

The analysis of macbeth character development

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The Analysis of Macbeth Character development Macbeth is a greatest tragedy drama written by a phenomenal playwright William Shakespeare.

It is the story of crime, punishment, guilt, and insatiability. At the beginning of the story, Macbeth is a brave warrior, honourable, and loyal. He fought loyally to save Scotland and to defend Duncan, the king of Scotland.

However, the situation which is presented by the three witches, the influence from his wife and his own ambition has made him begin to have dark desires and evil intentions. He kills Duncan, takes the throne and becomes a new king.

However, in the end of the story he will be suffering by his own ambition.

This essay will try to focus on how Macbeth character develops in the story.

In the beginning of story, Macbeth is introduced as a loyal man. He says “and to be King/Stand not within the prospect of belief (1, 3: p. 36)”, this point shows that he does not even think to try to take the throne and tries to be loyal though the third prophecy from the witches said that he shall be king. However, his ambitious characteristic firstly is indicated when he gets report from Angus that he becomes Thane of Cawdor.

This report confirms in Macbeth’s mind that the prophecies hold truth. It can be seen from Macbeth’s soliloquy “Two truths are told,/As happy prologues to the swelling act of the imperial theme (1, 3: p. 37)”. After the two prophecies were proven he begins to have a terrible thought and an intention to become a king. He says “If chance will have me King, why, chance may crown me,/Without my stir (1, 3: p. 38)”.

This point shows that he is an ambitious man; he begins to try to fulfill the third prophecy and become a king. After acquiring the throne by killing Duncan, he begins to show his evil characteristics. He begins to be a tyrant king and use his power as a king (power abuse) to keep the throne. First, in the scene 1 of act 3 Macbeth is suspicious of Banquo that he has already known about Duncan murder. Thus, he calls the three murderers and orders them to kill Banquo “ Both of you know Banquo was your enemy (3, 1: p. 63)” because he worries about his throne “ There is none I do fear; and under him My Genius is rebuked, as it is said Mark Antony’s was by Caesar (3, 1: p. 61)’. The decision that Macbeth took to kill Banquo through his position and his power by ordering the three murderers shows that he uses his authority into something bad (for his own interest). Second, in the scene 1 of act 4 Macbeth orders the murderer to kill Macduff’s wife and son “ The castle of Macduff I will surprise, Seize upon Fife, give to th’edge o’th’sword/His wife, his babes (4, 1: p. 79)” because he feels that Macduff is a threat after he knows that Macduff flees to England. Macbeth knows that Macduff has planned to overthrow his domination.

This point also indicates that he has used his power only for his own interest- to keep his throne. In addition to the explanation above, the indication of Macbeth’s evil characteristic can also be seen from Malcom’s description about Macbeth. He says “ I grant him bloody/Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,/Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin (4, 3: p. 84)”. This description shows that Macbeth is a tyrant and corrupt king. He has used his absolute power to corrupt as stated by Lord Acton (1887)” Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

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Great men are almost always bad men. " This essay has discussed Macbeth character development. From the explanation above we can conclude that Macbeth has experienced character development. This development was started when he was tempted by the witches' prophecies and he begins to have sinister thought. He has an intention to prove the last prophecy because of the influence of his wife and his own ambition. Subsequently, this circumstance has changed him from a noble man into a corrupt king because of his own ambition and outside influence.

#References: <http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/absolute-power-corrupts-absolutely.html> Watts, Cedric. 2005.

Macbeth William Shakespeare: Wordsworth Classics