

## The Dramatisation of the Two Conspirators' Suicides in *Julius Caesar*

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**Abstract** This paper discusses the dramatic effects of Cassius' suicide on Brutus' tragic end in *Julius Caesar*. Critics have pointed out the incongruity between the retributive justice and Brutus' unwavering posture in the latter part of the play. This paper approaches this problem from the perspective of theatrical performance and examines the way in which Brutus' actions are presented through the image of the preceding scenes. Brutus' suicide has often been analysed in relation to Caesar's demise, for which he is responsible. However, this paper closely compares Brutus' suicide with Cassius' suicide prior to that of Brutus and reveals the way in which the scene of Cassius' suicide contributes to Brutus' enigmatic presentation. While the similarities mainly contribute to the two interpretive contexts of Brutus' suicide, the distinctions highlight Brutus' autonomous attitude towards death, maintaining his interior world opaque to the audience.

### Introduction

*Julius Caesar* dramatises one of the most famous historical events in Western history, the assassination of the play's eponymous Roman leader. The first part of the play depicts the plot of the assassination, and the second focuses on the fate of the principal conspirators, Brutus and Cassius (David Daniell 75). Since the second part is infused with the retributive elements, such as Antony's proclamation of revenge against the conspirators (3. 1. 254-75), the appearance of Caesar's ghost to Brutus (4. 3. 275-86), and the conspirators' reference to the victim's name as they die (5. 3. 45-46; 5. 5. 50-51), the second part has often been interpreted as an ethical consequence of the assassination.

However, Brutus' suicide has evoked controversy among audiences and critics because of its ambiguity. Although he commits morally doubtful murder of his beloved friend, Brutus insists on his altruistic cause of

the assassination (4. 3. 18-26), never explicitly showing his feeling of guilt or doubt. At the end of the play he reaches his last moment proudly by running into his own sword. After death, he is even given an eloquent eulogy by his avenger Antony: "This was the noblest Roman of them all: / All the conspirators, save only he, / Did that they did in envy of great Caesar" (5. 5. 68-70). The eulogy clearly distinguishes Brutus from the other conspirators, including Cassius. Brutus does not die solely as a murderer but as "the noblest Roman" as stated in Antony's eulogy while the reason for Antony's elevation of Brutus remains unclear. Neither able to thoroughly deny Brutus' selfless idealism nor convinced of his moral infallibility, quite a few critics have tried to detect guilt feeling in Brutus' words and deeds<sup>1)</sup>. Recently, David Lucking has concluded that Brutus remains an enigma until the end of the play because the audience cannot discern "what lies at the core of Brutus' moral being" (131).

However, all those analyses lack the perspective of theatrical performance, the prime *raison d'être* of the work. The argument of Takashi Sasayama gives an insight into the audience's experience of the play. He maintains that an audience grasps a meaning of a scene of any play through the total experience of the previous scenes (24–29). This suggests that in performance the audience interprets Brutus' actions not only through the earlier portrayal of him but in relation to the preceding scenes, even if those scenes hardly seem to have a narrative relationship with each of Brutus' actions.

Therefore, in order to understand the ambiguous presentation of Brutus, especially in his last moments, an analysis through the preceding scenes should be essential. Among them, the scene of Cassius' suicide demands an exceptional status as Shakespeare juxtaposes the suicides of Cassius and Brutus in the final act of the play. Although the two suicides are often interpreted as presenting a single outcome of the whole series of the events of the play<sup>2)</sup>, a close comparison of the two scenes reveals that the similarities and differences between them heighten the dramatic effects of the enigmatic presentation of Brutus. Firstly, I examine the final farewell between the conspirators that articulates their readiness for their respective deaths. Then I look at Cassius' suicide in relation to Caesar's assassination and finally discuss Brutus' suicide in the light of his precursor, Cassius' suicide.

## 2. The Conspirators' Final Farewell

Shakespeare prepares the audience for the suicides by contrasting the two conspirators' attitudes towards death before they finally part. Before the battle at Philippi, Brutus and Cassius bid each other a final farewell, never to meet again in life (5. 1. 91–125). Just before their deaths, Shakespeare draws attention to how each character portends their respective ends. First, Cassius shares his ominous premonition with his friend, Messala (5. 1. 70–88), which greatly contrasts with the portrayal in the first three acts of Cassius as a

person preoccupied with fighting against fate<sup>3)</sup>. He is now perturbed by ravens, crows, and kites flying over his head (5. 1. 83–88), sensing from the ill omen his death approaching, which leads the audience to anticipate his ending under the influence of supernatural power. Having actually witnessed Caesar's ghost (4. 3. 275–86) and just heard Octavius' proclamation of revenge (5. 1. 50–55), the audience may connect Cassius' premonition with Caesar's ghost.

Subsequently, in his last conversation with Cassius, Brutus relates what he is determined to do as a noble Roman if he loses the battle :

BRUTUS. Even by the rule of that philosophy  
By which I did blame Cato for the death  
Which he did give himself — I know not how,  
But I do find it cowardly and vile,  
For fear of what might fall, so to prevent  
The time of life — arming myself with patience  
To stay the providence of some high powers  
That govern us below.

CASSIUS. Then if we lose this battle,  
You are contented to be led in triumph  
Through the streets of Rome?

BRUTUS. No, Cassius, no. Think not, thou noble  
Roman,

That ever Brutus will go bound to Rome ;  
He bears too great a mind. (5. 1. 100–12)<sup>4)</sup>

There is an ingenious deviation from Plutarch's *Lives*<sup>5)</sup>, the main source of the play, in the form of the modification of the courses of action Brutus would take at his end. Both in the "Life of Marcus Brutus" and *Julius Caesar*, Brutus states that he once disapproved of Marcus Cato's suicide for not being valiant enough to confront providence. Plutarch's Brutus then acknowledges that he has changed the earlier opinion and explicitly declares his preparation to kill himself in time of defeat (Geoffrey Bullough 120). On the contrary, Shakespeare's Brutus here still finds the suicide "cowardly and vile" (5. 1. 103), asserting his obedience to providence, while he at the same time clearly refuses to be taken captive. Therefore, unlike Plutarch's Brutus, there is contradic-

tion between Brutus in the conversation and Brutus who decides to commit suicide at his last moment. The dramatist thus bewilders the audience with the historical knowledge of Brutus' suicide, providing room for speculation. In other words, how he will (or, in the first place, how he can) fashion his suicide as an honourable death is left open to question. Shakespeare here provides the audience with the dramatic questions on how the two conspirators, Brutus and Cassius, reach their respective endings.

Significantly, Shakespeare avoids those questions interfering with each other on the narrative level. Even before their actual farewell, the two conspirators are subtly and deliberately separated. During Cassius' confession of his premonition to Messala, the dramatist keeps Brutus away from the centre of the scene and only shows him upstage in conversation with Lucilius (5. 1. 69–92). Moreover, Cassius' confession is the first time he reveals his personal concerns to the audience, for previously his words have always referred to Brutus or Caesar. The separation becomes more obvious in the conversation that follows (5. 1. 92–125) when Brutus takes his turn to express his readiness to his end. It is only Cassius that has questions for Brutus, while the latter answers them without seeking Cassius' opinions. Their conversation, therefore, stays one-sided. Cassius does not share his apprehension with Brutus, and Brutus remains aloof from his comrade's fate. This distancing of the two characters allows their subsequent suicides to be interpreted in different contexts. I should also add that Cassius' submissive attitude towards his premonition highlights Brutus' determination in the ensuing passages.

### 3. Cassius' Suicide as a Consequence of Caesar's Assassination

After their bidding farewell in Act 5 Scene 1, Shakespeare focuses on Cassius' suicide before that of Brutus. Although it often receives less attention than that of Brutus, its dramatic portrayal has some

interesting features. It mirrors Caesar's assassination and Brutus' suicide due to its analogous structure to both of them, which means that Cassius' suicide functions as a bridge between the two demises of Caesar and Brutus. Before examining the relationship between the suicides of Brutus and Cassius, I discuss how Cassius' suicide evokes Caesar's assassination. The process of Cassius' death shares the following three elements with Caesar's assassination: the ominous portents presaging their deaths, the emphasis on their fatal misinterpretation and the effects of their deaths to those who stab them.

In the dramatisation of Cassius' suicide, Shakespeare largely follows Plutarch's account in the "Life of Marcus Brutus". The following synopsis of the scene is derived from the source. On the battlefield, Cassius sends his friend, Titinius, in order to know how the battle is proceeding; he mistakenly assumes Titinius is about to be taken prisoner; driven to despair, he kills himself with the assistance of his slave, Pindarus; his suicide distresses the returning Titinius, who promptly kills himself as well (Bullough 123). Shakespeare also adopts the episode from the "Life of Julius Caesar", in which Cassius bids Pindarus to kill him with the same sword that slew Caesar (Bullough 88).

While adhering to Plutarch's account on a basic level, Shakespeare also introduces several original ideas that more closely relate Cassius' death to Caesar's. First, both victims sense the work of supernatural power prior to their deaths. Consistent with Cassius' superstitious attitude in Act 5 Scene 1, Cassius repeats the ominous presentiment that he will die on his birthday:

This day I breathèd first, time is come round  
And where I did begin there shall I end:  
My life is run his compass. (5. 3. 23–25)

Here, Cassius senses his time has come, not because of factual reason but because of a presentiment as ravens, crows, and kites have presaged (5. 1. 84–88). Although Plutarch's *Lives* refers to Cassius' birthday as the day of his death, it is never treated as a portent

actually spoken by Cassius (Bullough 119). As R. A. Foakes observes, the premonition echoes the sinister forebodings Caesar has before his death (260). Caesar receives a prophecy about his last day from a soothsayer (1. 2. 12–24). On the eve of his assassination, a storm, the “tempest dropping fire” (1. 3. 10) strikes Rome, and his wife, Calpurnia, has an ominous dream (2. 2. 76–82). In the morning, the augurers cannot find a heart within the sacrificial offering (2. 2. 38–40). Acknowledging those omens, Caesar expresses his anxiety towards them in the beginning of Act 2 Scene 2. Although Cassius’ presentiments are on a more personal scale compared to those of Caesar that involve the entire city of Rome, the portents of supernatural powers exert their influence on both characters.

Secondly, Shakespeare emphasises the fact that the misinterpretations on the part of murderers-to-be lead to two victims’ fatal decisions. Shakespeare’s Pindarus reports the misinterpreted battle situation, which drives Cassius to suicide, while in the “Life of Marcus Brutus” it is Cassius who misinterprets the situation (Bullough 123). This adaptation is subtly linked to Decius’ interpretation of Calpurnia’s dream. In the morning of the assassination, Calpurnia temporarily succeeds in persuading her husband not to go outside due to her ominous dream. However, Decius, one of the conspirators, cunningly reinterprets Calpurnia’s dream as a favourable portent, which Caesar accepts (2. 2. 83–91). To prevent tragedy from befalling him, Caesar should not have accepted Decius’ interpretation.

The significance of the role that misinterpretation plays in the tragedy of Cassius’ death is further emphasised by Titinius’ response when confronting Cassius’ corpse. Although Plutarch’s Titinius accuses himself of his failure to return in time to prevent Cassius’ death, Shakespeare’s Titinius regrets Cassius’ misconstruction rather than his own tardiness (Bullough 123). On returning to the scene of his comrade’s death, Titinius laments as follows :

Why didst thou send me forth, brave Cassius?

Did I not meet thy friends? And did not they  
Put on my brows this wreath of victory  
And bid me give it thee? Didst thou not hear  
their shouts?

Alas, thou hast misconstrued everything. (5. 3. 80–84)

In this way, Shakespeare emphasises for the audience that Pindarus’ misjudgement precipitates Cassius’ death. Therefore, in both cases, a misunderstanding of events prior to their deaths adds to the tragedies that could have been avoided.

Finally, Cassius says that his suicide sets the slave Pindarus free (5. 3. 37–46), which recalls the political context and consequences of Caesar’s assassination. Cassius’ motivation for the conspiracy is freedom as shown in his words on the eve of the assassination : “Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius” (1. 3. 90). Ernest Schanzer clarifies Cassius’ assumption that Caesar is already a tyrant and not merely a potential one and that all Romans including himself were “groaning underneath this age’s yoke” (1. 2. 61) (301). Therefore, the relationship between Cassius and the slave Pindarus here parallels the relationship between Caesar and Cassius in the assassination. The fact that Pindarus stabs Cassius with the “good sword, / That ran through Caesar’s bowels” (5. 3. 41–42) reinforces the analogy. Cassius’ enfranchisement of Pindarus even tinges his previous act of murder with irony for the audience with historical knowledge because the assassination of Caesar fails to recover freedom in Rome while Cassius’ suicide actually frees a slave.

In all these respects, the circumstances of Cassius’ suicide provide a re-enactment that mimics Caesar’s death. This means that Cassius’ death should be related to the context of the assassination and qualifies as a consequence of it. Furthermore, his death provides a sense of retributive justice through the apparent accomplishment of revenge by Caesar’s ghost. Cassius’ last words indicate the meaning of his death ; “Caesar, thou art revenged / Even with the sword that killed thee” (5. 3. 45–46). Subsequently,

Brutus' lamentation over his friend's death deepens the meaning of Caesar's retribution :

O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet,  
Thy spirit walks abroad and turns our swords  
In our own proper entrails. (5. 3. 94-96)

Although the scene of Cassius' death is tragic in its own right, his suicide somewhat appears as atonement for his act of murder. His acceptance of destiny from Act 5 Scene 1 contributes to making his passive attitude towards Caesar's retribution more natural. Cassius' ending hence may reduce the intensity of the anticipation of retribution by those in the audience who expect a disastrous end for the conspirators, serving as a partial aftermath of the assassination.

However, at the same time, his death does not have any impact on the society of Rome nor the ensuing dramatic development. It remains a personal tragedy in contrast to the greater consequences of Caesar's assassination. Cassius' death may evoke Caesar's assassination, but it has no political significance. While Antony's proclamation of revenge over Caesar's corpse (3. 1. 254-75) functions as a trigger for the civil war, Titinius only grieves over Cassius' death and ends his "Roman's part" by his self-annihilating deed. Moreover, it is interesting in this respect that both Pindarus and Cassius are removed from the site of political turmoil. Pindarus, now a free man, vanishes from Rome (5. 3. 47-50). Cassius' corpse is sent to Thasos, lest his death affects the morale of his soldiers (5. 3. 103-06). Given the perspective of Vivian Thomas who likens the Rome of *Julius Caesar* to a political theatre where characters play their respective roles (94), Cassius, after death, steps out of the theatre. The role of giving the play a final conclusion and ending the civil war is reserved for Brutus. It is only after staging Cassius' suicide that Shakespeare shifts the focus from retribution to an honourable end for "the noblest Roman".

#### 4. The Dramatisation of Brutus' Honourable Death

Following Cassius' demise, a new dramatic phase begins, in which Romans gallantly head for their virtuous end as acts of free will, which provides a new context to interpret Brutus' suicide as an honourable death as well as his nemesis. The play now diverges from the context of the assassination, focusing on unfamiliar characters uninvolved in the assassination, namely Titinius, Young Cato, and Lucilius.

Titinius' suicide, as the sequel to Cassius' death, specifically heralds the beginning of this phase. Titinius has little connection with the previous dramatic events. He makes his first appearance as one of Cassius' supporters in Act 4 Scene 3, and in Act 5 Scene 3 he abruptly begins to behave as Cassius' best friend. Confronted with Cassius' body, Titinius instantly resolves to emulate Cassius' deed. His motivation to die does not pertain to Caesar's retribution but to his identity as a Roman, as he says, "Brutus, come apace, / And see how I regarded Caius Cassius. / By your leave, gods! — This is a Roman's part" (5. 3. 87-89). For his act of self-sacrifice, he earns praise from Young Cato and Brutus, who later demonstrate their own Romanness by their deaths :

CATO. Brave Titinius!

Look whe'er he have not crowned dead  
Cassius.

BRUTUS. Are yet two Romans living such as  
these?

The last of all Romans, fare thee well! (5. 3.  
96-99)

Titinius' gallant death subtly implies a new mode of action, distinct from the context of the assassination of Caesar. However, Titinius does not have enough power to renew the retributive atmosphere of the play, for his suicide is, as it were, a by-product of Cassius' demise.

Developing the phase even further in Act 5 Scene 4,

Shakespeare stages the death of yet another Roman, Young Cato. Young Cato does not enter the stage until Titinius' death, 133 lines from the play's end, only to be killed in the battlefield almost immediately. Just as Portia uses the fact that she is Marcus Cato's daughter to verify her constancy (2. 1. 295-97), Young Cato proudly proclaims his identity on the battlefield :

I will proclaim my name about the field.

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho!

A foe to tyrants, and my country's friend.

I am the son of Marcus Cato, ho! (5. 4. 3-6)

Instantly after these lines, Young Cato meets his glorious death in the battle (5. 4. 9). Subsequently, Lucilius honours him for dying "as bravely as Titinius" and worthily as "Cato's son" (5. 4. 10-11). By virtue of his death, he becomes a paragon of Roman values. Since he is reminiscent of his late father, Marcus Cato<sup>6)</sup>, who committed suicide in protest to Caesar's tyranny, his identity sharpens the audience's historical awareness that the war dramatises not only a conflict between the conspirators and their avengers, but the transition from republic to empire. At the same time, his demise expands the scope within which the audience may construe Brutus' final decision to come. While he invokes his father's name, he dies a death in a contrastive manner to his father, that is, he is killed. Therefore, his manner of death can conjure up in the audience another possibility for the historical Brutus that he also could have been slain in battle as well as his decision to commit suicide. Although Brutus' suicide is itself already known as a fact to the audience, especially with historical knowledge, Young Cato's demise suggests that Brutus' final decision is merely one of the possibilities.

Soon after Young Cato's death, Lucilius acts as a decoy for Brutus, and Antony's army takes him captive (5. 4. 12-32), which further enhances the awareness of the inevitable shift of power. Moreover, as Brutus' double, Lucilius embodies yet another historical possibility for Brutus to be captured by Antony. This implication clearly recalls Brutus' ambiguous but

resolute attitude against his own capture mentioned in Act 5 Scene 1. By employing Lucilius, Shakespeare dramatises one of the options for Brutus which he, as a noble Roman, most abhors (5. 1. 110-12). At the same time, Lucilius sets the tone for Brutus' suicide. When brought before Antony, he proclaims :

Safe, Antony, Brutus is safe enough.

I dare assure thee that no enemy

Shall ever take alive the noble Brutus.

The gods defend him from so great a shame!

When you do find him, or alive or dead,

He will be found like Brutus, like himself. (5. 4. 20-25)

Lucilius avouches that Brutus remains insusceptible to defeat in the battle. Thus, Shakespeare attracts the audience's attention to how Brutus presents himself as "Brutus" before them facing his death. With the capture of Lucilius, the drama finally comes to Brutus' demise.

Even though the ultimate effects of their deaths are different, Brutus' approach to suicide does remind the audience of Cassius' death. Firstly, he indicates a decision-making process similar to Cassius. In Act 5 Scene 5, he asks his men to kill him and explain his determination to die :

BRUTUS. Why, this, Volumnius :

The ghost of Caesar hath appeared to me

Two several times by night, at Sardis once

And this last night here in Philippi fields.

I know my hour is come.

VOLUMNIUS. Not so, my lord.

BRUTUS. Nay, I am sure it is, Volumnius.

Thou seest the world, Volumnius, how it goes :

Our enemies have beat us to the pit.

*Low alarums*

It is more worthy to leap in ourselves

Than tarry till they push us. (5. 5. 16-25)

Here, Brutus refers to Caesar's apparition and concludes, "I know my hour is come" (5. 5. 20). Previously, in Act 4 Scene 3, Caesar's ghost prophesied his appearance in battle (4. 3. 282-85), and the audience now knows that the prophecy has been realised.

Notably, Brutus' reference to the appearance of Caesar's ghost precedes his description of the dismal situation on the battlefield. This implies Brutus has decided to die because of having witnessed Caesar's ghost, suggesting Caesar's shadow prevailing over him.

The manner of Brutus' death also closely resembles Cassius' suicide. Just as Cassius bids Pindarus to assist him, Brutus calls on Strato. The setting on stage even echoes the earlier scene of Cassius' death, which also involves a main conspirator being stabbed by his supporter. Finally, just before dying, as Cassius does, so too does Brutus utter the name of his victim.

Caesar, now be still,

I killed not thee with half so good a will. (5. 5. 50–51)

In light of the previous depiction of Cassius' suicide, Brutus' approach to death suggests that, as a principal conspirator, he finally incurs his nemesis.

However, despite the retribution of Caesar's ghost, Brutus retains his posture as a man who determines his own fate. The notable differences between his and Cassius' suicide clarifies the highly autonomous nature of his act. As noted, Cassius finally decides to end his life out of fear of seeing Titinius captured and that means he is presented as reacting to the external event. By way of contrast, Brutus appears to have already made up his mind to commit suicide by the time he appears on stage. The audience cannot know how and when he has reconciled the idea of suicide — which he had previously criticised — with his principle. The process of his reaching the decision remains opaque to the audience. Leaving his motivation unclear, Brutus has an opportunity to glorify his honourable life before his death :

My heart doth joy that yet in all my life  
I found no man but he was true to me.  
I shall have glory by this losing day  
More than Octavius and Mark Antony  
By this vile conquest shall attain unto.  
So fare you well at once, for Brutus' tongue  
Hath almost ended his life's history.

Night hangs upon mine eyes, my bones would rest,

That have but laboured to attain this hour. (5. 5. 34–42)

In this self-admiration, Brutus does not refer to his previous political goal of restoring liberty in Rome but to his whole life and the reputation which he will gain after death. This may imply Brutus' dissociation from his initial goal to redress the decaying Rome, which he pledged in deeds and words (2. 1. 51–58). However, in my view, Shakespeare also displays Brutus' integrity. Echoing the effects of the other characters' deaths and the possible ends of his life they suggested, his self-admiration gives a tone of triumph rather than that of self-deception. Unlike Cassius and other Roman characters, he can decide on when and how to end "his life's history" (5. 5. 40). Despite all the possibilities that could have befallen to Brutus, he successfully presents himself as serene and independent at the moment of his death. Lucilius' prediction about Brutus' fate (5. 4. 20–25) comes true here.

Cassius serves as an excellent foil to Brutus in their last moments. Shakespeare carefully choreographs the two conspirators' acts of thrusting their swords into their bodies so that Brutus' movement strikingly mirror that of Cassius. Both of them instruct their assistants in similar ways.

CASSIUS. Stand not to answer ; here, take thou the hilts

And when my face is covered, as 'tis now,  
Guide thou the sword. (5. 3. 43–5)

BRUTUS. Hold then my sword and turn away thy face,

While I do run upon it. Wilt thou, Strato? (5. 5. 47–8)

A distinctive movement of Brutus, however, is apparent all the more for the similarity with Cassius. Cassius is stabbed by Pindarus. Brutus, in contrast, runs himself onto his own sword Strato holds out. Although the retributive shadow of Caesar silently hangs over him, Brutus nonetheless achieves death of

his own free will.

Even after their deaths, the *mise-en-scene* of Cassius' demise sheds another light on Brutus. As pointed out in the previous section, both Pindarus and the body of Cassius disappear from Rome and have no significance in the historical context of the drama. On the contrary, Strato is subsumed into the new regime (5. 5. 60–67), which symbolises an inevitable shift of power. Brutus' corpse then becomes a cue for the ceasefire of the battle and the beginning of a new era as Octavius records (5. 5. 76–81). Brutus here evokes the historical Brutus who is remembered in Roman and Western history as a noble Roman who strived in vain to salvage the Republic in a period of transition to empire. At the same time, however, the enigma of his mind remains never to be entirely absorbed into an historical context. In this way, Brutus acquires his exclusive place in the play as Antony eulogises him, "the noblest Roman of them all".

## 5. Conclusion

In light of the shared settings of Cassius' suicide with Caesar's and Brutus' demises, Cassius' suicide functions as a bridge between the two contexts to which Brutus' ending belongs. It represents a diminished re-enactment of Caesar's assassination. Because of this representation, Cassius' death can be regarded as a partial outcome of the events in the first part of the play. This prevents the ensuing dramatic development from being entirely subsumed to the theme of retributive justice. Cassius provides room to insert the other context into the drama in which Titinius, Young Cato, and Lucilius each demonstrate their Roman part, broadening the dramatic scope. Those three characters heighten the audience's historical awareness in two ways: they situate Brutus in the period of transition from republic to empire; they respectively embody the other possibilities that could have been realised for Brutus so that the audience can consider Brutus' decision within the expansive range of other possible futures for him.

After such preparation, Shakespeare stages Brutus' suicide in an analogical manner with Cassius'. The parallelism of the processes of their deaths can provide the audience with the interpretation that the retributive justice was done, while Brutus' suicide can also be interpreted in the broader historical context, which becomes possible only after Cassius' death. Furthermore, the striking differences between their approaches to death highlight Brutus' autonomous attitude towards death in contrast with Cassius' passive one towards his fate. In this way, Brutus stands out at the tide of compelling political change as a man who autonomously chooses his course of action. Even though the moral atonement for the murder he committed may seem insufficient, he thus maintains the integrity of his interior world and invites various interpretations of his death. Shakespeare's masterly dramatisation of Cassius' suicide thereby contributes greatly to the ambiguous, but rich portrayal of Brutus.

## Notes

- 1) For example, see David Willbern (224) and James Howe (107–08). Both of them attribute Brutus' self-immolation to his self-dissociation between his sense of guilt and obsession with nobility.
- 2) For example, T. S. Dorsch (xxxviii) maintains that the deaths of Brutus and Cassius represent the triumph of Caesar's spirit in his revenge. Jeffrey J. Yu concludes that the two suicides are the result of blindness which pervades the play (103).
- 3) Before the assassination, Cassius actually asserts that "Men at some time are masters of their fates" (1. 2. 139).
- 4) All quotations from *Julius Caesar* are from Marvin Spevack's edition of the play in the New Cambridge Shakespeare Series (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).
- 5) The primary source of *Julius Caesar* is Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes* (1579). Geoffrey Bullough examines Shakespeare's adaptation in detail (3–57).
- 6) Anonymous *Caesar's Revenge*, the Shakespeare's contemporary play on Caesar's assassination, actually depicts Cato's suicide. He in this play also invokes self-destruction refusing to yield to Caesar (1084–89). Cato is portrayed as a symbol of Roman liberty, for his death is identified with the death of it. He tries to show his virtue in his death although the meaning of death is obscured by his son's criticism against his



deed (1117-21).

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## 『ジュリアス・シーザー』における暗殺者たちの自殺の劇化

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**要旨** 本稿では、『ジュリアス・シーザー』においてキャシアスの自殺がブルータスの悲劇的最期に与える劇的効果を論じる。この劇の後半で示唆される因果応報と、ブルータスのゆるぎない態度との不調和はしばしば指摘される場所である。本稿は、この問題に舞台上演の視点からアプローチし、ブルータスのアクションが、それに先立つ場面との関連でどのように提示されているかについて検証する。ブルータスの自殺は、彼自身が犯したシーザー暗殺との関連で分析されることが多い。しかし本稿は、ブルータスの自殺とその直前に配置されているキャシアスの自殺の類似と差異を分析することで、キャシアスの自殺の場面がブルータスの不可解な表象にどのように貢献しているかを明らかにした。両者の類似が、ブルータスの自殺を解釈する二つのコンテキストの両立を可能にしている一方で、両者の差異は、ブルータスが彼の内面の不可解さを保ちながら自ら死を選び取る姿勢を際立たせている。