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Shakespeare, Renan and Weber: an interdisciplinary study of the violence paradigm and what it means to law and the nation-state
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Propositions relating to the dissertation

SHAKESPEARE, RENAN AND WEBER

An interdisciplinary study of the violence paradigm and what it means to law and the nation-state

by R.C.G. Brouwer

1. Shakespeare was several centuries ahead of his time, not only in literary, theatrical, and linguistic terms – qualities that alone establish him as the greatest writer humanity has produced – but also because his dramas outline the eternal predicament of humanity: the often inadequate handling of radical violence.
2. The significance of Shakespeare for political philosophy, state theory, and legal philosophy is immense because he reflects on the basic concepts of the state, the nation-state, and the constitutional state.
3. The success of a nation-state is not dictated by its perfection, but by the commitment of those involved; the joint effort of citizens and government.
4. In *Macbeth*, we see the desire to create a unified embryonal nation by abolishing the legal primitivism of *sippenhaft* revenge.
5. Shakespeare invites us to examine a blueprint for a true leader and a framework for an orderly nation-state governed by the rule of law.
6. Shakespearean tragedy challenges every value system and governmental construct (in short: all reality constructs) and subjects them to the ultimate stress test of the tragic violence paradigm.
7. Shakespeare shows that every construct is fallible and will, at some point, succumb due to these flaws. His warning is universal and crystal clear: a nation-state construct requires continuous attention and repair.
8. The stress test of the Shakespearean violence paradigm functions as a catalyst for nation-state constructs.
9. Both Renan and Weber failed to distinguish between the diverse types of violence; therefore, their concepts of what a nation-state is are inadequate.

10. Shakespearean tragedy comes to grips with violence in the here and now. These qualities make the tragic existential worldview of Shakespeare secular and universalist in outlook.
11. He who does not distinguish between the different types of violence gets inexorably entangled in the Nietzschean loop: no *Umwertung* of positions and values takes place, but merely *Umdrehung*.
12. The Shakespearean violence paradigm demonstrates how Shakespearean tragedy copes with radical destruction, stages a reaction to it and hands us a mode to deal with it; the result of this process is also relevant for nation-forming or nation-renovation.