**Abstract**

Macbeth, the protagonist, had won both battles against the rebel army as well as the Norwegian army. On hearing this, King Duncan decided to reward Macbeth with the title of Thane of Cawdor as well as pay him a visit at his castle meanwhile, on their way home, Macbeth and Banquo meet the three witches. The three witches prophesy that Macbeth will he Thane of Cawdor (he does not know that the king has entitled him already with the sad title) and future king of Scotland. They then tell Banquo that he will be the father of a long line of kings. As soon as the witches disappear. Macbeth receives the news that he has been made Thane of Cawdor. It is here that belief in the witches self enkindled in Macbeth, so much so that he laying to hope for the crown. He immediately sends a letter to his wife. Lady Macbeth starting about Duncans visit of his castle as a token of showing honor to him for his heroic performance in the battle field and it ultimately has come to such extend. who driven by her ambition Lady Macbeth convinces her husband to murder the king and take fate into his own hands which ultimately lead to his tragic destruction.

**Introduction**

MACBETH AND AMBITION. In the play “Macbeth by William Shakespeare, we see many common themes that emerge. The most important theme is ambition, which in the end eventually leads to the death and destruction of the hero in his utter humiliation. Ambition finds its most powerful expression in the play’s two main characters. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth The ambition of these main characters leads to greed and their own humiliating death. Macbeth is a courageous Scottish general who is not naturally inclined to commit evil deeds, yet he deeply desires passer and advancement. There are three main factors that contribute greatly to Macbeth’s ambition and his ultimate tragedy. The prophecies told to him by the witches. Lady Macbeth’s influencing and manipulating Macbeth’s judgment and Macbeth’s own ambition and greed to become king are the main contributing elements in the heroic tragedy. Macbeth’s character degenerates from a noble man at the beginning of the play to a violent degraded individual at the end. With his wife’s extending end influence constantly and the three witches’ his diverted foretelling of has future Macbeth ultimately couldn’t but go ahead to embrace his tragic tile.

**Discussion**

It Is said that ambition is the key to success. In the case of Shakespeare’s Macbeth. It is the key to his downfall He is presented with the ambition by the supernatural power of the witches. Lady Macbeth, his wife, then pushes the ambition. After the murdering of Duncan. Macbeth has gained enough ambition himself to cause his own destruction. We can see a clear building of desire throughout the play. Macbeth, the most ambitious person in the play, is a ruthless king who has people killed so he can stay in power; this ambition represents violence. In the beginning of the play. Macbeth n. a kind person who would never kill anyone for power. After his wife convinces him to kill Duncan, Macbeth’s life will never be the same ever again; every murder he commits will haunt him until he is dead and the unbearable guilt will destroy him and his wife. Macbeth slowly becomes accustomed to killing and does it more easily and without remorse. For example, after Macbeth becomes king, he begins to worry about the second part of the prophecy, when Banquo’s sons becomes kings Knowing that he will not have any heirs. Macbeth dreads the idea of “the seeds of Banquo kings. Rather than so, come fate into the 1ist and champion me to the utterance..’ (Shakespeare 3.1.70-73). Since he committed a sinful act to fulfill his desire become king, Macbeth does not want to lose everything he got to Banquo’s royal bloodline This shows how corrupt and villainous Macbeth has become; he will not let anything, not even friendship, get in the way of his desire to be the King of Scotland. And if the destruction of friendship is not a symbol of how strong Macbeth’s ambition truly is, then the manslaughter of an innocent man’s entire family is. When Macbeth sees the three apparitions, one of them tells him to beware Macduff. Surprisingly, after Macbeth learns that Macduff has fled to England, he responds by declaring that he will “give to the edge o’ the sword his wife, babes, and all unfortunate souls that trace him in his line.” (4.1.151-153). This shows how corrupt and evil Macbeth has become; he doesn’t even care about who he’s killing anymore. A wife and kids symbolizes purity and love in a man’s life; the fact that Macbeth doesn’t even consider the moral consequences of destroying a loving family and killing children shows how filled with ambition he has become. Macbeth is so afraid of losing to Macduff that he believes that by killing his family, Macduff will be broken beyond repair and not be able to face Macbeth Unfortunately, he does not count on a certain someone to heighten Macduff s hopes to slaying Macbeth by using his sorrow to his advantage. That certain someone is Malcolm, the son of Duncan.

After the murder of his father, Malcolm’s ambition to destroy Macbeth becomes so strong that he forgets all moral values and disregards the feelings of others; this ambition represents revenge. Though Malcolm is able to understand the feelings of others, he lets nothing stop him from achieving his goal; this is either due to his inexperience of the world, or because he is too bent on revenge to think about anything else. When Macduff learns that his family is murdered, he begins to despair. Malcolm. not wanting to let anything get in the way of his ambition, tells Macduff to “dispute it like a man.” (4.3.221). Since Malcolm is a young man, he does not have a wife or kids and disregards Macduff s pain as a sign of weakness. Note that even if Malcolm had a family and understood Macduff s pain fully, he would still have been reckless and put revenge above anything else. Malcolm’s father was a good man who lost his life at the hands of the man he trusted the most; Malcolm is not going to let Macduff s personal tragedy get in the way of his goal of destroying Macbeth. When Macduff responds by saying that first he must feel pain like a man, Malcolm responds by telling Macbeth to make his grief “be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.” (4.3.230-231). While Malcolm is more understanding of the pain Macduff feels, he still convinces him to move on. When he says “let grief convert to anger”, he means for Macduff to use his sorrow as his anger so he can move on with his life and destroy the man responsible for his sorrow: Macbeth. Malcolm truly does feel bad about Macduff losing his family, but unlike Macduff, he has no family to worry about and has not experienced every pain and sorrow Macduff has been through. Given this evidence, it is evident how much ambition Malcolm has for destroying Macbeth. However, not even his ambition, or Macbeth’s, is powerful enough to match the ambition of a certain woman at the beginning of the play: Lady Macbeth.

Macbeth is not fully to blame for his ambition clouding his judgment since the audience knows that Lady Macbeth has him kill Duncan so she can be Queen; this ambition represents power. While Macbeth is to blame for all he has done to his country, his wife started a chain reaction that sent Macbeth down this dark path. Had Macbeth not told his wife about the prophecies, she would not have become so obsessed with power and she would not have sent her husband to kill Duncan so she could be Queen faster. . and all of Macbeth’s victims would be alive and well. Lady Macbeth wants so desperately to gain power, she begs of the immortals to “unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe topfull of direst cruelty!” (1.5.41-43). Lady Macbeth is asking the spirits (or gods.. .I’m not quite sure; it’s pretty vague) to make her cruel and unforgiving so she can do the terrible deed of killing Duncan. This shows how evil and impatient Lady Macbeth is; had she waited for Duncan to promote Macbeth, she could have been Queen without her husband having to kill anyone, Macbeth would still have been a good person, and they would not have had to suffer so much guilt for all they did. Later, after Lady Macbeth drugs the guards, she boasts about the drugs “that which hath made them drunk hath made me bold; What hath quenched them hath given me fire.” Now Lady Macbeth is almost certain that they will not fail; her ambition has clouded her better judgment and ignored the possibility of guilt haunting her and her husband. This ambition, the ambition of power, is by far the most deadly of all ambitions. If you want power so badly and very quickly, you forget about all the consequences that might come from it. In Lady Macbeth’s case, her consequence for her actions was the loss of her sanity and restless nights thinking about what she made her husband do, eventually causing her to take her own life. This being said, I think it is safe to say that too much ambition is NOT a promise of power or a sign of greatness.

Throughout the ages, many books have been written. Some of them are really cheesy and filled with girly romance, others are exciting and about the warrior who saves the damsel in distress. However, it is very rarely for someone to write a book that is very meaningful and so focused around a certain theme. The way he conveyed his thoughts and ideas into beautifully written plays is why Shakespeare is called ‘the greatest writer of all time’. A powerful literary classic, Macbeth is one of Shakespeare’s most famous works to date, as it conveys a powerful story of a man who started his journey in the peaceful and ambition- free light, but ultimately met his demise and fell into darkness because of ambition. The same is true for his wife, Lady Macbeth; until she falls to darkness and meets her demise, she is very witchlike, controlling, and is more ambitious than her husband by a huge degree. In addition, we see ambition in the least likely of people: Malcolm. While Malcolm is a good person at heart and desires power only to use it for good, he also has an ambition to destroy Macbeth for killing his father. Showing the true nature of humans, or teaching us a lesson about power and responsibility, Shakespeare conveyed his thoughts in Macbeth, and in all of his plays, so well that until today, no one has been able to match the talent he possessed. Through Macbeth, Malcolm and Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare makes violence, revenge and power go hand in hand with ambition to show the audience how far a determined person will go to achieve their goals.

**Literature Review**

Macbeth is a play, like many of Shakespeare’s, which employs aspects of later dramatic styles. Within the writing of Macbeth we find the application of three distinctive styles from various movements in literary history. The morality play is the first and most striking influence in Macbeth brought to life from the Medieval period. It is also apparent that Shakespeare had reviewed Aristotle’s theories on the Greek tragedy in forming the character of Macbeth. And lastly, the influence of the Elizabethan drama/tragedy is of course a driving force in Macbeth’s struggles. Though contradictory at times, these styles blend together to form the distinctive Shakespearian tragedy.

The Greek tragedy, according to Aristotle, contained a character that was neither virtuous nor evil. According to Aristotle the protagonist’s downfall as quoted in the Outline of Aristotle’s Theory of Tragedy, “should come about as the result, not of vice, but of some great error or frailty in a character.” Macbeth mistakenly brings about his own downfall, but not because he is sinful or morally weak; because he just doesn’t know enough. Macbeth, it seems, is driven only by his knowledge that he will be a king, as the Weird Sisters addressed him. They do not tell of any details; of how or when, yet Macbeth acts upon it showing his human failure and misunderstanding. Another significantly Aristotlian character trait Macbeth possesses is consistency. ‘I am in blood/ Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,/ Returning were as tedious as go o’er. Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,/Which must be acted ere they may be scanned”(137-141). Macbeth is aware of his decisions, yet at the same time he is troubled by his uncontrolled control. Once Macbeth kills the King he follows through by killing anyone in his path. There is no repentance on Macbeth’s part, which may sound like a contradiction to the earlier discussion of Macbeth as a morality play. Aristotle believed that the plot of the play speaks at a greater volume then the characters, which may redeem this conflict.

Macbeth recognizes that he is troubled by what he is doing. Macbeth speaks these lines after the ghost of Banquo has visited him. Macbeth notes that he is in fact fearful; fearful of what he will do next, and what will be done to him. Thus, Macbeth is made up of the morality play character caught between good and evil, the tragic Greek character doomed to err because of his weakness, and takes an Elizabethan path through murder and guilt. Renaissance dramatic theories about tragedy include many more topics than can be covered in one book let alone one paper. But an overview of historical ideas on drama and tragedy offer insight into the world of the dramatic tragedy. Shakespeare is perhaps most noted for his exceptional handle on the elements of tragedy. But Shakespeare was not the inventor of the genre. He drew from the Greek tragedy and the medieval morality play which offered a plethora of material to work from. Shakespeare was able to deliver to his crowds a blended style that was undoubtedly meant to cause reflection and stir the emotions.

**Conclusion**

The audience is left to ask whether the witches are independent agents toying with human lives, or agents of fate, whose prophecies are only reports of the inevitable. The witches bear a striking and obviously intentional resemblance to the Fates, female characters in both Norse and Greek mythology who weaves the fabric of human lives and then cut the threads to end them. Some of their prophecies seem self- fulfilling. For example, it is doubtful that Macbeth would have murdered his king without the push given by the witches’ predictions. In other cases, though, their prophecies are just remarkably accurate readings of the future—it is hard to see Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane as being self-fulfilling in any way. The play offers no easy answers. Instead, Shakespeare keeps the witches well outside the limits of human comprehension. They embody an unreasoning, instinctive evil.

And Macbeth carries out the crime, thus precipitating his own descent into hell. Later in the play, appropriately, Macduff calls Macbeth by the name of “hell-hound” (V x 3). Indeed, the story of Macbeth is that of a man who acquiesces in his damnation—in part because he cannot utter words that may attenuate his crime. As Duncan’s guards pray “God bless us” on their deathbed, Macbeth cannot say one “Amen” (II ii 26-27). His fate is thus sealed entirely by his own hands.

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