Post-9/11 Social Imaginary and Imperial Globalism  
in Shepard’s *The God of Hell*

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<contents>  
1. Sam Shepard and Post-9/11 Social Imaginary  
2. Farming without Government Subsidies  
3. Plutonium-Contaminated Haynes as the War Machine  
4. Welch as a Market and Imperial Globalist  
5. The Netwar and Grotesque Physicality  
6. Conclusion: Impossible Fantasy of Imperial Globalism  

【Abstract】

Entering the 1990s, Shepard’s dramatic themes have changed from American families and spiritual rebirth of American society to the wars caused by the States and newly rising global circumstances. After the September 11 attacks which served as midwives to the birth of the new social imaginary colored by imperial globalism, Shepard adheres to imperial America as a major dramatic theme and a social background.  

*The God of Hell* prepares the netwar between the megamachine of imperialist Welch and the war machine of Plutonium-contaminated

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Haynes comes to the American farmland to constitute a multitude network with Frank and Emma who are farming without the Bush administration’s agricultural subsidies.

The characters in *The God of Hell* become crippled by the practices of imperial globalism such as global capital and environmental contamination. One of these practices is the mutilation. The peak of the mutilation is grotesquely shown by the tethered genitals which represent the disruption of the power process and cause the psychological suffering.

One way to confront the counterinsurgency actions taken by imperial globalism is to act like the nine-headed Hydra which generates another head upon being cut off. Although there is no way of reforming the global system so as to prevent it from depriving the people of dignity and autonomy, *The God of Hell* shows the audience the possibility of the multitude like those of Hydra. Here the audience gets a glimpse of Shepard’s ability to create ‘factional historiography’ in which he combines a historical fact and fictional imagination.

Key words: Agricultural Subsidies, Imperial Globalism, Netwar, Magical Capture, Megamachine, Multitude, Mutilation, Organs without Bodies, Sam Shepard, Social Imaginary, *The God of Hell*, War Machine

1. Sam Shepard and Post-9/11 Social Imaginary

The United States in the plays of Sam Shepard is a problematic background where mythology in modern American life is materialized.