

# The importance of macbeth in modern society

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The importance of continuing to read Macbeth in our modern society is to educate readers on valuable lessons in life. The significance of gaining power appropriately, the fact that there are consequences for every action and the importance of justice are a few of the many life lessons that are relevant in Shakespeare's tragedy, Macbeth. Primarily, Macbeth, the main character, is influenced by his wife and subsequently has a great desire to be King of Scotland. Macbeth is presently the Thane of Glamis, as well as an army general of the current King, Duncan. When Duncan is in Inverness, he decides to stay at the home of the Macbeths.

Lady Macbeth eagerly devises a plot to murder Duncan, thus ensuring her husband's place on the throne of Scotland. Although Macbeth raises concerns about the regicide, he is eventually persuaded by his wife to follow her plan. " Stars, hide your fires! Let not light see my black and deep desires; the eye wink at the hand; yet let that be which the eye fears, when it is done, to see "(I. iv. 50-53). Macbeth knows that he must do wrong to achieve his goal, but plans to kill anyone in the way if he must. The method in which Macbeth chooses to use to gain power is neither civilized, nor humane.

This extremity is perhaps hinting to the reader that Macbeth's actions were wrong, as well as showing the extremes one may go through to get what they desire. The witches' apparitions given to Macbeth and friend, Banquo, at the beginning of the plot play a monumental role in the thoughts of both men. Macbeth is told that he will be king, though Banquo's sons will be kings as well. " As the weird woman promis'd; and, I fear, thou play'dst most foully

for't; yet it was said it should not stand in thy posterity, but that myself should be the root and father of many kings" (III. I. 2-6).

Banquo explains that he will father all kings to come, and that Macbeth will not be king for a long period of time. This apparition challenges the friendship between Macbeth and Banquo. Macbeth is not afraid to show his jealousy when saying, " Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown, and put a barren sceptre in my gripe, thence to be wrenc'd with an unlineal hand, no son of mine succeeding (III. I. 61-64). " Uneasy about the prophecy, Macbeth plans to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance, so that the premonition will not occur.

Macbeth hires two men to murder Banquo and Fleance, but they only accomplished to kill Banquo, and Fleance is able to escape. The actions of Macbeth had consequences, as most actions do in present day. At the time of the murder, Macbeth does not think of the cost of his deeds. His self-interest and desire for the throne of Scotland drives him to finish the act. " Methought I heard a voice cry ' Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep" (II. ii. 35-36). Macbeth achieves power, but due to guilt, he cannot sleep and starts to drive himself mad.

Macbeth was not the only person who was suffering from guilt. Lady Macbeth shows her agony when sleepwalking and talking to herself, " 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 afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? " (IV. I. 34-37) Lady Macbeth frantically tries to wash her hands, but the reality is that there is nothing on them. It is

evident that she is feeling guilty for her actions and because of it, she is going mad.

Insanity and loss of sleep are only minute consequences, but play an immense role in the development of the characters throughout the play. Lastly, Macbeth achieves justice and what he deserved at the end of the play when Macduff beheads him. Macbeth and Macduff battle, sword for sword, but Macbeth boasts that he has no reason to fear Macduff, because of his belief in the witches' prophesy. " Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn The power of man; for none of woman born Shall harm Macbeth" (IV. i. 86-87). This apparition informs Macbeth that he cannot be killed by any man " of woman born" (IV. i. 86-87).

Macduff declares that he was " from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd" which means that he was born by Caesarean section, and was therefore not " born" of a woman. The lesson to be learned is to not become a victim of peer pressure, and not to believe everything said. In conclusion, the importance of continuing to read Shakespeare's Macbeth in our modern society is to educate readers about human behaviour on many valuable lessons in life. Whether the play teaches readers about gaining power appropriately, the fact that there are consequences for every action, or the importance of justice, it proves that they are important to learn.