

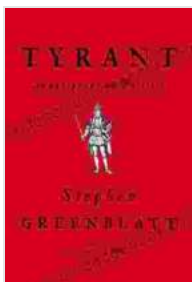
Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics by Stephen Greenblatt

An exploration of Shakespeare's political thought and its influence on his plays

Shakespeare's plays are full of political intrigue and commentary, and his characters often grapple with the complexities of power and authority. In his book "Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics", Stephen Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare was deeply interested in the nature of tyranny, and that his plays offer a profound meditation on the dangers of unchecked power.

Shakespeare's View of Tyranny

Greenblatt begins by examining Shakespeare's early plays, such as "Richard III" and "King Lear", which feature tyrannical rulers who are ultimately overthrown. These plays show that Shakespeare believed tyranny to be a destructive force that corrupts both the tyrant and his subjects.



Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics by Stephen Greenblatt

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 527 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 217 pages

Paperback : 186 pages

Item Weight : 12 ounces
Dimensions : 6 x 0.44 x 9 inches



In "Richard III", the titular character is a ruthless and ambitious king who murders his way to the throne. However, his reign is short-lived, and he is eventually killed in battle. "King Lear" tells the story of a king who divides his kingdom among his three daughters, only to see them turn against him and each other. This play shows that tyranny can lead to chaos and bloodshed.

The Dangers of Unchecked Power

Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare's plays warn of the dangers of unchecked power. He shows that tyrants are often able to seize power by exploiting the fears and insecurities of their subjects. Once in power, they use their authority to suppress dissent and silence their critics.

In "Julius Caesar", the titular character is a popular general who is persuaded to become a dictator. However, his reign is short-lived, and he is assassinated by a group of conspirators. "Macbeth" tells the story of a Scottish nobleman who murders his king and seizes the throne. However, he is haunted by guilt and paranoia, and his reign is eventually brought to an end by a rebellion.

The Importance of Resistance

Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare's plays show that tyranny can be resisted and overcome. He shows that even the most powerful tyrants have

their weaknesses and that their subjects can find ways to fight back.

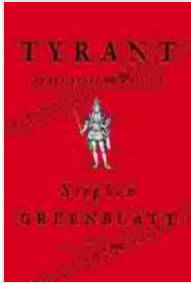
In "Hamlet", the titular character is a young prince who is haunted by the ghost of his murdered father. The ghost tells Hamlet to avenge his death, and Hamlet eventually kills the king who murdered his father. "Coriolanus" tells the story of a Roman general who is exiled from the city after he is accused of treason. Coriolanus joins forces with the city's enemies and leads an invasion against Rome. However, he is eventually defeated and killed by the Romans.

Greenblatt concludes by arguing that Shakespeare's plays offer a profound meditation on the nature of tyranny and the dangers of unchecked power. He shows that Shakespeare believed that tyranny is a destructive force that can corrupt both the tyrant and his subjects. However, he also shows that tyranny can be resisted and overcome.

"Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics" is a must-read for anyone interested in Shakespeare's political thought. Greenblatt's analysis is insightful and thought-provoking, and he offers a fresh perspective on one of the most important themes in Shakespeare's work.

Additional Resources

- [Tyrant: Shakespeare on Politics by Stephen Greenblatt](#)
- [Stephen Greenblatt's Website](#)
- [Shakespeare's Politics](#)



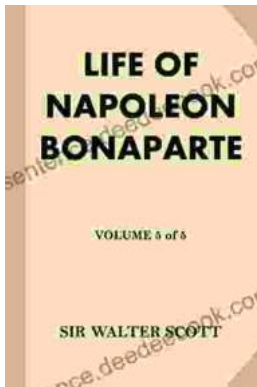
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