

Blood in macbeth

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



The story of Macbeth by William Shakespeare uses blood as an important symbol to illustrate the characters feelings and beliefs. Blood is used everywhere in Macbeth, the beginning in the battle field scenes, after they kill Duncan, when Banque was killed and at the end when Lady Macbeth feels that blood has stained her. Blood is used in Macbeth to symbolize many things and the meaning of blood slowly progresses throughout the play. Blood in the play symbolizes different things as the play goes by; the imagery of blood goes from meaning honor, to betrayal, to guilt then to honor again. As the symbol of blood changes, the character of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth changes. Blood can symbolize many things, honors is one of the main things that it symbolizes. When two groups of people are fighting in war, blood can symbolize glory and respect. Fighting for things like freedom is one way blood can be honorable. Even if it's a person's blood or the enemies' blood, it is something that will symbolize a sense of honor and courage. This is showed in Macbeth in the beginning scenes when Duncan sees the bloody sergeant. The bloody sergeant represents a brave soldier who fought heroically for his country. The bloody sergeant says to Duncan "Which smok'd with bloody execution", which represents how brave Macbeth is and how his sword is covered in the enemy's blood. The symbolism of blood changes throughout the play, as the character of Macbeth, and Lady Macbeth changes. Before the murder of Duncan, blood symbolizes treason and betrayal. Blood shed can mean betrayal if that blood shed goes against a person's belief. The execution of noble king can be treason. Two lines in the play show how blood symbolizes betrayal. The first line is said by Lady Macbeth when she prays to the spirits and says "make thick my blood," this

line says that Lady Macbeth wants to become thoughtless and remorseful for the evil deed that she is going to commit. " And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood, / Which was not so before. There's no such thing: / It is the bloody business which informs / Thus to mine eyes." This is a reference to treason and murder. The symbolism of blood changes dramatically from meaning honor to meaning sedition. The symbol of blood then changes again, the symbol of blood changes from meaning treachery to meaning guilt. Killing someone can cause a lot of problems to a person. The act of killing a person that once trusted you can cause a lot more problems. Macbeth says after the killing of Duncan " Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand? No; this hand will rather / The multitudinous seas incarnadine, / Making the green one red." This symbolizes the change in Macbeth's character; this line also symbolizes guilt and remorse. Macbeth realizes the magnitude of his crime, the thing that he did was truly evil and that not even the water of the oceans can wash away the crime. The symbol of guilt for blood continues through the play. When a person kills someone they have a chance of redemption. When a person kills multiple times recovery seems grim. The ghost of Banquo at the banquet shows the guilt of Macbeth and how what he did is beyond redemption. This point in the play shows that it is impossible for Macbeth to return to righteousness and salvation. Macbeth will have to continue to kill more and more people to keep the throne. This is also the point when Lady Macbeth realizes the severity of her crimes, and Lady Macbeth starts to have nightmares about the murder of Duncan: " Out damned spot! Out I say! One: two: why then 'tis time to do't: hell is murky. Fie, my lord, fie, a soldier, and

afraid? What need we fear who knows it when none can call out power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" The "damned Spot" represents the blood of Duncan and she can't wash it clean. The irony of this famous speech is that after the murder of Duncan, Lady Macbeth said "A little water clears us of this deed." This part in the play shows a complete transformation of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's character. The symbol of blood changes back to what it was back to the beginning of the play of meaning honor. Killing an evil man is honorable and virtuous. When Macbeth was killed at the hands of Macduff as revenge for the killing of his family he took admiration for it. Macduff was congratulated for the killing of Macbeth. The killing of Macbeth symbolized the end of the treachery and evil in the play. The symbol of blood progressed throughout the play, the meaning of blood in the beginning symbolized honor and nobility, to treachery and treason, to meaning guilt, then returns to the initial meaning of honor. If the play continued, then the same cycle would occur and come back to the meaning of honor. The symbol of blood relates to the character of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth because as the symbol of blood changes the same changes happen to Macbeths and Lady Macbeths character. William Shakespeare uses blood imagery to better improve the audience's understanding of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's character. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have both experienced a complete transformation of the character. They begin as a noble, and brave people to becoming evil, ambitious, and treacherous during Duncan's murder, to his final feelings of guilt and remorse for there crimes.