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Perception Operation in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*¹

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Abstract

Contemporary Shakespeare studies have gained a new perspective and created an unprecedented synergy in dramatic criticism with the introduction of Cultural Materialism and New Historicism as critical theories. Within the contexts set by New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, Shakespeare's plays, through polyphonic discourses and dialogues, create environments constructed in the relationships of his characters with one another and with the society on the basis of political and ideological considerations. In Shakespeare's theatrical environments, his characters play their political and ideological roles in a way similar to what happens in the real world politics. In such political and ideological environments, analysing polyphonic discourses and dialogues, critical readers can come up with some political and ideological concepts to analyse and explain the ways things happen and the reasons for why they happen. This study argues that one of these concepts is perception operation/management which Shakespeare uses in *Julius Caesar* as a means of political and ideological propaganda in the same way as is used in the contemporary real world, which creates a close association between the play's original context and contemporary political context through contemporary interpretations. Hence, this study deals with the role of perception operation/management in Brutus' manipulating attempts at political resistance to Julius Caesar's ruling, which paved the way for Caesar's assassination.

Keywords: Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, politics, sociology, perception operation, propaganda.

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The complexity and critical characteristics of political systems and the way they affect people have long been a focus of interest in theatre. Due to its very nature and the way it is exercised, politics has dramatic attributes, which leads to the idea that politics is drama (Redmond; Schutz; Innes). Considering conspiracy theories, economic and sex scandals, jealousy, cynicism, secret alliances, groundless accusations, culture and class conflicts, corruption and wars, which are major sources of dramatic conflicts, there is a strong association between politics and drama. The conventions in drama, the characters, the scenes, the audience as public participation, the fixed forms on which it sets itself, all help to understand the world (Williams).

Whether Shakespeare was interested in politics, whether his plays reveal political meanings and reflect political atmosphere of their time have always been a focus of discussion. Allan Bloom argues that Shakespearean texts very successfully establish political settings with characters who exercise capacities that can only be exercised in a political and social environment. Hence, with characters as rulers, statesman and citizens who are very much concerned with state affairs, whose thoughts, actions, beliefs and judgements help readers understand the weaknesses and strengths of the state and government regardless of the setting of the plays, whether it be Athens, Rome or London, Shakespeare's plays give a new perspective and scope to political science (Murley and Sean) and can be applied to political and sociological settings and phenomena. Such applications of Shakespearean texts have so far associated Shakespeare with a number of political, ideological and sociological concepts some of which are as follows: Shakespeare the republican, Shakespeare the royalist, Capitalist Shakespeare, Marxist Shakespeare, Feminist Shakespeare, Humanist Shakespeare, Shakespeare the democrat (Dobson; Taylor). Both Dobson and Taylor claim that all these re-appropriations and reinventions of Shakespeare himself and his plays by the generations the eras with distinctive political, cultural and sociological features and qualities from their antecedents are what has canonized Shakespeare himself and the texts. In a chaotic, complex and complicated world which is difficult to understand without any reference to any scientific, political, cultural and sociological sources and codes and which is no different from the ones Shakespeare created in his plays, one filled with poverty, wars, corruption, and power struggles at national and international level, nothing but political, cultural and sociological readings of Shakespearean texts would give them their contemporary meanings. "[...] Stage or

screen adaptations of the plays and poems, [...] the many translations produced on the multilingual European continent since time immemorial, [...] appropriations of the Shakespearean heritage by popular culture" (Hoenselaars, 9) inevitably create a culture which can be called 'Shakespearean' and which requires a specific political, ideological and sociological angle for contemporary readers to understand and analyze them.

Politics in Shakespeare's plays reveals similar characteristics with the politics of the contemporary world. The most common characteristic feature of Shakespearean politics and contemporary politics is power, which is in line with Weber's definition of politics. Weber draws a strong relationship between leadership of a state or a society and politics. Since this leadership entails power to control and rule the state or the community, he equates politics with power. The problem is how this power is exercised in the hands of people who play their roles in the political arena. Based upon Weber's understanding of the relationship between power and politics, *Julius Caesar*, in which Shakespeare creates settings where power plays a crucial role and the way it is exercised creates political discussions, and where the most important problem is who will have it to rule, leads to a myriad of political and ideological conflicts. In the play, Cassius employs what David and McKeldin mean by "ideas as weapons". They claim that a successful war plan will not only include the determined enemy but people and societies as well. If it is a war between Cassius and Julius Caesar, actually it is not a kinetic one but one of perceptions, Caesar is Cassius' enemy, and Cassius never directly attacks Caesar, rather he plays on Brutus, other noble people and the Roman citizens, which includes strategic communication (Cassius establishes a network to communicate with his fellow conspirators), information and influence operation, public diplomacy, and psychological operation.

Though the most contemporary version of the term 'perception operation or management' was first coined by US Department of Defence to refer to influence the emotions, motives of their enemies and to lead them to objective reasoning in line with their own objectives, Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu gave its details almost two thousand years ago in his *Art of War* (Briand). According to Tzu, deception plays a very crucial role in all forms of war (125). In addition to its ancient meaning of 'deception', the contemporary underlying theory behind perception management is that among the many realities man faces in his vicinity, he tends to select only a small number with respect to their influence (Agarwal). Thus, perception operation/management becomes a process that leads to the understanding of a selected message in a form that intends to change the target population's point of view in a way closer to the originator's one, which makes it different from

propaganda (Garfield). This means that perception operation is based on psychological and information operations as well. Normally, perception operations or psychological operations are used in war times. The case in *Julius Caesar* is not one of hot or armed war but one of cold war that ends in hot and deadly results. Steven Collins, in his analysis of the war on Iraq, comes up with a comprehensive definition which includes all its uses throughout history:

Perception management includes all actions used to influence the attitudes and objective reasoning of foreign audiences and consists of Public Diplomacy, Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), Public Information, Deception and Covert Action. Of special interest in the case of Operation *Iraqi Freedom* are public diplomacy, the deliberate attempt to persuade foreign audiences of the content and wisdom of one's policies, intentions and actions, and PSYOPS, the use of activities, predominantly media, to influence and persuade foreign audiences. (para.3)

This nature of perception management makes it a very powerful political device. As a matter of fact, Shakespeare changes what is called an art of war into an art of politics in *Julius Caesar*. In the play Shakespeare invents not the concept but the act of political warfare. *Julius Caesar* is a play in which all what Collins referred to as perception management is employed very successfully: Public Diplomacy, Psychological Operations, Public Information, Deception and Covert Action.

Given the appearances in the play, the dialogues and monologues Shakespeare uses to create his characters and given that Shakespeare creates his characters through their dialogues and monologues, one cannot help asking why the title of the play is *Julius Caesar*, but not *The Tragedy of Brutus* or something else. The reason for this is that Shakespeare creates the character Julius Caesar not on the stage as a physical entity and identity but fills in this identity with ideas and perceptions other characters hold about him. From this perspective, the play is a good example of what we call today as 'perception engineering' or 'perception management'. In the identity of Julius Caesar, he creates a perception of imperialism, of totalitarian and autocratic ruling and of anti-republicanism. *Julius Caesar* tells us about a tragedy of a military coup plotted upon this perception.

With Leigh Armistead's words, perception management is "information warfare" which Shakespeare uses not "to separate hype from reality" (1) but to mix them in *Julius Caesar*. With this act of mixing hype with reality, he argues that it becomes easier to shape and reshape an image or to organize influence campaigns. Goldman draws a strong association between perception management and psychological operations in that both aim at

a certain audience in order to affect their beliefs and attitudes in a given issue, and claims that it differs from public diplomacy in that perception management includes “falsehood and deception” as its “important ingredients” and that “the purpose is to get the other side to believe what one wishes it to believe, whatever the truth might be” (149). The truth, that is, whether *Julius Caesar* really wishes to be a tyrant or not, whether he really holds some tyrannical tendencies which will kill the democratic and republican spirit of Rome, is not known from the play. What Casca, Cassius, Cinna and others, with Brutus’s cooperation, do in the play is an operation that creates a false sense of reality. In order to supply legitimacy for their perception and plotting, Cassius has to convince others:

Cassius

And why should Caesar be a tyrant then?
Poor man! I know he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire
Begin it with weak straws: what trash is Rome,
What rubbish and what offal, when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar! But, O grief,
Where hast thou led me? I perhaps speak this
Before a willing bondman; then I know
My answer must be made. But I am arm'd,
And dangers are to me indifferent.

Casca

You speak to Casca, and to such a man
That is no fleering tell-tale. Hold, my hand:
Be factious for redress of all these griefs,
And I will set this foot of mine as far
As who goes farthest.

Cassius

There's a bargain made.
Now know you, Casca, I have moved already
Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans

To undergo with me an enterprise
Of honourable-dangerous consequence;
And I do know, by this, they stay for me
In Pompey's porch: for now, this fearful night,
There is no stir or walking in the streets;
And the complexion of the element
In favour's like the work we have in hand,
Most bloody, fiery, and most terrible. (2.1.103-130)

Cassius tries hard to create a perception in other conspirator's minds that Caesar will be a tyrant by claiming that he sees the Romans as sheep though he cannot directly say that Caesar is a wolf or a lion, which draws a direct connection with cruelty, wilderness, violence and tyranny. Cassius describes the plot against Julius Caesar as 'honourable but dangerous, bloody, fiery and most terrible' like any military coup. He knows very well that they cannot achieve their purpose without Brutus; hence it is necessary to have Brutus in their side. Brutus will guarantee the legitimacy of the assassination of Caesar. At the beginning, Brutus seems to be impartial or indifferent to what is implied by Cassius by referring to Caesar and his popularity among the plebeians. Here what Collins calls as psychological operation is performed by Cassius over Brutus:

Brutus

Let me not hinder, Cassius, your desires;
I'll leave you.

Cassius

Brutus, I do observe you now of late:
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love as I was wont to have:
You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand
Over your friend that loves you. (1.2.30-36)

Here Cassius abuses his friendship with Brutus. What is learnt from the Roman history is that both Brutus and Cassius are on the side of Pompey's in the war between Pompey and Caesar. Later, upon the victory over Pompey, Caesar forgives them. Brutus seems to give up his rivalry with Caesar while Cassius keeps his resentment and discontent with Caesar's ruling. Brutus becomes aware of Cassius's antagonistic attitudes towards Caesar and thinks that Cassius tries to influence him. Actually, Brutus is a close friend of Caesar's and he says he loves him; however, he also fears that Caesar will be crowned as king, which will give him

absolute power. On the other hand, Brutus is well aware that Cassius still holds antagonistic feelings for Caesar. Cassius' treachery and trickery is guided by ambition. Brutus acts on loyalty to the state and on logical considerations and arguments, which Cassius knows very well. He also knows very well that Brutus needs to be convinced and persuaded by some rational deliberations and noble and loyal obligations. One may think that Brutus joins the conspiracy just because he has found some rational obligations to do so. However, one should not ignore the role Cassius plays leaning on equally carefully plotted perception operation on Brutus. It is true Brutus fears that Caesar will be a tyrant, but his subconscious logic also makes him fear the undesirable consequences of this fear:

Brutus

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)

Cassius's shady characteristic, his jealousy and hatred of Caesar urges him to take any step to seduce Brutus. The cornerstones of this seduction begins with, as a means of perception operation, his writing fake letters to Brutus and other patricians and senators. At the end of Act I, Scene II, when Brutus exists, Cassius decides upon the last phase of his perception operation:

Well, Brutus, thou art noble; yet, I see,
Thy honourable metal 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 humour me. I will this night,
In several hands, in at his windows throw,
As if they came from several citizens,
Writings all tending to the great opinion
That Rome holds of his name; wherein obscurely
Caesar's ambition shall be glanced at:
And after this let Caesar seat him sure;
For we will shake him, or worse days endure. (1.2.312-326)

Then, he gives directions to Cinna: "[...] take this paper, /And look you lay it in the praetor's chair,/where Brutus may but find it; and throw this/ In at his window" (2.1.142-145). At home on the other side of the city, with mixed emotions and thoughts that make it hard for him to fall asleep, Brutus walks up and down in his garden, shaking his head, and speaking to himself: "That kind of power must not be allowed. Caesar could become too dangerous" (Wirkner 21). His servant comes in and hands him a paper. It reads: "Brutus, Wake up! Shall Rome Stand In Awe of One Single Man? Speak Out. Take Action". The operational effect of perception management becomes evident when he thinks it is a message from the people themselves urging him to do something about the present condition. This is, he says to himself, a political action. The paper Brutus receives is a very good example of agitation and propaganda, which is a stage in perception management. This urges Brutus to do something expected by Cassius and others addressing to his emotions and intends to create a good reason in Brutus' mind for the plotting since Brutus is governed by his mind. The Roman nobles have already started their perception operation dealing with the question of empire and autocracy in the Roman Republic. They try hard to make reference to the imperial nature of Caesar's ruling, the political and governmental crises, the inevitability of freeing the nation from Julius Caesar and the necessity for the transformation of the corrupted Roman society, as they perceive it to be, back into a free republican society. Actually, perception operation starts at the very beginning of the play with Marullus and Flavius trying to construct a cognitive mind in the plebeians that questions Caesar's institutional and constitutional legitimacy and popularity claiming that he is no different from Pompey in that he will also usurp the state power as Pompey did once.

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 (1.1.36-58).

Marullus and Flavius excoriate the plebeians for celebrating Caesar and this celebration, for them, is perfidious because they once celebrated Pompey, with whom Caesar contended for the leadership of the Roman Republic, which resulted in a civil war. Lawrence Danson (218) writes that the opening scene of the play is “the sort of apparently expository scene in which Shakespeare actually gives us the major action of the play in miniature”, a miniature and the initial attempt of perception management. This miniature presents a state of confusion in Rome’s symbolic and actual governmental system. Marullus and Flavius try to clear this confusion by claiming, when the commoners say they are there for a memorialisation of Caesar’s triumph, that there is nothing of triumph in Caesar's ruling but a corruption of republican order. Marullus and Flavius try to construct a Caesar in the eyes of the people not as a protagonist but as an antagonist with an image of a ruler who follows unethical ways in his contest of power:

Flavius

It is no matter; let no images
Be hung with Caesar's trophies.
I'll about, and drive away the vulgar from the streets:
So do you too, where you perceive them thick.
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. (1.2-72-79)

The vulgar is Caesar, and he is believed to place the cornerstones of the road to the dictatorship, one-man ruling, namely autocracy, which will keep them in "servile fearfulness". The result of Cassius's psychological operation through emotional and logical abuse of Brutus reveals itself just before Brutus gets the written message:

Brutus

It must be by his death: and for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. He would be crown'd:
How that might change his nature, there's the question.
It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;
And that craves wary walking. Crown him?--that;--
And then, I grant, we put a sting in him,
That at his will he may do danger with.
The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
Remorse from power: and, to speak truth of Caesar,
I have not known when his affections sway'd
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof,
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.
Then, lest he may, prevent. And, since the quarrel
Will bear no colour for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus; that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities:
And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
And kill him in the shell.(2.1.10-34)

He finds honourable reason, no personal cause, official and patriotic responsibility and public devotion in the conspiracy against Caesar thinking that Caesar abuses his power and greatness given to him by the Roman state, which has been a common pretext in such military coups all throughout history. Then, comes Lucius to hand in him the letter he says he found in the closet. The letter 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 receivest
Thy full petition at the hand of Brutus!(2.1.46-58)

At first, Brutus seems to be ambivalent, deriving from a kind of moral, logical and political ambiguity. He knows it is a conspiracy plotted by Cassius which he thinks will be good for his country but will destroy its peace:

They are the faction. O conspiracy,
Shamest thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then by day
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
To mask thy monstrous visage? Seek none, conspiracy;
Hide it in smiles and affability:
For if thou path, thy native semblance on,
Not Erebus itself were dim enough
To hide thee from prevention.(2.1.77-85)

The effect of perception management on the plebeians can best be seen after the assassination of Caesar. Ironical as it may seem to some critical eyes and minds, the plebeians, once applauding Caesar zestily and vehemently, applaud Brutus as a man who has good and noble reasons to kill their leader:

Brutus

...

There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

All

None, Brutus, none. (3.2.31-39)

...

First Citizen

This Caesar was a tyrant.

Third Citizen

Nay, that's certain:

We are blest that Rome is rid of him (3.2.70-72).

Shakespeare makes no mention of Caesar's dealing with state affairs in the play: widespread debt and unemployment in Rome, his seeking to make Rome a cultural and educational centre of the Mediterranean world by building Rome as a centre of attraction for intellectuals, doctors, and lawyers, all of which prove that Caesar was a successful leader of his country and this was what gave him so much popularity in Rome. It is also true that Caesar tried to combine all the power granted to him by the constitution to establish a strong state, an omnipresent and omnipotent body of government. Does this make Caesar a dictator? Still we have no clear answers to this and many others since Shakespeare creates the character Caesar through other characters' perceptions, which means there are many Caesars on the stage. Out of eighteen scenes in the play, Caesar appears on the stage in only three scenes, which is very strange for a titular character. However, other characters utter Caesar's name 219 times, which shows that there is more than one Caesar in the play each created by other's perceptions. Though the play is full of unanswerable political, philosophical and moral questions, the argument of this study is that what seems to be as public loyalty and public responsibility on the side of Brutus and Cassius is actually an internal feud. Perception operation is necessary to mask Cassius's feud, Brutus's seduction, other senators and

patricians' corruption and perversion. Through Cassius's psychological and emotional oppression, Brutus feels obliged to make a choice between loyalty to the public and to the state and loyalty to the friend and comes out as a hero, an honourable man dedicated to the well-being of his country. After the assassination of Caesar, Brutus's disguised moral deterioration becomes apparent when he faces the difficulty or impossibility of legitimizing a political murder, especially in the chaotic political, moral and governmental vacuum of that murder.

Richard Gafford argues that "perception is demonstrated to have occurred below the threshold of conscious sensory experience when a person responds to a stimulus too weak in intensity or too short in duration for him to be aware of it" (para.1), which is what happens in the play at the very beginning when Cassius says to Brutus "Brutus, I do observe you now of late:/ I have not from your eyes that gentleness/ And show of love as I was wont to have:/ You bear too stubborn and too strange a hand/ Over your friend that loves you" (1.2.32-36). Cassius achieves to transform passive or inactive or sleeping perception into active perception. Cassius is well aware that Brutus's perception of Caesar is, if not negative, inactive or passive. When he asks Brutus "Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?" (1.2.51), Brutus responds " No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself, / But by reflection, by some other things" (1.2.52-53). Cassius thinks Brutus must see himself, but he also thinks that what Brutus must see must be not what he himself wants to see but what Cassius himself wants him to see.

In *Shakespeare: Our Contemporary*, John Kott refers to Shakespeare's plays as sources of rich materials that provide information to understand the ideological conflicts of the modern world. The perception operation/management Cassius and his friends run to pave the way to Caesar's assassination, the agitation propaganda plotted to take Brutus their side, inter-institutional conflicts in the state, fear of loss of power, attempts to keep the status quo are what can be seen in the play that also can be seen in the modern world. In today's world such operations are conducted via such institutions as departments of defence, departments of state, security departments, intelligence agencies, supreme courts and military institutions. In the play, since Rome was not so sophisticatedly institutionalized, the operation is conducted by individuals who explicitly or implicitly hold some sort of state power and authority in their hands. To give an example, in today's United States of America, known to have a very strong constitutional body of government, there is a strong association between President Obama and Caesar. Based upon the following words, some blame him for having autocratic tendencies:

When Congress refuses to act — and as a result, hurts our economy and puts our people at risk — then I have an obligation as president to do what I can without them. I have an obligation to act on behalf of the American people. I'm not going to stand by while a minority in the Senate puts party ideology ahead of the people that we elected to serve. Not with so much at stake, not at this make-or-break moment for middle class Americans. We're not gonna let that happen (Obama, 2012).

This is no different from what Julius Caesar says to Metellus, the conspirator haunted by passion, jealousy, ambition and revenge, hiding his insidious intentions behind what we call today as ideological and political dissents, claiming that Caesar has dictatorial tendencies:

Caesar

I must prevent thee, Cimber.
These couchings and these lowly courtesies
Might fire the blood of ordinary men,
And turn pre-ordinance and first decree
Into the law of children. Be not fond,
To think that Caesar bears such rebel blood
That will be thaw'd from the true quality
With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
Low-crooked court'sies and base spaniel-fawning.
Thy brother by decree is banished:
If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.(3.1.40-53)

Both find themselves in a state of defensive against their legitimacy, legality, and ability to rule out the country. In terms of his public works, Obama resembles Caesar in that both can be called Populares. Obama receives harsh criticisms from the conservative circles, from the Mormons and Evangelicals. John Christian Ryter categorizes Obama as "Omnipotent Obama: King Without a Throne" (para.1). he blames Obama for changing the constitutional laws made in the senate by force. The criticism is that America does not favour an omnipotent president in the Oval Office, just as Brutus, Casca, Cassius, Cinna and others do not want one in the Roman Senate.

Perception operations have widely been used both at national and international levels. In 1998, the US and Britain waged and won a war of perception just before and after the bombing campaign over Iraq to convince both their people and others claiming that Iraq posed a great threat to the democratic nations of the world. In Vietnam, the US disseminated its official reasons for the involvement in the Vietnam War: North Vietnam or communists invaded South Vietnam, thus they needed urgent aid, and the US troops were there to support a democratic regime. Two of those very similar to what happens in *Julius Caesar* were operated in Venezuela and Chile. In 2002, they deposed the Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez from the office by a military coup claiming that there were a number of human rights breaches in the country. In 1973 in Chile, in line with the Cold War policies, the US demonized the socialist government under the presidency of Salvador Allende blaming him for passing unconstitutional laws, harassing the opposition media, for torture and illegal arrests. He was found dead in his office, which still creates conspiracy theories as to whether he was killed or committed suicide. Similar perception operations have been under construction in Turkey as well. The case is no different from what is operated in Shakespeare's Rome. There have been numerous military and semi-military coups and interventions in the political normality within the very short history of the Republic, surprisingly all of which, based upon successfully plotted perception operations reinforcing the idea that politicians were corrupted and sacrificed public interest to their personal interest just as Julius Caesar is perceived to do in the play, aim to save the republic by destroying its institutions like the parliament and the constitution.

The answer why Brutus kills Caesar might be that he does it for the wellbeing of his country. On the surface it seems he puts his country's interests and needs before his own. This answer loses its validity and reliability after Shakespeare shows what happens to Rome after the assassination of Julius Caesar. The best answer this study argues would be Brutus's inability to know himself-lack of self-knowledge- and to know what is going on around him- he is unaware of Cassius' manipulations that lead him to believe that Caesar will become a tyrant and destroy Rome as a republic. Shakespeare clears the minds of his audience when he portrays a Rome destroyed after the killing of Caesar, when he kills both Cassius and Brutus. Here it would be more appropriate to ask this question: could all these have happened if it were not for Cassius' manipulations through perception operations over Brutus and others?

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