,
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world
Did lose his lustre: I did hear him groan:
Ay, and that tongue of his that bade the Romans
Mark him and write his speeches in their books,
Alas, it cried 'Give me some drink, Titinius,'
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world
And bear the palm alone. (I.II. 99- 133)

Cassius knows very well that he is in dire need of Brutus' political prestige and authority in the senate. Consequently, after implying that Caesar will be a tyrant he directly appeals to Brutus' senses- those of nobility, patriotism, honour, pride, self-esteem, and responsibility:

Cassius

Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus and Caesar: what should be in that 'Caesar'?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with 'em,
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Caesar.
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed,
That he is grown so great? Age, thou art shamed!
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was famed with more than with one man?
When could they say till now, that talk'd of Rome,
That her wide walls encompass'd but one man?
Now is it Rome indeed and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king. (I.II. 140- 162)

Members of a deep state derive their legitimacy within that existing system in exerting a coup or assassination and instigating illegitimate interventions (Söyler, 2015). Cassius claims that this legitimacy comes from the thread Caesar poses to the republican system: "*That her wide walls encompass'd but one man? /Now is it Rome indeed and room enough, /When there is in it but one only man*" (I.II. 156-158). The perception operation led by Cassius is not over yet. He sends a letter to Brutus in which he implies Caesar's Rome is corrupted and that there must be another Rome:

Brutus

Opens the letter and reads:
'Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake, and see thyself.
Shall Rome, & c. Speak, strike, redress!
Brutus, thou sleep'st: awake!'
Such instigations have been often dropp'd
Where I have took them up.
'Shall Rome, & c.' Thus must I piece it out:
Shall Rome stand under one man's awe? What, Rome?
My ancestors did from the streets of Rome
The Tarquin drive, when he was call'd a king.
'Speak, strike, redress!' Am I entreated
To speak and strike? O Rome, I make thee promise:
If the redress will follow, thou receives
Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus! (II.I. 48-60)

In the end, Marcus Brutus cannot endure the pressures led by the conspiracy campaigns and he accepts to act to remove a tyrant in defence of freedom that is very vital for the Roman blood and of the Republican spirit of the Rome (Pelling, 2006): “*It must be by his death: and for my part, / I know no personal cause to spurn at him, / But for the general...*”(II.I. 10-12)

According to some historians, the number of senators involved in the assassination of Julius Caesar is not small for it is a dangerous mission to kill Caesar to remove him from the office and save the Roman Republic for any failure would make them traitors. It requires another state establishment, a deep and parallel state. Cassius forms this deep and parallel state with great aplomb with the mind of a politician and with the heart of an implacable enemy of Caesar. He organizes a group of conspirators made up of the old enemies of Caesar - friends and supporters of Pompey, once Cesar's friend but later his opponent, those who seemed to be friends of Caesar but dislike many of his policies, idealists and conservatives, in short a large group of people who, under normal circumstances, will and cannot get united round an ideal. Most of these people, except Brutus, know very well that they are important but not valuable or efficient. Their importance comes from the statues they hold which they inherited from their families, from oligarchy or from plutocracy. When Cassius cries “... *Age, thou art shamed! / Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!*” (I.II. 151-152), he deeply expresses his fear of loss of the status quo. This fear is among the most important and the strongest motivations and bases of deep and parallel state organizations.

When the Roman senate was waiting for Caesar on March 15, 44 B.C., most of the senators, Parenti says, did not guess the session would be an eventful one that would change the flow of the history, and then he asks two burning questions: “Was it a tyrannicide or treason? Why did a coterie of senators assassinate their fellow aristocrat?”(2003: 1). The word ‘coterie’ applies to what this study calls as ‘deep and parallel states’. Contrary to the common idea that the senatorial assassins are to restore republican liberties and remove a despotic ruler, Parenti comes up with an answer which is in line with what this study suggests: ‘The Senate aristocrats killed Caesar because they perceived him to be a popular leader who threatened their privileged interests (2)’. The reason seems to be a paranoiac, maniacal schizophrenic envy of Caesar; his popularity and power:

Brutus

Another general shout!
I do believe that these applauses are
For some new honours that are heap'd on Caesar.

Cassius

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves. (I.II.133-139)

Considering the critical role he played in the transformation of the Roman Republic to an Empire, his populist tactics, plans to restore the financial system to overcome economic stability, new codes that regulated the Roman citizenship, Julius Caesar was strong-willed to destroy the balance of power in the city of Rome.

4. CONCLUSION

In Hamlet, referring to the actors, Shakespeare says, “*Do you hear, let them be well used; for/they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time*” (2.2.524-525). In Shakespeare's plays, the term ‘time’ does not mean any limited time; it includes the past, the present and the future. Thus, the political conventions Shakespeare created in the plays can be applied to all

times. In *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare created a micro world in which a semi-military coup was portrayed with its clearest way: with its motivations, its latent and manifest causes and guises, its co-conspirators, and its consequences. It has always followed almost the same way all across the world as Shakespeare depicted it in *Julius Caesar*. Although the common idea among US political circles is that there is no American Deep State, what has been happening in the United States of America after Donald Trump moved to the Oval Office are very interesting. In an article published in the New Yorker, Remnick (2017) rejects the idea that there is American Deep State and claims that Washington's problem is not a deep state conspiracy against the president; but the president himself. The discourse seems to be similar in *Julius Caesar*. This is a common discourse deep state operators use to hide their personal interests and inject in people's minds the impression that there is a threat to the establishment. It is the same in *Julius Caesar*: the problem is Caesar himself not the conspirators and their plotting: "It is no matter; let no images/Be hung with Caesar's trophies. I'll about,/ And drive away the vulgar from the streets/These growing feathers pluck'd from Caesar's wing/Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,/Who else would soar above the view of men/ And keep us all in servile fearfulness. (I.I.68-74)".

Remnick (2017) defines the qualities of a deep state as follows: clandestine and secret, involving military and intelligence officers, civilian allies, protecting the status quo, surveillance, ties to big business tycoons, coups, assassinations. These qualities do exist in *Julius Caesar*. Cassius exploited Brutus to fill a deep gap in his plot just to attain political and military alliance. As has happened in history, such alliances that aim to impose their own values and policies on the legitimate ruling group has always been warped and self-destructive. No accountability and no legal limit exist in such deep and parallel state operations as in *Julius Caesar* for everything is based on self-interest, justified through an assertion of patriotism and the national interest for the players (Giraldi,2015). Because of the oppressive desire the politicians hold to bring down Caesar, an empire is thrown into chaos, which means such operations make deep black holes in political systems. After the assassination of Julius Caesar, either as a sign of guilt or of the need for washing the blood in their hands, hearts and minds, Cassius says "How many ages hence/Shall this our lofty scene be acted over/In states unborn and accents yet unknown" (3.1.112-114), which is a prophecy that makes the play timeless and universal for the history of politics is full of such assassinations. As Garber(2004) puts it, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* can be a good subject of study in classes where political sciences and state affairs are studied. Beard (2015) justifies what Garber says in her seminal book *Why Ancient Rome Matters* arguing that Ancient Rome provide us with the necessary language we can use in our understanding of the modern times and the modern world. Shakespeare' Roman Tragedies are a storehouse for such a language.

The assassination of Caesar after a very perfect perception operation by Cassius and his fellow men is an ancient version of deep and parallel state operations. The study argues that deep state and parallel state operations in the play aim to impede the transformation of state affairs and keep the status quo desired by the conspirators. The study also contends that, like all other olden texts, re-reading of Shakespearean texts on the basis of contemporary political context and concepts help understand the contemporary political agenda across the world.

REFERENCES

- ALTHUSER, Louis(1971). Ideology and ideological state apparatus. In L. Althuser (Ed.), *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Books, . Print. (Google Scholar)
- BEARD, Mary(2 October 2015). 'Why Ancient Rome Matters to the Modern World'. The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.the-guardian.com>.
- BLOOM, Allanand JAFFA, Harry V., *Shakespeare's Politics*, New York: Basic Books Inc. 1964. Print. (Google Scholar)
- BLUNDEN, William A. (2014) Why the deep state always wins: The Zero-Sum Game of Perpetual War. <https://dissentvoice.org/2014/09/why-the-deep-state-always-wins/>
- BRISCO, I. (2008), *The Proliferation of the "Parallel State"*, Madrid: FRIDE
- EYRE, Richardand WRIGHT, Nicholas.*Changing Stages: A View of British Theatre in The Twentieth Century*, London: Bloomsbury. 2000. Print. (Google Scholar)
- FILKINS. D. "The Deep State," *New Yorker*, March 12, 2012
- FRIEDMAN, George. "The Deep State", *Geopolitical Futures*. March 15, 2017.<https://geopoliticalfutures.com/the-deep-state/>. Print. (Google Scholar)
- GARBER, MarjorieB. *Shakespeare after All*. New York: Anchor Books. 2004. Print. (Google Scholar)
- GIRALDI, Phillip. *Deep State America*. *The American Conservative*, July 30. 2015.Print. (Google Scholar)
- GLENNON, MichaelJ. *National Security and Double Government*. New York: OUP. 2015. Print. (Google Scholar)
- GRANDIN, Greg. "What Is the Deep State?" *The Nation*. 17 Feb. 2017. para. 1. Print. (Google Scholar)
- KIDNIE, Margaret Jane, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation*, New York: Routledge, 2009. Print. (Google Scholar)
- LOFGREN, Mike. *The Deep State: the Fall of the Constitution and the Rise of a Shadow Government*, New York: Penguin Books. 2016. Print. (Google Scholar)
- MURLEY, John. A. and SEAN, Sutton D. *Perspectives on Politics in Shakespeare*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006. Print. (Google Scholar)
- PARENTI, Michael. *The Assassination of Julius Caesar: A peoples History of Ancient Rome*, NY: The New Press. 2003. p. 1. Print. (Google Scholar)
- PELLING, Christopher. *Caesar Then Caesar Now*, in Maria Wyke (Ed.) *Julius Caesar in Western Culture*, Blackwell Publishing: Oxford, 2006. Print. (Google Scholar)
- REMICK, David. *There is No Deep State*. *The New Yorker*. 2017 Issue, March 20 <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/03/20/there-is-no-deep-state>.
- SHAKESPEARE, William. *Julius Caesar. The Annotated Shakespeare*. Ed. A. L. Rowse. Vol. III. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1978. 141-187.
- SÖYLER, Mehtap. *The Turkish Deep State: State Consolidation, Civil-Military Relations and Democracy*. New York: Routledge. 2015. Print. (Google Scholar)

TAYLOR, Gary. *Reinventing Shakespeare: a cultural history from the restoration to the present*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. Print. (Google Scholar)