Daphne Osei

Instructor Name

English Literature

11 November 2019

Julius Cesare: The Nobility of Death

For hundreds of years, we are told that two well-known senators of the Roman Parliament called Cassius and Brutus came up with the plot to murder the Emperor Julius Cesare. As the emperor decided to attend the parliament session despite his ill health, almost sixty people conspiring his murder were waiting to strike their death-dealing blow. The Senate that changed Cesare's mind, Decimus, was well aware that his treachery will change the course of Roman history. Despite that Brutus is immortalized with the famous dialogue: “You too, Brutus”. But what was the main idea that turned Brutus against his benefactor? The assassination of the Emperor was flawlessly executed by the senators of the Roman Parliament. To some readers, this conveys the willingness of the conspirators for the murder in a most remorseless manner. There is more to it than meets the eye.

The things were not as simple as they seemed. The conspirators thought that Rome was in peril and the "murder" of Emperor Julius Cesare was a "noble" act that would ultimately result in the good of the Roman Empire. Brutus delivers an entire sermon that why it was the noblest thing to do and to some extent, he succeeds in capturing the hearts and minds of the roman population. However next came to the famous "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears" speech by Antony that reminded all the Roman population of all the good the Cesare had done for them.

Brutus’ intention at the nobility of the death of the Emperor cannot be questioned after he attacks Cassius for accepting bribes, staining this "noble act" of regicide, the murder of the ruling monarch. After reconciliation, they prepare to put a rebellion concocted by Julius' son Octavius, with help from Lepidus and Antony. That night, the ghost of the Cesare appears before Brutus prophesizing that he will fail and that his noble regicide will be all for nothing. At the battle, he realized that he will lose the battle after the death of his co-conspirator Cassius and therefore commits suicide with the help of his trusted soldier, who remained unnamed.

The play ends after the Shakespeare tribute to Brutus as the noblest Roman of them all, as he feels ashamed in his part in the murder of Julius Cesare. He holds that Brutus has been tempted by the lust for power, but throughout the preceding events, he is sorry for his part in the conspiracy. The writer thinks that Brutus truly considered his act as a noble one, but the preceding events and the civil war between him and Octavius did more harm than good to the integrity of the Roman Empire, which was the founding concept the rebellion was built on. In short, the act of Brutus was noble because he realized his mistakes and committed suicide because he was ashamed. The character of Brutus is immortalized by Shakespeare as the touchstone of the virtue of nobility, especially through the act of his suicide.

# Works Cited

CL Peters, P Anderson. *'The Tragedy of Marcus Brutus?': An Inquiry into the Intrigues of William Shakespeare's adaptation of Plutarch's Lives into Julius Caesar*. 2015. Google Scholar Document.

Phillips, Darryl. "Brutus: The Noble Conspirator by Kathryn Tempest." *Classical World* (2019): 115-116. Internet Document.

Shakespeare, William, Barbara A. Mowat, and Paul Werstine. *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*. New York: Washington Square Press, 2005. Print.

Strauss, B. *The Death of Caesar: The Story of History's Most Famous Assassination*. Simon and Schuster, 2015. Print.