

## Shakespearean Politics: Interpellation and Ideological State Apparatus in

### *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus*<sup>1,2</sup>

#### **Abstract:**

This paper analyses the dramatic text of William Shakespeare's plays namely *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus* from the standpoint of Louis Althusser's theoretical framework provided in the notion of Ideological State Apparatus and Interpellation. The paper foregrounds that ideological state apparatuses in the said plays work alongside the coercive arm of the state in subjecting protagonists of the plays in throes of processes of Interpellation. The effect of such interpellation and operation of ideological state apparatuses is the ascension of structures in dominance in the plays *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus* by Shakespeare.

**Keywords:** Ideological State Apparatus, Interpellation, Structures in Dominance

#### **Introduction:**

This paper co-opts Louis Althusser's theory of interpellation on Shakespearean plays namely *Coriolanus*, and *Titus Andronicus*. The purpose of the co-option will be to demonstrate how through the dramatic texts, the ruling caste in the said texts manages to keep sway over the subjects despite affording initially a leeway in the form of an accommodating agency. Yet, the state apparatus both through its coercive arm and that of ideological apparatus continues to interpellate individuals into subjection. Thus, co-opting the theoretical imprints of interpellation, I will be demonstrating, how the veneer of autonomy for individuals vanishes away in the three dramatic texts namely *Coriolanus*, and *Titus Andronicus*, with the ascendancy of dominant classes and subjection of individuals into afforded interpellation towards the end, thus paving way for the re-ascendancy of structures in dominance.

In enunciating how Althusserian interpellation works in the dramatic texts of *Coriolanus*, and *Titus Andronicus*, by William Shakespeare, we will be taking up instances from the dramatic texts to show, how ideological state apparatus with its coercive arm, remains at work in the text of the plays and seeks to interpellate individuals into the subjection of the dominant classes. So, for *Coriolanus*, we will be assessing how the ideological constructs in the play legitimize the notion of patrician ascendancy over the plebian and to cement the same, how towards the end, the instrument of war as a coercive threat is hurled in order to topple the plebian tribunes from the power, again thereby restoring aristocracy back to power and interpellating plebian individuals into

<sup>1</sup> . Hussain Imam  
Lecturer M.A.O College, Lahore

<sup>2</sup> . Afzaal Amir  
M.Phil Scholar GC University Lahore

subjection. In *Titus Andronicus*, we will be again reading the text through the schema of Althusserian interpellation and ideological state constructs. Resultantly, through the said reading as well, both ideological constructs and punitive actions, enwrap individuals such as Tamora and Aaron into subjection and force them to acquiesce to the dominant structures. In *Titus Andronicus*, again the agency of ideological constructs where self-effacing discrimination against the Goths and moors like Aaron are well instituted alongside the formidable war machine of Lucius remain at work to subject individuals into subjection. Thus, with the theoretical imprints of interpellation and ideological apparatus, we will be arguing how the individuals in these dramatic texts remain in subjection but any attempt on their part to exert their agency is quashed and nixed, thus confirming the dominance of ruling classes.

#### **Literature Review:**

It is appurtenant here to enlist some of the major analyses co-opted upon the plays *Titus Andronicus*, and *Coriolanus*, and then to make way for the co-option of Althusser's theory of Ideological state apparatus and interpellation on the said plays. With the said end in consideration, we disseminated the paper, authored by Molly Easo Smith titled, "Spectacles of Torment in *Titus Andronicus*". In the work, the author draws a comparison between the *Spanish Tragedy* by Thomas Kyd and *Titus Andronicus*. Despite having overwhelming similarities between the two plays, there is one that makes the Shakespearean *Titus Andronicus* strikingly different from the *Spanish Tragedy*, which is the manner in which the violence and execution are treated in *Titus Andronicus* (Smith 315). According to Smith, the play revels in presenting a carnivalesque version of execution and torture through the course of the text (315). Likewise, the paper titled, "Lend me thy hand": Metaphor and Mayhem in *Titus Andronicus*" authored by Gillian Murray Kendell, sees the gaping cleft that opens up in the play between actual physical violence depicted in the play and the metaphors in language used to commence the said violence (Kendell 299). The result of the cleft is that violence appears perpetrated not only against the individuals but also against the language itself (299). The paper titled, "I" will Find a Day to Massacre Them All": Tamora in *Titus Andronicus* and Catherine De Medicis" authored by Jo Eldridge Carney, draws an intertextual parallel between the French Queen, Catherine De Medicis and Tamora from *Titus Andronicus* and comments on the sources of intertextual transmissions which find a supernumerary transmission in the works of William Shakespeare (Carney 415). In the paper titled, "Sumptuously Re-edified: The Reformation of Sacred Space in *Titus Andronicus*", by Helga L. Duncan, the author asseverates upon the sacred spaces in *Titus Andronicus* and observes them from the lens of the reformation struggle during the sixteenth century in Western Europe. By doing so, the author sees how the sacred space becomes associated with the spirit of martyrdom and that too in the lens of the reformation struggle in the sixteenth century (Duncan 425). This sacred space itself is where the conflict unfurls in the dramatic text of *Titus Andronicus* (425). A critical essay written by Dorothea Kehler, titled, "That Ravenous Tiger Tamora" *Titus Andronicus*'s Lusty Widow, Wife, and M/Other", sees women as depicted in later Jacobite

drama from the standpoint of a sexualized being (Kehler 317). Similarly, for *Coriolanus*, an article titled, “Coriolanus”: Shakespeare’s Anatomy of Virtus” by Phyllis Rackin, takes consideration for division which rends asunder the entire body-politic in the play ranging from the division between Patricians and Plebians, Romans and Volsces, Man Coriolanus against women, hero against an entire city, thus reflecting here on the hero Coriolanus who becomes victim of this division (Rackin 68). A very interesting analysis has been co-opted by Arthur Riss in the paper, titled, “The Belly-Politic: Coriolanus and the Revolt of the Language”. In the said paper, the author foregrounds the metaphor of the belly used in the play and builds upon the disintegration that opened in the hierarchical order of Jacobin-era England. Belly, in that configuration, represents the commoners and the head is typical of the feudal class which was meant to represent the interest of the state (Riss 53). Carol M. Sicherman, the author of the paper, titled, “Coriolanus: The Failure of Words”, draws an analogy between Cordelia from *Lear* and Coriolanus, in as much that both remain phlegmatic in offering officious reasoning. The only difference is that in the case of *Coriolanus*, there again is a gaping cleft between the words and meanings uttered by Coriolanus (Sicherman 189). The work that arrives in proximity to the theme of the argument intended in this paper, has been authored by Rebe Karrie Dickson, titled, *Phallic Power as Monstrosity: Caliban’s Threat of Miscegenation in Aime Cesaire’s a Tempest*. In the said paper, using the Ideological state construct of Althusser, the theoretical imprints of monster-making have been analyzed upon the colonized races, considering how the character of Caliban had been hailed as a monster (Dickson 14).

#### **Theoretical Framework:**

With respect to the theoretical framework, Louis Althusser’s Interpellation and Ideological State Apparatus has been co-opted in the reading of the plays, Titus Andronicus and Coriolanus. The contours of the said theoretical framework have been spelled out by Louis Althusser himself in his essay, “Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays”. Commenting on the emerging theoretical imprints from the said essay, Michael Sprinker, in his article titled, “Politics and Theory: Althusser and Sartre”, identifies for Althusserian project, the subjection of an individual through the ideological state apparatus which is termed as hailing. In the said process, the individual is interpellated as a subject through the paraphernalia of the state apparatus:

Ideology “acts” or “functions” in such a way that it “recruits” subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) by that very precise operation which I have called *interpellation* or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: “Hey, you there!”

Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn around. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he recognized that the hail was really addressed to him,

and that “it was *really him* who was hailed” (and not someone else). (998)

Another appendage in the theoretical framework which serves as equally indispensable in the furtherance of our argument, is the ideological state apparatus, defined as explicated upon by Louis Althusser himself. Althusser, writing in “Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays” says:

What are the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)?

They must not be confused with the (repressive) state apparatus. Remember that in Marxist theory, the State Apparatus (SA) contains: the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc., which constitute what I shall in future call the Repressive State Apparatus. Repressive suggests that the State Apparatus in question ‘functions by violence – at least ultimately (since repression, e.g. administrative repression, may take non-physical forms).

I shall call Ideological State Apparatuses a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions. (15)

Louis Althusser, in the same essay, goes ahead and enlists these varied ideological institutions which serve to further the cause of interpellation and state upon the individual. These ideological institutions include the likes of the religious, educational, family, legal, political, trade union, communications, and cultural ideological state apparatuses (15).

It is appurtenant to outline the Althusserian notions of structures in dominance because our contention seeks to assert the ascendancy of these structures in the plays *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus*. In the article, “Modernism, Postmodernism, and Social Theory: A Comparison of Althusser and Foucault” authored by Robert Paul Resch, contends that for Althusser, structures are social relations exhibited among people and their environment, and among people and people (524). These structures serve as structures in whole and structures in dominance, in which the economy may at times gain prominence and at other times may be reduced to redundancy as is seen in primitive societies. In the ultimate analysis, their structures remain absolutely firm and unsusceptible to modulation (525). These structures along with their primitiveness are the ones that make a repartee in the plays *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus*. So, the argument that this paper will contend is that ideological state apparatuses along with their coercive arm, not only hail and subject the disparate individuals in the said plays through interpellation but also ensure the preservation and restoration of structures of dominance.

#### **Textual Analysis:**

This paper will affirm through dramatic text, the operation of Ideological state apparatus and interpellation working upon certain individuals and characters from the plays. With the exaction of ideological state apparatus

and interpellation working upon the characters, hierarchies, and structures would appear to be reaffirming. So, from *Titus Andronicus*, the operations of ideological state apparatus would appear to be arrayed against the house of Tamora and Aaron, the Goths and Moors. Not only the ideological arm of the state, but equally the coercive arm would appear to be weighing against the said characters. Through the said apparatus, they would appear to be interpellated in the dominant state system and structures in dominance. Their attempts at wresting control of the state from within, are all nixed as seen in the dramatic text with the inhuming of Aaron and execution of Tamora along with her sons Demetrius and Charon. Thus, the culmination of the play again registers the restoration of the hierarchies and structures of dominance in the primitive sense.

All through the play, *Titus Andronicus*, not only do we see coercive state apparatus exacting its operations, but equally witness the ideological discourse of various sorts, such as the political, religious, and cultural imprints at sway to aid and rationalize the physical apparatus of the state. At the very outset of the play, we are made aware of the ideological political discourses which find credence and legitimacy in the Roman state to the exclusion of other variegated political discourses, as is seen in the speech of Saturninus:

Sat. Noble patricians, patrons of my right,  
Defend the justice of my cause with arms;  
And, countrymen, my loving followers,  
Plead my successive title with your swords:  
I am his first-born son that was the last  
That wore the imperial diadem of Rome;  
Then let my father's honours live in me,  
Nor wrong mine age with this indignity. (1.1.1-8)

So, with the above quoted lines, we get a sense of legitimized and accepted ideological concerns finding prevalence in the Roman state, in which there was as per the quoted lines, acceptability for the rule of the dominant classes, the patricians. Moreover, there was also acceptance of the right of primogeniture, that is to say, the right of the firstborn to succeed to the throne after the demise of the imperial father. Now, from the quoted lines we do glean the rule by patricians and primogeniture providing fabric to the ideological political state apparatus within the Roman state and forming the structures of dominance within that milieu (Resch 524). However, this ideological political apparatus does not act alone but is bolstered by the coercive arm of the state as well. The call to arms by Saturninus to fellow countrymen and patricians solidifies the notion that the political ideological state apparatus remains always backed up and bolstered, equally by the coercive and formidable arm of the state as well. The call to the defense of the just cause fits in the aforementioned analogy and description.

Likewise, we also see in the play, *Titus Andronicus*, the preponderant role played by the ideological religious state apparatus, going in full sway as well as forming another compact structure in the dominance of the Roman

society, depicted in the play. In fact, this very particular ritual associated with the offering of human sacrifice is one that kindles an implacable animosity between the defeated queen of Goths, Tamora, and the Roman General Titus Andronicus. This gory and blood-riddled ritual finds expression in the following manner:

Luc. Give us the proudest prisoner of the Goths,  
That we may hew his limbs, and on a pile  
*Ad manes fratrum* sacrifice his flesh,  
Before this earthy prison of their bones;  
That so the shadows be not unappeas'ed,  
Nor we disturb'd with prodigies on earth.  
Tit. I give him you, the noblest that survives,  
The eldest son of this distressed queen.  
Tam. Stay, Roman brethren! Gracious conqueror,  
Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,  
A mother's tears in passion for her son:  
And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,  
O! think my son to be as dear to me.  
Sufficeth not that we are brought to Rome,  
To beautify thy triumphs and return,  
Captive to thee and to thy Roman yoke;  
But must my sons be slaughter'd in the streets  
For valiant doing in their country's cause?  
O! if to fight for king and commonweal  
Were piety in thine, it is in these.  
Andronicus, stain not thy tomb with blood:  
Draw near them then in being merciful;  
Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge:  
Thrice-noble Titus, spare my first-born son.  
Tit. Patient yourself, madam, and pardon me.  
These are their brethren, whom your Goths beheld  
Alive and dead, and for their brethren slain  
Religiously they ask a sacrifice:  
To this your son is mark'd, and die he must,  
To appease their groaning shadows that are gone.  
Luc. Away with him! And make a fire straight;  
And with our swords, upon a pile of wood,  
Let's hew his limbs till they be clean consum'd. (1.1.96-129)

The parleys between Titus and Queen Tamora are emblematic of the religious ideological state apparatus, which the Roman state, holds in reverence in the play. The religious credo so held, ideologically, asked for the blood of the vanquished to be shed in order to soothe the spirits of the fallen soldiers who died defending the Roman state. This Ideological conviction leads the likes of General Titus to offer Alarbus, the eldest son of Queen Tamora as a sacrificial offering to the spirits of dead Romans at the sight of the tomb. The dramatic text also connotes the variance between the religious convictions of Titus and

Queen Tamora. General Titus deems it absolutely exigent to ask for a religious sacrifice and justifies the endeavour seeking to shed Alarbus's blood on the ground of ideological religious convictions. For Tamora, piety does not lie in shedding the blood and dappling the same upon the tomb and thereby sullyng it but is to be found in the valiant defense surmounted in the cause of preservation of one's state and country.

In the dramatic text of *Titus Andronicus*, we are also made aware of the cultural ideological state apparatus which seeks to view the likes of Aaron from stringently racist standpoints. This visceral and openly explicit racism on the basis of colour is unabashedly avowed by the likes of Titus Andronicus and others, who culturally deem the black coal-like colour of Moor Aaron, worthy of being hurled with choicest invectives and insults. This anathema on the basis of racial difference operates as the typified Cultural ideological state apparatus and its instance can be gleaned from the following lines in the text of the play, *Titus Andronicus*:

Tit. What does thou strike at, Marcus, with thy knife?  
Mar. At that that I have kill'd, my lord; a fly,  
Tit. Out on thee, murderer! thou kill'st my heart;  
Mine eyes are cloy'd with view of tyranny:  
A deed of death, done on the innocent,  
Becomes not Titus' brother. Get thee gone;  
I see, thou art not for my company.  
Mar. Alas! my lord, I have but kill'd a fly.  
Tit. But how if that fly had a father and a mother?  
How would he hang his slender gilded wings  
And buzz lamenting doings in the air!  
Poor harmless fly,  
That, with his pretty buzzing melody,  
Came here to make us merry! and thou hast kill'd him.  
Mar. Pardon me, sir; it was a black ill-favour'd fly,  
Like to the empress' Moor; therefore I kill'd him  
Tit. O,O,O!  
Then pardon me for reprehending thee,  
For thou hast done a charitable deed.  
Give me thy knife, I will insult on him;  
Flattering myself, as if it were the Moor  
Come hither purposely to poison me.  
There's for thysself, and that's for Tamora.  
Ah! sirrah.  
Yet I think we are not brought so low,  
But that between us we can kill a fly  
That comes in likeness of a coal-black Moor. (3.2.52-78)

The above-quoted lines, establish the explicit prejudice on the basis of colour which finds expression in the form of cultural ideological state apparatus to which the likes of Titus subscribe without qualms. This prejudice, held by the

likes of Titus as is apparent from the lines, does not even shirk away from dehumanizing Aaron the Moor on the basis of colour and gains quenching satiation by striking the dead cadaver of a fly who simply bore black hue. This bespeaks the cultural conviction as we come to understand in Althusser's ideological state apparatus which in turn aids the furtherance of the hold and sway of coercive/repressive state apparatus (Althusser 15).

Similar contours and broad features of cultural convictions to the likeness of cultural ideological state apparatus are also vented and given expression by the likes of Bassianus who says:

Bas. Believe me, queen, your swarth Cimmerian  
Doth make your honour of his body's hue,  
Spotted, detested, and abominable.  
Why are you sequester'd from all your train,  
Dismounted from your snow-white gooldy steed,  
And wander'd hither to an obscure plot,  
Accompanied but with a barbarous Moor,  
If foul desire had not conducted you? (2.3.72-79)

Lines imputed to the dialogue uttered by Bassianus establish that the prejudice on the basis of colour is not something exclusive to Titus only, for he had cause to be antagonistic towards Aaron the Moor, who had exacted most grievous harm upon Titus by severing his arm. But the manner in which Bassianus, as seen from lines above, equally hurl similar vile sentiments and prejudice upon Aaron and Queen Tamora on the basis of colour, establishes that prejudice on the basis of colour operated latently and explicitly as a cultural conviction as depicted here in the dramatic text of *Titus Andronicus*. These prejudicial cultural sentiments are then expressed as an ideological cultural state apparatus that seeks to reinforce the structures of dominance and hierarchy in the Roman state notwithstanding the proselytizing of Queen Tamora and her retinue to the Roman way of life.

With ideological state apparatus and coercive/repressive system at work in the play *Titus Andronicus*, interpellation also remains at work in the play as well. The process allows for the subjection of individuals like Queen Tamora and her retinue. This subjection can be seen from the lines of dramatic text through the dialogue of Titus in instances, where he says, "Now, madam, are you prisoner to an emperor;/To him that, for your honour and your state,/Will use you nobly and your followers." (1.1.258-260). The realization of interpellation is also acknowledged by Queen Tamora herself where she declares:

Tam: Thus, I am incorporated in Rome,  
A Roman now adopted happily,  
And must advise the emperor for his good.  
This day all quarrels die, Andronicus;  
And let it be mine honour, good my lord,  
That I have reconcil'd your friends and you.



For you, Prince Bassianus, I have pass'd  
My word and promise to the emperor,  
That you will be more mild and tractable. (1.1.460-470)

The lines bespeak the acknowledgment and realization on the part of Tamora that she herself had been subjected and hailed in the process of interpellation and had been proselytized as a Roman upon whom now the exigency which applied to a Roman, was also applicable (Sprinker 998). It also engendered in her an impression that she now also enjoyed privileges that were accorded to any naturalized Roman. However, this sense of impression was wrong, considering how easily, the structures of dominance continued to be arrayed against her and her retinue towards the end. These very structures of dominance took away from her, any privilege which she enjoyed as a Roman incorporate and treated her as nothing more than a vanquished and a defeated Goth.

Besides the ideological state apparatus in the form of political, cultural, and religious expression which we see at play in *Titus Andronicus*, the repressive structures of power also continue to function in the dramatic text as well. This coercive arm of the state finds potent expression in the form of the war and threat of punitive action. More importantly, the coercive or the repressive arm of the state in play is resorted to when structures of dominance are being challenged by the likes of Queen Tamora and her retinue. To preserve and restore these structures and the ideological convictions associated with these structures, the repressive or coercive power of the state is exerted in the form of the threat of war upon Queen Tamora and Emperor Saturninus. This repressive arm of the state finds expression in the resolve shown by Lucius who resolves to raise an army and avenge the honour of Rome :

Luc. Farewell, Andronicus, my noble father;  
The woeful'st man that ever liv'd in Rome:  
He leaves his pledges dearer than his life.  
Farewell, Lavinia, my noble sister;  
O! would thou wert as thou to fore hast been;  
But now nor Lucius nor Lavinia lives  
But in oblivion and hateful griefs.  
If Lucius live, he will require your wrongs,  
And make proud Saturnine and his empress  
Beg at the gates like Tarquin and his queen.  
Now will I to the Goth, raise a power,  
To be reveng'd on Rome and Saturnine. (3.1.288-300)

From these lines, resolve emerges on the part of the dominant sections of Rome, emblematic of the house of Andronicus, to restore the structures of dominance through the coercive and repressive power of the state through the threat of arms. Althusser alludes to these very repressive state structures whose actions and executions find legitimacy in the ideological state apparatuses (Althusser 15).

Towards the end, the repressive and coercive arm of the state or its threat is used to restore the structures of dominance which, find expression in the ideological state apparatuses of culture, religion, and economics. With the ascension and rise of Tamora through the process of interpellation, these ideological manifestations stand disturbed in *Titus Andronicus*, but with the repressive arm of the state which results in the execution of Emperor Saturninus and Queen Tamora, these very ideological convictions stand restored, and rehabilitated. The hierarchical order in which Goths such as the dead Tamora and Moor Aaron were debased, stands as an example of restoration of the said structures of dominance:

Luc. Set him breast-deep in earth, and famish him;  
There let him stand, and rave, and cry for food:  
If anyone relieves or pities him,  
For the offense he dies. This is our doom:  
Some to stay to see him fasten'd in the earth.  
Aar. O! why should wrath be mute, and fury dumb?  
I am no baby, I, that with base prayers  
I should repent the evils I have done.  
Ten thousand worse than ever yet I did  
Would I perform, if I might have will:  
If one good deed in all my life I did,  
I do repent it from my very soul.  
Luc. Some loving friends convey the emperor hence,  
And give him burial in his father's grave.  
My father and Lavinia shall forthwith  
Be closed in our household's monument.  
As for that heinous tiger, Tamora,  
No funeral rites, nor man in mournful weeds,  
No mournful bell shall ring he burial;  
But throw her forth to the beasts and birds of prey.  
Her life was beast-like, and devoid of pity;  
And, being so, shall have like want of pity.  
See justice done on Aaron, that damn'd Moor.  
By whom our heavy haps had their beginning:  
Then, afterwards, to order well the state,  
That like events may ne'er it ruin. (5.3.179-204)

With the above quoted lines from the play, Aaron and Queen Tamora who were in the first instance interpellated, are subjected to the repressive arm of the structures of dominance. These structures of dominance find expression in the cultural, religious, and political life of the Roman state and use prejudice towards Goths like Aaron and Tamora. Towards the very end, with the aid of the coercive arm of the state, these very structures of dominance find restoration and exact the same prejudicial treatment wherein the dead body of Tamora is discarded to be mutilated by wild beasts while Aaron is inhumed alive. One of their own, dead emperor Saturnine, however, is to be accorded

proper burial even though he too sided with the Goths is a testament to the cultural prejudice and differentiation found amongst the Romans as depicted in *Titus Andronicus*.

In the play, *Coriolanus* by Shakespeare, we equally see the ideological state apparatus at work alongside the interpellation of the plebians by the patricians and the threat of repressive and the coercive arm of the state. To begin with, Caius Marcius expresses the cultural expression of the aristocracy against the plebians and their demands in the most vile terms:

Mar. He that will give good words to thee will flatter  
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,  
That like nor peace nor war? The one affrights you,  
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,  
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;  
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,  
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,  
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is,  
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,

.....  
You cry against the noble senate, who,  
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else  
Would feed on one another? What's their seeking? (1.1.173-181, 192-

194)

These above-quoted lines speak volumes about the political ideological state apparatus prevalent in Rome, wherein the patricians maintain firm political sway and hold against any design by the plebians to wrest control away from the Patricians. Caius Marcius, not only hurls demeaning invectives upon the common plebians but also legitimizes the rule of patricians by alluding to the aid that the gods extend to the noble senate in maintaining a hold over the Roman state and the plebians. The same Caius Marcius also give vent to the cultural ideological state apparatus which he tries to defy but nevertheless points towards the prevalence of the custom when he declares, "I do beseech you, Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot/ Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,/ For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you,/ That I may pass this doing. (2.2.141-143). The foregoing lines from the text, attest to the significance attached to the custom and thereby to the cultural ideological state apparatus which remains at work in the Roman state in the play *Coriolanus*. This very, cultural expression which Coriolanus tries to break free from, leads the plebians and the common citizens to revolt against Coriolanus and force his exile.

Interpellation in *Coriolanus* works against the common citizenry or the plebians when Coriolanus using a repressive or coercive arm of the state leads the forces of Aufidius against the Romans. At that juncture, the plebians instead of putting up any fight and preserving their independence or rule, simply acquiesce to the nobility of Coriolanus and appeal to his mercy, thereby having themselves subjected:

Com. Who shall ask it?  
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people  
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf  
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they  
Should say, 'Be good to Rome,' they charg'd him even  
As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,  
And therein show'd like enemies. (4.6.109-115)

With the threat or use of the repressive structures of the state, Coriolanus brings about the subjection of the common citizenry/plebians and forces them alongside the patricians/aristocracy to plead for mercy, thus bringing the whole corpus in the totality of Rome to Coriolanus' subjection. This subjection which we glean in *Coriolanus* is how interpellation works as is put forth by Althusser (Sprinker 998).

With interpellation at work in *Coriolanus*, the structures of dominance stand restored and preserved in the play. This is seen towards the end of the play wherein though Coriolanus, the symbol of aristocracy and elite rule is stabbed and killed by the lot of Aufidius, he is still accorded a hero's send-off and with a mark of respect, preserving the notion of nobility. With the notions of nobility preserved, what we do get to see is that the passing of Coriolanus is still accorded a noble memory. Thus the discourse of patricians in terms of nobility is accorded an appraisal rather than the memory of plebians:

Auf. My rage is gone,  
And I am struck with sorrow, Take him up:  
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one,  
Beat thou the drum, that it speaks mournfully;  
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he  
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,  
Which to this hour bewail the injury,  
Yet he shall have a noble memory.  
Assist. (5.5.148-156)

**Conclusion:**

Thus towards the end, I reaffirm that the ideological state apparatuses and interpellation remain at sway in the plays *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus*. These apparatuses are aided in turn by the coercive arm of the state, which seeks to reinforce the structures of dominance. These structures of dominance manifest the interpellation of Queen Tamora and Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* and the restoration of Patrician rule in *Coriolanus*. The result of interpellation in these plays is the restoration of structures in dominance.

**Work Cited:**

- Carney, Jo Eldridge. "I'll find a day to massacre them all": Tamora in Titus Andronicus and Catherine De Medicis." *Comparative Drama* 48.4 (2014): 415-435
- Dickson, Reba Karrie. *Phallic Power as Monstrosity: Caliban's Threat of Miscegenation in Aime Cesaire's A Tempest*. Diss. Florida Atlantic University, 2022.
- Duncan, Helga L. "Sumptuously Re-edified". The Reformation of Sacred Space in Titus Andronicus." *Comparative Drama* 43.4 (2009): 425-453
- Kehler, Dorothea. "That Ravenous Tiger Tamora": Titus Andronicus's Lusty Widow, Wife and M/Other". *Titus Andronicus*. Routledge, 2015. 317-332.
- Kendell, Gillian Murray. "Lend me thy hand": Metaphor and Mayhem in Titus Andronicus." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40.3 (1989): 299-316.
- Rackin, Phyllis. "'Coriolanus': Shakespeare's Anatomy of Virus." *Modern Language Studies* (1983): 68-79
- Resch, Robert Paul. "Modernism, postmodernism, and social theory: A comparison of Althusser and Foucault." *Poetics Today* 10.3 (1989): 511-549
- Riss, Arthur. "The Belly Politic: Coriolanus and the revolt of the language." *ELH* 59.1 (1992): 53-75.
- Sicherman, Carol M. "Coriolanus: the failure of words." *ELH* 39.2 (1972): 189-207
- Shakespeare, William. *Coriolanus*, Methuen, 1904.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus*. Methuen, 1904.
- Smith, Molly Easo. "Spectacles of torment in Titus Andronicus." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 36.2 (1996): 315-331.
- Sprinker, Michael. "Politics and theory: Althusser and Sartre." *MLN* 100.5 (1985): 989-1011.