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**#Rituparna Ray Chaudhuri, an Indian-British based Author.**

**PREFATORY NOTE**

**This is a short academic book based on Shakespeare’s *M*acbeth (original). The approach and procedure on writing critical answers of the play is authored on advanced thoughts of the Council for Indian School (XI and XII, ISC). This book can also be used by college students on preliminary understanding to Analyse this Shakespearian play as *The Prologue of Evil*. We are thankful to the Semantic Scholar and Author (Harvard, London) Rituparna Ray Chaudhuri, who is also called in Literature as ‘Divine Vengeance and Art of Thinking,’ on navigating and harbouring this Academic book.**

**SHALL LADY MACBETH BE CALLED AS THE FOURTH WITCH?**

(An Approach to *Shakespeare’s Original* Play: ***M***acbeth, Academic)

[The book is authored specially on advanced thoughts of the Council for Indian School (XI and XII, ISC) with the Google Scholar’s Self Analysis on reference to her Shakespeare’s **Birthplace Trust Logo: London**]

**“Self-Content isn't king, it's my historical kingdom and I am the dictator of it. This is where I never allow anyone to rule on my analysis: British and English Literature is on my flesh-and- blood.”**

***BY***

**RITUPARNA RAY CHAUDHURI**

[Author, Scholar, Critic, Self-Analyst, Teacher and International Awardee on History of British and English Literature, and In English Speaking World]

**ABOUT THE BOOK: AUTHOR’S VOICE**

**“People make a first impression with appearance, wardrobe and body language: so my manuscript demands it with a title.** **In realm of the play Macbeth, Lady Macbeth is not typically considered fourth witch because she has many different characteristics from the witches, such as *showing signs of guilt*. The witches, on other hand, do not show any sign of guilt or regret, and enjoy murder.** **In the play, Hecate is presented as a separate character from three witches who first appear in Act 1, Scene 1. Hecate's role is primarily that of an observer and commentator on actions of Macbeth and the other characters. She serves as a counterpart to Lady Macbeth, as she rules the three witches and is drawn from the Greek goddess of feminine magic.**

**Goethe's judgment of Lady Macbeth as a super witch is the most well-known evaluation of calling her a witch. This is used to describe evil forces she has that are more terrible than three witches in the play.”**

“Words are powerful. They can create or they can destroy. So choose your words wisely.’’

**OF THE AUTHOR: FROM LITERARY SOURCES, HIGHLIGHTS** **FROM HANS-INDIA**:

Indian-British based Author Rituparna Ray Chaudhuri, renowned globally as ‘Divine Vengeance and Art of Thinking,’ shares insights into her journey from Munsi Premchand Award to the London Book of World Records and discusses her favourite book. She sheds light on her distinctive writing style, personal habits, and success, even amid unconventional circumstances. The path to literary acclaim has not been smooth for this Historical Mighty Pen Awardee from India, who received recognition for her unique approach to literature when Partridge-Penguin(U.S.A.-U.K.) reached out to her in 2017. Over time, her exceptional ideas for analyzing Classical English and British literature have gained prominence through various renowned newspapers.

**LITERATURE, FROM GOOGLE AND SEMANTIC SCHOLAR: *RESTRICTED* ANALYSIS, ACADEMIC**

**Self-*Content* isn't king, it's my historical kingdom…:-**

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*Macbeth existed in 11th Century Scotland (then Alba) and his real name was Mac Bethad mac Findláich, known in English as Macbeth mac Findlay and he reigned in what is now called Scotland.*

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I

**UNIQUENESS OF TITLE**

**SHALL LADY MACBETH BE CALLED AS THE FOURTH WITCH?**

(An Approach to ***M****acbeth*, Academic)

In *Brief* the *Original*: The real Macbeth took the throne of Scotland in 1040, after killing his cousin King Duncan I in a battle near Elgin in the Moray district of Scotland. Although Shakespeare does not mention *her* name in the play, the historical Lady Macbeth's first name was Gruoch. She lived in 11th-century Scotland. She was a descendant of the Gaelic kings of Scotland, and was born around 1005. Gruoch was the widow of Macbeth's cousin Gillacomgain, and her son Lulach tried to oppose Malcolm after his stepfather's death.

On *Shakespearian* Macbeth, with *Brief* Symbolism: “The Plot of Macbeth would have never advanced if the prophecy given by the witches did not make Macbeth eager to take power away from Duncan and become king himself. It is Lady Macbeth who suggests to Macbeth that they should kill Duncan in order to make the witches’ prophecy come true. Goethe famously described Lady Macbeth as a "*super witch*" to describe her evil forces, *which are worse* than the three witches (consider of cauldron episode in Act IV, Sc. 1) in the play. *To get her power, Lady Macbeth not only openly rejects her femininity, but the thought of belonging to any gender at all*.

**MACBETH**: My dearest love,

***Duncan*** comes here tonight.

**LADY MACBETH**: And when goes hence?

**MACBETH**

***Tomorrow***, as he purposes.

**LADY MACBETH**: O, ***never***

Shall sun that ***morrow*** ***see***! (***Act I Sc. V***)

Some say, “Lady Macbeth is referred to as the fourth witch because she is the fourth female character in the play who prayed to a spiritual presence for power. In her "Come, thick night" soliloquy, (Act I Sc. 5) she asks an unholy power to give her the ability to kill the king. The witches make predictions, and Lady Macbeth convinces Macbeth to fulfill them through violence...Seemingly more strong willed than Macbeth, she helps her husband recover from his fear after he kills Duncan, and helps the cover up. But as Macbeth grows more and more used to being a tyrant *following Duncan’s murder*, *Lady Macbeth suffers more and more from guilt.*

….*She goes mad and finally kills herself*.

**SEYTON**: The ***Queen***, my lord, is ***dead***.

**MACBETH**

She should have died hereafter. There would have been a time for such a word.

***Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow*** creeps in this petty pace from day to dayTo the last syllable of recorded time,and all our yesterdays have lighted foolsthe 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.

***(Act V Sc. V)***

**II**

**AWARE OF SYMBOLISM**

‘Stars hide your fires

Let not light see my black and deep desires

The eye wink at the hand**.**’

(Act I, Scene IV)

With utmost thorough knowledge of human nature in the play through deep understanding of its varieties, this complex and foreshadowing historical play, Macbeth, is one of Shakespeare’s greatest effusions on wordplay.

Pay attention to the Shakespearian language, consider the contexts and think on the characters’ motives, you’ll know the irony of the play gives us a complete feeling of Fate's operation! **Hence,** **Macbeth demands an Alert Reader**. “Macbeth is relevant even today mainly because it examines the idea of corruption and how easily it is to be led astray by ambition.

“*And you all know, security*

*Is mortals chiefest enemy*.” (*Act III, Sc. V*). Further, the key line from the play is when Lady Macbeth (*Act I Sc. V*) is advising her husband: “*Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under it.* ’ ”

**III**

**ACKNOWLEDING**

I am thankful to my consultant and publisher on giving me proper guidance as well as complete freedom on evaluating my content.

**IV**

**INTRODUCTION**

This book approaches to basic critical answers on Macbeth, in *spectroscopic*, could be used by school and college students, on also understanding the pattern of developing a creative answer sometimes with referential quotes.

**V**

**MACBETH’S SUMMARY**

On bleak Scottish moorland, Macbeth and Banquo, two of King Duncan's generals, discover **three** strange women (witches). These witches tell the Scottish general, Macbeth, that he will be King of Scotland...

…Encouraged by his wife, Macbeth kills the ‘King’, eventually becomes the new King (Act II, Sc. IV), ambition consumes him….and he betrays and kills more people **out of paranoia**. Civil war erupts to overthrow Macbeth, eventually resulting in his downfall.

**VI**

**PROFILE OF THE AUTHOR**

**Author in English and British Literature, Rituparna Ray Chaudhuri is a Teacher and with illustrations on Research-Services she is flooded as both Google -Scholar and Semantic-Scholar.**

**Born in South Calcutta to a historical family ‘Roy Choudhury’, this Indian-British based Author flourished on Classical-Literature and introduced self to notable international-libraries like World Cat Library, Milton Public Library, Barnes and Noble; featured her research work on ‘A World on Fire’ on The Guardian News, London as dated July 27, 2018.**

**This Indian-born Author, in reign of History on English Literature, globally accepted as ‘Art of Thinking’ and ‘Divine Vengeance’ with rare art-of-style on writing books. With her immigrant experience, in the English Speaking World, she is phenomenally recognized by the University of London and Telegraph [U.K] Media-Group in 2023, on reference to her third book, published from Partridge-International (USA) in Association with Penguin Random House (UK), named “The Revolt in the Desert: Journey on English Literature from India to the USA.’’**

**This Google Scholar and the Mighty Pen Awardee, along with other notable awards like Munsi Premchand Literature Award and Harvard World Record, interviewed in The New Indian Express titled ‘The Path of Minimalism: Less is Always More’, in international newspaper The Daily Guardian captioned her interview ‘Blood is Memory without Language: A Litterateur’ as well as in Precious Kashmir which describes her words: ‘Art is never finished, only abandoned.’**

**VII**

**DEDICATION**

“To my Mom and her possessive knowledge on Indian Philosophy and Immanuel Kant in modern philosophy supported me at Self Academic Research to some selected pieces on British Literature.”

**VIII**

**PROLEGOMENON: ACADEMIC**

Like Oxford University Press, the Author cum Semantic Scholar too somewhere agreed and mentioned of the play, “No summary and casual reading can do justice to the play, Macbeth. The entertainment, the moral teaching, the psychology, and the poetry are often all contained in the same speech-even, sometimes in the same line: **Macbeth demands a vigilant reader**.” She continues, “Of **understanding accuracy** and morality of the Shakespeare’s Verse oriented in this **solicitous** play, I urge equivalently both the teacher and the student must be very **rigorous and meticulous**, while learning.”

Likewise while explaining on Macbeth, the Author on Self-Artistry Authority mentions: “Among innumerable, it is foremost to understand respectively ‘also’ when the witches dictating ‘Fair is foul, and foul is fair’ on lonely-moor and Macbeth’s similar words: “So fair and foul a day I have not seen”. Similarly, Porter speaks out “Anon’’ which is surprisingly the same word as in the scene of The Prologue of Evil spoken by The Third witch; Again,“…a rat without a tail/I’ll do, I’ll do, I’ll do” in the Temptation Scene (Act I Sc. III) where The First Witch speaks and not too far away in **Act I Sc. V** appearance and words of Lady Macbeth: “Come, thick night, And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,…” contrary to the **quoted line** of Macbeth : “Stars, hide your fires,/Let not light see my black deep desires,/ The eye wink at the hand” …contrasts to **Macbeth’s conscious words to Lady Macbeth** “Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore **Cawdor shall sleep no more**; **Macbeth shall sleep no more**.’': the Porter Scene where ‘All is discovered’, Shakespeare’s Act III Scene I of Banquo’s speech in the very beginning of the play attributes to the revelation of Temptation Scene in Act I Sc. III : the Banquet(Banquo) Scene wherein a question lies, ‘Was Macbeth the third murderer?’ ; **‘a great perturbation in nature’** when Doctor in **Act VSc.1** speaks out wherein Lady Macbeth in theSleep Walking Scene, unlike Act I Sc. V, in her ‘slumbery agitation’ says, “The Thane of Fife ‘**had**’ a wife…” highly arrests a literary mind on its own authority.

…..There must need a break: **Act III Sc. V questioned its legitimacy** as part of Shakespeare's original manuscript. To many scholars, Act III Sc. V declares Shakespeare never wrote this because in terms of style and setting. This scene of the Act stands out different from the rest of acts in Shakespearean Macbeth. As Oxford continues, this scene of the Act probably inserted by some over-enthusiastic actor, who saw that the audiences enjoyed the witches’ scenes, and decided to give them another!

However, based on Shakespeare’s Verse of the play, the author cum semantic scholar’s power of imagination and self-creative analysis developedthis **Academic-book**.

With several alike questions and independent analysis of the author to every answer, this critical based book is comprising of Act I and Act II in Part II and from Act III to Act V in Part III.

**IX**

**MACBETH: UNDERSTAND**

The essential greatness of the play Macbeth, however, lies not in its accidental moral tone, but in Shakespeare’s true-to-life portrayal of human character. If he wanted to make Macbeth a morality play he would have made Macbeth and his wife out-and-out villains without bothering to endow them with certain great qualities.

To Shakespeare, on the contrary, a human individual has both good and bad elements, and man often approaches a tragic end because of the presence of a tragic flaw in his character. Macbeth is presented as a brave general, a man of conscience, an affectionate husband: but one flaw in his character, namely ambition, pushes all his good qualities aside and leads him from one crime to another, and finally to his tragic end.

Lady Macbeth is an exceptional woman with an iron will, presence of mind, and a conscience that prevents her from committing Duncan’s murder herself: but that all too powerful flaws in her character. Her overwhelming love for her husband suppresses all her virtues and makes her take the required step to see her husband crowned. Her innate goodness shows itself in her ultimate surrender to conscience and the resultant insanity.

The major purpose of Shakespearian Macbeth like that of Shakespeare’s other tragedies is, therefore not to teach a moral lesson, but to emphasise sympathetically the human frailties which often tend to lead men to tragic circumstances.

**X**

**FORWORD**

‘When great minds essay an important question, it is always interesting to watch their different turns of thought and expression.

Under separate heads on types of different kinds of critical answers, it is always to be understood between two terms - ‘matter’ and ‘form’: how inevitably it is to understand on usage of words and its manner differently in descriptive essays from essay in criticism. Author continues, “With Scholarly Citations on Literature, not only I proved self to be a teacher but also remained to be identified in Google as an Author flourished from the USA.”

She mentions, “Choosing on words with its vocabulary, therefore, as a wordsmith of the book, I like to represent of the foreign language on usage of bookish and contextual referential words while writing a basic critical answer.”

**XI**

**LITERATURE: PERCEPTION**

“Words are like leaves; and where they most abound.”

Writing an answer has its own uniqueness: Perception on same words in the book speaking at various temperaments and circumstances to the hearer and listener, proportionately makes the same *human mind to act with different physiology*.

**XII**

**DENOUEMENT: IN BRIEF**

The brave, the true, the vengeful, the despairing: learn the complexities of the characters that make Macbeth unlike any other Shakespearian tragedy.

Plagued by insecurities and the witches’ prophecy, Macbeth seeks out the witches again, who still affirm the prophecy, and he goes on a murderous rampage: Civil war erupts to overthrow Macbeth, resulting in more death.

**XIII**

**REFERENCES**

Apart from the complete works of Shakespeare, this Academic book also shared the views of many selective referential works as well as Oxford School Shakespeare.

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**AN IDEA TO ANSWER ON CRITICAL BASED QUESTIONS**

**Part I**

**Anthropomorphism: Original Play, Macbeth**

**Common to both Part II and Part III**

***QUESTION 1***

***Who are these Witches: How far the play demands an alert reader?***

***Author’s Analysis***

In August 1606 James was at Hampton Court, a palace near London, entertaining his brother-in-law, King Christian of Denmark. A play was acted for them, Macbeth, written by the best dramatist of the time, William Shakespeare. It was a new play, but the story was an old one, and James knew it well, because it was about the ancestors, Banquo and Fleance, through whom he had inherited the throne of Scotland.

Shakespeare found the story in ‘The History of Scotland’ by Raphael Holinshed, but his play is much more than a dramatic re-writing of the historical facts. He made many changes, and the biggest of these concerned James’s ancestor.

James also believed that he was descended spiritually from the long tradition of English monarchs, and that he had inherited the power of healing that Edward the Confessor (1042-66) possessed. Shakespeare’s description of this power (Act IV, Sc. III, 148-58) is, to some extent, deliberate flattery of his king. Shakespeare also knew that James was extremely interested in witchcraft and had written a book about it.

But of course, it is more than flattery for an ancient British monarch: and although the story is largely true, we do not read Macbeth as ‘history’. We could interpret Shakespeare’s play as a moral lesson.

In Macbeth, however, the protagonist does act on his unconscious, and there’s an argument to be made that his actions aren’t so much driven by his own volition as they are by his inability to control the subterranean mind.

**Thunder Enter the three Witches.**

**FIRST WITCH   
 Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.  
SECOND WITCH   
 Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.  
THIRD WITCH   
 Harpier cries ’Tis time, ’tis time!”**

Macbeth murders his king. To murder any man is a crime, but those who lived at the time of Shakespeare thought that the murder of a king was the greatest of all crimes. Kings were appointed by God, to rule as His deputies: rebellion against a true king was rebellion against God. By murdering Duncan, Macbeth gains the crown; but he loses love, friendship and respect-and, in the end his life. His crime is rightly punished.

**FIRST WITCH**

**“Round about the cauldron go;**

**In the poisoned entrails throw.  
 Toad, that under cold stone  
 Days and nights has thirty-one  
 Sweltered venom sleeping got,  
 Boil thou first i’ th’ charmèd pot..** **”**

Macbeth approaches the witches to learn how to make his kingship secure. In response they summon for him three apparitions: an armed head, a bloody child, and finally a child crowned, with a tree in his hand.

**SECOND WITCH   
 “Fillet of a fenny snake  
 In the cauldron boil and bake.  
 Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
 Adder’s fork and blindworm’s sting,  
 Lizard’s leg and howlet’s wing,  
 For a charm of powerful trouble,  
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.’’**

These apparitions instruct Macbeth to beware Macduff but reassure him that no man born of woman can harm him and that he will not be overthrown until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane.

**THIRD WITCH   
 “Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witch’s mummy, maw and gulf  
 Of the ravined salt-sea shark,**

**Root of hemlock digged i’ th’ dark,  
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
 Gall of goat and slips of yew  
 Slivered in the moon’s eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar’s lips,**

**Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-delivered by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab.  
 Add thereto a tiger’s chaudron  
 For th’ ingredience of our cauldron.”**

Macbeth is greatly reassured, but his confidence in the future is shaken when the witches show him a line of kings all in the image of Banquo. After the witches disappear, Macbeth discovers that Macduff has fled to England and decides to kill Macduff’s family immediately:

**ALL   
Double, double toil and trouble;  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.  
SECOND WITCH   
 Cool it with a baboon’s blood.  
 Then the charm is firm and good.  
*Enter Hecate to the other three Witches*.**

**HECATE   
 O, well done! I commend your pains**

**And everyone shall share i’ th’ gains.  
 And now about the cauldron sing  
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
 Enchanting all that you put in.**

**Music and a song: “Black Spirits,etc’’.**

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die…!

**SECOND WITCH   
“By the pricking of my thumbs,**

**Something wicked this way comes;**

**Open locks, whoever knocks.” *Enter Macbeth*.**

Macbeth is certainly a play ‘fit for a king’:

**FIRST WITCH**

**Speak.  
SECOND WITCH**

**Demand  
THIRD WITCH**

**We’ll answer.  
FIRST WITCH Say if th’ hadst rather hear it from our-mouths Or from our masters’.**

**MACBETH**

**Call ’em. Let me see ’em.**

The Three Witches, also known as the Weird Sisters or Wayward Sisters, are characters in William Shakespeare's play Macbeth (c. 1603–1607). The witches eventually lead Macbeth to his demise, and they hold a striking resemblance to the three Fates of classical mythology. Their origin lies in Holinshed's Chronicles (1587), a history of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Holinshed reported that "the common opinion was that these women were either the Weird Sisters, that is [...] the goddesses of destiny, or else some nymphs or fairies endued with knowledge of prophecy by their **necromantic science**.

**FIRST WITCH   
 Pour in sow’s blood that hath eaten  
 Her nine farrow; grease that’s sweaten  
 From the murderers’ gibbet throw  
 Into the flame.  
ALL**

**Come high or low;  
 Thyself and office deftly show.**

**Thunder. First Apparition, an Armed Head….**

Shakespeare's witches are ‘**prophets**’ who hail Macbeth early in the play, and predict his ascent to kingship. Upon killing the king and gaining the throne of Scotland, Macbeth hears them ambiguously predict his eventual downfall. The witches, and their "**filthy**" trappings and supernatural activities, set an ominous tone for the play.

***QUESTION 2***

***Animalia is a part of the play, Macbeth: Discuss, in brief.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**“The obscure bird**

**Clamored the livelong night.”**

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan.

**“Light thickens, and the crow makes wing to th’ rooky wood. Good things of day begin to droop and drowse, while night’s black agents to their preys do rouse.”**

We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this surely, cannot be good.

**“*Her husband’s to Aleppo gone, master o’th’ Tiger:***

***But in a sieve I’ll thither sail,***

***And like a rat without a tail,***

***I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do*.”**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell.

**“*That have the me to a stake. I cannot fly, but bear-like, I must fight the course*.** **’’**

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’smind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action:

**“Here I have a pilot’s thumb,**

**Wreck’d as homeward he did come.** **’’**

To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.” Inspite her all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death.

**“*The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan Under my battlements*.** **’’**

The Witches merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concrete manner, but the effect of the prophecy is to make Macbeth, start as if he were already guilty of harboring dangerous ideas.

**“On Tuesday last a falcon tow’ring in her pride of place, Was by a mousing owl hawk’d at and kill’d.”**

It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “the swelling act of the imperial theme”, though his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

**“Did you say ‘all’? O hell-kite! All? What, all my pretty chickens and their dam at one fell swoop?”**

Though the Witches here do not have a direct share in its action they are a very important part of the play. The play from its very beginning continues under their evil shadows until the shadows are finally lifted in the last scene with Macduff’s entry with “the usurper’s cursed head.”

The tragedy would lose all its magnificence without its strange atmosphere and the atmosphere would amount to nothing without the presence of the Witches.

**“That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state Esteem him as a lamb, being compared With my confineless harms.”**

The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of Macbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest.

**“And Duncan’s horses, a thing most strange and certain, Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, Turn’d wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, Contending ‘gainst obedience as they would Making war with mankind.”**

The accounts of these supernatural happenings hence are helping towards the atmosphere of horror in the play.

***An owl shrieks***

**“It was the owls that shriek’d, the fatal bellman which gives the *stern’st* good-night.”**

King Edward, the Confessor was thought to be inspired with a gift of prophecy and also to possess the gift of healing infirmities and some incurable diseases. Though one motive of the references may have been to flatter James I, another valid justification on dramatic grounds, is that the good supernatural described here is a contrast to the evil supernatural of the witches.

**“Ay, in the catalogue you go for men,**

**As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept all by the name of dogs.”**

Man’s actions are, therefore, not isolated but closely connected to various forces operating in the universe.

**“That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state Esteem him as a lamb, being compared With my confineless harms.”**

While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck.

**“He loves us not; He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren will fight, her young ones in her nest, *against the owl*.”**

Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when Macbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness

**“There the grown serpent lies. The worm that’s fled Hath nature that in time will venom breed, No teeth for th’ present.”**

Macbeth is guilty of committing the most heinous crimes. Lady Macbeth, as if she were a fourth witch, encourages and influences him with valour of her tongue and the crime, which might otherwise have remained undone, is committed.

**“What *beast* was’t then, that made you break this enterprise to me?”**

Lady Macbeth, too, soon realizes the futility of the crown that they have obtained through crime and soliloquies. She suffers like her husband, the tortures of Hell, a glimpse of which we get in the sleep-walking scene.

**“This guest of summer, the temple-haunting martlet, does approve, by his loved mansionry, that the heaven’s breath smells wooingly here. No jutty, frieze, Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle. Where the most breed and haunt, I have observed, the air is delicate.”**

In Macbeth, Macbeth’s progression from a brave, heroic and well-meaning person to a scheming and evil one without a moral compass is exemplified through Shakespeare’s usage of animal imagery, especially through the varied usage of birds, snakes, and beasts.

**DUNCAN: “Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?”**

**CAPTAIN: “Yes, as sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.”**

As we look at the character of Macbeth we see, more clearly than we are able to see in real life, the effects of uncontrolled ambition on a man who is, except for his ambition, noble in nature.

**“O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!**

**Thou know’st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.”**

Macbeth has full knowledge of right and wrong; he knows that he has committed a very great crime by murdering ‘King’. Shakespeare shows us how Macbeth becomes hardened to his crimes, and yet how he suffers from fears which he has created himself.

**“Look like th’ innocent flower,**

**But be the serpent under’t.”**

***QUESTION 3***

***Analyse Shakespeare’s Macbeth as Sophoclean Play.***

***Author’s Analysis***

Sophocles' position has been described as "heroic humanism," a belief in the human capacity to transcend evils. Sophocles developed his characters more than earlier playwrights. Sophocles is known for adding a third actor to Greek tragedy, which reduced the chorus's importance in explaining the plot and emphasized character development and conflict.

Macbeth by William Shakespeare has some common traits with Sophocles' Oedipus, including style, plot, and composition. However, the two plays have different reader experiences. Macbeth has common themes with Sophoclean' play such as the role of fate and the futility of human actions.

In Macbeth, the titular character's fate is given to him by three witches, dictating the eventuality of him becoming king.

**LADY MACBETH**

**“The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements.”**

Macbeth, set primarily in Scotland, mixes witchcraft, prophecy, and murder. Three “Weird Sisters” appear to Macbeth and his comrade Banquo after a battle and prophesy that Macbeth will be king and that the descendants of Banquo will also reign. Macbeth is a tragic hero who is consumed by ambition and makes mistakes.

**LADY MACBETH**

**“Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty.”**

When Macbeth arrives at his castle, he and Lady Macbeth plot to assassinate King Duncan, soon to be their guest, so that Macbeth can become king.

**FIRST WITCH**

**“*Her husband’s to Aleppo gone, master o’ th’ Tiger;***

***But in a sieve I’ll thither sail,***

***And, like a rat without a tail,***

***I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do*.”**

Macbeth's desire to appease Lady Macbeth comes from his need to gain her love and affection, which demonstrates that he never fully developed a castration complex.

**FIRST WITCH**

**“A sailor’s wife had chestnuts in her lap**

**And munched and munched and munched. “Give me,” quoth I.**

**“Aroint thee, witch,” the rump-fed runnion cries.”**

Banquo, who has accompanied Duncan to Inverness, is uneasy because he too is tempted by the witches’ prophecies, although only in his dreams. Macbeth pretends to have forgotten them.

**FIRST WITCH**

**Where hast thou been, sister?**

**SECOND WITCH**

**Killing swine.**

**THIRD WITCH**

**Sister, where thou?**

Left alone by Banquo, Macbeth sees a gory dagger leading him to Duncan’s room. Hearing the bell rung by Lady Macbeth to signal completion of her preparations for Duncan’s death, Macbeth exits to kill the king.

**FIRST WITCH**

**“I’ll drain him dry as hay.**

**Sleep shall neither night nor day**

**Hang upon his penthouse lid.**

***He shall live a man forbid*.**

**Weary sev’n nights, nine times nine,**

**Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.**

**Though his bark cannot be lost,**

**Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.”**

Lady Macbeth waits anxiously for Macbeth to return from killing Duncan. When Macbeth enters, he is horrified by what he has done.

**LADY MACBETH**

**“Come to my woman’s breasts and take my milk for gall, you murd’ring ministers, wherever in your sightless substances you wait on nature’s mischief.”**

He has brought with him the daggers that he used on Duncan, instead of leaving them in the room with Duncan’s servants as Lady Macbeth had planned. When he finds himself incapable of returning the daggers, Lady Macbeth does so.

**BANQUO**

**“What are these, so withered, and so wild in their attire, That look not like th’ inhabitants o’ th’ Earth And yet are on ’t?—Live you? Or are you aught that man may question? You seem to understand me by each at once her choppy finger laying upon her skinny lips. You should be women, and yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so.”**

She returns to find Macbeth still paralyzed with horror and urges him to put on his gown and wash the blood from his hands.

**ALL**

**“Double, double toil and trouble;**

**Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.”**

**SECOND WITCH**

**“Fillet of a fenny snake**

**In the cauldron boil and bake.**

**Eye of newt and toe of frog,**

**Wool of bat and tongue of dog,**

**Adder’s fork and blindworm’s sting,**

**Lizard’s leg and howlet’s wing,**

**For a charm of powerful trouble,**

**Like a hell-broth boil and bubble**.”

A drunken porter, answering the knocking at the gate, plays the role of a devil-porter at the gates of hell.

**SECOND WITCH**

**…“Cool it with a baboon’s blood.**

**Then *the charm* is firm and good**.**”**

He admits Macduff and Lennox, who have come to wake Duncan. Macbeth appears and greets them. Macduff exits to wake Duncan, then returns to announce Duncan’s murder.

**OLD MAN**

**“’Tis unnatural,**

**Even like the deed that’s done. On Tuesday last a falcon, tow’ring in her pride of place, was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.”**

Macbeth and Lennox go to see for themselves.

**MACBETH**

**“Ay, in the catalogue you go for men,**

**As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept all by the name of dogs.”**

When they return, Lennox announces that Duncan’s servants are the murderers. Macbeth reveals that he has slain the servants.

**ROSS**

**“And Duncan’s horses (a thing most strange and certain), Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, Contending ’gainst obedience, as they would Make war with mankind.”**

When his motives are questioned, Lady Macbeth interrupts by calling for help for herself. Duncan’s sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, plan to flee for their lives—Malcolm to England, Donalbain to Ireland. Banquo suspects that Macbeth killed Duncan in order to become king. Macbeth invites Banquo to a feast that night. Banquo promises to return in time.

Macbeth, fearing that Banquo’s children, not his own, will be the future kings of Scotland, seizes upon the opportunity provided by Banquo’s scheduled return after dark to arrange for his murder. To carry out the crime, Macbeth employs two men whom he has persuaded to regard Banquo as an enemy. Both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth express their unhappiness. Macbeth speaks of his fear of Banquo especially.

**MACBETH**

**“We have scorched the snake, not killed it. She’ll close and be herself whilst our poor malice remains in danger of her former tooth. But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer, ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep in the affliction of these terrible dreams that shake us nightly.”**

He refers to a dreadful deed that will happen that night but does not confide his plan for Banquo’s murder to Lady Macbeth.

**MACBETH**

**“*O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! Thou know’st that Banquo and his Fleance lives*.”**

Lennox and an unnamed lord discuss politics in Scotland. Lennox comments sarcastically upon Macbeth’s “official” versions of the many recent violent deaths.

**MACBETH**

**“*They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, but, bear-like, I must fight the course*.”**

The nameless lord responds with news of Macduff’s flight to England to seek help in overthrowing Macbeth. Macbeth has Macduff’s wife and children murdered. Malcolm and Macduff lead an army against Macbeth, as Lady Macbeth goes mad and commits suicide.

Macbeth confronts Malcolm’s army, trusting in the Weird Sisters’ comforting promises. He learns that the promises are tricks, but continues to fight: **M**acduff kills Macbeth and Malcolm becomes Scotland’s king.

**SHAKESPEARE’S MACBETH AS SOPHOCLEAN PLAY:**

**ALL IN BOGS AND DAMP PLACES:**

**“Fair is foul, and foul is fair”**

**MACBETH**

**“*So foul and fair a day I have not seen*.”**

Thus, Shakespeare’s play Macbeth has obviously some common traits with Sophocles' Oedipus: He was influenced by its style, plot and composition; there is a great difference in the way the reader feels while reading the works.

***QUESTION 4***

***Shall Lady Macbeth be called as the fourth witch?***

***Author’s Analysis***

**MACBETH**

**“There’s comfort yet; they are assailable: Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown his cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate’s summons the shard-born beetle with his drowsy hums hath rung night’s yawning peal, there shall be done a deed of dreadful note.”**

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die!

When Lady Macbeth makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband in whom he tells her “his dearest partner of greatness”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments.

In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. Aware of her husband’s weakness, she is determined to further the schemes using the whole force of her superior-will that leads him into prompt action. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career.

**MACBETH**

**“We have scorched the snake, not killed it. She’ll close and be herself whilst our poor malice remains in danger of her former tooth.”**

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true. Two lines of her soliloquy in Act I, Sc. V are particularly significant:

**“Thou wouldst be great;**

**Art not without ambition, but without**

**The illness should attend it:”**

Lady Macbeth is feminine not only as a perfect wife but also as a mother. She has given suck and knows “how tender ‘tis to love the babe” that milk her. In Act II Sc. II, she also shows the feminine feeling of tenderness explaining her reluctance to kill Duncan herself:

**“Had he not, resembled**

**My father as he slept, I had done’t.”**

It is not that she is unaware of her feminine weaknesses, but she has enough will to repress them; at least temporarily. Her feminity, noticed long repressed by an apparent show of cruelty, fully takes possession of her in the sleep-walking scène, at end. Every crime has struck deep into the mind and heart: she now sobs like a delicate woman.

**MACBETH**

**“O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! Thou know’st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.”**

We find her concern for Macbeth again in Act III Sc. II, when she tries to cheer up her husband and rid him of his “sorriest fancies” and a tendency to “keep alone”. Though Macbeth does not reveal his plans of murdering Banquo and Fleance, the understanding between him and his wife is so perfect that she can easily read the thoughts in her husband’s mind.

Macbeth knows quite well of the feminine qualities of his wife. So in Act III Sc. II, he decides to protect her from the knowledge of his plans to murder Banquo and his son. He tells her:

**“Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck.”**

It is significant that the play begins with a brief meeting of the three witches. A very short prologue is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. We have come in Act I Sc. I:

**FIRST WITCH**   
**Where the place?  
SECOND WITCH**

**Upon the heath.  
THIRD WITCH   
 There to meet with Macbeth.  
FIRST WITCH**

**I come, Graymalkin.  
SECOND WITCH**

**Paddock calls.  
THIRD WITCH**

**Anon.   
ALL   
 Fair is foul, and foul is fair;  
 Hover through the fog and filthy air.**

The apparent confusion implied in their words –“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” points to the general upheaval of order to which Scotland is led by Macbeth and that constitutes the main action of the play. “So fair and foul a day I have not seen”—a strange coincidence evidently establishes a connection-a kind of affinity- between Macbeth and the Witches, even before they meet.

**LADY MACBETH**

**“Look like th’ innocent flower,**

**But be the serpent under it.”**

It also brings out the possibility that Macbeth, who has so far been referred to as a brave general in the heights of glory, has a somewhat tainted soul and is, therefore vulnerable to the Witches’ machinations:

**FIRST WITCH**

**Here’s the blood of a bat.**

**Hecate**

**Put in that; oh put in that.**

**SECOND WITCH**

**Here’s libbard’s bane.**

**FIRST WITCH**

**The juice of toad, the oil of adder.**

**SECOND WITCH**

**That will make the younker madder…**

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this surely, cannot be good:

**LADY MACBETH**

**“Look like the time bear welcome in your eye, your hand, your tongue.”**

And yet Macbeth, who has a strong conscience, is yet to decide on further action. So his response to his wife’s persuasion is non-committal: “We will speak further”, but Lady Macbeth cannot let the matter rest here. She advises Macbeth to “look up clear” and tells him “Leave all the rest to me.” Being aware of her husband’s weakness she wishes to take control of the situation:

**“And you shall put this night’s great business into my dispatch; which shall to all our nights and days to come give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.”**

After the arrival of Duncan, **M**acbeth finds himself tormented by the practical and the moral objections to the proposed assassination:

**MACBETH'S DILEMMA:**

**“We still have judgment here that we but teach bloody instructions, which being taught, return to plague th’ inventor”**

When Macbeth expresses his fear of the consequences of failure, she assures him that failure is impossible if only Macbeth shows the courage to act. He cannot help agreeing to her plan.

**PORTER to 'THE GATES OF HELL’:**

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there I’th’name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged himself on th’expectation of plenty. Come in time-have napkins enough about you, here you’ll sweat for’t.”**

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action:

**FIRST WITCH**

**“Here I have a pilot’s thumb,**

**Wreck’d as homeward he did come.”**

In Act IV Sc I the three witches have three animal familiars: a cat, a hedgehog, and a harpy. The harpy is a monster from Greek mythology with the head and chest of a woman and the body of a predatory bird. The name of the harpy is Harpier, which is the name of the third witch's familiar spirit.

**FIRST WITCH**

**“I’ll drain him dry as hay.**

**Sleep shall neither night nor day**

**Hang upon his penthouse lid.**

**He shall live a man forbid.**

**Weary sev’nnights, nine times nine,**

**Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.**

**Though his bark cannot be lost,**

**Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.”**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell. In the Banquet Scene, though Macbeth’s superstitions, fears and loss of self-control have spoilt their schemes and threaten certain ruin to both of them, it is noticeable that, even when they are left alone, she utters no words of reproach to him.

**LADY MACBETH STATES THAT THE NIGHT:**

**“Almost at odds with morning, which is which?”**

Her love for him makes her look upon the incident with genuine sympathy, she only endeavors to comfort him and find an excuse for his strange behavior: “You lack the season of all nature’s sleep!”

**PORTER**

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”**

Lady Macbeth’s influence on her husband begins to decline steadily after accomplishment of Duncan’s murder. Despite her apparent cruelty, Lady Macbeth is certainly not without traces of conscience. In Act III, Sc. II, her first private thought since Duncan’s murder gives a momentary expression to her feelings of remorse at the heinous deed:

**LADY MACBETH**

**“Tis safer to be that which we destroy**

**Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy...”**

Lady Macbeth is capable of tremendous self-control and practically when it comes to meeting crisis. In Act II, Sc. III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder. And her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, at least for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present. Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there; she tries to save the awkward situation by intervene an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him. She remains composed all through that even **M**acbeth cannot help admiring her:

**“When now I think you can behold such sights, and keep the natural ruby of your cheeks, when mine is blanched with fear”**

She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal:

**MACBETH**

**“Bring forth men-children only, for thy undaunted mettle should compose nothing but males.”**

Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she does not appear at all on the stage after Act III, Sc. IV: Though she partially succeeds in saving the situation by bringing the banquet to a hurried end, it now becomes clear that her personal influence upon her husband is no longer a match for his fast growing guilt-conscience. Macbeth’s decisions to murder Macduff’s family and to revisit the Witches, it may be noted, have nothing to do with his wife’s influence.

While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when **M**acbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness:

**“*Out, out brief candle,***

***Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player that stuts 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.*”**

Thus Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.”

In spite all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death. As A.W. Verity mentions “Of all women Shakespeare had drawn, none exercises so strange a fascination as this fragile, indomitable northern Queen, who makes the great denial of her sex-and greatly suffers, even to the death.”

**FIRST WITCH**

***[Her husband’s to Aleppo gone, master o’th’ Tiger]:***

***“But in a sieve I’ll thither sail,***

***And like a rat without a tail,***

***I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do”***

***QUESTION 5***

***Power is the main theme of the play: Elucidate.***

***Author’s Analysis***

The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of Macbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest.

**Ross**

**“And Duncan’s horses, a thing most strange and certain, Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, turn’d wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, Contending ‘gainst obedience as they would making war with mankind.”**

According to Charles Lamb, ‘The ‘Witches’ are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, or whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music.’ It is significant that the play opens with a brief meeting of the ‘Three Witches’.

The eerie and desolate spot where the Witches utter their chant provides a suitable environment for their statement. This scene with its thunder and lightning also introduces the atmosphere of stormy and turbulent weather, threatening skies, gathering darkness and black night in which most of the violent action of the play occurs.

**Third Witch**

**“*There to meet with Macbeth*”.**

**First Witch**

**“I come, Graymalkin.”**

**Second Witch**

**“Paddock calls.”**

Every Shakespearean tragedy has its own distinctive atmosphere. **M**acbeth is, therefore, not at all exceptional. The supernatural element, the repeated references to blood, the chaos in nature are all introduced to create and draw an element of fear into our apprehension of the atmosphere of the Macbeth world.

**First Witch**

**“When shall we three meet again?**

**In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”**

From a brave soldier and noble person Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, ‘a beast chained to a stake like a *beast*’!

We sense an unearthly abnormality; it is a mad world where the cart drives the horse; the course of nature goes awry and the earth goes feverous and shakes. Shakespeare, introduces **M**acbeth as a brave general, a bold, resolute man of action who has also referred to “Valor’s minion”, “Bellona’s bridegroom’’, the king’s ‘‘valiant cousin’’, a very “eagle’’ among ‘‘sparrows’’, a ‘’lion’’ among ‘‘hares’’.

In the third scene of the first act of the play though the hero accepts evil overtly, there is a suggestion that, even before the commencement of action of the play, he has fallen under the influence of evil:

**Lady Macbeth**

**“I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.**

**Did not you speak?”**

Macbeth reads into the prophecies a “supernatural soliciting” to murder and Lady Macbeth looks upon them as “metaphysical aid.” The **W**itches in **M**acbeth never solicit nor aid- is this nothing -but a wishful thinking.

**Old Man:**

**“Threescore and ten I can remember well;**

**Within the volume of which time, I have seen**

**Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night hath trifled former knowings.”**

The predominantly black atmosphere of the play has been made more vividly gloomy because of the occasional flashes of light. The lightning of the thunder-storm in the opening scene been introduced to emphasise the black darkness by sharp contrast. So a ‘bloody’ atmosphere is continually formed in the course of the play, through insistent references to blood.

**Lady Macbeth**

**“*Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe top full of direst cruelty.*’’**

At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately, at the same time there is a sense of inevitability, about Macbeth’s choices.

**Macbeth:**

**“Come, let me clutch thee:**

**I have thee not, fatal vision, sensible to feeling as to sight?”**

In ‘Macbeth’ the effect of atmosphere is particularly marked; the atmosphere, indeed, is both the result and cause of the artistic unity of the play. The play opens with thunder, rain and lightning when three strange apparitions on a desolate heath speaking a few words in cryptic, enigmatic language and then flitting away through the fog and filthy air with a mysterious concluding remark: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.”

**Second Witch**

**“When the hurly-burly’s done,**

**When the battle’s lost, and won.”**

According to Charles Lamb, ‘they are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, or whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music.’

**First Witch:**

**“And, like a rat without a tail,  
 I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do.”**

There is no doubt that we can see with Macbeth the uncanny apparition: the blood blotched ghost. The horror of its sight compels Macbeth to make many a comprising disclosure. As Coleridge points out them, “as true a creation of Shakespeare’s as his Ariel and Caliban” and “wholly different from the representation of Witches in the contemporary writers with external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice, to act immediately on the audience.”

**Old Man**

**“*God’s benison* go with you, and with those that would make good of bad, and friends of foes.”**

The first scene is thus an epitome of the entire atmosphere of **M**acbeth. The mystery, and a sense of uncanny terror, gloom and murk that we discover in the scene, are in a nutshell the symbol of the play itself. A very short scene that opens the play is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. We have come in at the ‘*end*’ of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their ‘familiar spirits’-devils in animal shapes- call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’.

**Macduff:**

**“I have no words my voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain than terms can give thee out.” **

**Part II: ACT I & ACT II**

***QUESTION 1***

***The play demands an alert reader with no similar substitution: Discuss the Anthropomorphism lies in routes of the map of the play, ‘Macbeth’: The Prologue of Evil.***

***Author’s Analysis:***

The play, ‘Macbeth’, on the British Literature is Shakespeare’s profound and mature vision of Evil. It is a play that stands completely in the study of the disintegration and damnation of a man: and yet, the critics suppose, ‘Macbeth: A Tragic Hero.’

Act I Sc. I is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. The mood of the play is set here in thirteen lines is chaotic: ‘alarm-bells ring’ and ‘characters’ appear on a desolate heath speaking a few words in cryptic, enigmatic language with a mysterious concluding following remark, although the action does not start until the next scene:

**All**

**“*Fair is foul, and foul is fair*,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

According to Charles Lamb, ‘The ‘Witches’ are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, or whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music.’ It is significant that the play opens with a brief meeting of the ‘Three Witches’.

**First Witch**

**“When shall we three meet again?**

**In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”**

The predominantly black atmosphere of the play has been made more vividly gloomy because of the occasional flashes of light. The lightning of the thunder-storm in the opening scene been introduced to emphasise the black darkness by sharp contrast. So a ‘bloody’ atmosphere is continually formed in the course of the play, through insistent references to blood.

**Second Witch**

**“When the hurly-burly’s done,**

**When the battle’s lost, and won.”**

The eerie and desolate spot where the Witches utter their chant provides a suitable environment for their statement. This scene with its thunder and lightning also introduces the atmosphere of stormy and turbulent weather, threatening skies, gathering darkness and black night in which most of the violent action of the play occurs.

**Third Witch**

**“There to meet with Macbeth”.**

**First Witch**

**“*I come, Graymalkin*.”**

**Second Witch**

**“Paddock calls.”**

In ‘Macbeth’ the effect of atmosphere is particularly marked; the atmosphere, indeed, is both the result and cause of the artistic unity of the play:

**“The battlefield: thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches”**

**…….**

**Third Witch**

**“That will be ere the set of sun.’’**

Every Shakespearean tragedy has its own distinctive atmosphere. **M**acbeth is, therefore, not at all exceptional. The supernatural element, the repeated references to blood, the chaos in nature are all introduced to create and draw an element of fear into our apprehension of the atmosphere of the Macbeth world.

We sense an unearthly abnormality; it is a mad world where the cart drives the horse; the course of nature goes awry and the earth goes feverous and shakes. Shakespeare, introduces **M**acbeth as a brave general, a bold, resolute man of action who has also referred to “Valor’s minion”, “Bellona’s bridegroom’’, the king’s ‘‘valiant cousin’’, a very “eagle’’ among ‘‘sparrows’’, a ‘’lion’’ among ‘‘hares’’.

In the third scene of the first act of the play though the hero accepts evil overtly, there is a suggestion that, even before the commencement of action of the play, he has fallen under the influence of evil:

**Lady Macbeth**

**“I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.**

**Did not you speak?”**

Here presents, the hero’s complete symbolic life-journey in a reflective pattern to ensure the only operation of evil in this world.

**Macbeth:**

**“Come, let me clutch thee:**

**I have thee not, fatal vision, sensible**

**To feeling as to sight?”**

The forces of evil are always ready to ensnare man; but they have their limitations. They do not, indeed cannot, force man into evil; they can merely tempt man to choose to follow evil ways. **M**acbeth, deliberately choose not once, but several times in the play-the evil path.

**First Witch:**

**“*And, like a rat without a tail,  
 I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do*.”**

At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately, at the same time there is a sense of inevitability, about Macbeth’s choices.

**Macbeth**

***“Come what come may,***

***Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.”***

The deterioration of Macbeth’s character illustrates the theme of conscience and its decline:

**Duncan:**

**“This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air  
 Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
 Unto our gentle senses.”**

From a brave soldier and noble person Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, ‘a beast chained to a stake like a *beast*’!

**Second Witch:**

**“*By the pricking of my thumbs,***

***Something wicked this way comes;***

***Open locks, whoever knocks*.”**

Macbeth reads into the prophecies a “supernatural soliciting” to murder and Lady Macbeth looks upon them as “metaphysical aid.” The **W**itches in **M**acbeth never solicit nor aid- is this nothing -but a wishful thinking.

**Old Man:**

**“*Threescore and ten I can remember well; within the volume of which time, I have seen Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night Hath trifled former knowings*.”**

The accounts of these supernatural happenings hence are helping towards the atmosphere of horror in the play.

***An owl shrieks***

**Lady Macbeth:**

**“It was the owl that shriek’d, the fatal bellman**

**Which gives the stern’st good-night.”**

The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation, “*Look like th’ innocent flower, But be the serpent* *under it*,” in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of Macbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest.

It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards **“the swelling act of the imperial theme”**, though his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne. **Lenox** describes the ‘unruly’ night in some detail:

**“*Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say lamentings heard i’ th’ air; strange screams of death, and, prophesying with accents terrible of dire combustion and confused events…’’***

***QUESTION 2***

***Discuss the importance of Sleep and Clothes in Macbeth.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**Porter, woken from a drunken sleep:**

**“Faith, here’s an English tailor come hither for  
 stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor.**

**Here you may roast your goose.”**

Act I Sc. VI shows Duncan and his followers appreciate the peaceful harmony of Macbeth’s castle, where Lady Macbeth welcomes the guests with an overflow of polite compliments which even the audience, can barely understand.

**Lady Macbeth:**

**“Infirm of purpose!**

**Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead**

**Are but as pictures; ’tis the eye of childhood**

**That fears a painted devil.’’**

Duncan’s choice comes as a great shock to Macbeth, for he recognizes it as an obstacle standing between him and the crown. At the end of the Act II Sc.IV, he admits to possessing ‘black and deep desires’, but Macbeth is afraid to speak these openly, even to himself.

**Banquo:**

**“New honours come upon him**

**Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould,**

**But with the aid of use.’’**

Act II Sc. II shows Lady Macbeth is as tense as her husband, “**Shake off this downy sleep, death’s counterfeit, /And look on death itself**’’, and she has been drinking to give herself courage. Her speech is jerky, for she reacts to every sound, and when her husband comes from the king’s room, **“Go carry them and smear the sleepy grooms with blood”**, his hands red with Duncan’s blood, she greets him with relief and pride: ‘**My husband**’. He has now proved himself, in her eyes, to be a man. **M**acbeth slowly awakens from the nightmare he has been living in and realizes what a terrible crime he has committed. He speaks of the real sounds he has heard, and then of the voice that cried:

**“*Sleep no more:***

***Macbeth does murder sleep*.’’**

This ban will be carried out: never again will Macbeth or his wife, have any rest, and from time to time throughout the play they will comment on their weariness and lack of refreshing sleep. However, Lady Macbeth again takes charge of the situation. Early, she revealed some natural, woman feelings when she confessed that she could not murder Duncan herself as he ‘**resembled/ My father as he slept**.’

**Porter:**

**“Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine…In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, and leaves him.”**

***QUESTION 3***

***Briefly mention the Prologue of Evil of the play, ‘Macbeth’.***

***Author’s Analysis:***

Macbeth is Shakespeare’s profound and mature vision of evil. It is a play depicting destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man: And yet Macbeth is a tragic hero! Therein lays Shakespeare’s art, evolving from a deep understanding of the complexity of human nature.

**All**

**“Fair is foul, and foul is fair,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

The predominantly black atmosphere of Macbeth has been made more vividly gloomy because of the occasional flashes of light. Macbeth is essentially a tale of murder and bloodshed. The lightning of the thunder-storm in the opening scene been introduced to emphasise the black darkness by sharp contrast. So a ‘bloody’ atmosphere is continually formed in the course of the play, through insistent references to blood.

**First Witch**

**“When shall we three meet again?**

**In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”**

In ‘Macbeth’ the effect of atmosphere is particularly marked; the atmosphere, indeed, is both the result and cause of the artistic unity of the play. The play opens with thunder, rain and lightning when three strange apparitions on a desolate heath speaking a few words in cryptic, enigmatic language and then flitting away through the fog and filthy air with a mysterious concluding remark: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.”

**Second Witch**

**“When the hurly-burly’s done,**

**When the battle’s lost, and won.”**

The eerie and desolate spot where the Witches utter their chant provides a suitable environment for their statement. This scene with its thunder and lightning also introduces the atmosphere of stormy and turbulent weather, threatening skies, gathering darkness and black night in which most of the violent action of the play occurs.

**First Witch**

**“Where the place?”**

**Second Witch**

**“Upon the heath.”**

The first scene is thus an epitome of the entire atmosphere of **M**acbeth. The mystery, and a sense of uncanny terror, gloom and murk that we discover in the scene, are in a nutshell the symbol of the play itself. A very short scene that opens the play is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. We have come in at the ‘end’ of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their ‘familiar spirits’-devils in animal shapes- call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’. The mood of the play is set here, although the action does not start until the next scene.

Fear forms an integral part of the atmosphere of **M**acbeth. The supernatural element, the repeated references to blood, the chaos in nature are all introduced to create and draw an element of fear into our apprehension of the atmosphere of the Macbeth world. We sense an unearthly abnormality; it is a mad world where the cart drives the horse; the course of nature goes awry and the earth goes feverous and shakes. The supernatural elements- the ghost, the strange happenings, the apparitions, the witches and their ghastly rites’-are elements superbly employed by the dramatist to create an atmosphere of terror and evil in the play.

**“*The battlefield: thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches”…….***

***Third Witch***

***“That will be ere the set of sun*.’’**

***QUESTION 4***

***Discuss the Supernatural Elements and Impacts in the play Macbeth reflected in both Acts I and II.***

***Author’s Analysis:***

**“Man is not the creature of circumstances**

**Circumstances are the creatures of man.”**

In the third scene of the first act of the play though the hero accepts evil overtly, there is a suggestion that, even before the commencement of action of the play, he has fallen under the influence of evil.

Macbeth, throughout the play, is presented as one much above the ordinary beings, and, as such, he fulfills the basic requirements of being a tragic hero. Shakespeare, introduces him as a brave general, a bold, resolute man of action who has as also referred to “Valor’s minion”, “Bellona’s bridegroom’’, the king’s “valiant cousin’’, a very “eagle’’ among “sparrows’’, a “lion’’ among “hares’’. It is a play, which is depicting a complete destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet, Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’! Here presents, the hero’s complete symbolic life-journey in a reflective pattern to ensure the only operation of evil in this world.

The Witches merely prophecy certain things for **M**acbeth: They do not influence him in any concrete manner, but the effect of the prophecy is to make Macbeth, start as if he were already guilty of harboring dangerous ideas. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards **“the swelling act of the imperial theme”**, though his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

**Macbeth**

**“Come what come may,**

**Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.”**

Macbeth is the starkest and the least discursive of Shakespeare’s tragedies as Granville-Barker has pointed out. The deterioration of Macbeth’s character illustrates the theme of conscience and its decline. From a brave soldier and noble person Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, ‘*a beast chained to a stake like a beast’*!

The forces of evil are always ready to ensnare man; but they have their limitations. They do not, indeed cannot, force man into evil; they can merely tempt man to choose to follow evil ways. Macbeth, deliberately choose not once, but several times in the play-the evil path. At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately, at the same time there is a sense of inevitability, about Macbeth’s choices.

Much more, than the other elements, the Witches introduce an element of supernatural mystery and fear into Macbeth. According to Charles Lamb, ‘they are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, or whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music.’ It is significant that the play opens with a brief meeting of the Three Witches.

The opening scene, in fact is important, in that which makes a complete sense of mystery, strikes the keynote of the play:

**Second Witch**

**“When the hurly-burly’s done,**

**When the battle’s lost, and won.**

**Third Witch**

**That will be the ere the set of sun.”**

We meet, when, the Witches again in Act I, Sc. III, we get to know of their physical aspects. They are withered and not dressed like earthly beings; their fingers are choppy and lips skinny. They look like women, and yet they are bearded. They can at will vanish into air, can foresee the future, and possess more than mortal knowledge. They are by no means the ordinary witches; they are more powerful beings, resembling rather the “Goddesses of Devine’’ as Holinshed calls them. Shakespeare has endowed they may have power over Nature, but that power is not -absolute.

**First Witch**

**Where the place?**

**Second Witch**

**Upon the heath.**

**Third Witch**

**There to meet with Macbeth.’’**

They may have power over a man’s soul but that power is not absolute either. It is when a mortal mind is tainted that they can have an influence on it. Their prophecy only gives a definite shape to the dark thoughts that have already been smoldering in Macbeth’s mind.

The thought of assassinating Duncan occurs to him independently of ‘them’-without any hint from ‘them’. Macbeth reads into the prophecies a “supernatural soliciting”, to murder and, Lady Macbeth looks upon them as “metaphysical aid.” The **W**itches in Macbeth never solicit nor aid- is this nothing -but a wishful thinking.

**Old Man**

**“God’s benison go with you, and with those**

**That would make good of bad, and friends of foes.”**

There is no doubt that we can see with Macbeth the uncanny apparition: the blood blotched ghost. The horror of its sight compels Macbeth to make many a comprising disclosure. As Coleridge points out them, “as true a creation of Shakespeare’s as his Ariel and Caliban” and “wholly different from the representation of Witches in the contemporary writers with external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice, to act immediately on the audience.”

**Lady Macbeth**

**“I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.**

**Did not you speak?”**

Though the Witches here do not have a direct share in its action, they are a very important part of the play. The play from its very beginning continues under their evil shadows until the shadows are lifted in Act II Sc. III where Oxford mentions ‘All is discovered’. The tragedy would lose all its magnificence without its strange atmosphere and the atmosphere would amount to nothing without the presence of the Witches.

**Macbeth**

**“There’s one did laugh in’s sleep, and one cried**

**‘Murder!’ That they did wake each other; I stood, and heard them, But they did say their prayers and address’d them again to sleep.’’**

**Lenox** describes the ‘unruly’ night in some detail:

**“Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say lamentings heard i’ th’ air; strange screams of death, and, prophesying with accents terrible of dire combustion, and confused events….”**

In the next scene, Ross and the Old Man discuss of similar events that have taken place during the fateful night:

**Old Man:**

**‘On Tuesday last**

**A falcon tow’ring in her pride of place,**

**Was by a mousing owl hawk’d at and kill’d.”**

The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of **M**acbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest.

**Ross**

**“And Duncan’s horses, a thing most strange and certain, Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, turn’d wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, contending ‘gainst obedience as they would making war with mankind.”**

The accounts of these supernatural happenings hence are helping towards the atmosphere of horror in the play.

**An owl shrieks**

**Lady Macbeth:**

**“*It was the owl that shriek’d, the fatal bellman***

***Which gives the stern’st good-night*.”**

Man’s actions are, therefore, not isolated but closely connected to various forces operating in the universe. At the same time, it is made to clear that effect would be different if Man did not succumb to the evil within him. Though one motive of the references may have been to flatter James I, another valid justification on dramatic grounds, is that the good supernatural described here is a contrast to the evil supernatural of the Witches.

**Lady Macbeth**

**“*Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe topfull of direst cruelty*.”**

It is noticeable that Macbeth himself never blames the Witches for his sinister actions. The supernatural elements contribute to the play a rich texture, raise the tragedy to a cosmic dimension to a sense of Fate, operating in man’s life in Macbeth.

**Macbeth**

**Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor: The greatest is behind.**

**M**acbeth’s failure to utter the word ‘Amen’ is also accepted only as a psychologic. Before his end, he simply blames the juggling fiends as they, “keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope.” The air-drawn dagger is not strictly a part of the supernatural. The visionary dagger that Macbeth perceives just before committing Duncan’s murder has been interpreted more as a projection of Macbeth’s heated mind than as a concrete reality to be felt and known: “***Macduff*:** *O horror, horror, horror, /Tongue nor heart cannot conceive, nor name thee*.”

**Lennox**

**“New hatch’d to th’ woeful time, the obscure bird clamour’d the live long night; some say, the earth was feverous, and did shake.”**

***QUESTION 5***

***Analyse the Temptation Scene from the play concerning both Acts I and II.***

***Author’s Analysis***

The Witches speak strange prophecies to Macbeth and Banquo; and Ross brings the new title to Macbeth. Macbeth speaks very little when first the witches, and then Ross, hail him as ‘Thane of Cawdor’. Perhaps he is stunned to silence by his good fortune: but soon we hear him speak –or rather, think aloud, for he does not mean to be overheard:

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage: first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this, surely, cannot be good.

Very soon Macbeth begins to admit a ‘suggestion’, some ‘horrible imaginings’, and then he says to himself the word ‘murder’. Once this word has been spoken, we must regard Macbeth with suspicion, and the suspicion grows when he confesses his ‘black and deep desires’ in the scene that follows, in Act I Sc. IV. It is confirmed when his wife, speaking as though he were in the room with her, tells Macbeth that she knows he wants: “that which rather thou dost fear to do,/Than wishest should be undone.”

**First Witch:**

**He shall live a man forbid:**

**Weary se'nnights nine times nine**

**Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:**

**Though his bark cannot be lost,**

**Yet it shall be tempest-tost.**

Macbeth is certainly a play ‘fit for a king’: but of course it is more than this: more than flattery for an ancient British monarch; and although the story is largely true, we do not read Macbeth as ‘history’. We could interpret Shakespeare’s Macbeth as a moral lesson. Macbeth murders his king. To murder any man is a crime, but those who lived at the time of Shakespeare thought that the murder of a king was the greatest of all crimes. Kings were appointed by God, to rule as His deputies: rebellion against a true king was rebellion against God. By murdering Duncan, Macbeth gains the crown; but he loses love, friendship, respect- and in the end his life. His crime is rightly punished.

**Macbeth**

**Stars, hide your fires****; Let not light see my black and deep** **desires: The eye wink at the hand; yet let that** **be, Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.**

On a heath, with thunder still rumbling, the three Witches are awaiting Macbeth on his way from victory. Macbeth, when, accompanied by Banquo, arrives, the Witches greet him as Thane of Glamis (his present title), Thane of Cawdor and ‘King hereafter’, and then predict that Banquo will produce heirs who will become kings. They disappear before the arrival of Ross and Angus with the news that the King has conferred on **M**acbeth the title of Thane of Cawdor. Fascinated by this speedy proof of the Witches’ foreknowledge, Macbeth is ‘rapt’ and he begins to speculate to himself upon the prospect of becoming the king in future.

**Macbeth**

**Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted****as breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!**

The scene also displays the characters of Macbeth and Banquo in contrast. Their reactions to the Witches’ greetings show the difference in their characters. While Macbeth is disturbed and frightened, Banquo remained calm and skeptical. Macbeth, when, is “All hailed’’ as ‘’King hereafter’’, he starts in the manner of ‘a guilty thing surprised.’ On the other hand, Banquo remains level-headed and conscious of the fact that men can easily be tempted into wrong-doing by such “instruments of darkness.’’

The world of the supernatural and the world of men, which remained separated in the first two scenes, are now brought together. The vindictiveness of the Witches, apparent in their curses on the sea-captain, casts a gloom on Macbeth’s career. Macbeth’s opening remarks curiously echo the final words of the Witches in Scene I and establish a link between Macbeth and these abominable creatures. The audience, suddenly aware of the presence of certain follies in the character of their mighty hero, is now prepared for some sinister action to follow.

***QUESTION 6***

***Analyse the dramatic irony of Macbeth from Act I and Act II.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**Porter:**

**“*In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him*.”**

Dramatic irony is present in many of Macbeth’s sayings. His opening words, “So foul and fair a day I have not seen”, unknown to Macbeth himself, has special significance for the audience on account of their being an echo of the earlier words of the witches, “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.” He does not know what we know, the close correspondence between his language and theirs, suggestive of a bond of spiritual kinship pre-existing between them.

Again in the same scene Macbeth utters the well-meaning words, “Let us toward the king.”, but what a grim suggestion the words have for us who know the full story. He is moving towards the kingship indeed in a sense in which he at least consciously does not mean it: Macbeth’s words to Banquo in Act II Sc. I before Banquo retires to bed again is ironical.

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is.

We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this, surely, cannot be good. It is a play depicting destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’, Therein lies Shakespeare’s art, evolving from a deep understanding of the complexity of the human nature.

**All the Witches:**

**“The weird sisters, hand in hand,**

**Posters of the sea and land,**

**Thus do go, about, about,**

**Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,**

**And thrice again, to make up nine.**

**Peace, the charm’s wound up.”**

In the portrayal of Macbeth we witness the destructive power of evil in the inner life of a man. It is not a simple, smooth downward progress; but involves turmoil and conflict between conscience and other desires, between good and evil impulses that work within man. At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately; at the same time there is a sense of inevitability about Macbeth’s choices.

The Witches merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concert manner. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “the swelling act of the imperial theme” but his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

Duncan’s words of appreciation for the brave Macbeth come to be charged with dramatic irony in the light of the subsequent acts of villainy and treachery committed by the “valiant cousin” and “worthy gentleman”.

Duncan: “*No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive/Our bosom interest*” but his words become ironical when the new Thane of Cawdor, i.e. Macbeth, proves him wrong and encounters him with a much greater amount of treachery. In Act I Sc. IV Duncan regrets having built “an absolute trust” on the treacherous Cawdor; the regret itself is full of tragic irony, but the fact of his saying this precisely when the new “Thane of Cawdor” is contemplating his murder makes the irony even more poignant and tragic. On Macbeth too Duncan has already been building an absolute trust. The tragedy is further deepened by Duncan’s ecstatic reception of Macbeth:

**Duncan:**

**“O worthiest cousin!**

**The sin of my ingratitude even now**

**Was heavy on me.”**

Further, the irony here becomes more effective because the audience is now fully aware of the evil ambition in Macbeth’s mind. On the other hand, the good king Duncan cannot imagine that the worthy cousin to whom he is apologizing for his fancied ingratitude will soon commit the worst conceivable ingratitude by killing him. He creates a cruelly the worst conceivable ingratitude by killing him. He creates a cruelly ironical situation by inviting himself to Macbeth’s castle: the lamb committing himself gleefully to the wolves’ care. There is a dramatic irony in his extravagant tribute to Macbeth’s exit from the scene:

**Duncan:**

**“..he is full so valiant.**

**And in his commendations I am fed.**

**It is a banquet to him.”**

So far, Macbeth is certainly a play ‘fit for a king’. But of course, it is more than this-more than flattery for an ancient British monarch; and although the story is largely true, we do not read Macbeth as ‘history’. We could interpret Shakespeare’s play, so far, as a moral lesson. Macbeth murders his king. To murder any man is a crime, but those who lived at the time of Shakespeare thought that the murder of a king was the greatest of all crimes. Kings were appointed by God, to rule as His deputies: rebellion against a true king was rebellion against God. By murdering Duncan, Macbeth gains the crown; but he loses love, friendship and respect-and, in the end his life. His crime is rightly punished.

It is significant that the play begins with a brief meeting of the three witches. A very short prologue is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. The apparent confusion implied in their words –“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” points to the general upheaval of order to which Scotland is led by Macbeth and that constitutes the main action of the play.

It also brings out the possibility that Macbeth, who has so far been referred to as a brave general in the heights of glory, has a somewhat tainted soul and is, therefore vulnerable to the Witches’ machinations.

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true.

The vision of the dagger before him with the handle dripping with blood unnerves Macbeth. The scene is a profound evocation of terror and uneasy gloom. The ideas of night and witchcraft and murder expressed in Macbeth’s words create an atmosphere of fear and evil- a fitting prelude to the murder.

Fear tentacles are seen to spread fast and wide, as in the very next scene we see the so far invulnerable Lady Macbeth feels the first twinge of the emotion. She admits that she herself would have killed Duncan if only he had not resembled her father as he slept. Her courage now is the hollow courage derived from drink. Macbeth after his crime is shown to be in abject terror pitifully giving voice to his inability to pronounce “Amen.” While Macbeth expresses the inventible loss of peace mind as a result of his criminal action-his consciousness that he will no longer be able to sleep in peace-Lady Macbeth expresses her fear of a more practical kind.

She tells him to wash his hands and place threw daggers in Duncan’s room, but fear has completely unmanned him; he cannot go back into the room, and it is Lady Macbeth who has to undertake the work. Every noise now appeals him and his bloodstained hands, he feels, will redden the entire ocean…. Lennox while describing the nights is yet to know the truth of the murder but the audience linked up the strange happenings of the night with the foul murder of the innocent king. The dramatic irony in the account of the portents effectively intensifies the horror of the heinous crime.

**Macduff:**

**“Confusion now hath made his masterpiece:**

**Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope**

**The Lord’s anointed temple.”**

Banquo’s expression of admiration for the castle, “the heaven’s breath/smells wooingly here,” is similarly imbued with a sense of grim irony. The irony becomes memorable when Duncan describes the conspiring Lady Macbeth as “our honoured hostess” and ‘’fair and noble hostess.” The irony employed here effectively heightens the cruelty, ugliness and meanness of the act that Lady Macbeth proposes to commit in partnership with her husband.

There is equally intense irony in Duncan’s final words on the stage. Duncan has no idea that his host and hostess whom he loves highly will prove the worst traitors to him; the audience, however, knows it through Lady Macbeth’s earlier announcement that Duncan would never leave their castle alive.

Dramatic irony produces in the audience a sense of the working of Fate. The action initiated by the protagonist has in itself the seeds of his destruction though he is only aware of the glory and prosperity that he is aiming to get.

**All the Witches:**

**“Fair is foul, and foul is fair,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

Macbeth’s ambition makes him blind to the equivocation of evil forces. The Witches’ prophecies are taken in one sense by Macbeth and he lets his evil impulses take the upper hand. This is the awesome dramatic irony working at the level of the action, and it is what makes the tragedy’s impact so powerful. At every step, the situational irony mocks at Macbeth. The irony gives us a feeling of Fate’s operation.

***QUESTION 7***

***Analyse the character of Lady Macbeth from Act 1 and Act 2.***

***Author’s Analysis***

In Act II, Sc. III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder; and her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, at least for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present.

Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there; she tries to save the awkward situation by intervene an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him. She remains composed all through that even Macbeth cannot help admiring her.

Lady Macbeth when makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband in which he tells her “his dearest partner of greatness”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments. In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career.

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true.

**Lady Macbeth**

**“Thou wouldst be great;**

**Art not without ambition, but without****The illness should attend it:”**

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die!

**Lady Macbeth**

**“Come, thick night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell, that my keen knife see not the wound it makes, Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, to cry 'Hold, hold!'**

Lady Macbeth is feminine not only as a perfect wife but also as a mother. She has given suck and knows “how tender ‘tis to love the babe” that milk her. In Act II Sc. II, she also shows the feminine feeling of tenderness explaining her reluctance to kill Duncan herself:

**Lady Macbeth**

**“*Had he not, resembled***

***My father as he slept, I had done’t*.”**

It is not that she is unaware of her feminine weaknesses, but she has enough will to repress them; at least temporarily. Her feminity, noticed long repressed by an apparent show of cruelty, fully takes possession of her in the sleep-walking scène, at end.

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is.

We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this surely, cannot be good: When Macbeth tells that Duncan who is coming as a guest will leave the next day, she straightaway hints at the proposed murder:

**“Look like the time bear welcome in your eye,**

**Your hand, your tongue:”**

And then proceeds to offer him sound advice:

**“Look like th’ innocent flower,**

**But be the serpent under it.”**

It is significant that the play begins with a brief meeting of the three witches. A very short prologue is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it.

**Porter:**

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”**

We have come in Act I, Scene I ,where at the end of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their familiar spirits-devils in animal shapes-call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’.

And yet Macbeth, who has a strong conscience, is yet to decide on further action. So his response to his wife’s persuasion is non-committal: “We will speak further”, but Lady Macbeth cannot let the matter rest here. She advises Macbeth to “look up clear” and tells him “Leave all the rest to me.”

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action.

After the arrival of Duncan, Macbeth finds himself tormented by the practical and the moral objections to the proposed assassination. Macbeth, when expresses his fear of the consequences of failure, she assures him that failure is impossible if only Macbeth shows the courage to act. He cannot help agreeing to her plan.

**First Witch:**

**“Here I have a pilot’s thumb,**

**Wreck’d as homeward he did come.”**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently the plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell:

**Porter:**

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there? Faith, here is an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose. [Knock]”**

Lady Macbeth’s influence on her husband begins to decline steadily after accomplishment of Duncan’s murder. Despite her apparent cruelty, Lady Macbeth is certainly not without traces of conscience. She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal.

Thus Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.”

In spite of all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death. According to A.W. Verity,” Of all women, Shakespeare had drawn none exercises so strange a fascination as this fragile, indomitable northern Queen, who makes the great denial of her sex and greatly suffers, even to the death.”

***QUESTION 8***

***Analyse the Porter Scene of the play.***

***Author’s Analysis:***

**Porter:**

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”’**

Macbeth is certainly a play ‘fit for a king’. Of course, it is more than this-more than flattery for an ancient British monarch; and although the story is largely true, we do not read Macbeth as ‘history’.

We could interpret Shakespeare’s play as a moral lesson. Macbeth murders his king. To murder any man is a crime, but those who lived at the time of Shakespeare thought that the murder of a king was the greatest of all crimes. Kings were appointed by God, to rule as His deputies: rebellion against a true king was rebellion against God. By murdering Duncan, Macbeth gains the crown; but he loses love, friendship and respect-and, in the end his life. His crime is rightly punished.

**Duncan:**

**“This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air**

**Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself**

**Unto our gentle senses...”**

It is significant that the play begins with a brief meeting of the three witches. A very short prologue is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. The apparent confusion implied in their words –“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” points to the general upheaval of order to which Scotland is led by Macbeth and that constitutes the main action of the play. “So fair and foul a day I have not seen”—a strange coincidence evidently establishes a connection-a kind of affinity- between Macbeth and the Witches, even before they meet.

It also brings out the possibility that Macbeth, who has so far been referred to as a brave general in the heights of glory, has a somewhat tainted soul and is, therefore vulnerable to the Witches’ machinations.

**Porter:**

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there in th’ other devil’s name? Faith, here’s an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either scale, who committed treason enough for God’s sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O come in, equivocator. [Knock]”**

The fact of words reaching out to meaning in the future which is beyond the speaker’s imagination intensifies the tragedy considerably. **M**acbeth abounds in such examples of dramatic irony and this fact accounts for its success as a tragedy among readers and audiences. In Macbeth the effect of atmosphere is particularly marked; the atmosphere, indeed, is both the result, and cause of the artistic unity of the play.

**Porter:**

**“Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes: it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him and disheartens him, makes him stand to and not stand to.”**

The vision of the dagger before him with the handle dripping with blood unnerves Macbeth. The scene is a profound evocation of terror and uneasy gloom. The ideas of night and witchcraft and murder expressed in Macbeth’s words create an atmosphere of fear and evil- a fitting prelude to the murder. Fear tentacles are seen to spread fast and wide, as in the very next scene we see the so far invulnerable Lady Macbeth feels the first twinge of the emotion. She admits that she herself would have killed Duncan if only he had not resembled her father as he slept. Her courage now is the hollow courage derived from drink.

**Old Man:**

**“Threescore and ten I can remember well;**

**Within the volume of which time, I have seen**

**Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night Hath trifled former knowings.”**

Macbeth after his crime is shown to be in abject terror pitifully giving voice to his inability to pronounce “Amen.” She tells him to wash his hands and place threw daggers in Duncan’s room, but fear has completely unmanned him; he cannot go back into the room, and it is Lady Macbeth who has to undertake the work. Every noise now appeals him and his bloodstained hands, he feels, will redden the entire ocean.

**Porter:**

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there I’th’name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged himself on th’expectation of plenty. Come in time-have napkins enough about you, here you’ll sweat for’t.”**

Macbeth’s opening words, “So foul and fair a day I have not seen”, has an echo of the earlier words of the witches, “Fair is foul, and foul is fair.” Macbeth does not know what we know, the close correspondence between his language and theirs, suggestive of a bond of spiritual kinship pre-existing between them.

Again in the same scene Macbeth utters the well-meaning words, “Let us toward the king.”, but what a grim suggestion the words have for us who know the full story. He is moving towards the kingship indeed in a sense in which he at least consciously does not mean it. Macbeth’s words to Banquo in Act II Sc.I before Banquo retires to bed, is again ironical.

**Porter:**

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there? Faith, here is an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose. [Knock]’’**

Dramatic irony also underlies Lennox’s description of the ‘unruly’ night just before Macduff returns with the news of Duncan’s assassination.

**Macduff:**

**“Confusion now hath made his masterpiece:**

**Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope**

**The Lord’s anointed temple.”**

A.C. Bradley thus comments on Shakespeare’s use of dramatic irony in Macbeth: “Not even Richard III is there so much of irony. I do not refer to irony in the ordinary sense (to speeches, for examples, where the speaker is intentionally ironical, like that of Lennox in Act III Scene VI) I refer to irony on the part of the author himself, to ironical juxtaposition of persons and events, and especially to the Sophoclean irony by which a speaker is made to use words bearing to the audience, in addition to his own meaning , a further and ominous sense, hidden from himself and usually, from the other persons on the stage.”

***QUESTION 9***

***How can Macbeth as a tragic hero be justified?***

***Author’s Analysis:***

**Lady Macbeth:** **“Come,** **you spirits**

**That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here**

**And fill me from the crown to the toe topfull**

**Of direst cruelty.”**

Macbeth is presented as one much above the ordinary beings, and, as such, he fulfils the basic -requirements of being a tragic hero. Shakespeare, introduces him as a brave general, a bold, resolute man of action who through as also referred to “Valor’s minion”, “Bellona’s bridegroom’’, the king’s “valiant cousin’’, a very “eagle’’ among “sparrows’’, a “lion’’ among “hares’’.  It is a play, which is depicting a complete destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet, Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’. Here presents, the hero’s complete symbolic life-journey in a reflective pattern to ensure the only operation of evil in this world.

**Macbeth: “Come, let me clutch thee:**

**I have thee not, fatal vision, sensible**

**To feeling as to sight?”**

In the third scene of the first act of the play though the hero accepts evil overtly, there is a suggestion that, even before the commencement of action of the play, he has fallen under the influence of evil.

**Banquo: ..“Merciful powers,**

**Restrain in me** **the cursed thoughts that nature**

**Gives way to repose.”**

The Witches, merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concrete manner, but the effect of the prophecy is to make Macbeth, start as if he were already guilty of harboring dangerous ideas. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “the swelling act of the imperial theme”, though his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

**Macbeth:  “Come what come may,**

**Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.”**

Macbeth is the starkest and the least discursive of Shakespeare’s tragedies as Granville-Barker has pointed out.  The deterioration of Macbeth’s character illustrates the theme of conscience and its decline. From a brave soldier and noble person Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, a beast chained to a stake like a beast!

**Second Witch: “When the hurly-burly’s done,**

**When the battle’s lost, and won.**

**Third Witch: That will be the ere the set of sun.**

**First Witch: Where the place?**

**Second Witch: Upon the heath.**

**Third Witch: There to meet with Macbeth.’’**

The forces of evil are always ready to ensnare man; but they have their limitations. They do not, indeed cannot, force man into evil; they can merely tempt man to choose to follow evil ways. Macbeth, deliberately choose- not once, but several times -the evil path. At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately, at the same time there is a sense of inevitability, about Macbeth’s choices.

**Old Man: “Threeescore and ten I can remember well;** **within the volume of which time, I have seen** **Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night** **Hath trifled former knowings.”**

It is significant that the play opens with a brief meeting of the Three Witches. The opening scene, in fact is important, in that which makes a complete sense of mystery, strikes the keynote of the play:

**All the Witches: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

We meet the Witches again in Act I, Sc. III, when we get to know of their physical aspects. They are withered and not dressed like earthly beings; their fingers are choppy and lips skinny. They look like women, and yet they are bearded. They can at will vanish into air, can foresee the future, and possess more than mortal knowledge. They are by no means the ordinary witches of popular super -station; they are more powerful beings, resembling rather the ‘Goddesses of Devine’ as Holinshed calls them. Shakespeare has endowed they may have power over Nature, but that power is not -absolute. They may have power over a man’s soul but that power is not absolute either.

It is when a mortal mind is tainted that they can have an influence on it. Their prophecy only gives a definite shape to the dark thoughts that have already been smoldering in Macbeth’s mind. The thought of assassinating Duncan occurs to him independently of ‘them’-without any hint from ‘them’. Macbeth reads into the prophecies a “supernatural soliciting”, to murder and, Lady Macbeth looks upon them as “metaphysical aid.” The Witches in Macbeth never solicit nor aid- is this nothing -but a wishful thinking. Lenox describes the ‘unruly’ night in some detail:

**“Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say lamentings heard i’ th’ air; strange screams of death, And, prophesying with accents terrible** **Of dire combustion, and confused events, new hatch’d to th’ woeful time,** **the obscure bird** **Clamour’d the live long night; some say, the earth was feverous, and did shake.”**

In the next scene, Ross and the Old Man discuss of similar events that have taken place during the fateful night:

**Old Man: “On Tuesday last**

**A falcon tow’ring in her pride of place,**

**Was by a mousing owl hawk’d at and kill’d.”**

Though the Witches here do not have a direct share in its action they are a very important part of the play. The play from its very beginning continues under their evil shadows until the shadows are finally lifted. The tragedy would lose all its magnificence without its strange atmosphere and the atmosphere would amount to nothing without the presence of the Witches. The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of Macbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest.

**Ross: “And Duncan’s horses, a thing most strange and certain,** **Beauteous and swift,** **the minions of their race,** **Turn’d wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,** **Contending ‘gainst obedience as they would** **Making war with mankind.”**

Macbeth’s failure to utter the word ‘Amen’ is also accepted only as a psychologic: The air-drawn dagger is not strictly a part of the supernatural. The visionary dagger that Macbeth perceives just before committing Duncan’s murder has been interpreted more as a projection of Macbeth’s heated mind than as a concrete reality to be felt and known: Before his end, he simply blames the juggling fiends as they, “keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope.”

The accounts of these supernatural happenings hence are helping towards the atmosphere of horror in the play.  **–**

**An owl shrieks**

**Lady Macbeth: “It was the owl that shriek’d,** **the** **fatal bellman**

**Which** **gives the** **stern’st good-night.”**

It is noticeable that Macbeth himself never blames the Witches for his sinister actions. The supernatural elements contribute to the play a rich texture, raise the tragedy to a cosmic dimension to a sense of Fate, operating in man’s life in Macbeth.

***QUESTION 10***

***Analyse the Murder Scene of the ‘King’.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**Old Man:**

**’Tis unnatural,  
 Even like the deed that’s done. On Tuesday last A falcon, tow’ring in her pride of place,  
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.**

Macbeth is Shakespeare’s profound and mature vision of evil. It is a play depicting destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’, Therein lies Shakespeare’s art, evolving from a deep understanding of the complexity of the human nature. No summary can do justice to the play. At best, a commentary such as the one here can be no more than a map. It can show the roads and even point out the important places; but it is no substitute for reading the play.

The King of Scotland (c.1034) is presented as a true and gracious monarch- the embodiment of the Elizabethan notion that a King was appointed as God’s deputy on earth and was himself almost divine. We could interpret Shakespeare’s play as a moral lesson. Macbeth murders his king. To murder any man is a crime, but those who lived at the time of Shakespeare thought that the murder of a king was the greatest of all crimes: rebellion against a true king was rebellion against God. By murdering Duncan, Macbeth gains the crown; but he loses love, friendship and respect-and, in the end his life. His crime is rightly punished.

**Macduff:**

**“Confusion now hath made his masterpiece:**

**Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope**

**The Lord’s anointed temple.”**

Macbeth is certainly a play ‘fit for a king’-but of course, it is more than this-more than flattery for an ancient British monarch; and although the story is largely true, we do not read Macbeth as ‘history’. As we look at the character of Macbeth we see, more clearly than we are able to see in real life, the effects of uncontrolled ambition on a man who is, except for his ambition, noble in nature. Macbeth has full knowledge of right and wrong; he knows he has committed a very great crime by murdering Duncan. Shakespeare shows us how Macbeth becomes hardened to his crimes, and yet how he suffers from fears which he has created.

**Macbeth:**

**Still it cried ‘Sleep no more’ to all the house:**

**‘Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor**

**Shall sleep no more – Macbeth shall sleep no more’.**

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this, surely, cannot be good.

**Porter:**

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”**

Very soon he begins to admit ‘a suggestion’, some ‘horrible imaginings’, and then he says to himself the word ‘murder’ (Act I Sc. III) - once this word has been spoken, we must regard Macbeth with suspicion grows when he confesses his ‘lack and deep desires’ in the scene that follows (Act I Sc.IV). It is confirmed when his wife, speaking as though he were in the room with her, tells Macbeth that she knows he wants.

**Banquo**

**This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,  
By his loved-mansionry, that the heaven’s breath  
Smells wooingly here…**

Duncan’s words of appreciation for the brave Macbeth come to be charged with dramatic irony in the light of the subsequent acts of villainy and treachery committed by the “valiant cousin” and “worthy gentleman”. Informed of Cawdor’s joining hands with the enemy he orders his death-

**Duncan:**

**“No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive**

**Our bosom interest**.”……… but his words become ironical when the new Thane of Cawdor, i.e. Macbeth, proves him wrong and encounters him with a much greater amount of treachery. In Act I, Sc. IV Duncan regrets having built “an absolute trust” on the treacherous Cawdor; the regret itself is full of tragic irony, but the fact of his saying this precisely when the new “Thane of Cawdor” is contemplating his murder makes the irony even more poignant and tragic. On Macbeth too Duncan has already been building an absolute trust. The tragedy is further deepened by Duncan’s ecstatic reception of Macbeth:

**Duncan:**

**“O worthiest cousin!**

**The sin of my ingratitude even now**

**Was heavy on me.”**

Further, the irony here becomes more effective because the audience is now fully aware of the evil ambition in Macbeth’s mind. On the other hand, the good king Duncan cannot imagine that the worthy cousin to whom he is apologizing for his fancied ingratitude will soon commit the worst conceivable ingratitude by killing him. He creates a cruelly the worst conceivable ingratitude by killing him. He creates a cruelly ironical situation by inviting himself to Macbeth’s castle: the lamb committing himself gleefully to the wolves’ care. There is a dramatic irony in his extravagant tribute to Macbeth’s exit from the scene:

He then goes on to describe Macbeth as “a peerless kinsman” without knowing that this kinsman of his would ultimately prove “peerless” only in the treachery and not in the sense of nobility that the term is usually associated with.

**Porter:**

**“Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes: it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him and disheartens him, makes him stand to and not stand to.”**

The vision of the dagger before him with the handle dripping with blood unnerves Macbeth. The scene is a profound evocation of terror and uneasy gloom. The ideas of night and witchcraft and murder expressed in Macbeth’s words create an atmosphere of fear and evil- a fitting prelude to the murder.

**Enter Macbeth with bloody daggers.   
Lady Macbeth: My husband?  
Macbeth: I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?  
Lady Macbeth: I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.  
 Did not you speak?  
Macbeth:  When?  
Lady Macbeth:  Now.  
Macbeth:  As I descended?  
Lady Macbeth:  Ay.**

Fear tentacles are seen to spread fast and wide, as in the very next scene we see the so far invulnerable Lady Macbeth feels the first twinge of the emotion. She admits that she herself would have killed Duncan if only he had not resembled her father as he slept.

Her courage now is the hollow courage derived from drink. Macbeth after his crime is shown to be in abject terror pitifully giving voice to his inability to pronounce “Amen.” While Macbeth expresses the inventible loss of peace mind as a result of his criminal action-his consciousness that he will no longer be able to sleep in peace-Lady Macbeth expresses her fear of a more practical kind.

She tells him to wash his hands and place threw daggers in Duncan’s room, but fear has completely unmanned him; he cannot go back into the room, and it is Lady Macbeth who has to undertake the work. Every noise now appeals him and his bloodstained hands, he feels, will redden the entire ocean.

**Lady Macbeth:**

**“To bed, to bed; there’s knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand; what’s done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed.” [Exit]**

Macbeth is guilty of committing the most heinous crimes. Lady Macbeth, as if she were a fourth witch, encourages and influences him with valour of her tongue and the crime, which might otherwise have remained undone, is committed. Lady Macbeth, too, soon realizes the futility of the crown that they have obtained through crime and soliloquies.

***QUESTION 11***

***Should Lady Macbeth be called as Fourth Witch?***

***Author’s Analysis***

**“Her husband’s to Aleppo gone, master o’th’ Tiger:**

**But in a sieve I’ll thither sail,**

**And like a rat without a tail,**

**I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do.”**

We have come in Act I, Sc. I ,where at the end of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their familiar spirits-devils in animal shapes-call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’. The apparent confusion implied in their words –“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” points to the general upheaval of order to which Scotland is led by Macbeth and that constitutes the main action of the play. “So fair and foul a day I have not seen”—a strange coincidence evidently establishes a connection-a kind of affinity- between Macbeth and the Witches, even before they meet. It also brings out the possibility that Macbeth, who has so far been referred to as a brave general in the heights of glory, has a somewhat tainted soul and is, therefore vulnerable to the Witches’ machinations:

**“I will drain him dry as hay:**

**Sleep shall neither night nor day**

**Hang upon his penthouse lid;**

**He shall live a man forbid:**

**Weary se’n nights nine times nine**

**Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:**

**Though his bark cannot be lost**

**Yet it shall be tempest-tost.”**

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true. Two lines of her soliloquy in Act I, Sc. 5 are particularly significant:

**“Thou wouldst be great;**

**Art not without ambition, but without  
The illness should attend it:”**

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die!

**“Come, thick night,**

**And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,**

**That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,**

**Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, to cry 'Hold, hold!'**

When Lady Macbeth makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband in which he tells her “his dearest partner of greatness”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments. In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. Aware of her husband’s weakness, she is determined to further the schemes using the whole force of her superior will lead him into prompt action. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career.

**“What beast was't, then****,**

**That made you break this enterprise to me?****When you durst do it, then you were a man;****And, to be more than what you were, you would**

**Be so much more the man.”**

Lady Macbeth is feminine not only as a perfect wife but also as a mother. She has given suck and knows “how tender ‘tis to love the babe” that milk her. In Act II Sc. II, she also shows the feminine feeling of tenderness explaining her reluctance to kill Duncan herself:

**“Had he not, resembled**

**My father as he slept, I had done’t. ”**

It is not that she is unaware of her feminine weaknesses, but she has enough will to repress them; at least temporarily. Her feminity noticed long repressed by an apparent show of cruelty, fully takes possession of her in the sleep-walking scène, at end. Every crime has struck deep into the mind and heart. She now sobs like a delicate woman.

**‘Therefore much drink may be said to be an *equivocator* with lechery.’**

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this surely, cannot be good:

**“Assisted by that most “disloyal’’ traitor,**

**The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict.”**

As soon as Macbeth arrives, Lady Macbeth goes straight into business, significantly greeting him as lone greater than both Glamis and Cawdor. When Macbeth tells that Duncan who is coming as a guest will leave the next day, she straightaway hints at the proposed murder:

**“Look like the time bear welcome in your eye,**

**Your hand, your tongue:**

And then proceeds to offer him sound advice:

**“Look like th’ innocent flower,**

**But be the serpent under it.”**

Much more than the other elements, the Witches introduce an element of supernatural mystery and fear into Macbeth. As Coleridge says, “as true a creation of Shakespeare’s as his Ariel and Caliban” and “wholly different from the representation of witches in the contemporary writers, and yet presented a sufficient external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice, to act immediately on the audience.”

**“The raven himself is hoarse**

**That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan**

**Under my battlements.”**

Being aware of her husband’s weakness she wishes to take control of the situation--

**“and you shall put**

**This night’s great business into my dispatch;**

**Which shall to all our nights and days to come**

**Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.”**

And yet Macbeth, who has a strong conscience, is yet to decide on further action. So his response to his wife’s persuasion is non-committal: “We will speak further”, but Lady Macbeth cannot let the matter rest here. She advises Macbeth to “look up clear” and tells him “Leave all the rest to me.”

**“Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood; Stop up the access and passage to remorse, that no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose nor keep peace between Th’effect and it.”**

When Macbeth expresses his fear of the consequences of failure, she assures him that failure is impossible if only Macbeth shows the courage to act. He cannot help agreeing to her plan: The practicality of her scheme and her reproaches to drive away Macbeth’s scruples can be overtly analysed:

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there I’th’name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged himself on th’expectation of plenty. Come in time-have napkins enough about you, here you’ll sweat for’t.”**

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action:

**“Here I have a pilot’s thumb,**

**Wreck’d as homeward he did come”.**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell:

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there? Faith, here is an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose. [Knock] ”**

Her love for him makes her look upon the incident with genuine sympathy, she only endeavors to comfort him and find an excuse for his strange behavior: “You lack the season of all nature’s sleep!”

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”**

Lady Macbeth’s influence on her husband begins to decline steadily after accomplishment of Duncan’s murder. Despite her apparent cruelty, Lady Macbeth is certainly not without traces of conscience. Lady Macbeth is capable of tremendous self-control and practically when it comes to meeting crisis. In Act II Sc. III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder. Her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, atleast for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present. Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there; she tries to save the awkward situation by intervene an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him. She remains composed all through that even Macbeth cannot help admiring her. She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal:

**“Bring forth men-children only,**

**For thy undaunted mettle should compose**

**Nothing but males.”**

Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she does not appear at all on the stage after Act III Sc.IV. Though she partially succeeds in saving the situation by bringing the banquet to a hurried end, it now becomes clear that her personal influence upon her husband is no longer a match for his fast growing guilt-conscience. Macbeth’s decisions to murder Macduff’s family and to revisit the Witches, it may be noted, have nothing to do with his wife’s influence.

Thus Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. In spite her all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death. According to A.W. Verity,” Of all women, Shakespeare had drawn none exercises so strange a fascination as this fragile, indomitable northern Queen, who makes the great denial of her sex-and greatly suffers, even to the death.”

***QUESTION 12***

***Discuss Macbeth on reference to as the symbol ‘Heart of Darkness’.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**“In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him.”**

Lady Macbeth’s influence on her husband begins to decline steadily after accomplishment of Duncan’s murder. Despite her apparent cruelty, Lady Macbeth is certainly not without traces of conscience. She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal:

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It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action:

**“Here I have a pilot’s thumb,**

**Wreck’d as homeward he did come.”**

In Act II, Scene III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder. And her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, atleast for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present. Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there, she tries to save the awkward situation by intervening an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him.

As soon as Macbeth arrives, Lady Macbeth goes straight into business, significantly greeting him as lone greater than both Glamis and Cawdor. When Macbeth tells that Duncan who is coming as a guest will leave the next day, she straightaway hints at the proposed murder:

**“Look like the time bear welcome in your eye,**

**Your hand, your tongue:**

And then proceeds to offer him sound advice:

**“Look like th’ innocent flower,**

**But be the serpent under it.”**

And yet Macbeth, who has a strong conscience, is yet to decide on further action. So his response to his wife’s persuasion is non-committal: “We will speak further”, but Lady Macbeth cannot let the matter rest here. She advises Macbeth to “look up clear” and tells him “Leave all the rest to me.”

When Macbeth expresses his fear of the consequences of failure, she assures him that failure is impossible if only Macbeth shows the courage to act. He cannot help agreeing to her plan:

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there I’th’name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged himself on th’expectation of plenty. Come in time-have napkins enough about you, here you’ll sweat for’t.”**

Two lines of Lady Macbeth’s soliloquy in Act I, Scène 5 are particularly significant:

**“Thou wouldst be great;**

**Art not without ambition, but without  
The illness should attend it:”**

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. ‘Macbeth’ needs an alert reader. At best, a commentary such as the one here can be no more than a map. It can show the roads, and even point out the important places; but it is no substitute for reading the play. No summary can do justice to the play. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die!

We have come in Act I, Scene I ,where at the end of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their familiar spirits-devils in animal shapes-call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’.

**Assisted by that most “disloyal’’ traitor,**

**The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict**

While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when Macbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness.

**“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there? Faith, here is an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose. [Knock]’’**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell. Her love for him makes her look upon the incident with genuine sympathy, she only endeavors to comfort him and find an excuse for his strange behavior: “**You lack the season of all nature’s sleep**!”

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**Part III: ACT III to ACT V**

***QUESTION 13***

***Analyse the Banquet Scene of the play.***

***Author’s Analysis***

Outside the castle, the two murderers wait for Banquo and Fleance. It is certainly a surprise when a third hired assassin appears. Macbeth can trust no one, not even the thugs he first appointed to murder Banquo.

**Banquo  
 Thou hast it now—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all  
 As the Weïrd Women promised, and I fear  
 Thou played’st most foully for ’t.**

The Witches have distributed Banquo, as well as Macbeth. But of, Banquo thinks about the prophecy concerning his own children; and this gives him hope. Macbeth too has been thinking about this prophecy, and it gives him cause for bitterness: he realizes that his crown is ‘fruitless’ and his scepter ‘barren’. He murdered Duncan in order to make the witches’ prophecy come true, but now he plots to murder Banquo and Fleance so that the witches’ promise to Banquo may ‘not’ come true.

The audience has been tensed as the confusion of Banquo’s murder contrasts well with the ceremony of the state banquet. The formality is announced in the following first line and the scene proceeds with dignity for some time. :

**Macbeth   
 You know your own degrees; sit down. At first  
 And last, the hearty welcome.**

The banquet is symbolic as well as realistic, and Shakespeare is careful that we do not overlook this aspect. As soon as the guests are seated, Macbeth promises to ‘drink a measure/ The table is round.’ In many societies and religions, the sharing of a cup of wine, sometimes even called a ‘loving –cup’, symbolizes unity and fellowship; and so it is intended here. The state occasion demands courteous behaviour from the king, but when the murderer says that Fleance has escaped, Macbeth is agitated. In other words, the appearance of one of Banquo’s murderers disturbs the peace for Macbeth. “**Here had we now our country’s honour roof’d,/ Were the graced person of our Banquo’s present**’’: no sooner is this said than Banquo’s ghost appears seated in Macbeth’s chair, which has been so than long empty. This coincidence is a master-stroke of dramatic art. Banquo’s Ghost, which only Macbeth can see, adds to this distress, until the whole scene breaks into fragments, and Lady Macbeth has to ask her guests to leave, without any of the formality with which they arrived:

**“Stand not upon the order of your going,**

**But go at once.”**

The terror and mystery of the scene is conveyed in the mere thrill and how potent is its spell upon Macbeth! Macbeth, when, has stepped away from the table to speak to the murderer, Lady Macbeth calls him back, and reminds him of his duty as a host, adding that on such an occasion ‘the sauce to meat is ceremony’. Macbeth demands an alert reader. No summary can do justice to the play. The sudden apparition of Banquo in the midst of the banquet foreshadows the doom of Macbeth. Banquo’s murderer shows blood on his face and the ghost of Banquo ‘‘shakes his gory locks’’ at us.

At best, a commentary such as the one here can be no more than a map. It can show the roads, and even point out the important places; but it is no substitute for reading the play. The entertainment, the moral teaching, the psychology and the poetry are often all contained in the same speech-even, sometimes, in the same line. The language is rich in sound and meaning, full of pictures, and immensely varied.

***QUESTION 14***

***Discuss the importance of Sleep and Clothes in Macbeth.***

***Author’s Analysis***

**Lady Macbeth**

**The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?--**

**What, will these hands ne'er be clean?--No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.**

Macbeth deliberately chooses--not once but several times in the play-the evil path. In the portrayal of Macbeth we witness the destructive power of evil in the inner life of a man. It is not a simple, smooth downward progress; but involves turmoil and conflict between conscience and other desires, between good and evil impulses that work within man.

**Lady Macbeth**

**Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so** **pale.--I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he** **cannot come out on's grave.**

At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately; at the same time there is a sense of inevitability about Macbeth’s choices. The Witches merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concert manner. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “the swelling act of the imperial theme” but his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

**Lady Macbeth**

**To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate:****come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's** **done cannot be undone.--To bed, to bed, to bed!**

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true. By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die------

**Doctor**

**Look after her;**

**Remove from her the means of all annoyance,**

**And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:**

**My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.**

**I think, but dare not speak.**

When Lady Macbeth makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband where he tells her “his dearest partner of greatness”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments.

**Macbeth:**

**“Come, we’ll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse is the initiate fear that wants hard use;**

**We are yet but young in deed.”**

In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. Aware of her husband’s weakness, she is determined to further the schemes using the whole force of her superior will lead him into prompt action. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career.

**Lady Macbeth**

**Here's the smell of the blood still: all the****perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little****hand. Oh, oh, oh!**

Lady Macbeth is feminine not only as a perfect wife but also as a mother. She has given suck and knows “how tender ‘tis to love the babe” that milk her. She also shows the feminine feeling of tenderness explaining her reluctance to kill Duncan herself.

**Gentlewoman**

**It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus** **washing her hands: I have known her continue in** **this a quarter of an hour.**

It is not that she is unaware of her feminine weaknesses, but she has enough will to repress them; at least temporarily. Her feminity, noticed long repressed by an apparent show of cruelty, fully takes possession of her in the sleep-walking scène, at end. Every crime has struck deep into the mind and heart. She now sobs like a delicate woman.

**Lady Macbeth**

**What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?--Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.**

We find her concern for Macbeth again in Act III, Sc. II, when she tries to cheer up her husband and rid him of his “sorriest fancies” and a tendency to “keep alone”.

**Angus:**

**“Now does he feel his title**

**Hang loose about him, like a giant’s robe**

**Upon a dwarfish thief.”**

Though Macbeth does not reveal his plans of murdering Banquo and Fleance, the understanding between him and his wife is so perfect that she can easily read the thoughts in her husband’s mind. Macbeth knows quite well of the feminine qualities of his wife. So in Act III, Sc. II, he decides to protect her from the knowledge of his plans to murder Banquo and his son. He tells her: “**Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck**.”

**Gentlewoman**

**She has spoken what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.**

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action.

**Doctor**

**A great perturbation in nature, to receive at**

**once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of**

**watching.**

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell.

**Doctor**

**This disease is beyond my practise: yet I have known** **those which have walked in their sleep who have died** **holily in their beds.**

In the Banquet Scene, though Macbeth’s superstitions, fears and loss of self-control have spoilt their schemes and threaten certain ruin to both of them, it is noticeable that, even when they are left alone, she utters no words of reproach to him.

**Lady Macbeth**

**Almost at odds with morning, which is which.**

Her love for him makes her look upon the incident with genuine sympathy, she only endeavors to comfort him and find an excuse for his strange behavior:

**Lady Macbeth**

**“You lack the season of all nature’s sleep!”**

Lady Macbeth is capable of tremendous self-control and practically when it comes to meeting crisis.

**Macbeth**

**Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?**

In Act II Sc. III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder: And her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, at least for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present. Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there; she tries to save the awkward situation by intervene an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him. She remains composed all through that even Macbeth cannot help admiring her.

**Doctor**

**Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds****Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds****to their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:** **More needs she the divine than the physician.** **God, God forgive us all!**

She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal. Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she doesnot appear at all on the stage after Act III Sc. IV.

**All the Witches**

**“Double, double toil and trouble,**

**Fire burn and cauldron bubble.”**

Though she partially succeeds in saving the situation by bringing the banquet to a hurried end, it now becomes clear that her personal influence upon her husband is no longer a match for his fast growing guilt-conscience. Macbeth’s decisions to murder Macduff’s family and to revisit the Witches, it may be noted, have nothing to do with his wife’s influence.

**Lady Macbeth in her ‘Slumber Agitation’:**

**A little water clears us of the deed:**

**How easy is it then.**

While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when Macbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness:

**Macbeth**

**Out, out brief candle,**

**Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player**

**That stuts 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.**

Thus Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.”

**Macbeth:**

**“How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags! What is’t you do?**

**All the Witches:**

**A deed without a name.”**

In spite her all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death. According to A.W. Verity,” Of all women, Shakespeare had drawn none exercises so strange a fascination as this fragile, indomitable northern Queen, who makes the great denial of her sex-and greatly suffers, even to the death.”

**Gentlewoman:**

**“Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, takes forth paper, fold it, write upon’t, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed, yet all this while in a most fast sleep.”**

***QUESTION 15***

***How far the character of Macduff is justiciable?***

***Author’s Analysis***

Imagine a film camera. First the camera shows you a picture of endless waters, stretching as far as the eye can see: then a sudden close-up picture, perhaps a small pool of green water that turns red with blood as we look at it. Macbeth is Shakespeare’s profound and mature vision of evil. It is a play depicting destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’. Therein lays my analysis on Shakespeare’s art, evolving from a deep understanding of the complexity of human nature.

**Macduff:**

**“I have no words**

**My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain**

**Than terms can give thee out.”**

Lady Macbeth when makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband in whom he tells her “his dearest partner of greatness”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments. In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself. Aware of her husband’s weakness, she is determined to further the schemes using the whole force of her superior will lead him into prompt action. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career.

Macbeth is guilty of committing the most heinous crimes. Lady Macbeth, as if she were a fourth witch, encourages and influences him with valour of her tongue and the crime, which might otherwise have remained undone, is committed. Lady Macbeth, too, soon realizes the futility of the crown that they have obtained through crime and soliloquies. She suffers like her husband, the tortures of Hell, a glimpse of which we get in the sleep-walking scene.

Gradually Macbeth discovers the unshakable truth of evil’s deception, but not before it has wrought deterioration of character in him. To him appearance is reality, but he has lost touch with the benevolent spirit, which gives meaning to life. The theme of false appearance is embodied in the very action of the play, so that Macbeth’s despairing recognition of mere ‘mouth-honor’ among his remaining followers’ echoes ironically his wife’s advice to be a serpent under the welcoming of Duncan.

It is reinforced by the cloud of uncertainty that settles on Scotland during Macbeths’ despotism. After the murder of Duncan, the darkness that envelops the earth in daytime reinforces the disorder and equivocation in nature as aptly implied in the words of Rosse, Act II, Sc.IV.

**Macduff:**

**“Let our just censures**

**Attend the true event, and put we on**

**Industrious soldiership.’’**

A.C. Bradley thus comments on Shakespeare’s use of dramatic irony in Macbeth: “I do not refer to irony in the ordinary sense (to speeches, for examples, where the speaker is intentionally ironical, like that of Lennox in Act III, Sc. VI). I *refer to irony on the part of the author himself, to ironical juxtaposition of persons and events, and especially to the Sophoclean irony* by which a speaker is made to use words bearing to the audience, in addition to his own meaning, a further and ominous sense, hidden from himself and usually, from the other persons on the stage.”

Macduff’s emotional nature, as Percival points out, “shows itself in public life also and contrasts him to Banquo’’: *Perceival further observes: “Like him (Banquo) he is loyal, but his loyalty is emotional- it is towards the Lord’s anointed, while Banquo’s is rational-it is towards the head of the state as a human institution.*”

Banquo’s loyalty may be called ‘official’ or’ conventional’; Macduff is certainly ‘emotional’. That is why, unlike Banquo’s, his loyalty rises to the level of the heroic from where one can make any sacrifice for proving one’s loyalty to a king or humanity. So in Act IV Sc. III, when he is told of the massacre of his wife and children, deep grief interrupts his desire for revenge and reveals a tenderness beneath his violence.

Dramatic irony produces in the audience a sense of the working of Fate. The action initiated by the protagonist has in itself the seeds of his destruction though he is only aware of the glory and prosperity that he is aiming to get. Macbeth’s ambition makes him blind to the equivocation of evil forces.

The Witches’ prophecies are taken in one sense by Macbeth and he lets his evil impulses take the upper hand. In the end, however, Macbeth realizes that he has misinterpreted the words of these “juggling fiends.” But for this knowledge comes too late; his actions must bear fruit and he must be destroyed.

This is the awesome dramatic irony working at the level of the action of the play, and it is what makes the tragedy’s impact so powerful.

At every step, the situational irony mocks at Macbeth. He kills Duncan, but the king’s sons live; he feels Macduff to be a threat but his murder of the rest of the family achieves nothing for him.

He thinks he has killed one enemy in Banquo only to be tormented and led to what the protagonist expects happens. The irony gives us a feeling of Fate’s operation.

***QUESTION 16***

***Analyse the Hecate Scene.***

***Author’s Analysis***

There is still more to the play. On one ‘level’ it is royal entertainment-and entertainment, too, for all those of us who enjoy the suspense and excitement of a murder story. On another level, it teaches us, in a new way, the old lesson that crime does not pay but there are at least two more levels. As we look at the character of Macbeth we see, more clearly than we are able to see in real life, the effects of uncontrolled ambition on a man who is, except for his ambition, noble in nature. Macbeth has full knowledge of right and wrong; he knows that he has committed a very great crime by murdering ‘King’. Shakespeare shows us how Macbeth becomes hardened to his crimes, and yet how he suffers from fears which he has created himself.

The mood of the play suddenly changes. The tension mounts ‘again’ as we wait for the murder to be discovered. The confusion of Banquo’s murder contrasts well with the ceremony of the state banquet. Macbeth brings chaos to Scotland, breaking up the harmony of a well-ordered country, just as he breaks up the state banquet ‘***With most admir’d disorder***.’ There is something uncanny in the next scene of the act.

**Hecate:**

**“And you all know, security**

**Is mortals’ chiefest enemy.**

**Music and a song.**

**Hark! I am called. My little spirit, see,**

**Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.”**

Act III Sc. V states the witches and their queen Hecate prepare the audience for the next meeting with Macbeth. It is a pity that this ‘silly’ little scene has to be included in Macbeth. Shakespeare never wrote like this, and it was probably inserted into the play by some over-enthusiastic actor, who saw that the audiences enjoyed the witches’ scenes, and decided to give them another!

**Hecate:**

**‘‘Shall draw him on to his confusion:**

**He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear**

**He hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear:**

**And you all know, security**

**Is mortals' chiefest enemy.’’**

The witches meet Hecate. Hecate is offended because the witches who owe all their power and charms to her, had left her cut in their dealings with Macbeth. She asks them to meet her at the pit of Acheron and get ready all their charms, as she expects: Macbeth to come there to learn his fate. She will herself prepare a charm by distilling the dew that drops from the moon, and call up the spirits which will lead Macbeth on to further damnation. There is heard a song in the air; it is Hecate’s little spirit calling her, and she asks leave of the witches who also depart.

***QUESTION 17***

***Contrast of characters between Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff.***

***Author’s Analysis***

The vices in Lady Macbeth’s character become more striking through the obvious difference between her character and Lady Macduff’s. Lady Macduff shows all the feminine qualities even during her brief appearance in the play.

**Son**

**“Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang them up.’’**

She is essentially a housewife, an affectionate mother and shows through her condemnation of her husband’s unexplained departure a political innocence considered typical of a woman.

**Lady Macduff**

I hope in no place so unsanctified

Where such as thou mayst find him.

**A Murderer**

He’s a traitor

**Son**

Thou liest, thou shag-hair’d villain.

**A Murderer**

What, you egg!

Young fry of treachery**.**

Lady Macbeth, on other hand, has been portrayed as a woman who can suppress the feminine qualities and can boldly resort with confidence to treachery and murder for the sake of fulfilling her aspiration; her only concern is to destroy the evidence.

We find Lady Macduff, her son and Ross speaking to one another. Macduff has fled to England and his wife is extremely anxious about her family’s safety. Ross tells her that Macduff is wise and bold and knows the political situation of the country. His family-members condemn him for being a traitor, when they learn that he has fled to England.

**Lady Macduff**

**“Father’d he is, and yet he’s fatherless.’’**

The son urges his mother to run away. The murderers kill him with their daggers. As she runs for life, the murderers chase her. It is known later that Lady Macduff is also brutally killed by the murderers, though she tries to run away crying ‘murder’.

**Second Apparition**

**“Be bloody, bold and resolute; laugh to scorn**

**The power of man, for none of woman born**

**Shall harm Macbeth.’’**

**Lady Macbeth**

**“You lack the season of all natures, sleep.”**

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows only Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although **she cannot see the** **whole** truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true.

**Third Apparition**

**“Be lion-mettl’d, proud, and take no care**

**Who chafes, who frwets, or where conspirers are. Macbeth shall never vanquish’d be until**

**Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill**

**Shall come against him.”**

The villainy of Lady Macbeth becomes more glaring because it comes from a woman and is set in contrast to the innocence of another woman that is Lady Macduff.

***QUESTION 18***

***Was Macbeth himself the third murderer at Banquo's death?***

***Author’s Analysis***

Macbeth is, however, not cowardice that restrains him: he is wrestling with his conscience. Macbeth appreciates Duncan’s fine qualities-his humility and his integrity in carrying out to perfection the tasks of kingship; and he knows that to destroy such virtue would be a crime against Heaven.

**First Murderer**

But who did bid thee join with us?

**Third Murderer**

Macbeth

The play ‘Macbeth’ includes detailed explanation with own difficult words, passages and self-background. Macbeth now has to act many parts. The body of Duncan, when is discovered, he must appear as the loyal subject, appalled by the murder of his King. After the murder of Duncan, Macbeth is horrified to think of what he has done. Macbeth appears again as himself at the end of Act 3 Scene 4, when he and his wife face each other across the remains of their banquet.

**‘Some say he’s mads; others that lesser hate him: Do call it valiant fury.’**

He now knows that ‘***blood will have blood***’, and that the first murder is only the first. A new character is emerging- a man who is so desperate that he must act and not stop to consider the reasons for acting. With the following quoted line, we find this comparison where Macbeth is beginning to recognize an unreality about his life:

**“Strange things I have in head that will to hand,**

**Which must be acted ere they may be scann’d.”**

Act III Sc. III shows the murder of Banquo-but Fleance escapes from the murderers. Here, outside the castle, the two murderers wait for Banquo and Fleance. It is a surprise, to us as well as to them, when a third hired assassin appears. Macbeth can trust no one, not even the thugs he first appointed to murder Banquo.

**Macbeth**

**“Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. If charnel-houses and our graves must send**

**Those that we bury back, our monuments shall be the maws of kites.”**

The **new Macbeth** trusts no one: he has no faith even to the loyalty of thanes, and sets spies on each one of them. It seems now that he will not trust even the witches and their ‘masters’, for he is determined to ‘make assurance double sure’. He is indeed madly self-confident, believing he is invincible.

**Doctor**

**“Foul whisperings are abroad; unnatural deeds**

**Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds**

**To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.’’**

Macbeth, who, is casual at first in his conversation about the ‘**weather**’ unlike Banquo who is surprised at the appearance of the weird sisters, and fearful that they may be supernatural beings; he is comforted when they seem to understand him; and he can even make a nervous joke about their beards.

**Macbeth:**

**“Come, we’ll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse is the initiate fear that wants hard use;**

**We are yet but young in deed.”**

Macbeth, speaking with some authority, completes a line started by Banquo- and so identifies himself with the other’s feelings. Some words in Banquo’s speech have had to be elided, but this’s usual in English-especially when the speaker is under pressure from some emotion (and Banquo is ‘very’ surprised!)

***QUESTION 19***

***On reference to idea of a ‘tyrant’, shall Lady Macbeth be called as the Fourth Witch?***

***Author’s Analysis***

Macbeth is the unique one, in which a villain or a criminal is pronouncing as its hero or protagonist. In all other tragedies the hero is on the side of the moral order, but in this tragedy the hero turns a villain and flagrantly violates the oral order. Othello and Lear, despite their trivial faults, are still on the side of good. They are wicked and hence when they suffer, we feel that their suffering is wholly disproportionate to their minor short-comings.

**Macbeth:**

Tell me, thou unknown power-

**First Witch:**

He knows thy thought:

Hear his speech, but say thou nought**.**

We feel justice has not been done to them. Macbeth. On the other hand, turns a villain early in the play. He violates most flagrantly all laws of morality and decency; hence when he and Lady Macbeth are punished, the feeling is that they have been justly punished for the crimes they had committed. The canons of poetic justice are fully satisfied.

Macbeth is guilty of heinous crimes. He murders the king, kinsman as well as the guest, who is old, benevolent and generous, who has suitably rewarded him… Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows **Lady Macbeth** to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she **cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal earlier about Macbeth that is true**.

After the murder of Duncan, Macbeth is horrified to think of what he has done. Again Shakespeare contrasts Macbeth and his wife in their attitudes to murder. Lady Macbeth is bold and confident, because she does not understand that the deed is morally wrong; her only concern is to destroy the evidence. Macbeth, however, awakens to a consciousness of guilt that will remain with him until his death. Macbeth is certainly on whom **Duncan is building ‘An absolute trust.’** Duncan’s comment on ‘**there’s no art to find the mind’s construction in the face**’ could also be applied to **other persons and happenings in this play**, **where things are not what they seem to be, where ‘Fair is foul and foul is fair**’.

Lady Macbeth exemplifies to a high degree the influence of ambition as a force that sustains the will to a high degree the influence of ambition as a force that sustains the will to a certain point, and overbears all scruples in self and others. It can also be noted that she never hints at personal animosity towards Duncan. It is Shakespeare’s purpose to show that she acts for her husband’s sake, as A.W. Verity observes. Lady Macbeth incited her husband to proceed in the business of murder resolutely and fearlessly.

Terror, which is observed, aroused by the speeches of Lady Macbeth as she exhorts Macbeth to commit the crime of killing Duncan. The speech in which she asks the Spirits to ‘unsex’ her and fill her breasts with poison instead of milk is horrifying. So is the image aroused by the speech in which she says that she should have plucked the suckling babe from her breast and dashed its brains out if she had pledged to do so. Ironically, when she desperately seeks to wash her hand of the imaginary blood in the sleep-walking scene, she arouses a different kind of terror in us-when we see the consequences of the guilt produced by rash and unscrupulous criminal action.

Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she does not appear at all on the stage after Act III Sc. IV.

Nemesis works relentlessly in the life and actions of the hero and the heroine. The first shock of Nemesis comes in the Banquet Scene. Macbeth has surrendered himself to the supernatural and from the supernatural he acutely suffers in the presence of all courtiers. Macbeth’s ‘bloody’ career makes his country bleed and engulfs and sweeps away both the innocent and the virtuous.

**“Here’s the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.”**

Lady Macbeth’s third soliloquy in Act III Scene II reveals her state of depression. Her words, “Naught's had, all’s spent,’’ reveals the profound melancholy that has been enveloping her whole being from the moment of achieving her ambition.

Bradley thus narrates her present state of mind: “**The glory of her dream has faded. She has thrown away everything and gained nothing. She reached at the golden diadem, which is to sear her brain.**’’ *Her soliloquy serves the dramatic purpose of contributing to the pathos of the tragedy.*  While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. The heroism of Macduff’s child contributes to raise our opinion of his father, who is to be the instrument of the tyrant’s final ruin.

***Question 20***

***Do you find Macduff a sympathetic character?***

***Author’s Analysis:***

**ROSS:**

 “**My dearest coz,  
 I pray you school yourself.**

**But for your husband, He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows the fits o’ th’ season. I dare not speak much further”…**

Man’s actions are, therefore, not isolated but closely connected to various forces operating in the universe. At the same time, it is made to clear that effect would be different if Man did not succumb to the evil within him.

**Second Witch: “By the pricking of my thumbs,**

**Something wicked this way comes;**

**Open locks, whoever knocks.”**

Macduff’s emotional nature does not allow him to lose his essential humanity. So in Act IV, Scene III, when he is told of the massacre of his wife and children, deep grief interrupts his desire for revenge and reveals tenderness beneath his violence. The moment he is convinced of Macbeth’s treachery, he sets himself up, against all odds, as an uncompromising enemy to the usurper. He does not hesitate to offend Macbeth by refusing to attend the royal banquet and thus earn his promotion to the position of his chief enemy. He runs off to England, not to save himself from Macbeth’s wrath, but to beg for assistance for his suffering country. His loyalty to his rightful sovereign is shown by his active assistance and the help he promises to Malcolm, the true heir. He puts his country above all other interests; he is ready to leave his castle and his family at the mercy of the ***ruthless Macbeth in order that he may stir Malcolm to stand and defend* his “down fallen birthdom’’**.

The sorrowful accents in which he utter the words: “**O Scotland, O Scotland**” would not fail to convince the most skeptical of his intense feelings for his country. Even the suspicious Malcolm cannot help being touched by the sincerity with which Macduff expresses his love for country.

Like every man of action, Macduff is impatient of words. In the last Act, the other leaders keep discussing their prospects in the battle, Macduff remains silent: when he interposes, he does so only to end the discussion and urge caution. He, when, meets Macbeth on the field of battle he wastes no time in violent abuse or empty threats.

Macbeth’s patriotism, loyalty and humanity have a common source: his highly emotional nature. Macduff shows an uncanny wisdom and shrewdness from his earliest appearances in the play. From the very beginning, though he is without the secret information that Banquo holds, Macduff seems to regard Macbeth with suspicion. He hold a position of respect among his countrymen and remains, “the good Macduff’’ throughout the action of the play.

Macduff is hated and feared by Macbeth because Macbeth is ever conscious of his superior nobility and morality: that he should be chosen as the final instrument of **divine justice** by executing Macbeth points to the **highest esteem, which Shakespeare had for the character**.

Macbeth, throughout the play, is presented as one much above the ordinary beings, and, as such, he fulfils the basic -requirements of being a tragic hero. Shakespeare, introduces him as a brave general, a bold, resolute man of action who through as also referred to “Valor’s minion”, “Bellona’s bridegroom’’, the king’s “valiant cousin’’, a very “eagle’’ among “sparrows’’, a “lion’’ among “hares’’. It is a play, which is depicting a complete destruction, wrestling with creation. It is a study of the disintegration and damnation of a man. And yet, Macbeth is a ‘tragic hero’. Here presents, the hero’s complete symbolic life-journey in a reflective pattern to ensure the only operation of evil in this world. The Witches merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concrete manner, but the effect of the prophecy is to make Macbeth, start as if he were already guilty of harboring dangerous ideas. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “*the swelling act of the imperial theme*”, though his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

Macbeth is the starkest and the least discursive of Shakespeare’s tragedies as Granville-Barker has pointed out. The deterioration of Macbeth’s character illustrates the theme of conscience and its decline. From a brave soldier and noble person Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, a beast chained to a stake like a beast!

Much more, than the other elements, the Witches introduce an element of supernatural mystery and fear into Macbeth. According to Charles Lamb,” They are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, or whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning and vanish to airy music.”It is significant that the play opens with a brief meeting of the Three Witches.

**Macbeth: “***How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags! What is’t you do?*

**All the Witches: *A deed without a name*.”**

When we meet the Witches again in Act I Sc.III, we get to know of their physical aspects. They are withered and not dressed like earthly beings; their fingers are choppy and lips skinny. They look like women, and yet they are bearded. They can at will vanish into air, can foresee the future, and possess more than mortal knowledge. They are by no means the ordinary witches of popular super -station; they are more powerful beings, resembling rather the Goddesses of Devine as Holinshed calls them. They may have power over a man’s soul but that power is not absolute either. It is when a mortal mind is tainted that they can have an influence on it. Their prophecy only gives a definite shape to the dark thoughts that have already been smoldering in Macbeth’s mind. The thought of assassinating Duncan occurs to him independently of ‘them’-without any hint from ‘them’. Macbeth reads into the prophecies a “supernatural soliciting”, to murder and, Lady Macbeth looks upon them as “metaphysical aid.” The Witches in Macbeth never solicit nor aid- this is nothing -but a wishful thinking.

**Macbeth: “Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?”**

Though the Witches here do not have a direct share in its action they are a very important part of the play. The play from its very beginning continues under their evil shadows until the shadows are finally lifted in the last scene with Macduff’s entry with “the usurper’s cursed head.” The tragedy would lose all its magnificence without its strange atmosphere and the atmosphere would amount to nothing without the presence of the Witches.

The most- distinct suggestion, of the supernatural in Macbeth comes from Banquo’s Ghost. Banquo’s Ghost plays an important role in the action of tragedy. The horror of its sight compels Macbeth to make many a comprising disclosure. As Coleridge points out them, “as true a creation of Shakespeare’s as his Ariel and Caliban” and “wholly different from the representation of Witches in the contemporary writers, and yet presented a sufficient of witches in the contemporary writers, and yet presented a sufficient external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice, to act immediately on the audience.”

The portents suggest a topsy-turvy situation in Nature and emphasize the naturalness of Macbeth’s heinous deed in murdering Duncan who is at once his king, kinsman and guest. King Edward, the Confessor was thought to be inspired with a gift of prophecy and also to possess the gift of healing infirmities and some incurable diseases. Though one motive of the references may have been to flatter James I, another valid justification on dramatic grounds, is that the good supernatural described here is a contrast to the evil supernatural of the witches.

***All the Witches*: “Double, double toil and trouble, Fire burn and cauldron bubble.”**

It is he who makes it possible for Birnam Wood to come to Dunsinane Castle shutting himself up inside. It is he who senselessly murdering Macduff’s family rouses Macduff who is “none of woman born”- to revenge. Before his end, he simply blames the *juggling fiends* as they, “*keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope.*”

The visionary dagger that Macbeth perceives just before committing Duncan’s murder is more as a projection of Macbeth’s heated mind than as a concrete reality to be felt and known.

It is noticeable that Macbeth himself never blames the Witches for his sinister actions. The supernatural elements contribute to the play a rich texture, raise the tragedy to a cosmic dimension to a sense of Fate, operating in man’s life in Macbeth. Macbeth’s failure to utter the word ‘Amen’ is also accepted only as a psychologic. The air-drawn dagger is not strictly a part of the supernatural.

***All the Witches*: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

****

**PROJECT TYPE, ACADEMIC**

**I**

**(SETTING *IN BRIEF*)**

*Do the Witches; in fact have any power in the play ‘Macbeth’ throughout?*

***Authors Analysis***

The forces of evil are always ready to ensnare man, but they have their limitations. They do not, indeed cannot, force man into evil; they can merely tempt man to choose to follow evil ways. Experiencing temptation is not sinful, but deliberately choosing to give in to temptation is an evil.

**[“Have I not reason, beldams as you are,**

**Saucy and over-bold? How did you dare**

**To trade and traffic with Macbeth**

**In riddles and affairs of death?”]** **(HECATE SCENE, Act 3, SCENE 5)**

Macbeth deliberately chooses-not once but several times in the play-the evil path. In the portrayal of Macbeth we witness the destructive power of evil in the inner life of a man. It is not a simple, smooth downward progress; but involves turmoil and conflict between conscience and other desires, between good and evil impulses that work within man. At every stage of Macbeth’s degeneration we witness the choice being made deliberately; at the same time there is a sense of inevitability about Macbeth’s choices. The Witches merely prophecy certain things for Macbeth: They do not influence him in any concert manner. It is a fact that his ambition impels him towards “the swelling act of the imperial theme” but his conscience fills him with horror at the idea that has come to him about how to gain the throne.

The deterioration of Macbeth’s character illustrates the theme of conscience and its decline. From a brave soldier and noble person, Macbeth reaches a state when he is a soulless man, a beast chained to a stake and finally slaughtered like a beast. A fever in his blood keeps him away from conscience and urges him on to ceaseless action and to desperation. Love of power and the will to live are so powerful in him that he goes to the extent of challenging Fate...

TheWitches’predictions and their *partial fulfillment* at once engross him in the thought of kingship. His ambition makes him unscrupulous and the thought of murdering Duncan occurs instantly in his mind.

**“And you all know, security**

**Is mortals’ chiefest enemy.” (HECATE SCENE, Act 3, SCENE 5)**

Act-I Scene-I, a short scene introduces the readers to the theme of evil. As a scene of exposition, it creates the atmosphere and hints at a battle being fought and the keenness of the Witches to meet the protagonist. Even before human beings have been introduced, the witches and tumultuous, hostile weather suggest the part to be played by the supernatural. The two ambiguous lines, “When the battle’s lost and won” and “Fair is foul and foul is fair” are only a beginning to many more of such paradoxical and enigmatic statements. It may be noted that in the whole play there are nineteen scenes of darkness as against only seven of dusk and daylight. The atmosphere of darkness and terror continues through the play until in the last scene Macduff enters with Macbeth’s head indicating the ultimate end of the nightmare.

Macbeth’s ambition, aided by his wife’s instigation, is too strong for his conscience, which is ignored. As soon as he commits the murder he can again hear the disturbing protest of his deeper self. Conscience now gnaws at him and makes itself articulate in the form of unforgettable sighs and haunting sounds. Macbeth is now overwhelmed with a sense of futility of the crime and an equally strong sense of remorse.

**“So foul and fair a day I have not seen.”**

Macbeth is guilty of committing the most heinous crimes. Lady Macbeth, as if she were a fourth witch, encourages and influences him with valour of her tongue and the crime, which might otherwise have remained undone, is committed. Lady Macbeth, too, soon realizes the futility of the crown that they have obtained through crime and soliloquies. She suffers like her husband, the tortures of Hell, a glimpse of which we get in the sleep-walking scene.

**Macbeth: “How now,you secret,black, and midnight hags!**

**What is’t you do?**

**All the Witches: A deed without a name.”**

Evil always works through deception. The evil within Macbeth responds to the evil outside when he believes the words of the Witches. The Witches offer Macbeth worldly prosperity, as evil must, in order to be attractive enough to tempt man, but the promises of evil are false; they are seeming or half-truths. Evil always create an atmosphere of uncertainty and false belief. Macbeth’ himself does not know how far the Witches’ prophecies are good or evil!

**“Stay, you imperfect speakers. Tell me more.**

**By Sinel’s death, I know I am Thane of Glamis.**

**But how of Cawdor?”**

Evil must deceive in order to prosper, if only temporarily, for deception ultimately is found out. While it is in sway it sets in motion ripples of ambiguity in which the innocent are perforce also caught. Thus Duncan calls, Macbeth as “noble”, “worthy” and so on, little knowing the reality beneath the appearance…the reality is given expression to by the porter’s macabre humorous quibbles on hell-gate!

**“I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to th’ everlasting bonfire. [Knock] Anon,anon. I pray you, remember the porter.” [Opens door]**

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth’s ‘voice what appear to be the most hospitable epithets while committing the most heinous of crimes against hospitality- the murder of a guest under their own roof. Thus before he commits the murder of Duncan he is troubled by the vision of the blood-stained dagger. He is later troubled by the hallucination of Banquo’s Ghost. Once again there is confusion between appearance and reality.

**“Fair is foul, and foul is fair,**

**Hover through the fog and filthy air.”**

Like all tragic heroes, Macbeth too is blind to reality. He believes implicitly in what the Witches say, it is on the basis of his belief in their words that he takes action and goes deeper into the quagmire till he reaches the point of no return. His belief in the Witches…The atmosphere of uncertainty let loose by one act of evil permeates everything and colours the vision of even the innocent and good characters. Thus Malcolm in his cautiousness puts on an appearance of vileness to test the reality of Macduff’s integrity. In case of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth when they welcome Duncan, we have evil masquerading as good to hide the truth.

**“Come, we’ll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse is the initiate fear that wants hard use;**

**We are yet but young in deed.”**

Gradually Macbeth discovers the unshakable truth of evil’s deception, but not before it has wrought deterioration of character in him. To him appearance is reality, but he has lost touch with the benevolent spirit, which gives meaning to life. The theme of false appearance is embodied in the very action of the play, so that Macbeth’s despairing recognition of mere ‘mouth-honour’ among his remaining followers’ echoes ironically his wife’s advice to be a serpent under the welcoming of Duncan. It is reinforced by the cloud of uncertainty that settles on Scotland during Macbeths’ despotism. After the murder of Duncan, the darkness that envelops the earth in daytime reinforces the disorder and equivocation in nature as aptly implied in the words of Rosse, Act II, Scene IV.

Evil works out its own destruction. It may create terrible disorder at first but Nature is able to restore harmony. The birth of good is heralded by the perversion of Nature itself. Birnam Wood moves and Macduff turns out to be a man “unborn” of a woman-these are symbolic devices to indicate that the very perversion of mature can herald the doom and destruction of one who initially caused that perversion. True honour and bravery are opposed to false honour and rashness. The repetition of words such as ‘duty’, and ‘service’ create a sense of an orderly social and political fabric which has been disrupted by Macbeth’s crime. Images of planting and seeing, of sleep, and of milk stand in contrast to the images of disorder implied by words like fear and blood and by contrast between appearance and reality. Evil is deceptive and seeks to lead astray.

**II**

**(ANALYSIS *IN BRIEF*)**

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife?

***Author’s Analysis***

***Synopsis*:** Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true. Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die----

***Brief Analysis***: Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.” Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she does not appear at all on the stage after Act III, Scene IV. While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when Macbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness: “Out, out brief candle, Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player That stuts and frets his hour upon the stage’’

***Self-Analysis***: It is significant that the play begins with a brief meeting of the three witches. A very short prologue is long enough to awaken curiosity, but not to satisfy it. We have come in Act I, Scene I, where at the end of the witches’ meeting, just as they are arranging their next appointment before their familiar spirits-devils in animal shapes-call them away into the ‘fog and filthy air’.

The apparent confusion implied in their words –“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” points to the general upheaval of order to which Scotland is led by Macbeth and that constitutes the main action of the play. Lady Macbeth is undoubtedly the most fascinating female character of Shakespeare. To quote A.W. Verity, “Lady Macbeth and Hamlet stand apart from the rest of Shakespeare’s creations in the intensity and perplexity of the interest they arose.”

Inspite her all her crimes and machinations, the readers cannot help pitying her ultimate sufferings and premature death. According to A.W. Verity,” Of all women, Shakespeare had drawn none exercises so strange a fascination as this fragile, indomitable northern Queen, who makes the great denial of her sex-and greatly suffers, even to the death.” “Come, thick night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell, That my keen knife see not the wound it makes, Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, To cry ‘Hold, hold!’

We hear a lot about Macbeth before he comes on to the stage, first from the Sergeant who has fought on his side, and then from Ross, who also speaks of Macbeth’s courage in battle. These reports lead us to expect a noble warrior and a loyal subject to Duncan. We have only one slight doubt about Macbeth, and we are not able to explain quite what this is. We know that, somehow, he is associated with the witches; and this surely, cannot be good: “Assisted by that most “disloyal’’ traitor, The Thane of Cawdor began a dismal conflict……”

Much more than the other elements, the Witches introduce an element of supernatural mystery and fear into Macbeth. As Coleridge says, “as true a creation of Shakespeare’s as his Ariel and Caliban” and “wholly different from the representation of witches in the contemporary writers, and yet presented a sufficient external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice, to act immediately on the audience.”

“Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood; Stop up the access and passage to remorse, That no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose nor keep peace between Th’effect and it.’’ We find her concern for Macbeth again in Act III, Scene II, when she tries to cheer up her husband and rid him of his “sorriest fancies” and a tendency to “keep alone”.

Though Macbeth does not reveal his plans of murdering Banquo and Fleance, the understanding between him and his wife is so perfect that she can easily read the thoughts in her husband’s mind. Macbeth knows quite well of the feminine qualities of his wife. So in Act III, Scene II, he decides to protect her from the knowledge of his plans to murder Banquo and his son. He tells her: “Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck.” “Come to my woman’s breasts, and take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers, wherever in your sightless substances you wait on nature’s mischief!”

Though Lady Macbeth’s influence on Macbeth guides the earlier action of the play, later she becomes so insignificant that she does not appear at all on the stage after Act III, Scene IV. Though she partially succeeds in saving the situation by bringing the banquet to a hurried end, it now becomes clear that her personal influence upon her husband is no longer a match for his fast growing guilt-conscience.

Macbeth’s decisions to murder Macduff’s family and to revisit the Witches, it may be noted, have nothing to do with his wife’s influence. While Macbeth degenerates into a butcher, Lady Macbeth is herein now overcome by a growing sense of guilt and becomes a nervous wreck. Their isolation from each other goes to such an extent that when Macbeth receives the news of her death, he seems to do so with extreme callousness: “*Out, out brief candle, Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player That stuts and frets his hour upon the stage*’’ She employs her strength of determination to keep her conscience suppressed because without doing so, she can never reach her goal: “*Bring forth men-children only, For thy undaunted mettle should compose Nothing but males*.”

Lady Macbeth’s influence on her husband begins to decline steadily after accomplishment of Duncan’s murder. Despite her apparent cruelty, Lady Macbeth is certainly not without traces of conscience. In Act III, Scene II, her first private thought since Duncan’s murder gives a momentary expression to her feelings of remorse at the heinous deed: “‘Tis safer to be that which we destroy than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy…” In the Banquet Scene, though Macbeth’s superstitions, fears and loss of self-control have spoilt their schemes and threaten certain ruin to both of them, it is noticeable that, even when they are left alone, she utters no words of reproach to him.

“*Almost at odds with morning, which is which*.” Lady Macbeth is capable of tremendous self-control and practical when it comes to meeting crisis. In Act II, Scene III after the discovery of Duncan’s murder, she pretends in ignorance of the murder. And her pretence is so convincing that it succeeds, at least for the time being, in keeping her husband beyond the suspicion of those present. Her subsequent fainting now seems only too natural in the eyes of the others there; she tries to save the awkward situation by intervene an illness for her husband, by discouraging the guests from talking to him. She remains composed all through that even Macbeth cannot help admiring her: “*When now I think you can behold such sights, And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks, When mine is blanched with fear*”….. And then is heard no more. It is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.”

As soon as Macbeth arrives, Lady Macbeth goes straight into business, significantly greeting him as lone greater than both Glamis and Cawdor. When Macbeth tells that Duncan who is coming as a guest will leave the next day, she straightaway hints at the proposed murder: “*Look like the time bear welcome in your eye, Your hand, your tongue:*’’ And then proceeds to offer him sound advice: “*Look like th’ innocent flower, But be the serpent under it.*”

And yet Macbeth, who has a strong conscience, is yet to decide on further action. So his response to his wife’s persuasion is non-committal: “*We will speak further*”, but Lady Macbeth cannot let the matter rest here. She advises Macbeth to “look up clear” and tells him “*Leave all the rest to me*.” “*The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan Under my battlements*.”

After the arrival of Duncan, Macbeth finds himself tormented by the practical and the moral objections to the proposed assassination: “*Black spirits, and white; red spirits and gray, Mingle, mingle, mingle; you that mingle may. Titty,Tiffin, keep it stiff in. Fire-Drake, Pucky, make it lucky. Liand, Robin, you must bob in. Round, a-round, a-round, about, about All ill come running in, all good keep out*.”

Macbeth when expresses his fear of the consequences of failure; she assures him that failure is impossible if only Macbeth shows the courage to act. He cannot help agreeing to her plan: *“[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there I’th’name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged himself on th’expectation of plenty. Come in time-have napkins enough about you, here you’ll sweat for’t.*”

To tempt Macbeth into action she outlines the evidently fool-proof plan she has chalked out. When Duncan is asleep, his two guards will be reduced to a state of drunken stupor and it will be possible to put on them the guilt of the great quell: “[Knock] Knock, knock. Knock. Who’s there? Faith, here is an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor, here you may roast your goose.” [Knock]

Her love for him makes her look upon the incident with genuine sympathy, she only endeavors to comfort him and find an excuse for his strange behavior: “*You lack the season of all nature’s sleep*!” “*In conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and giving him the lie, leaves him*.” Lady Macbeth is feminine not only as a perfect wife but also as a mother. She has given suck and knows “how tender ‘tis to love the babe” that milk her.

In Act II Scene II, she also shows the feminine feeling of tenderness explaining her reluctance to kill Duncan herself: “*Had he not, resembled my father as he slept, I had done’t*.” It is not that she is unaware of her feminine weaknesses, but she has enough will to repress them; at least temporarily.

Her feminity, noticed long repressed by an apparent show of cruelty, fully takes possession of her in the sleep-walking scène, at end. Every crime has struck deep into the mind and heart. She now sobs like a delicate woman. “*Therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery*.”

Who can tell us more about a man’s character than his wife? Shakespeare allows Lady Macbeth to explain her husband’s character as she understands it, and although she cannot see the whole truth, she tells us a great deal about Macbeth that is true. Two lines of her soliloquy in *Act I, Scène 5* are particularly significant: “*Thou wouldst be great; Art not without ambition, but without the illness should attend it*”.

By ‘illness’ Lady Macbeth means ‘evil’; but her metaphor is appropriate: Macbeth catches evil, as one might catch a disease. The play shows how his symptoms develop, until there is no hope of a cure, and the man must die----

Lady Macbeth when makes her first appearance in the play, she is seen reading the letter from her husband in which he tells her “*his dearest partner of greatness*”, of his success in the battle, the prediction of the witches and their partial fulfillments. In her comments on the letter, she expresses her admiration for his greatness, and wishes for him all that he wishes for himself.

Aware of her husband’s weakness, she is determined to further the schemes using the whole force of her superior will lead him into prompt action. Her cruelty is only assumed and meant for the betterment of her husband’s career. “*I will drain him dry as hay: Sleep shall neither night nor day hang upon his penthouse lid; He shall live a man forbid: Weary se’n nights nine times nine Shall he dwindle, peak and pine: Though his bark cannot be lost yet it shall be tempest-tost*.”

It is true that the thought of murdering Duncan initially comes to Macbeth’s mind from his meeting with the Witches, but without Lady Macbeth’s instigations, the thought might probably never been transformed into action: ----- “*Here I have a pilot’s thumb,* ***Wreck’d*** *as homeward he did come. But in a sieve I’ll thither sail, And like a rat without a tail, I’ll do, I’ll do, and I’ll do*.’’

Being aware of her husband’s weakness she wishes to take control of the situation-- “*And you shall put this night’s great business into my dispatch; which shall to all our nights and days to come give solely sovereign sway and masterdom*.”

He decides, “*But in these cases, we still have judgement here that we but teach Bloody instructions, which being taught, return to plague th’inventor*.’’

“*So fair and foul a day I have not seen*”—a strange coincidence evidently establishes a connection-a kind of affinity- between Macbeth and the Witches even before they meet. It also brings out the possibility that Macbeth, who has so far been referred to as a brave general in the heights of glory, has a somewhat *tainted soul* and is, *therefore* vulnerable to the *Witches’ machinations*:

“*First Witch: “Here’s the blood of a bat. Hecate: Put in that; oh put in that. Second Witch: Here’s libbard’s bane. First Witch: The juice of toad, the oil of adder. Second Witch: That will make the younker madder. Hecate: Put in; ther’s all, and rid the stench.” -------*

