

Parker, Barbara L. "[\*Julius Caesar\*](#)." *Plato's Republic and Shakespeare's Rome: A Political Study of the Roman Works*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004. 74-91. **Rpt. in** *Shakespearean Criticism*. Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 95. Detroit: Gale, 2006. *Literature Resource Center*. Gale. Cape Cod Regional Technical High School. 4 Jan. 2011  
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Title: *Julius Caesar*

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Publication Details: *Plato's Republic and Shakespeare's Rome: A Political Study of the Roman Works*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004.

Source: *Shakespearean Criticism*. Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 95. Detroit: Gale, 2006. From *Literature Resource Center*.

Document Type: Critical essay

[(essay date 2004) *In the following essay, Parker analyzes Julius Caesar in the philosophical context of Plato's Republic, considering the political degeneration of Caesarian Rome depicted in the play and its relationship to late Elizabeth-era politics in England.*]

At the end of *Coriolanus*, popular supremacy holds sway. The attendant triumph of lawlessness and mob rule, both heralded by Marcius's slaughter, marks the passage of democracy into tyranny--the focus of *Julius Caesar*. *Caesar* depicts the next stage of the political decline set forth by Plato: with the triumph of the poor over their patrician oppressors, the class warfare characterizing oligarchy has ceased, along with oligarchy and its successor, democracy, which was born with the advent of the tribunate. Democracy has in turn given way to tyranny, and to the concomitant concentration of power in one man: the people's champion.

To understand fully this phase of Rome's decline, we must turn to Cassius's only soliloquy in the play:

Well, Brutus, thou art noble. Yet I see  
Thy honorable mettle may be wrought  
From that it is disposed. Therefore it is meet  
That noble minds keep ever with their likes;  
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?  
Caesar doth bear me hard, but he loves Brutus.  
If I were Brutus now, and he were Cassius,  
He should not humor me.  
(1.2.308-15)

Scholars have attributed at least part of this speech to a passage in Plutarch, in which Cassius's friends urge Brutus to beware "Caesars sweete intisements, and ... tyrannicall favors: the which they sayd Caesar gave him, not to honor his vertue, but to weaken his constant minde, framing it to the bent of his bowe."<sup>1</sup> Plutarch's version, however, lacks the curious reference to inverse alchemy--to the sullyng of the mind's "mettle" through association with baser elements--that marks Cassius's speech. "Mettle," as Bevington's gloss notes, is a variant of "metal." "As *honorable mettle* [or noble metal], gold cannot be transmuted into base substances, and yet Cassius proposes to do just that with Brutus" (1026 n, 1030 n; brackets Bevington's). This

concept of contamination, added by Shakespeare to his source, becomes one of the play's governing metaphors. I shall argue that the notion expressed in this metaphor derives from the *Republic* and that the downfall of both Caesar and Brutus is the consequence of their contamination--a contamination that also explains Rome's tyrannic regime.

Shakespeare never lets us forget that the Caesar of his play is a changed Caesar, a profoundly declined Caesar, little resembling "the noblest man / That ever livèd" (3.1.258-59). He does this through allusions to Caesar's former conquests, impaired judgment, physical infirmities, lately acquired superstitiousness, and previous disdain for the fantasies, dreams, and ceremonies that now govern his life.<sup>2</sup> The cause of this decline--first in Caesar and then in Brutus--is the real subject of the play, and it is grounded on the concept of inverse alchemy Cassius describes.

Plato devotes an extended portion of the *Republic* to discussion of the corruption of the philosophic nature, which he prefaces with a description of the metals that theoretically comprise the human soul. The masses or Workers are framed of brass and iron, the Auxiliaries of silver, and the Guardians of gold (3.415). Because the masses are unavoidably corrupt, the philosopher must keep to his own environment since all seeds when deprived of "proper nutriment or climate or soil, in proportion to their vigour," will be tainted. The noblest natures are most prone to such injury; thus the philosopher, in "alien soil, becomes the most noxious of all weeds" and the author "of the greatest evil to States and individuals" (6.491-92, 495).

Elaborating this concept, Socrates states:

[T]he diviner metal is within them [the Guardians], and they ... ought not to pollute the divine by any such earthly admixture; for that commoner metal has been the source of many unholy deeds, but their own is undefiled. ... And this will be their salvation, and they will be the saviours of the State. But should ... [pollution occur], they will become ... enemies and tyrants instead of allies of the other citizens; ... plotting and being plotted against, ... [living in] greater terror of internal than of external enemies, and the hour of ruin, both to themselves and to ... the State, will be at hand.(3.416-17)

Some preliminary parallels between the *Republic* and *Caesar* immediately emerge. At the play's outset, the plebeians' "basest mettle" is remarked (1.1.61). Caesar's constant association with the masses is suggested both by his alienation from the patriciate and by the enveloping throng of citizens that marks all of his public appearances.<sup>3</sup> Indeed "plotting [to become king] and being plotted against," he is threatened wholly by internal enemies, and his hour of ruin--and Rome's--is at hand.

Proclaiming the masses the greatest vitiators of the philosophic nature, Socrates explains--in a passage exhibiting thematic as well as scenic and stylistic affinities with the play--how corruption occurs:

When they meet together, ... at an assembly, ... or in any other popular resort, and there is a great uproar, and they praise some things which are being said or done, and blame other things, equally exaggerating both, shouting and clapping their hands, and the echo of the rocks and the place in which they are assembled redoubles the sound of the praise or blame--at such a time will

... any private training enable him [the philosopher] to stand firm against the overwhelming flood of popular opinion? or will he be carried away by the stream? Will he not have the notions of good and evil which the public in general have--he will do as they do, and as they are, such will he be?(6.492)

To this we may compare the following passage:

Why, there was a crown offered him; and being offered him, he put it by with the back of his hand, thus, and then the people fell a-shouting. ... He put it the third time by, and still as he refused it the rabblement hooted and clapped their chapped hands. ... If the tag-rag people did not clap him and hiss him, according as he pleased and displeased them, ... I am no true man.(1.2.221-61)<sup>4</sup>

His friends and fellow-citizens will also wish to exploit him, Socrates continues; "Falling at his feet, they will ... honour and flatter him, because they want to get into their hands" the power he will possess. This will fill him with "boundless aspirations," and he will "elevate himself in the fulness of vain pomp and senseless pride" (6.494). Although Socrates here describes the young philosopher, Caesar's ascent hews closely to the sequence Socrates describes: surrounded by flatterers, which include the mass adulators through whom he has risen to power, Caesar has become pompous and vainglorious, aspiring illegitimately to kingship<sup>5</sup> and impiously equating himself with the gods (3.1.75).

Such tainting, as Socrates observes, leads to the one who is corrupted assuming the nature of his corrupter--to his becoming "[such] as they are" (6.492). Caesar claims throughout to transcend "ordinary men," citing his immunity to the flattery and base fawning "which melteth fools." Further, he grounds this claim on what he conceives to be the inviolability of his exalted nature:

These couchings and these lowly courtesies  
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,  
And turn preordinance and first decree  
Into the law of children. Be not fond  
To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood  
That will be thawed from the true quality  
With that which melteth fools. ...  
(3.1.37-43)<sup>6</sup>

The irony, of course, is that Caesar had indeed been "thawed," from his determination to remain at home, by Decius's flattering interpretation of Calphurnia's dream, moreover twice reversing his decision--and it is this inconstancy that leads directly to his death.<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding his assertions to the contrary, therefore, he is as fickle and as credulous as the "fools" he contemns, his judgment similarly predicated on appearances.<sup>8</sup> It is thus one of the play's great ironies that "the noblest man that ever lived" descends to the brute level of the mob, a fact underscored by the beast imagery that pervades the play: the people are "sheep," Caesar is a "lion" and a "wolf," and the conspirators are "apes" and "hounds."<sup>9</sup>

These images recall Socrates' description of the tyrant, that man in whom "the basest elements of human nature have set up an absolute despotism ... over the higher."<sup>10</sup> As Socrates explains, tyranny follows democracy when the insatiable desire for freedom leads to anarchy, the populace finally taking command of the state. The citizens "chafe impatiently at the least touch of authority and at length ... cease to care even for the laws ... ; they will have no one over them." They then procure "some champion whom they set over them and nurse into greatness." Eventually, the protector becomes a wolf: "having a mob entirely at his disposal, he is not restrained from shedding the blood of kinsmen," killing some and banishing others. The rich begin to hate him; "And if they are unable to expel him, ... they conspire to assassinate him" (8.562-66).

Again, the parallels between Plato's text and Shakespeare's are striking. The play opens on a Caesar who is the darling of the mob, who has just slain not a foreign enemy but a Roman and kinsman,<sup>11</sup> who has banished another fellow Roman, and who is hated by a patriciate that conspires to kill him. Cassius terms him a tyrant and a wolf (1.3.104-5), linking--as does Plato--the two concepts. Further, unlike the initially subjugated plebeians of *Coriolanus*, this populace is insolently contemptuous of the law: although it is "a laboring day," they have discarded their prescribed working attire and, literally and figuratively, their "rule" (1.1.4, 7), taking an unauthorized holiday to witness Caesar's triumph.<sup>12</sup> This divestment of the garb emblematic of their ordained place in society emphasizes their hierarchical breach. Their contempt for authority, further underscored by their reported hatred of kingship (1.2.244-66), culminates in their destruction of Rome.<sup>13</sup> Also suggesting the Platonic provenance of the scene are the representative cobbler and carpenter, who have no corollary in Plutarch. The following exchange occurs between Socrates and Glaucon:

Suppose a carpenter to be doing the business of a cobbler, or a cobbler of a carpenter; and suppose them to exchange their implements or their duties ... ; do you think that any great harm would result to the State? Not much. But when the cobbler or any other man whom nature designed to be a trader ... attempts to force his way into the class of warriors ... , for which he is unfitted, and either to take the implements or the duties of the other; ... then I think you will agree ... that this ... meddling of one with another is the ruin of the State.

Conversely,

the division of labour which require[s] the carpenter and the shoemaker and the rest of the citizens to be doing each his own business, and not another's, [is] a shadow of justice. (4.434, 443)

The real tyrant, Socrates emphasizes,

is the real slave, and is obliged to practise the greatest ... servility, and to be the flatterer of the vilest of mankind. He ... is full of convulsions, and distractions, even as the State which he resembles. (9.579)

Caesar's servile flattery of "the common herd" (1.2.264) cements the parallel:

When he came to himself again, he said if he had done or said anything amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four wenches ... cried, "Alas, good soul!" and forgave him with all their hearts.(1.2.268-73)<sup>14</sup>

The "distractions" Socrates mentions are manifested in Caesar's unreason; the "convulsions," in Caesar's epileptic fits. Both are replicated in the civil turmoil that besets Rome.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, references to sickness--of the characters, of the state, and of the cosmos--pervade the play. The very earth "Shakes like a thing unfirm" (1.3.4), the cosmos mirroring the corrupted "faculties" and altered nature of Rome's head:

But if you would consider the true cause  
(1.3.62-71)

Caesar, as Cassius observes, is "Most like this dreadful night" (1.3.73). The concept recalls Socrates' equation of justice with health and well-being, and injustice with deformity and disease, justice consisting in the "natural order and government" of the soul's faculties, and injustice in a perversion of the natural order (4.444). "Natural" is the key word: each element maintains the place and function appropriate to its nature. Any deviation from this principle fosters the growth of a monster (9.588-89).<sup>16</sup>

All these infirmities reflect the flawed judgment of the ruling faculty; for, as Socrates emphasizes (9.588-89), the ambitious man is devoid of reason, being governed largely by will (9.588-89).<sup>17</sup> This concept also conceivably underlies the lion image that defines Caesar (1.3.75, 106; 2.2.46): as Socrates explains, pride occurs when the lion and serpent elements in the soul disproportionately gain strength (9.590). Socrates equates the lion with the faculty of will (just as he equates the appetites with the serpent or "many-headed monster"; hence the analogous "many-headed multitude" of *Coriolanus*). The irrational man "feast[s] the multitudinous monster and strengthen[s] the lion," thus becoming slave to both (9.588-89). It is perhaps significant that Caesar, apprising Decius of his immediately-to-be-reversed decision to remain at home, explains, "The cause is in my will" (2.2.71).<sup>18</sup> Hence the irony of Brutus's comment: "I have not known when his affections swayed / More than his reason" (2.1.20-21).

In addition to mirroring the ruler's ills, the state also mirrors his political temperament; and Caesar's tyranny is paralleled by that of the populace. For it is not Caesar who rules; it is the mob, the state thus replicating that soul "in which the basest elements of human nature have set up an absolute ... 'tyranny' over the higher, the very negation of that principle of justice whereby each element, by doing its proper work, contributes to the well-being of the whole."<sup>19</sup> Indeed, it may not be an overstatement to assert that the mob is the play's real protagonist, for they control not only Caesar and the other patricians but virtually the entire course of events. Their subjugation of Caesar is manifested in his previously noted servility and in his repeated refusal of the crown though "he would fain have had it" (1.2.239-40). Lest the audience doubt Caesar's subjugation, it is underscored by his symbolic gesture of surrender: offering the crowd his throat to cut. The conspirators are no less ruled by the mob; they enlist Brutus solely because they fear popular reprisal. As Casca observes, in another reference to alchemy,

O, he sits high in all the people's hearts;

And that which would appear offense in us,  
His countenance, like richest alchemy,  
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.  
(1.3.157-60)

The point is reiterated by Brutus himself:

Let's be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.  
(2.1.167-81)

Later, Cassius exhorts Brutus not to let Antony address the crowd because "the people may be moved" (3.1.236); Brutus will allow Antony to do so, but only if he agrees to speak well of Caesar, cast no blame on the conspirators, and make clear that he speaks by the conspirators' permission,<sup>20</sup> all of which, Brutus contends, will "advantage" them in the eyes of the people (3.1.244). Similarly, Metellus urges their recruitment of Cicero because his silver hair and reputed "judgment" will "purchase" the people's "good opinion" (2.1.144-49).<sup>21</sup> Antony equally defers to the mob. Clearly recognizing that they control the fate of the counterconspiracy, he humbly addresses them as "friends" and "masters," manipulating them through calculated appeals to their supremacy: "You will compel me then to read the will?" And when he asks, "Shall I descend? And will you give me leave?" Third Plebeian accords him the requisite permission: "You shall have leave" (3.2.158, 161, 164). Indeed, we remain cognizant of the mob's preeminence even when they are offstage, both through repeated references to their actions and through the shouting that twice disrupts the dialogue.

Antony's oration also appears to derive from the *Republic*. The supreme politician, Antony is the consummate version of such figures as *Lucrece's* Brutus and *Coriolanus's* Tribunes and Aufidius--he who studies "the tempers and desires of a mighty ... beast" and learns

how to approach and handle him, also at what times and from what causes he is dangerous or the reverse, ... and by what sounds ... he is soothed or infuriated; and ... when, by continually attending upon him, he has become perfect in all this, he ... makes of it a system or art, ... [calling] this honourable and that dishonourable, or good or evil, or just or unjust, all in accordance with the tastes and tempers of the great brute.(6.493)

The passage seems the basis not only of Antony's psychology but also of the motifs he invokes. Thus Socrates' "good ... evil" becomes "The evil that men do lives after them; / The good is oft interrèd with their bones"; Socrates' "just ... unjust" becomes "O masters! If I were disposed to stir / Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage, / I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong, ... / I will not do them wrong"; and "honourable ... dishonourable" becomes the oration's celebrated refrain, "And Brutus is an honorable man." These elements find no basis in Plutarch, who presents a brief and antithetical account: Antony moves the people to rage by displaying Caesar's bloody garments and terming "the malefactors, cruell and cursed murtherers."<sup>22</sup>

Shakespeare's Caesar--partially deaf, figuratively blind, sustained by mass adulation, and ruled by a populace he should theoretically command--markedly resembles the captain in Socrates' parable of the ship of state. This captain "is taller and stronger than any of the crew, but he is a

little deaf and has a similar infirmity in sight, and his knowledge of navigation is not much better." The sailors quarrel about the steering, each believing "he has a right to steer, though he has never learned the [pilot's art] ... , and they are ready to cut in pieces any one who says the contrary. They throng about the captain, ... praying him to commit the helm to them." At length "they mutiny and take possession of the ship," having first "chained up the noble captain's senses with ... some narcotic drug" (6.488). The resemblance is the more striking in that no mention of Caesar's deafness appears in any of Shakespeare's known sources.<sup>23</sup>

Shakespeare, then, as James Hanford puts it,

by making the corruption of society result from a substitution of will or appetite for reason, touches on the principle by which Plato explains not only the growth of democracy but the consequent development of democracy into tyranny as well. ... The tyrant is the embodiment in a single person of the lawlessness of the community. The brute appetites in him have gained full sway; "he has purged away temperance and brought in madness to the full," [winning] mastery of the state by championing the lawless indulgence of the populace.<sup>24</sup>

As the *Republic* informs Shakespeare's characterization of Caesar, so it informs his characterization of Brutus. Brutus is not merely Caesar's parallel; Brutus figuratively *becomes* Caesar through a like process of reverse alchemy that morally debases and destroys him. To quote Gary Miles, "this implicit convergence of personalities and roles" is underscored by "the apparition that is simultaneously the ghost of Caesar and Brutus' own 'evil spirit'" (4.3.284)<sup>25</sup> and by the shout, "Let him be Caesar." It is perhaps further underscored by the fact that the term "Caesar" had by Shakespeare's time become generic for an autocrat or absolute monarch.<sup>26</sup>

We may recall Socrates' statement that the philosopher will be thronged by "friends and fellow-citizens" who, wishing to use him for their own purposes, "honour and flatter him," filling him with senseless pride. They will, moreover, "do and say anything to prevent him from yielding to his better nature and to render his teacher [i.e., philosophy] powerless, using to this end private intrigues." "[T]he very qualities," accordingly, "which make a man a philosopher may ... divert him from philosophy, no less than riches and ... the other so-called goods of life." Thus the noblest minds "become pre-eminently bad" (6.494-95, 491). Brutus, we may recall, not only possesses a noble nature but is also a philosopher;<sup>27</sup> and it is precisely his contamination by friends and fellow-citizens--who similarly recruit him for their own purposes and who honor and flatter him in order to win him--that destroys him.<sup>28</sup> His downfall parallels Caesar's; these "friends" and "countrymen," as Brutus in fact terms the conspirators, are the moral correlative of the mob, a fact denoted not only by the beast imagery and participation in murder common to both (the killing of Caesar morally parallels the killing of Cinna), but by their implicit identification with the appetites: all except Brutus "Did that they did in envy of great Caesar" (5.5.70). Brutus's association with them therefore incurs the same debasement that befell Caesar through his like association with the mob. Those "very qualities," moreover, that make him a philosopher--his virtue and his idealistic devotion to honor--divert him from philosophy; thus "the noblest Roman of them all" slays Caesar for what he conceives to be the common good.

Initiating the process of debasement are Cassius's flattering advances: he remarks Brutus's "hidden worthiness," invokes Brutus's noble ancestry, and forges letters glancing at "the great

opinion / That Rome holds of his name" (1.2.59, 318-19). Brutus's initial response is emblematic of the as-yet-unsullied state of his soul:

Into what dangers would you lead me, Cassius,  
That you would have me seek into myself  
For that which is not in me?  
(1.2.63-65)<sup>29</sup>

By the conclusion of their encounter, however, the flattery has begun to work; and it is Cassius's recognition of Brutus's imminent defilement through association with the likes of himself (i.e., Cassius) that prompts his soliloquy.<sup>30</sup> The term "humor" at 1.2.315 refers to "wrought" earlier in the speech, implying Cassius's refashioning, so to speak, of Brutus's "honorable mettle."<sup>31</sup> Two metaphors, therefore, are at work in this passage: one of alchemy, the other of metalworking, which Shakespeare interrelates and fuses. Plato similarly links the two metaphors: thus Socrates explains how "the greatest of all Sophists," the populace, fashions the philosopher after its own heart (6.492). Brutus's corruption, however, is not total until receipt of the letters; as Cassius observes, "Three parts of him / Is ours already, and the man entire / Upon the next encounter yields him ours" (1.3.154-56).

As in the *Republic*, corruption is signaled by internal chaos, as the soul's hierarchy collapses:

Since Cassius first did whet me against Caesar,  
I have not slept.  
(2.1.61-69)

Brutus's condition has begun to parallel Caesar's; the lower faculties are in contention with reason, vitiating the soul's integrity and replicating the growing anarchy of the Roman state. This replication is punningly emphasized in Caius Ligarius's greeting to Brutus shortly before the assassination: "Soul of Rome!" (2.1.322).<sup>32</sup>

Brutus's ensuing descent into tyranny is denoted by his despotic rule of a realm that is the microcosmic parallel of Caesar's. Acclaimed figurative king of the conspirators--a role underscored by Fourth Plebeian's punning assertion that "Caesar's better parts / Shall be crowned in Brutus" (3.2.51.52)--he overrides or rejects each one of their proposals: that they bind themselves with an oath, that they sound Cicero, and that they dispatch Antony along with Caesar. Later, he vetoes Cassius's objection to letting Antony speak at Caesar's funeral,<sup>33</sup> and just as disastrously overrules Cassius's abler judgment on military procedure, pompously alleging "better" reasons (4.3.202). Ultimately, he becomes as arrogant and imperious as Caesar. The fact is attested by his contemptuous dismissal of Cassius: "Away, slight man!" (4.3.38) (the phrase will recur almost verbatim in Antony's assessment of Lepidus as "a slight, unmeritable man" [4.1.12] as Antony's tyranny in turn supplants Brutus's). His hubris and self-aggrandizement likewise recall Caesar's: he cites the "too great a mind" that precludes his captivity (5.1.116), assures Octavius that he could not die more honorably than by Brutus's sword (5.1.59-61), and self-righteously exempts himself from Cassius's threats:

For I am armed so strong in honesty



That they pass by me as the idle wind,  
Which I respect not.  
(4.3.68-70)

As with Caesar, corruption effects a "monstrous" alteration. "It will not let you eat, nor talk, nor sleep," Portia observes;

And could it work so much upon your shape  
As it hath much prevailed on your condition,  
I should not know you Brutus.  
(2.1.253-56)

As Socrates concludes:

Thus ... is brought about ... that ruin ... of the natures best adapted to the best of all pursuits; they are natures which we maintain to be rare at any time; this being the class out of which come the men who are the authors of the greatest evil to States and individuals.(6.495)

Shakespeare, then, adds to his Platonic paradigm of constitutional decline Plato's theory of the composition of the soul in order to explain fully the passage of democracy into tyranny. Initially engendered by abolishment of the monarchy, Caesar's Rome, with its mob supremacy, is a final consequence of kingless rule. Caesar is the embodiment of this decline: debased by his association with the masses, he has sunk from a prince to a tyrant, enslaved by the very elements he champions. Brutus's decline is the microcosmic parallel of Caesar's and results from a like defilement. An idealistic philosopher, Brutus exemplifies the rare and noble nature vitiated through contamination by society's basest elements. Precisely because of that nobility, he destroys Rome. The ultimate irony of the play is, then, Platonic; and again, as in Plato, the leader images the "soul" of the state he theoretically commands.

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Why Shakespeare composed *Caesar* is suggested by a number of parallels between the play's political milieu and England's. At the time, a continuing concern remained in the person of the Earl of Essex, "whose arrogant pride, assurance of high place, hold over Elizabeth's affections, and complete command of popular favour made him a standing danger to the state."<sup>34</sup> It is this danger, I shall argue, that the play reflects.

... [A] perception that Essex was seeking the crown dated back to the early 1590s. By 1599, when *Caesar* was written, the concern over Essex had markedly increased, several things having conspired to exacerbate the threat he posed well beyond that reflected in *Lucrece*. While the Privy Council continued to be dominated by the two factions respectively led by Essex and the Cecils, Essex's feud with the Cecilians for control of royal policy had escalated into open conflict.<sup>35</sup> His degenerating influence with the Queen, his jealousy of the power wielded by the Cecils, and his conviction that they were poisoning her against him drove him to increasingly rash behavior, including his actions during the famous ear-boxing incident with Elizabeth in 1598,<sup>36</sup> which stopped just short of regicide when he abortively reached for his sword; and his

ignominious and unauthorized return from Ireland in 1599, a prelude to his subsequent revolt. Adding to the perception of Essex as a threat was his courtship of the masses, always associated with potential usurpation; and the appearance of John Hayward's allegedly treasonous book, *The First Part of the Life and Raigne of King Henry III*, which centered on the fall of Richard II and Bolingbroke's role in effecting it. Like the earlier treasonous book of Robert Parsons, this one was also dedicated to Essex, already identified in the national consciousness with Bolingbroke,<sup>37</sup> in words with unsettling implications: "For you are great indeed, both in present judgment and in expectation of future time"--language appropriate for an heir apparent to the throne. Indeed, at his trial, Robert Cecil adduced as proof of Essex's seditious intentions "the book written on Henry IV, making this time like that of Richard II, to be reframed by him as by Henry IV."<sup>38</sup> Hayward's book appeared in March 1599--one month before Essex left as Lord Deputy for Ireland to quash the rebellion led by the Earl of Tyrone, after having persuaded the Queen and the Council--by denigrating other candidates while pressing his own singular qualifications--to grant him the post.<sup>39</sup>

It was not surprising, therefore, that his departure--"at the height of a popularity that no subject had enjoyed in Tudor times" and with "the greatest army that had left English shores during the reign"--occasioned serious alarm.<sup>40</sup> What he wanted, his adversaries suspected, "was simply command of an army, 'to engage the swordmen to him. Yea, so eager was he about the business that divers feared he was hatching some dangerous design'"<sup>41</sup>--a sentiment shared by the queen herself and buttressed by the concurrent boast of some of his followers that he had a better claim to the crown than any of his competitors by reason of his Plantagenet blood.<sup>42</sup> A letter to John Harington from a friend at Court going as an officer to Ireland encapsulates the concern: the Earl, it asserts, "goeth not forth to serve the Queen's realm, but to humour his own revenge. ... Essex hath enemies; he hath friends too. ... I sore fear what may happen."<sup>43</sup> During the ensuing months, "the civil peace of the realm hung in the balance, at the mercy of the uncertain impulses"--and the monumental army--"of the tormented nobleman at Dublin."<sup>44</sup>

These fears were quickly justified: Essex, defying the Queen's orders, made his irresponsible crony Southampton Master of the Horse, knighted thirty-eight henchmen in two months (which, like those he had created in France, were tantamount to a body of personal retainers and thus potentially damaging to the balance of power in the state),<sup>45</sup> and secretly negotiated with Tyrone who promised that, if Essex heeded his advice, "he would make him the greatest man that ever was in England."<sup>46</sup> Capping these events were his unauthorized desertion, in September, of his post, followed by his hasty return to Court to justify himself, where he burst unannounced into Elizabeth's bedchamber.<sup>47</sup> A charge of treason came the following summer; among the allegations was the charge that he had conspired with Tyrone to "let him [Tyrone] rule under the Pope in Ireland, until the Earl was fully confirmed to the Crown and reconciled to the Pope," when "by the Pope's command" Tyrone would submit to Essex under the pope.<sup>48</sup> Although no doubt largely propagandistic, these charges seem less than fantastical given that Essex had in fact considered appropriating two or three thousand of his troops, landing in Wales where he had a large following, and then storming the Court and purging it of the Cecilians, a plan he abandoned only because his cohorts Southampton and Blount opposed it as imprudent and because taking over an army would require their aid.<sup>49</sup>

Whether Shakespeare had wind of this plan is less material than the widespread belief, even before Essex departed for Ireland, that he was harboring just such treasonous intents--a belief Shakespeare arguably shared. Written virtually concurrently with *Caesar*, *Henry V*, in an allusion to the Earl's as yet unconcluded Irish campaign, contains the following lines:

Were now the General of our gracious Empress,  
As in good time he may, from Ireland coming,  
Bringing rebellion broachèd on his sword,  
How many would the peaceful city quit  
To welcome him!  
(5.0.30-34)

In addition to its veiled censure of the Queen's governance by her favorite ("the General of our gracious Empress"), the passage both suggests Shakespeare's perception of the threat Essex posed and prophetically augurs the Earl's 1601 revolt as well as the popular backing it theoretically would inspire:<sup>50</sup> feted by an adoring populace who forsake the pale of peace to embrace him, Essex brings "rebellion" on the sword that defines him, "broached" denoting not "spitted" (the standard interpretation) but "set on foot, started, introduced."<sup>51</sup>

It is these concerns and this perception that *Caesar* appears to address. Like England, Rome is dominated by two rival, mutually hostile factions harboring antithetical political ideologies.<sup>52</sup> The leader of one faction is bitterly envious of the leader of the other, whose overthrow he secretly contrives through rebellious conspiracy. Essex, in the summer of 1599, was similarly attracting rebellious conspiracy,<sup>53</sup> drawing, like Cassius, the disreputable, the politically mediocre, and the politically alienated, including the disgruntled noblemen and office seekers the Queen had failed to satisfy through patronage. Like the play's conspirators, Essex sought to rally the local populace behind his revolt (although this occurred in 1601, after the writing of *Caesar*, the move had long been anticipated given his pursuit of popularity; consider, for example, Shakespeare's above-noted prognostication of it in *Henry V*). Also like Cassius, he believed in the use of violence for the defense of honor and for the pursuit of "legitimate" political ends<sup>54</sup> (compare 1.3.108-11 and Cassius's justification of assassination on grounds of the nobleness of the enterprise), and "could not live as anything but the first of men"<sup>55</sup> (compare Cassius's pathological jealousy of Caesar and his resentment at being an "underling" [1.2.141]), a trait that ultimately incurred the Queen's mistrust (compare Caesar's distrust of Cassius, 1.2.192-95). Elizabeth he contemned as an old woman frustrating his greatness, an inferior female whose mind was "as crooked as her carcass"<sup>56</sup> (compare Cassius's depiction of Caesar as feeble-tempered, sickly, and vile [1.2.100-29, 1.3.111], a false deity who keeps the superior Cassius in a position of humiliating and degrading subservience). Caesar's characterization of Cassius is equally applicable to Essex:

Such men as he be never at heart's ease  
Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,  
And therefore are they very dangerous.  
(1.2.208-10)<sup>57</sup>

But Essex is also figured in Caesar--in his quest for supremacy, in his martial triumphs, in his heroic stature, in his courtship of and veneration by the rabble, in the fear and dislike he inspires in members of his own class, and in the potential for mob rule that inheres in such a figure. Flavius's depiction of Caesar as the idol of the "vulgar," who seeks to "soar above the view of men / And keep us all in servile fearfulness" (1.1.70-75), equally describes Essex. Indeed, more than one Elizabethan linked Essex with Caesar, Sir Robert Naunton, for instance, comparing Essex's followers and advisors during his revolt to the followers of Caesar.<sup>58</sup>

There are also resemblances between Caesar and Elizabeth. While the aging and declined Caesar need not necessarily figure the Queen,<sup>59</sup> the following details--almost all of them Shakespeare's additions to his source--seem calculated to press the connection:

(1) Caesar's heirlessness. Plutarch contains two separate accounts of the Lupercalia (*Antonius*, 12-13, *Caesar*, 62). While both report Antony's participation, including his offer of a crown to Caesar, neither mentions Calpurnia's barrenness, Caesar's concern about it, or even her presence at the event. The issue of childlessness (which Caesar terms a "sterile curse" [1.2.9]) receives added emphasis by reason of its prominence: it is the first topic Caesar broaches on entering the play. Caesar, as David Daniell notes, needs an heir; lacking a legitimate son, he is--like Elizabeth--dynastically vulnerable.<sup>60</sup> In Plutarch, Caesar adopts as his son his great-nephew Octavius and names him his heir. Shakespeare, however, omits this fact; in the play, the people, not Octavius, are termed Caesar's heirs (3.2.147). (Plutarch nowhere refers to the people as Caesar's heirs, instead reporting that Octavius was charged with distributing items "bequeathed" by Caesar "unto the people of Rome" in his capacity as Caesar's "lawfull heire by will" [*Antonius*, 15-16].) Shakespeare's additions possibly allude to Elizabeth's own "cursed sterility" and to her insistence, when pressed to marry, that she was wed to England and her subjects were her children.

(2) Caesar's vulnerability to flattery, epitomized by his succumbing to Decius's interpretation of Calpurnia's dream (see also Decius's remark at 2.1.203-9). None of these details--the dream, the interpretation, or the remark--appear in Plutarch (cf. Plutarch's reference to Caesar's "great wisdom"). Elizabeth's vanity and her proneness to (and cultivation of) flattery were well known and widely deplored.

(3) Caesar's implied profession of immortality (when he equates himself with the gods [3.1.75; see also 1.2.60]) and his related, repeated refusals to heed warnings of impending death. Both evoke Elizabeth's steadfast refusal to address the succession despite her increasingly imminent demise and despite warnings that her inaction would sentence England upon her death to the "bloody sword."<sup>61</sup> In this regard, Elizabeth's deafness metaphorically parallels Caesar's. Caesar's deific self-image also contains parallels with that generated by the cult of the Virgin Queen, the fervent adulation of whom aroused not only enthusiasm but hostility and charges of idolatry.<sup>62</sup>

(4) Caesar's pronouncements of changelessness. Closely related to Caesar's professed immortality, these pronouncements--contained in another of Shakespeare's additions, the North Star speech (3.1.59-74)--evoke Elizabeth's motto, *semper eadem* (always the same), similarly belied by the old Queen's frequent indecision and mind changes in matters of state.<sup>63</sup> The motto informed Elizabeth's identification with the moon ("That ever in one change doth grow / Yet still

the same: and she is so," as the Elizabethan John Dowland put it) as well as her persona as the eternal Petrarchan beloved, who was attended--even in her sixty-ninth year, according to John Davies--by the "fresh youth and beauty" of "Time's young hours." Hence her portraits, until almost her death, as a beauty immutably young.<sup>64</sup>

Further evoking England's contemporary political scene is the crown that Caesar covets and that will shortly cost him his life.

By the play's end, nothing has changed. The power struggle proceeds apace, as one tyrant metamorphoses into another in the ongoing battle for supremacy. This fact is impressed on us from the outset, as Caesar arrives "in triumph over Pompey's blood" (1.1.51); Caesar is in turn vanquished and displaced by Brutus, who is displaced by Antony, who is displaced by Octavius. That the triumvirs reincarnate the conspirators is underscored by the parallel scenes 2.1 and 4.1, in which each group debates what political foes to kill and Lepidus supplants Brutus as the vehicle to mute culpability. Brutus also re-embodies the ancestor whose name he bears and whose antimonarchic role he tacitly assumes as he prepares to destroy the man who "would be crowned" (2.1.12). Thus did Lucius Junius Brutus "from the streets of Rome / The Tarquin drive, when he was called a king" (2.1.53-54). More ironic still, Caesarism has been resuscitated: "another Caesar" (5.1.55) controls Rome,<sup>65</sup> a figure at once Caesar's spiritual successor and incarnation.<sup>66</sup> The spirit of Caesarism will play itself out in the final stage of tyranny that marks *Antony and Cleopatra* as the new victors battle each other for dominion, and sovereignty ultimately accrues to the sole man left alive.

## Notes

1. *Brutus*, 188. References to Plutarch (*Caesar, Brutus, Antonius, Cicero*) are to *Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans Englished by Sir Thomas North* (1579), ed. W. E. Henley, The Tudor Translations, vols. 5 and 6 (London: David Nutt, 1895-96). For a summary of critical positions on this soliloquy, see Ernest Schanzer, *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare: A Study of Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, Antony and Cleopatra* (New York: Schocken, 1963), 40.

2. These characteristics are substantially Shakespeare's additions. In Plutarch, Caesar is, except for a proneness to headaches and the falling sickness, physically and mentally unimpaired; and as to the falling sickness, Plutarch states that Caesar "yeilded not" to the disease "to make it a cloke to cherishe him withall [cf. 1.2.268-73], but contrarilie, tooke the paines of warre, as a medicine to cure" it. (*Caesar*, 17-18; see also 54). Elsewhere he cites Caesar's "great wisdom, power, and fortune" (*The Comparison of Dion with Brutus*, 239).

3. Caesar, of course, was traditionally perceived as an opportunistic populist. The point here is Caesar's association with what the populace represents: "basest metal."

4. Cf. *Caesar*, 62, and *Antonius*, 13.

5. See Irving Ribner, "Political Issues in *Julius Caesar*," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 56 (1957): 10-22.

6. This speech is Shakespeare's addition to Plutarch's narrative. Cf. Plutarch: "So when he [Caesar] was set, the conspirators flocked about him, and ... presented one Tullius Cimber, who made humble sute for the calling home againe of his [banished] brother. ... They all made as though they were intercessors for him ... and kissed his head and brest. Caesar at the first, simplie refused their kindnesse and intreaties: but afterwarde, perceiving they still pressed on him, he violently thrust them from him" (*Brutus*, 197).

7. This, again, is Shakespeare's addition. In Plutarch, Calpurnia dreams that "Caesar was slaine" and that she saw a broken pinnacle atop Caesar's house. The next morning, she begs Caesar to remain at home and "to adjerne the session of the Senate, untill an other day." Not only is the dream different, but Decius states merely that were Caesar to return to the Senate "when Calpurnia shoulde have better dreames: what would his enemies ... say, and how could they like of his frendes wordes?" (*Caesar*, 65-66).

8. Cf. Plutarch's contention that "Caesar was not ... fickle headed" (*Antonius*, 6).

9. The concept of the brute mentality of the populace also derives ultimately from Plato, who terms them "a mighty ... beast" and "the great brute" (*Rep.* 6.493). The concept was a Renaissance commonplace. Cf. Frederick Tupper, Jr., "The Shakspearean Mob," *PMLA* 27 (1912): 486-523.

10. Francis MacDonalld Cornford, *The Republic of Plato* (1941; reprint, London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 264.

11. Pompey's son; he also attempted to kill Pompey (see *Caesar*, 37-48, 56-57). Pompey was Caesar's son-in-law through marriage to Caesar's daughter Julia.

12. Jan H. Blits, *The End of the Ancient Republic: Essays on Julius Caesar* (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 1982), 23. The wolf image as well as the lion image discussed below are Shakespeare's additions.

13. Compare Plutarch: "[T]he chiefest cause that made [Caesar] mortally hated, was the covetous desire he had to be called king: which first gave the people just cause ... to beare him ill will." And: "[T]hey could not abide the name of a king, detesting it as the utter destruction of their liberty" (*Caesar*, 60; *Antonius*, 13). On the Republican equation of king and tyrant, see Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 144-46. See also John Velz, "Clemency, Will, and Just Cause in 'Julius Caesar,'" *Shakespeare Survey* 22 (1969): 109-18, on the distinction between tyrants and kings.

14. The seizure and its attendant speech are Shakespeare's addition. While Plutarch reports instances of Caesar's falling sickness (*Caesar*, 17, 54), the occasion of his being offered the crown is not one of them. Cf. *Caesar*, 61-62.

15. The Platonic correspondence between ruler and state is a standard notion in Shakespeare. Compare *Hamlet*, in which Denmark's "rotteness" reflects that of Claudius; and *Macbeth* (esp. 2.4), in which the myriad, gross perversions in nature reflect those in Macbeth's soul.

16. The monster as symbol for perversion of the natural order was another standard concept. See James Emerson Phillips, *The State in Shakespeare's Greek and Roman Plays* (1940; reprint, New York: Octagon, 1972), 65-66; and chapter 2 above.

17. Socrates explains that each of the soul's faculties has its characteristic desire: reason seeks after truth, will after power and fame, and appetite after gain (9.580-81). To these correspond three classes of men, depending on which element predominates: the philosophic, the ambitious, and the lover of gain. In Elizabethan psychology, the will is responsible for translating thought into action, ideally serving reason by choosing the good. In the unregenerate man, however, the will follows the blind guide of the appetites. In the case of Caesar, Shakespeare appears to be fusing the two contexts. Elsewhere he identifies Caesar (i.e., the tyrant) with the appetites and passions (i.e., with their correlative, the mob). In all three instances, however, the point remains the same: reason is enslaved by the lower faculties.

18. See the related study of Bernard R. Breyer, "A New Look at *Julius Caesar*," in *Essays in Honor of Walter Clyde Curry*, comp. John W. Stevenson, Vanderbilt Studies in the Humanities 2 (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1954), 175-76. For a non-Platonic interpretation of the will/tyranny relationship, see Velz, "Just Cause," who argues that Caesar, acting *in voluptatem*, reflects the tyrant of Seneca's *De Clementia*.

19. Cornford, *Republic*, 264.

20. Brents Stirling, "'Or else were this a savage spectacle,'" in *Unity in Shakespearian Tragedy: The Interplay of Theme and Character* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), 47.

21. Plutarch's account is the antithesis: "[T]hey durst not acquaint Cicero with their conspiracie, although he was a man whome they loved dearelie, and trusted best: for they were affrayed that he being a coward by nature, and age also having increased his feare, he woulde quite turne and alter all their purpose, and quenche the heate of their enterprise" (*Brutus*, 191-92; see also *Cicero*, 358).

22. *Antonius*, 15; see also *Brutus*, 201, and *Cicero*, 358. Cf. Schanzer, *Problem Plays*, 43, who believes Antony's character and oration derive from Appian.

23. Cf. John W. Velz, "Caesar's Deafness," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 22 (1971): 400-401; and Douglas L. Peterson, "'Wisdom Consumed in Confidence': An Examination of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 16 (1965): 19-28. Both argue that Caesar here speaks figuratively, Velz suggesting that Caesar's deafness derives from Plutarch's *Life of Alexander the Great*.

24. James Holly Hanford, "A Platonic Passage in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*," *Studies in Philology* 13 (1916): 107, quoting *Rep.* 9.572.

25. Gary B. Miles, "How Roman Are Shakespeare's 'Romans'?" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40 (1989): 279.

26. See *OED*, s.v. "Caesar," 2.

27. Both Plutarch and Shakespeare cite Brutus's pursuit of philosophy. Plutarch states that Brutus "framed his ... life by the rules of vertue and studie of Philosophie" and that "he loved Platoes sect best" (*Brutus*, 182, 183; see also 221, 222). Shakespeare notes Brutus's study of philosophy at 4.3.144-45 and 5.1.104-11.

28. Cf. Plutarch: "For by flattering of him [Brutus], a man coulde never obteyne any thing at his handes, nor make him to doe that which was unjust" (*Brutus*, 187). The seeming nobility of the enterprise rather than Cassius's flattery is what seduces Plutarch's Brutus, although Plutarch also refers elsewhere to Brutus's ambition (*Caesar*, 63).

29. Shakespeare's addition; the speech has no corollary in Plutarch.

30. In a related study ("The Metaphor of Alchemy in *Julius Caesar*," *Costerus* 5 [1972]: 135-51), William B. Toole explores the play's alchemical motif, arguing that it illuminates, through irony, key aspects of plot and character. Toole views Cassius's soliloquy in the context of this motif but concludes, as I do not, that while Cassius succeeds in seducing Brutus, he fails to transform Brutus's character. The repeated connection between character and metal is also noted by T. S. Dorsch in his Arden edition of the play (London: Methuen, 1955), lxxvii-lxxviii, who additionally considers the play's recurring *metal/mettle* pun. See also Cumberland Clark, "The Art of the Alchemist," in *Shakespeare and Science* (Birmingham, England: Cornish, 1929), 63, who analyzes the alchemical motif in Shakespeare's works in the context of Elizabethan scientific views.

31. I base this meaning on the *OED* definition of "Humour," v., 5: "To give a particular character or style to." Such working or "humoring" of metal is a recurring motif in the play; note, e.g., Brutus's statement to Cassius: "What you would work me to, I have some aim" (1.2.163), and Brutus's profoundly ironic reference to "th' insuppressive mettle of our spirits" (2.1.134). *Metal* and *mettle* were interchangeable spellings, *metal* having the additional meaning of "the 'stuff' of which a man is made, with reference to character" (*OED*, s.v. "Metal," *sb.*, 1.f). Shakespeare plays on both meanings throughout, the two senses conceivably having been suggested by the *Republic*, in which they are similarly fused. The phrase "honorable metal" may also derive from the *Republic*, i.e., from Socrates' tenet that those whose souls are composed of gold "have the greatest honour" (6.492).

32. Brutus's analogy derives from *Rep.* 4.441-44, the passage in which Socrates likens the soul to the State. In the soul as in the State, vitiation of the ordained hierarchy produces chaos. The concept was a Renaissance commonplace, and Shakespeare need not have gotten it from the *Republic* directly.

33. All noted by Dorsch, *Julius Caesar*, xli. Brutus's pomposity, as Dorsch points out, has little or no basis in Plutarch. Brutus's tyranny is extensively explored in Gordon Ross Smith's seminal



"Brutus, Virtue, and Will," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 10 (1959): 67-79, which argues that Brutus uses his putative virtue to cloak his relentlessly egotistical willfulness.

34. G. R. Elton, *England under the Tudors*, 3d ed. (1955; reprint, London: Routledge, 1962), 469.

35. Wallace T. MacCaffrey, *Elizabeth I: War and Politics, 1588-1603* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 520; John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 439.

36. See J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth I: A Biography* (1934; reprint, Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1957), 362; MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 517.

37. On the Parsons book and the Essex/Bolingbroke identification, see chapter 2 above.

38. Andrew Gurr, ed., *King Richard II*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6; Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's "Histories": Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy* (San Marino, Calif: Huntington Library, 1947), 190. Hayward's dedication was in Latin.

39. Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 367; MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 522; cf. MacCaffrey, 523.

40. Guy, *Tudor England*, 524; Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 368.

41. MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 522, quoting William Camden, *Annals of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1675).

42. MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 526; Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 369; Howard Nenner, *The Right to be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 265 n. 65.

43. The point and the quotation are Neale's, *Elizabeth I*, 369.

44. MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 526.

45. Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 371; Elton, *England under the Tudors*, 473.

46. Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 374.

47. Guy, *Tudor England*, 447.

48. *Ibid.*, 448, quoting *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, 1598-1601*, 453-55.

49. Guy, *Tudor England*, 448; Neale, *Elizabeth I*, 375. See also MacCaffrey, *War and Politics*, 525, 533-36.

50. On this passage and the Queen's domination by favorites, see chapter 2 above.

51. *OED*, s.v. "Broached," 2.

52. The Caesar faction may be taken to include those who favor Caesar's supremacy, including the senators about to make him king. Note Brutus's reference to the conspirators as "the faction" (2.1.77).

53. David Daniell, ed., *Julius Caesar*, The Arden Shakespeare, Third Series (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 23.

54. Guy, *Tudor England*, 443.

55. The phrase is Elton's, *England under the Tudors*, 469. Compare the comment of William Camden: the Earl sought to outshine "both his equals and superiours, to detract from the praise of all which were not at his devotion, [and] to frowne upon others which had any power or grace with the Queene" (*Annals of Queen Elizabeth*, quoted in Richard C. McCoy, *The Rites of Knighthood: The Literature and Politics of Elizabethan Chivalry* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989], 84).

56. Elton, *England under the Tudors*, 469.

57. Compare Plutarch's account, in which Cassius hates Caesar because Caesar had preferred Brutus for the Praetorship and, reportedly, had confiscated his lions but more probably because "even from his cradell [he] could ... abide [no] maner of tyrans" (*Brutus*, 189; see also *Caesar*, 63-64, and *Antonius*, 13). Cassius's depiction of Caesar is Shakespeare's invention.

58. On Naunton as well as other parallels adduced by Elizabethans between the two, see Wayne A. Rebhorn, "The Crisis of the Aristocracy in *Julius Caesar*," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43 (1990): 102-3. Caesar's adulation by "the vulgar" (1.1.70) finds a parallel in an anonymous 1603 poem, which cites Essex's admiration by "the vulgar sorte," q.v. chapter 2 above.

59. Shakespeare seems to have gone out of his way to stress Caesar's decline. Besides adding such details as deafness (perhaps additionally suggestive of advanced age) and a fever contracted in Spain, Shakespeare makes Caesar a poor swimmer, effectively inverting the account in Plutarch: Plutarch's Caesar escapes from the Egyptians by leaping from a boat "into the sea, with great hazard. ... [H]olding divers bookes in his hand, he did never let them go, but kept them alwayes upon his head above water, and swamme with the other hand, notwithstanding that they shot marvelously at him, and was driven sometime to ducke into the water: howbeit the boate was drowned presently" (*Caesar*, 51). Caesar's "falling sickness," while not added, is augmented. That Caesar can figure more than one personage is entirely plausible; Shakespeare is again employing the "mirrors-more-than-one" device, q.v. chapter 2 above.

60. Daniell, *Julius Caesar*, 163 n. The issue's prominence is noted by Daniell. Strictly speaking, of course, Caesar was not childless; according to Plutarch, he had a daughter (Julia, already

noted, who died in 54 b.c.), and a son (Caesarion, by Cleopatra) killed by Octavius in 30 b.c. possibly because, as Caesar's child, he was seen by Octavius as a potential rival.

61. Nenner, *Right to be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995, p. 23 (see also 22-25), representatively quoting Peter Wentworth, *A Pithie Exhortation to Her Majestie for Establishing Her Successor to the Crowne* (1587, pub. 1598), 8.

62. Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth: Elizabethan Portraiture and Pageantry* (1977; reprint, London: Pimlico, 1999), 125-26.

63. See Robert Lacey, *Robert, Earl of Essex* (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 56-57; Guy, *Tudor England*, 439. Ironically, her indecision did not include her adamancy about naming a successor.

64. Both cited by Strong, *Cult of Elizabeth*, 48; Daniell, *Julius Caesar*, 25. Daniell (22-29) adduces further parallels.

65. This last point is made by Norman Sanders, "The Shift of Power in *Julius Caesar*," *Review of English Literature* 5 (1964): 35. Further parallels between the two Caesars are noted by Sanders.

66. See Barbara L. Parker, "The Whore of Babylon and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*," *SEL* 35 (1995): 265-66.

#### **Source Citation**

Parker, Barbara L. "*Julius Caesar*." *Plato's Republic and Shakespeare's Rome: A Political Study of the Roman Works*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004. 74-91. Rpt. in *Shakespearean Criticism*. Ed. Michelle Lee. Vol. 95. Detroit: Gale, 2006. *Literature Resource Center*. Web. 4 Jan. 2011.

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