

Violence in Macbeth

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Violence and brutality are an excessive symbol in *Macbeth*. The recurring theme of violence is ultimately shown, and the ramification of all the bloodshed creates guilt that Macbeth harbors deep within himself. The guilt gnaws away at Macbeth so much, that he has agonizing visions and hallucinations. Nevertheless, Macbeth goes on a bloody rampage, seizing to slaughter his enemies without any contempt. The abusive relationship between ambition and violence has made Macbeth into a shell of a human being. Shakespeare goes a great length to portray the effect of violence and ambition. Violence persists as a substantial disparity from ambition; one can see the depths of Macbeth's struggle with ambition and how he responds with violence to preserve his spot on the throne.

Violence in all forms is a distinct way of gaining power. The beginning of the play starts off with Macbeth fighting valiantly against rebel forces. The violence that occurs shows how important violence is in establishing dominance. Power is sought after, and violence is a form in achieving it. After Macbeth returns from battle, he is commended by the Captain for killing Macdonwald. "For brave Macbeth/ Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel/ Which smoked with a bloody execution/ Like valor's minion carved out his passage/ Till he unseamed him from the nave to the chops, And fixed his head upon our battlements." The Captain and Duncan's glorification of the bloodshed creates the impression of violence being desired or more importantly, power. Macbeth is crowned Thane of Cawdor and praised for being a brutal war hero. While violence is the main theme of *Macbeth*, Macbeth exhibits boundless violence.

Macbeth seeks to fulfill his ambition and his resolution is to slay his enemies. By yielding his equanimity and morals, Macbeth reveals his ambitious side which eventually consumes him and leads to him committing terrible atrocities.

Throughout *Macbeth*, acts of violence are not rare. From the very beginning to the end, the bloodbath never ceases. Shakespeare puts emphasis on brutality to convey the wills of the characters. Macbeth murders for his ambition to be king. Young Siward fights to prove his masculinity to his father. Macduff vows to inflict his vengeance upon Macbeth for slaughtering his family. Lady Macduff encourages Macduff to kill Duncan; she is more power-hungry than her husband. Violence is the main way of expressing action in *Macbeth*. Each character expresses some form of violence to accomplish something. (Lady Macbeth) "Come, you spirits That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full Of direst cruelty." (Macbeth) "The castle of Macduff I will surprise, Seize upon Fife, give to th' edge o' th' sword His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls That trace him in his line." Violence is significant because it personifies each individual's reason to resort to violence. Shakespeare uses violence to convey the immorality of the deed and how if left unchecked for whatever reason, the moral conscience of human beings degenerates to such a level that it becomes the norm.

Violence is the most significant symbol in *Macbeth*. Blood is used very often to give the sense of how much gore *Macbeth* contains. Shakespeare uses blood very specifically as in when Macbeth hallucinates the bloody dagger or Banquo's bloody ghost. Violence is not only used as an action but as a consequence. The blood is a reminder of the inescapable guilt that haunts Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. At first, Lady Macbeth seems composed about the murder of

Duncan. However she soon goes insane, hallucinating blood on her hands that she cannot wash away. "Out, damned spot!/Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him./What, will these hands ne'er be clean?"Shakespeare uses blood to illustrate the effects of guilt and how it changes Lady Macbeth. Blood does not only convey violence but also the remorse that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth carry with them.

Violence is the form of action in *Macbeth*. Each and every character mentions violence. Whether if it be Macbeth and his discussion of violence to maintain power or Macduff's vow of retribution, there is no denial of the significance of violence in *Macbeth*. By using violence, Shakespeare distorts the meaning of ambition. Too much ambition can lead to terrible consequences. Macbeth uses his ambition to gain power and be king. Just one hint of power from the witches is enough for Macbeth to plot murder and regicide. Shakespeare uses violence in *Macbeth* to warn against the possible dangers of ambition and how violence to achieve anything, can ultimately lead to one's downfall.