

SUMMARY

In contrast to traditional analyses of Macbeth focusing on power and politics, this essay examines it as the drama of evading introspection, a psychological process that shows more kinship to the self-reflection of Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov than to Shakespeare's ambitious Richard III. In analysing the dramatic text and the stage instructions, my theoretical premise was that the play was originally intended not as literature but as a play to be performed on stage. In other words, in addition to its philosophical content, its effect on the viewer, the expressivity of the actors' performance, its real or imaginary scenery invoked by the text played an equally significant role. Consequently, in terms of their stage significance I ascribed greater importance to certain scenes (for example, the monologues of The Bleeding Captain or Hecate) than would be justified by their philological content or dramaturgical role in the text. In some cases the text's close examination from a staging perspective yielded surprising results that contrast with accepted theories and fixed ideas. One such instance is the issue of Lady Macbeth's "going mad," or the time of the regicide.

Perhaps the essay's most important point is that the play is about evading punishment: each murder helps Macbeth to learn to live with his crime, he "gets used to the horror." This psychological process starts with initially cathartic anxieties, hallucinations and a fundamental sense of guilt and leads to obtuseness, indifference and the sustainment of a sheer physical existence. The arrival of death at the end of the play fails to bring relief, redemption, catharsis since it is only the physical end of a dead soul devoid of any feeling, desire, or hope.

In the second half of the essay dealing with practical staging issues I take a look at the theatrical feasibility of Macbeth as the process of "crime and non-punishment" based on the director's copy created in tune with the concepts described earlier. In this studio version, reduced to the four main characters, the removal of the witches and the outside world intensified the personal ties (love and friendly relations) among the players, which cast the

psychological and moral complexities between the Macbeth couple in higher relief. The DVD attached to the copy of this essay contains the recording of a performance of the four-character Macbeth version in the production of the Győr National Theatre.