

Theme in macbeth: "fair is foul, foul is fair"

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Macbeth's theme in one word is EQUIVOCATION (of double or doubtful meaning, questionable, ambiguous). Equivocation is prevalent throughout the play. Lady Macbeth uses it a lot, and suggests it to her husband when she says "...look like the innocent flower / But be the serpent under ' t..." (Act I, Scene 5, 64-65)

In other words, the idea or themes of Macbeth " Fair is foul, foul is fair." Basically, this means that appearances can be deceiving. What appears to be good can be bad, and this is seen in such things as the deceptive facade of Lady Macbeth and in the predictions of the witches.

In the first scene of the first act, three witches plan their next meeting in which they will encounter Macbeth. It is in this scene that the theme is first presented, as the three witches chant, " Fair is foul, and foul is fair, hover through the fog and filthy air" (Act I, Scene 1, 11-12).

The witches meet again in scene three of act one. One of the witches discusses a curse she has placed on a woman's husband, because she refused to share her food. This display of evil powers and spitefulness suggests that the witches may have some influence in the development of the theme.

To the Weird Sisters what is ugly is beautiful, and what is beautiful is ugly: " Fair is foul and foul is fair". Throughout the play, fair appearances hide foul realities.

Macbeth theme enters during scene three of act one along with Banquo, arriving from a victorious battle. He uses the motif to describe the day as "

So foul and fair a day I have not seen" (Act I, Scene 3, 38). When Macbeth and Banquo first see the weird sisters, Banquo is horrified by their hideous appearances. Conversely, Macbeth immediately begins to converse with these universally known evil creatures. After hearing their prophecies, one can say that Macbeth considers the witches to be "fair" when in reality their intentions are quite "foul."

Macbeth's possession of the titles of Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland come by foul means. Upon hearing the prophecies, Macbeth immediately begins to plan his methods of obtaining these positions, including the murder of the king. Because of this, it may be assumed that he has thought of such actions prior to the meeting. This is an example of what was once fair, a loyal and noble of Scotland, has become foul, an ambitious traitor.

On the night of his murder, king Duncan is invited to a banquet hosted by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Once there, Duncan describes the castle in a positive manner. "This Castle hath a pleasant seat; the air / Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself / Unto our gentle senses." (Act I, Scene 6, 1-3). Ironically, Macbeth murders him in his sleep in the castle. The main theme of the play is supported here, as this fair and pleasant castle, has become a foul place of betrayal and murder. This scenario is also seen at Macbeth's second banquet, which he holds to show gratitude and love for his friends.

In her first appearances, Lady Macbeth is presented as an ambitiously evil and foul character that will do whatever it takes to get what she wants. We see this motivation in her when she says, "...How tender 'tis to love the babe

that milks me: / I would, while it was smiling in my face, / Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums, / And dash'd the brains out..." (Act I, Scene 6, 55-58). In these lines, Lady Macbeth threatens that she would smash her baby's head if it meant achieving their goals. However, after killing Duncan and becoming queen, she realizes her mistakes and she is driven mentally ill by it. She is no longer able to live with the guilt and fears of her actions. In her case, we see what was once foul, becomes fair.

Throughout the play Macbeth, the general mood is one of crafty and betrayal. What appears to be fair is foul. This is why it is considered to be the major theme of the play. It is also considered to be a major idea in today's society. This is why I find it very meaningful to me as maybe to other people.