**Critics to Consider**:

“No one since Shakespeare, made so many separate selves.”

--Dr. Johnson

“Macbeth’s language is the grave utterance on the very heart, conscience-sick, even to the last faintings of moral death. The variety rises from rage to anxious thought, added by fear.”

--Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1819)

The Scottish thane is the rough, blunt soldier, a man of action. He takes little time for deliberation before he strikes; but immediately after the murder he is attacked by hallucinations both of sight and hearing, and is hounded on, his guilt is wild and vacillating, and frenzied, from crime to crime.

–George Brandes (1902)

Macbeth’s imagination is the best part of him—images which alarm and horrify. His conscious or reflective mind considers outward success and failure. His inner being is convulsed by conscience. His imagination is excitable and intense, but narrow. That which stimulates it is almost solely, that which thrills with sudden, startling, and often supernatural fear.

–A. C. Bradley

The problem Shakespeare gave himself in *Macbeth* was a tremendous one. Take a good man, a noble man, a man admired by all who know him—and destroy him, not only physically and emotionally, as the Greeks destroyed their heroes, but also morally and intellectually. It is difficult because he is both one of the most despicable mortals conceivable and Shakespeare still maintains him as a tragic hero.

–Wayne C. Booth