

Macbeth paper noble deterioration

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



In Shakespeare's play Macbeth, the protagonist undergoes a profound and gradual evolution throughout the play, for the worse. Macbeth decays from a noble soldier, and a truly great man, into a corrupt king whose senseless actions result in his mental deterioration. Macbeth's mind set is mostly stable in the early stages of the play, until he regresses him into an uneasy character, and finally devolves into such a corrupt state that his life is ended and falls to pieces even before he even meets his death.

Macbeth expresses high signs of a heroic character in the early stages of the play. Captain says: For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),/
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,/
Which smoked with bloody execution,/
Like valor's minion, carved out his passage/
Till he faced the slave;/
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,/
Till he unseamed him from the nave to th' chops,/
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

" and expresses Macbeth's high levels of nobility(I. ii. 18-25).

The mental state of Macbeth at this point is still very stable and displays the strength of the principal character. Macbeth's mental stability is not only represented by his loyalty, but also by his steadiness and ability to analyze situations. He communicates his mind state to the reader by saying, " The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step/
On which I must fall down or else o'erleap,/
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;/
Let no light see my black and deep desires./
The eye wink at the hand, yet let that be/
Which of the eye fears, when it is done, to see"(I. iv. 55-60). The decisiveness and precise mindset Macbeth has is more evidence to support the fact that Macbeth changed from a stable character in the beginning of the play.

Granted, he thought about how to deal with Dunkin, he still thought to himself clearly and think realistically as to his possible solutions at hand.

Towards the middle of the play, Macbeth shows strong signs of mental deterioration. Macbeth displays his true signs of his deterioration through his soliloquys and is clearly shown when he says, “ Is this a dagger/ that summons thee to heaven or hell”(II. i. 44-77). The soliloquy exposes the decline of Macbeth’s mental state as he hallucinates the dagger telling him to kill Duncan. After Macbeth does kill Dunkin, he says, “ Methought I heard a voice cry ‘ Sleep no more!/ Macbeth does murder sleep’- the innocent sleep,/ Sleep that knits up the raveled sleep of care,/ The death of each days life, sore labor’s bath,/ Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,/ Chief nourisher in life’s feast”(II. ii. 47-52). This shows his extreme feelings of guilt, directly resulting from the murder he committed.

The guilt plays an immense role in Macbeth’s decay because he cannot take his murders back at any point and causes his loss of sensibility. He speaks on the impact it leaves on him by saying, “ How is ‘ t with me when every noise appalls me?/ What hands are here! Ha, they pluck out mine eyes./ Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood/ Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather/ The multitudinous cease incarnadine,/ Making the green one red”(II. ii. 76-81). Macbeth feels that nothing in this world can rid him of his guilt and/or anxiety.

The reader can see that Macbeth has even deeper signs of guilt when Lady Macbeth says to her guests at Banquo’s Banquet, “ Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus/ And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat./ The fit is momentary; upon a thought/ He will again be well. If much you note him/

You shall offend him and extend his passion./ Feed and regard him not./ Are you a man?"(III. iv. 64-70). Macbeth's guilt has worsened his mental state so immensely, that he sees a ghost of Banquo and Lady Macbeth has to cover up for his awkward behavior in front of their guests. Due to the overwhelming amount of guilt Macbeth is feeling, his mental state takes the blunt force and drastically declines, resulting in hallucinations and abnormal behavior.

By the end of the play, Macbeth is locked into and irreversible decay and ends up as an unrecognizable person in contrast to his origins. Macbeth's final stage of decay involved his lack of emotion and loss of honorability. Malcolm exclaims, " I grant him bloody,/ Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,/ Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin/ That has a name"(IV. iii. 70-73). This blatantly reveals the kingdoms feeling towards Macbeth's corrupted character and the man he has come to be.

The mental deterioration is not only evident in his decisions, but also in his emotions. Macbeth has a serious lack of emotion by his final corrupted state and shows almost no emotion when he finds out his wife is dead, as seen by the quote, " She should have died hereafter./ There would have been time for such a word"(V. v. 20-21). He lacks the passion he felt for his wife in the earlier stages of the play. The decay of Macbeth causes him to lose his followers and kinsmen as well. Malcolm makes his opinion clear by saying, " But Macbeth is./ A good and virtuous nature may recoil/ In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon," and makes it very clear that he feels Macbeth has been a good man until he changed for the worse(IV. iii. 22-25). Macbeth's final deterioration state, that proved he changed from a valiant

soldier to a corrupt king throughout his mental decay, is obvious to the reader by his massive character change in an opposition to his original role.

It is easily seen that Macbeth goes through an extreme mental deterioration throughout the course of the play. Macbeth decays from a noble soldier, and a truly great man, into a corrupt king whose senseless actions expose his mental deterioration. In the beginning of his nobility, Macbeth is an honest and stable man, who then regresses into an uneasy and backstabbing deviant, which ultimately leaves him in such a corrupt state that his life is destroyed and set onto a track of demise for him to only be left a slain, foul, tyrant.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, by William Shakespeare. Edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. New York, Washington Square Press: n. p., 1992. Print.