
VICIOUS ATTRIBUTES, ENEGMATIC ATMOSPHERE AND THE NOTION OF USURPING THE POWER AND HIGHER AUTHORITY REPRESENTS AS STRIKING THEMES IN THE PLAY MACBETH BY WILLIAM SHAKEPEARE

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ABSTRACT: *Shakespeare's Macbeth has been written to show the evil nature of human being. How a person with good nature suddenly can turn into a wicked one, and that is usually happens because of extreme greed for power and higher position in his milieu. In this play, Shakespeare has exhibited the ambitious mind of Macbeth and lady Macbeth which has been forced them to commit the most vicious deeds towards the king Duncan. Shakespeare in this play didn't only portray the vicious nature of a man who got success in his villainous intentions but also showed that the natural order of things can regain its original shape. In this way my paper will eventually elucidate about Shakespeare's notion of depicting the transformation of a good person into a wicked one. Macbeth and lady Macbeth were two significant characters in this play who has been played the role of evil minded souls.*

KEYWORDS: Lady Macbeth, Macbeth, Evil attributes, Power politics, Castle at Inverness, Duncan, Witches

INTRODUCTION

Macbeth was basically the play which did focused towards human's inner evil intentions that can ruin any life. The provoking nature, pride, extreme determination to grab the power and lust were some noticeable facts about Macbeth and lady Macbeth. They both made themselves changed from good to villains. From the beginning of the play Macbeth was considered as the hero who made himself very successful and highly esteemed figure of a social group. Therefore, he was packed up with honoured and was enjoying his merriment and thriving life for further triumph. Besides his success in work, he had a loving wife and a safe home in his castle at Inverness. Macbeth was the man, "full of the milk of human kindness" (Shakespeare, Macbeth I.V.17).

After the play opened, the spectators have been understood by the heroic nature of Macbeth. He was a strong kind of man who did defense the kingdom and as a result he was able to interact with other nobles in order to make friendship for the sake of his kingdom. Macbeth was Duncan's favourite therefore the king believed him blindly. The impetuous generosity from Duncan was coming more towards Macbeth but he was overpowered by his inner vicious nature. And at last he did a heinous crime by killing the king Duncan as he wanted to grab the utmost power than any other in the kingdom. After this vicious deed, Macbeth was

considered as the unnatural man who did eliminate his relationships with humanity as well as with God. The relationship with humanity has been disintegrated for Macbeth. This kind of murder out of grabbing power made him only to love for desire but eventually he was living under the fathomless despair which was the incredible proof of his damnation.

Macbeth's Evil Intentions

Though Macbeth was a good man at the beginning of the play but gradually his evil intentions evolved by his confident and indifferent nature towards God. As a result all of his bad deeds has been presented as the most terrible way. As he was fully aware of God's moral system with its "even handed justice" (Act I. Scene VII. Lines: 10), which forces the criminal to drink the very cup of poison which he has prepared for another. Macbeth's soliloquy in which he meditates upon Duncan's murder (Act 1, Scene VII. Lines: 1-28).

Those above lines are the evidence of Macbeth's feelings of kinship before he committed the murder but his great aspiration to hold the highest power actually made him as an evil man. His excessive evil force overlapped his goodness and left him as a treacherous one. His urge for usurping the entire authority of the kingdom created his good instinct as more weaker in front of his bad instinct. Therefore he has lost his sense to differentiate what is good and what is bad. His inward evil intention was inevitable that didn't relinquish from killing Duncan. Hence he has gone towards remorse. Purposefully he did commit the murder of the king Duncan though he tried to revive his moral feelings just before the killing. But the dark nature of him told to forget about morality thus the devilish traits of him became visible. He actually violated the harmonious order of the world. This violation made the separation between him and God. Immediately after the murder, Macbeth noticed that he didn't able to utter the word "Amen". From that day Macbeth was unable to accomplish the sound sleep which is the divine mercy from God to forget all kinds of worldly troubles and struggle. In this case of sound sleep Macbeth was truly deprived. After this great sin of killing Duncan, Macbeth has been alienated from God and his fellow human being. His bond with nature was also shattered. The murder of Duncan made him doing unnatural things from which he didn't able to come out,

I am in blood Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go over. (Act III. Scene IV. Lines: 136-38)

Out of deep disappointment Macbeth was seeking help from the witches in order to get further information about his future. The devilish words of the witches compelled him to do the extreme brutality; therefore he killed Macduff's family. The evil which was hidden in him has now came out in its most horrifying form. He plunged in extreme kind of vicious atrocities and thus Scotland suffered:

Each new morn New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows Strike heaven on the face. (Shakespeare, Macbeth IV.III. 4-6)

When the inner sense of a person becomes full with evil intentions then he can easily loose his true conscience and go near his annihilation. In this way Malcolm said:

I grant him bloody, Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful, Sudden, malicious. (Shakespeare, Macbeth IV.III.58-60)

MACBETH'S SENSE TO COME TOWARDS GOODNESS

Eventually Macbeth got realized his great sin. When has determined to embrace his evil intention he was going to perish his soul. Nothing was present to him to forget his grievous crime that he has done with Duncan. There was only way to despair and nothing was left good for Macbeth. We can see the despair through his speech:

To-morrow, and to-morrow and to-morrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day; To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. Out, out brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage. And then is heard no more: it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing. (Shakespeare, Macbeth V.V.19-28)

TRACES OF EVIL AND THE SENSE OF REMORSE IN LADY MACBETH'S ATTRIBUTES

In the life of Lady Macbeth the effects of evil was more stronger than Macbeth. She was possessed the devilish notion and provoked her husband Macbeth to do the crimes more spontaneously.

She embraced evil more deliberately than her husband did. Macbeth thinks his "vaulting ambition" (Shakespeare, Macbeth I.VII. 27)

It was lady Macbeth who persuaded Macbeth to kill Duncan because she was in great longing to have the ultimate power and authority. When she told anything that means she really suppose to accomplish that. In order to fulfil lady Macbeth's dark side of nature, she literally summoned the powers of black and evil realm to overpower her:

Come, you spirits That tend in mortal thoughts, unsex me here, And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full Of direst cruelty! (Shakespeare, Macbeth I.V. 40-43)

In the inner heart of lady Macbeth she was biased by the evil's magic which was unaccepted. To gain the crown of the kingdom Lady Macbeth did plot against Duncan, therefore she made her husband Macbeth convinced to murder the king. She thought this evil intention regarding murder was the first step of her glorious future. She was so adamant to fulfil her hideous act which we can see in her soliloquy where she has remarked about Macbeth:

Yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' the milk of human kindness To catch the nearest way; thou wouldst be great; Art not without ambition, but without The illness should attend it, what thou wouldst highly,

Thou wouldst thou holily. (Act I. Scene V. Lines: 16-21)

The famous critic Bradley mentioned his ideologies about lady Macbeth in his theory. He did elucidate that towards lady Macbeth, good means to achieve the highest power which was the royal crown and evil means the way to achieve its goal. In the words of Bradley:

"Moral distinctions do not in this exaltation exist for her; or rather they are inverted: 'good' means to her the crown and whatever is required to obtain it, evil whatever stands in the way of its attainment" (Bradley 325).

For some little time lady Macbeth's inner conscience came out from the state of dormant, therefore she thought for a while to stop her brutal act of killing. But her evil intentions wielded her whole existence enormously and as well as subdued her husband's affairs. Hence her fragile mentality unveiled when she said the below words:

Had he not resembled My father as he slept, I had don't. (Act II. Scene II. Lines: 12-13)
 She has showed the temporary excuse and told king Duncan has been resembled like her father. But this kind of realization was not sustainable as evil did evolve and finally engulfed her deeds. It seemed she was doing such kind of murder on behalf of evils. At the beginning of the play lady Macbeth has been presented as a strong character who was almost stronger than Macbeth. But as the play progressed she was going near the darkest side of morality. She was at first Macbeth's

“dearest partner of greatness” (Act I. Scene V. Lines : 11-12),
 but at the end she was came out Macbeth's “fiendlike queen” (Act V. Scene IX. Lines: 35).

Lady Macbeth was the woman who did provoke Macbeth to kill Duncan as she was having greed for acquiring the throne of Scotland. Later part of this play, she became mad after completing the brutal murder and made herself as a symbol of evil like the witches.

LADY MACBETH'S FATAL WORKS OF EVIL CREATES DANGEROUS EFFECTS IN MIND THROUGH HER SLEEPWALKING SCENE

sleepwalking scene was one of the appropriate demonstration of her hideous deeds of killing the king of Scotland. The sleepwalking event did show that the murder has created the utmost destruction inside of the mind of lady Macbeth which did not allow her to sleep well even she didn't able to take rest. She was having the feelings of purgatory and mental trauma and eventually got scared from darkness and blood. She did tell her husband not to afraid from blood as the little drops of water can clean the deed of murder. But now she was feeling afraid from blood and said,

“What, will these hands never be clean?” (Act V. Scene I. Lines: 42) and
 “All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand” (Act V. Scene I. Lines: 48-49).

In the sleepwalking scene lady Macbeth told about Duncan that a old man like him had so much blood in him. This types of saying proved that her mental condition was collapsed and evil has fully captured her heart and soul. Lenox's ideologies has immediately followed the murder of Duncan which has showed the physical world out of harmony. He actually remarked that to when evil is powerful and active over a human mind then it can also corrupted all the creation but not only human kind or state but also the physical realm as well. Lenox's ideologies did match with the incident happened with Duncan in the play Macbeth.

The night has been unruly; where we lay, Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say, Lamentings heard in the air, strange screams of death, And prophesying with accents terrible. (Act II.Scene III. Lines: 55-58)

THE SETTINGS OF THE PLAY MACBETH

The settings and the environment of the play did forecast the destruction of the king's authority. In this way the clamouring of the owls at night, and the devouring part of Duncan's horses by each other, all these incidents actually gave the indication of something supernatural which was happening around the characters living places. We can see the corruption even in the natural phenomena such as the ravens' were seemed like crook, the sound of the crickets and the upcoming of the night considered as like something bad will happen. In this fearful apprehension the meaning of natural phenomena did restore with harmony. The revive of good was willing to work out of evil. In the play Macbeth, evil

intentions made the striking force which has been created by Shakespeare. He did use the provoking elements of nature that carried out the messages of downfall. Hence the destruction of the perpetrators to restore the physical universe to its natural state of goodness.

THE SOURCE OF EVIL INTENTIONS

The annihilation of human kind is literally associated with the influences of devils or supernatural powers. For example Macbeth and lady Macbeth were highly biased and hypnotized by the evil ambitions, greed, and lust. In this play there we have seen the source of evil through the wired sisters on whom different critics made different ideologies. To show the evilness of three sisters the critics have considered them as demons or devils in the form of witches. In this way Macbeth was powerless to resist as the witches did influence and instilled guilt inside of his mind. After examining the evilness of the witches A. C. Bradley made remarked on them, “The witches and their prophecies, if they are to be rationalized or taken symbolically, must represent not only the evil slumbering in the hero’s soul, but all those obscurer influences of the evil around him in the world which aid his own ambition and the incitements of his wife. Such influences, even if we put aside all belief in evil ‘spirits’ are as certain, momentous, and terrifying facts as the presence of inchoate evil in the soul itself: and if we exclude all reference to these facts from our idea of the witches, it will be greatly impoverished and will certainly fail to correspond with the imaginative effect. The union of the outward and the inward must be realized here” (Bradley 304-5).

The power of evil became more effective that worked in the outside world that affect the inward world of a soul. The seeds of evil intentions were actually hidden in Macbeth’s soul that suddenly emerged to the outside world and therefore the words of the witches which proved fatal to him. In this connection we may consider lady Macbeth’s activities as the symbol of devil’s work. She was possessed by evil spirits.

SHAKESPEARE CREATES THE CONTRASTING GOOD WHICH MITIGATES EVIL

In this play there were the presence of the contrast between darkness and light which has been showed the elements of evil and good, devil and angel, evil and purity, hell and heaven. and Macbeth himself who was the jinx from which his country suffered in this play. Lady Macbeth who did spread her evil intentions upon her husband therefore greatly to his valour. In the field of goodness Malcom was a person of honour as the words and the wounds of the bleeding sergeant were suggestive of honour. Therefore the titles bestowed by Malcolm at the end of the play. One of the noblemen pines for “free honours” (Act III. Scene VI. Lines :36). Macbeth felt guilty in front of Malcom as we can see in the final act he lamented that he has only “mouth-honor” (Act V. Scene III. Lines: 27) instead of true “honor” (Act IV. Scene III. Lines:25). The images of sleep and milk did contrast with the images of unnatural disorder and the recurrent condition of fear and blood. The contrast was most visible in the lines which expressed lady Macbeth’s vulgar of her sex:

“ I have given suck, and know How tender ‘tis to love the babe that milks me: I would; while it was smiling in my face, Have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums, And dash’d the brains out, had I so sworn (Shakespeare, Macbeth I.VII.54-58) By such means Shakespeare builds up the order of nature and examines the nature of order, so that the violation of order in the state by the assassination of Duncan is seen to be an unnatural horror, inevitably attended by portents.

THE DESTRUCTION OF EVIL AND THE RESTORATION OF GOOD ESSENTIALLY PRESENT IN THE PARALLEL WAY

The nature of destructiveness and restoration has been beautifully depicted by the characters. The example of goodness was done by the characters like Macduff, Malcolm and King Edward who did show the nature of goodness. These characters have created a strong contribution for the restoration of grace and purity. Towards the end of the play we can see the divine judgement through the punishment upon the wrong doers. For example, Macbeth who did injustice towards Macduff. In Act IV, Scene II, Shakespeare described about the purity of King Edward who had the ability to cure a dreadful disease by his touch. The activities of Edward has been described as a person of saint who was considered as an agent of God. He was also known as a messenger of supernatural grace who had the ability to remove the unnatural evil in the way he did remove disease from the body of a man. Finally the victory of Malcolm over Macbeth restored the unity, peace, truth, justice and legitimate kingship to Scotland. Malcolm’s last words in the play exhibited the destruction of evil and disorder, and recollection of order, harmony and peace by a young and rightful king of the country:

“We will perform in measure, time and love” (Act V. Scene IX. Lines: 39).

The play has been ended with the grisly display of Macbeth’s head that was taken aloft on a spear by Macduff. As the evil got the retribution that means good may return out of evil.

CONCLUSION

This novel has created a sense of destruction in the aftermath of achieving power, greed to snatch the highest authority and lust to satisfy the human soul. Macbeth and lady Macbeth were the two predominant characters who have been spell bound by the witches’ evil words and directions to lead life. Through the murder of Duncan, the evil nature of Macbeth and lady Macbeth got manifested. The below words by lady Macbeth did prove how much she has been merged with the witches.

“All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hands” (Act V. Scene I. Lines: 48-49).

The whole play has been presented on the basis of vicious attributes of human mind, how a good soul can turn into bad soul under the supervision of devils. In this way the critic Knight said,

“The Whole play may be write down as a wrestling of destruction with creation” (Knight 140). And also Traversi remarked about the orientation of good and evil described by Shakespeare.

“It contains the decisive orientation of Shakespearean good and evil” (Traversi 86).

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