



# Blood Imagery In Macbeth: Significant to Set Up the Atmosphere and Tone of the Play

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## Abstract

In this study, I have analyzed the imagery of blood in Macbeth. Throughout the whole play, the recurring imagery blood is used as the symbol of the characters' guilty feelings and that guilty feelings ultimately lead to their endless feelings of fear and horror. Blood symbolizes the guilt within Macbeth after murdering King Duncan. It also causes him to experience eternal fear for the crime he has committed. It also shows the soul damnation of Macbeth. Not only the damnation but also the cruelty of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth also comes out of the audience. Actually the atmosphere of the play is set by the blood images. I have interpreted the blood images in all possible aspects to make the reader understand the tone and Shakespeare's magic of conducting the play outstandingly.

## Keywords

Blood imagery, soul damnation, guilt of Macbeth, Macbeth, Shakespeare play, eternal fear, horrible atmosphere

## 1. Introduction:

Shakespeare is the only one phenomenon in the history of English literature. Among his historical creations *Macbeth* is like the most shining star. This drama is basically a tragedy of murder & bloodshed where Shakespeare uses the imagery of blood in such a tremendous way that the blood imageries in the whole play visualize flawlessly the theme, characters mind & the mood, environment of the play. Even the plot of the play is steeped in blood. In *Macbeth* writer uses the word "blood" so many times that in one time during the play blood is synonymous of *Macbeth*. Actually Shakespeare's use of this word is very significant because the development of the character of Macbeth and the unfolding events of the drama are related dramatically with the word. The symbolic meaning of this powerful word changes from the beginning to the end of the play. At the beginning of the play blood is symbolic of bravery & courage when the hero, Macbeth, & others shed blood for their king & for their loyalty. At that time bloodshed for the noble cause is good blood. But gradually with the development with the play blood becomes the image of horror & fear. The changes of the main central character Macbeth's character throughout the play are characterized by the images of blood he sheds. But in the end the blood obviously refers to the guilt Macbeth feels. There is a sharp contrast between the images of blood at the starting point & the end of the play. Because where blood is seen as the positive value at the beginning becomes associated with vice in the end. The blood images show the character transformation from a person of

nobility, honesty, and bravery to that of treachery, deceit, and evil. After Macbeth murders Duncan, he begins to realize the serious depth of his crime as it is seen that he thinks that all great Neptune's ocean will be unable to wash the blood of his hand. This act of murder & through this image of blood brings change the Macbeth's character & the events of the play. No longer does the blood indicate an image of ambition. It symbolizes guilt, remorse, and an entry into gates of hell from which no one can return. Even Macbeth becomes more and more bloodthirsty. He sheds blood to protect his throne whether it is necessary or not. Through the realization of the bloody evil crime, he becomes the devil. Like her husband, the once ambitious Lady Macbeth finally realizes the significance of associating herself in the murder plot and severe consequences it will bring. The blood imagery exhibits Lady Macbeth's guilt over Duncan's murder. Her hallucination of blood on her hands and her heartily efforts to wash it off demonstrate that agony of having guilty feelings is causing her to go insane and at last she commits suicide. The frequent uses of this blood imagery represent murder and the emotion after each murder. After each blood image the act of guilt and regret increases and in one moment Macbeth accepts that he cannot become the same Macbeth again. After every murder and the image of blood Macbeth has dug himself in a hole that is nearly impossible to get out. After the death of Banquo, there are a series of times he meets the blood covering face of the ghost of Banquo and after a certain meeting he admits that there is no chance of return from this blood sweating road. Though he seems to love Lady Macbeth unconditionally, Blood and murder have brainwashed him in such a way that her death does not faze him. Actually blood has scared his life forever, running his relationship with his wife. Even during his final face to face combat with Macduff he wars him to get away back because Macbeth thinks his soul is too much changes with the blood of Macduff. Shakespeare not only uses the images of blood to show the transformation of the hero & heroine of the play but also to create the horror environment with the images of the beginning battle bloodshed, blood dropping image of dagger in front of the eyes of Macbeth before killing Duncan, Blood covering face of Banquo's ghost & the bloodshed in the final battle in front of the audiences so that they can feel the intensity of what is going inside the mind of the characters and to feel it effectively.

## 2. Analysis:

Macbeth is the bloodiest of William Shakespeare's plays. This bloody play is all covered by numerous types of imageries. Among them blood imagery is one of the powerful ones. Writer uses this particular imagery different time throughout the play for various reasons. The reasons behind this using of this imagery are

**2.1. To bring the battle atmosphere of that contemporary time.**

**2.2. To set the atmosphere of the play.**

**2.3. To express the inner condition & the transformation from the path of virtue to sin or destruction central characters.**

There are some critics who also prefer to divide the imagery of blood into some reasons for better understanding. David Artman is one of them. He said

“The Shakespearean tragedy *Macbeth* is filled with references to blood and gore. Three of the many functions which this blood imagery serves are to set the tone in the various scenes, to pace the wave of action throughout the play, and to characterize the nature of the death and killing in the play.”

### 2.1. To bring the atmosphere of battle of that contemporary time.

In *Macbeth*, blood imagery plays such an important role that through the imagery it can be found out very easily that what the situations of the battlefields of the time were. Actually, at the beginning of the play & in the end of the play there are two times where Shakespeare uses the blood imagery through the battle. The play begins with a civil war battle where the Scottish & Norwegian armies fight with each other. In that time no modern arms were used or invented rather sword was used in that time. So, blood flowing is found all over the battlefield. As it is seen in the beginning of the play because of the two armies fighting all the people died in bloody death. There are also some places writer gives us the hint of the bloody condition of the battle.

“Duncan: What bloody man is that ? He can Report,

As seemth by his plight, of the revolt

The newest state.” (Line no:18-20, Act: 1, Scene: 2)

Here, through the speech of King Duncan the miserable condition of the battlefield along with the bloody condition of the soldiers came out to the audience. Because through the blood covering face & dress King Duncan assumes that that bloody man can give the actual information about the battlefield. So, it indicated the condition of the battlefield.

Then,

“Captain: For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),

Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish’d steel.

Which smok’d with bloody execution?

Like Valor’s minion, carv’d out his passage,” (Line No.35-38, Act.1, Scene.2)

Through the comment of the captain of the Scottish army, the bloody horror of the battlefield comes in the light. Through the word “bloody execution” writer gives the clear message of the mind of the soldiers who were only believed in floating of blood in the battlefield. Side by side this reference of blood imagery also indicates the inherited blood thirst of Macbeth & the image of the brave Macbeth as warrior.

Again,

“Captain: So they

Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:

Expect they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,

Or memorize another Golgotha,” (line No.58-61, Act.1, Scene.2)

In the above reference Shakespeare brings bloody politics of that age where bloodshed is the winning factor on the battles for conquering any country by others.

Then in the end of the play where Macbeth fights against Macduff & Malcom the fighting of the Young Siward & Macbeth again prove the horror & bloodshed of the battle.

## 2.2. To set the atmosphere of the play.

The imagery of blood makes atmosphere horror & terrified for the audience. Shakespeare actually uses the blood imagery to set the right atmosphere for the play which is to show the blood thirsty tendency of the play. Not only has that blood set the mood or tone of the play. This imagery sets the tone in the various scenes and the tone most often established is one of horror and disgust. A pattern established in *Macbeth* is that after each murder there is an abundance of blood imagery which magnifies the atmosphere of the play. The play which had before a murder been moderately paced and subdued is swept away in a flood of blood and gore after a murder occurs.

From the beginning of the play blood imageries make the atmosphere which is for the right situation. Like, the blood imageries in the battle field make the horrible atmosphere which is actually seen in the battle field. Then Lady Macbeth chants to devil to make thick her blood in such a way that pity cannot pass through it.

“Lady Macbeth: And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top full

Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,

Stop up th’access and passage to remorse;”(line.393-395,Act.1,Scene.5)

Through the comments writer creates such a terrific atmosphere which arouses the horror and disgust among the audience.

Then, right before the moment of murdering King Duncan Macbeth visualizes a dagger from which blood is dropping and which is pointed toward the room of King Duncan. This blood imagery makes the situation in such a worse that audience feels not only fear but also start to feel disgust for Macbeth. It is also indicating blood thirst atmosphere along with the starting of sinful situation in the play.

Artman also talks about the horror which has been created after king Duncan’s Murder. He said

“Frequently, blood sets the mood or tone in the play. When Duncan’s body is found, “his silver skin laced with his golden blood” sets a tone of horror for the rest of the scene. (II,ii,102) Although this particular imagery also sets a tone of reverence for the assassinated ruler, its main purpose is to fill one with disgust for the vile deed.”

(David Artman)

After that when Macbeth is in the room of King Duncan after murdering him & his hands are covered with blood, he sees & hears the dream talking of the two sons of the king. One of them says Amen at that time but Macbeth cannot say Amen at that time which also creates a very unreligious atmosphere at that time.

Then again the blood imagery makes the atmosphere full with fear & horror when Macbeth comes to see the Ghost of Banquo whose head is full of blood.

“Macbeth: Thou canst not say, I did it: never shake

Thy gory locks at me.” (Line.1336-1337,Act.3, Scene.4)

In these above lines Macbeth admits that he has murdered Banquo and ordered Banquo not to shake his blood covering head over him. This indication of bloody sinful condition of Macbeth & blood covering ghostly head of Banquo create the breath taking horrible situation which is also served to expose the inner atmosphere of the characters .Not only that dead person also makes the situation more horrible. Every time the atmosphere of fear & horror rise among the stage through the entrance of the Banquo ghost.

C.F.E.Spurgeon says,

“I think, to indicate how complex & varied is the imagery of *Macbeth*, and to make it clear that an appreciable part of the emotions we feel throughout of pity, fear & horror, is due to the subtle but definite & repeated action of the blood imagery upon our minds, of which, in our preoccupation with the main theme, we remain often largely unconscious.”

(C.F.E. Spurgeon)

Again when the three witches make the cauldron for gaining more power they add baboon’s blood in it which impose horrible effect over the audience. The image of bloody child who comes because of the chants of the witches to tell a prediction to Macbeth creates fearful environment. In act.4, scene.3 Macduff laments for his miserable nation which bleeds for the bloody tyrant like Macbeth and it creates an emotional atmosphere & raises love for own country among every audiences.

“Macduff: Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tranny, lay thou thy basis sure,

For goodness dare not check tee! Wear thou

thy wrongs;

The title is affeer'd!-Fare thee well, Lord:" (Line.1879-1883, Act.4,Scene.3)

In these above lines Macduff express his deep grief that bleed, my poor country, bleed! Great tyrant (Macbeth) establishes himself firmly because good people are afraid of opposing him! Let him enjoy the fruits of his crimes; his kingship is now confirmed. Through this comments writer actually tries to create the environment passionate for the country lovers.

At last, Macduff also laments & almost complains to his country in his mind that how his country is allowed to rule by the blood-stained scepter of a usurper like Macbeth.

"Macduff: Fit to govern?

Not, not to live- o nation miserable!

With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,

When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,

Since that the truest issue of thy throne" (line.1960-1964, Act.4, Scene.3)

Through the above speech the lamenting condition of Macduff makes the inner country loving blood flowing for the heart of every audience. Thus this blood related imagery creates the emotional & patriotic environment around the audience.

Not only have these above references of blood imagery have made the correct atmosphere of the play but also set the mood of the audiences in which way they get the actual meaning of the scenes of the play. So, the blood imagery is very important & plays a vital role for creating perfect dramatic atmosphere according to the wish of the author, Shakespeare.

"Imagery and symbolism are unavoidable features in William Shakespeare's Macbeth. One of the most prominent symbolic factors in the play is the presence of blood. It has been noted that the presence of blood "increases the feelings of fear, horror, and pain" (Spurgeon, Pg. 20). From the appearance of the bloody sergeant in the second scene of the very last scene, there is a continued vision of blood all throughout the play."

(The Imagery and Symbolism in Macbeth: www.chuckiii.com)

### 2.3. To express the inner condition & the transformation from the path of virtue to sin or destruction central characters.

Shakespeare uses the blood imagery in a very artistic way to bring out the inner condition of the central characters. Especially the atmosphere of the two most important characters Macbeth & Lady Macbeth are clear in front of the audiences through some references of the blood imagery. Not only that but also the inner transformation from the Noble & loyal to evil what goes inside Macbeth also comes out through the blood imagery of the play.

In Ukessays,

“It is clear that Shakespeare uses the image of blood to enhance the audience's understanding of Macbeth and his character transformation. He starts on as a noble and just person, turns ambitious and treacherous and becomes a man full of guilt and remorse for his crime.”

(The Blood Imagery In Macbeth English Literature Essay: [www.ukessays.com](http://www.ukessays.com))

In Act (1) Scene (5) Lady Macbeth prays to the devil to make her blood so thick that pity cannot pass through it. This blood imagery makes it clear that the inner condition of Lady Macbeth is damned from the beginning of the play. The rotten soul of Lady Macbeth is ready instantly to commit to murder King Duncan to make her husband the next king. Through this image it is obvious that she is lacking of morality.

“Lady Macbeth: And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top full

Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,

Stop up th'access and passage to remorse ;”( line.393-395,Act.1, Scene.5)

The above blood image indicates the upcoming bloodshed which continues throughout the play. It is also the symbol of sinking conscience of Lady Macbeth.

Then in Act(2), Scene(2), after committing the murder of king Duncan Macbeth comes in front of the room where two sons' of King Duncan sleeps. Suddenly one of them shouts in the sleep. Macbeth thinks the son may see his blood covering hands which proves of his crime. But later he comes to know the originality that the son has shouted because of dream but because of his sinking religious aspect & because of his blood in his hands he cannot say “Amen”. This blood imagery is also the proof of Macbeth gradual transformation from good to evil. The loyal Macbeth who bleeds blood for his country & that blood makes him proud enough but in this time because of the blood he cannot say Amen which refers his mental changing state. The devilish attitude gradually demolishes his mind which comes up through this blood imagery. After that again in Act(2), Scene(2) after the murder has happened lady Macbeth wants to paint the guards' face with the

blood of King Duncan which can be the proof of their innocent. This devilish thought to make innocents guilty to make themselves out of suspecting condition predicts the evil minded quality of Lady Macbeth where Shakespeare also uses the imagery of blood.

Then,

“Macbeth: What hands are there? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes.

Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood

Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather

Making the green one red.”(Line.723-726, Act2, Scene.3)

In this above dialogues Macbeth says that his hands cannot be washed with the whole water of Neptune. Through this blood imagery the depth of the crime inside the mind of Macbeth comes out in front of the audience. Not only the crime depth but also the little conscience which is yet left inside him also brings up in the light of audiences judgment.

In Study Mose there is an indication of the guilty feeling of Macbeth after committing the murder of King Duncan.

“After Macbeth murders Duncan, he begins to realize that he will never be the same, “Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather / The multitudinous seas incarnadine” (2.2.78-80). The blood imagery represents his life changing forever because the blood of Duncan (the murder) will never go away. Not even Neptune, the God of the sea can wash it away. This murder is used for only Macbeth’s damnation, which sheds bad blood. In addition, the blood imagery also epitomizes the guilt and regret that follows the murder.”

(Macbeth: The Bloodbath Essay) (Study Moose)

Jan Johnston, another critic also said about the condition of Macbeth with the reference of blood. He said,

“It's not that Macbeth is averse to killing. He is famous as a warrior, and the first thing we hear about him, well before he enters, is that he is drenched in blood and has slit someone open from the navel to the chaps. His high social status comes from his effectiveness as a bloody warrior. So it's not compunction about killing that holds him back. It is rather a clear awareness that in killing Duncan he will be violating every rule that holds his community together. This awareness is accompanied by an intelligent appreciation for the immediate consequences to himself”



(Jan Johnston)

But, Lady Macbeth already turns into pure evil minded women because after the above comment of Macbeth she easily gives him the way to usual wash of hands which will remove the blood lines from the hands. Because of her full transformation she cannot consume the weight of the comment of Macbeth. But the gradual transformation of Macbeth from humanity to blood thirsted tyrant is clear to all of the audience.

“Lady Macbeth: My hands are of your color; but I shame

To wear a heart so white.

[knocking within]

I hear a knocking

All to the south entry:- retire we to our chamber.

A little water clears us this deed:

How easy it then! Your constancy” (line.729-735, Act2, acene.3)

In this above dialogue it is clear that conscience level of Lady Macbeth is already sunk. She is now trying to do the same thing to his husband’s mind that the transformation of Macbeth is going to complete because of her consistent provocation.

In Act (3), scene (1), Lady Macbeth & Macbeth make the hands & faces of the sleeping guards with the blood of King Duncan & this blood imagery indicates not only the proof of the murder but also the stable devilish & sinful condition of their inner mind after committing the murder.

“Shakespeare presents the negative implications of unbridled ambition, and the reader can see in Macbeth their own potential corruption. Shakespeare’s visceral depiction of Macbeth’s ambitious nature and his ensuing depravity are similarly relevant to the reader in exploring humanity’s weaknesses. Macbeth ultimately understands his loss of honor, following descent into immorality, “I am in blood stepped so far that should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o’er.”As Macbeth’s moral character weakens, spurred by his ambition, the reader relates to the raw representation of the weaknesses and vices of humanity. Shakespeare’s exploration of the negative influences of ambition therefore transcends cultural and historical barriers and continues to be relevant to modern audiences.”

(Lily Gordon.:‘Shakespeare is not relevant to contemporary audiences’:Academia Share Research)

In Act(3), Scene(4) after murdering Banquo when Macbeth meets the first murderer who has blood on his face Macbeth does not feel any confusion or tensed about that line of blood. That actually indicates his complete transformation from humanity to blood thirsty devil.

Then, When Macbeth is afraid because of the blood covering face of Banquo's ghost he says that he has seen bloodshed before but in that times bloodsheds were not horrible to him but this blood makes him terrified because this blood is indicating treacherous crime. So, it is stranger than a crime to him. This blood related comments give the audience water like picture of the inside atmosphere of Macbeth.

“Macbeth: Blood hath been shed ere noe, I'th'olden time,

Ere humane statue purg'd the gentle weal;

Ay, and since too, murthers have been perform'd

Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,”(Line.1366-1369,Act.3,Scene.4)

In this above blood imagery exposes the inside horror of Macbeth. Macbeth was a loyal soldier who has already taken part in many battles where he shed blood for his country & king but this time the reason of the bloodshed is quite different. Treachery is the reason of bloodshed. As he knows from his inside that it is a crime, it makes him nervous & afraid.

Again in Act(3),Scene(4),Macbeth describes the nature of blood to his wife that the murdered blood will demand the blood of the murderer. He also gives the reference of a proverb that blood will have blood. Through this blood related conversation gives us the view of the inner weakness of Macbeth. Side by side the full compact transformation of blood thirst inside the mind of Macbeth comes out.

“Macbeth: It will have blood, they say: blood will have blood:” (line. Act. Scene.)

Through the above comment the nature of the blood which will shed if it sheds for any fowl reason for one time. The other thing is the murdered blood will always demand the blood of the murderer. So, it means blood is the reason of bloodshed.

In Act (4), Scene (1), When Macbeth goes to the witches in the second time to know his future, the second apparition suggests him to be blood thirsty. This will indicate the quality of tyrant. This also indicates the heavy bloodshed in the play & Macbeth becomes more & more blood thirsty because of this suggestion.

In Act (4), Scene (1) Macbeth is followed by the blood covering ghost of Banquo when Macbeth goes second time to the witches. In that time at one of their conversation the blood covered figure of Banquo smiles at him & points to the witches as his descendants.

“Macbeth: Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;

For the bloodbolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,

And points at them for his.

[Apparitions vanish]

What, is this so?" (Line.1694-1698,Act.4,Scene.1)

Here, Macbeth feels very terrified & afraid because the blood covered face of Banquo smiles at in a horrible way & points to the witches who are his main strength to fight against Macduff.

In Chuckii we can get the idea How Macbeth is about blood.

"The image of blood is induced when Macbeth calls upon the "bloody and invisible hand" of night to help the murderers he has hired carry out their assassination of Banquo and his son, Fleance. Then, Macbeth realizes that "blood will have blood" and that his murderous plots will all come to an end with his death. Finally, at the end of the banquet scene, Macbeth confesses that he is "in blood, stepp'd in so far that, should [he] wade no more, returning [would be] as tedious as to go o'er." [III. iv. 136-7] Through all these instances of blood symbolism and imagery, it is obvious that "Macbeth is about blood."

(The Imagery and Symbolism in Macbeth: www.chuckiii.com)

After that in Act (4), scene (3) Macduff also indicates about blood. Though his saying is totally for different reason that image of blood also indicates the condition of Macduff's mind.

"Macduff: Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny! lay thou thy basis sure,

For goodness dare not cheque thee: wear thou

thy wrongs;" (Line.1879-1882, Act.4, Scene.3)

In this above image of blood Macduff actually laments for the country which he loves most. When he observe his loving country ruled by a bloody tyrant line Macbeth his heart is bleed. Through the comment of bleeding poor country it actually indicates the inner bleeding of Macduff & shows his lamenting condition. In act (4), scene (3) he also laments from the bottom of his heart for his country & express his worry about the country's future.

"Macduff: No, not to live- O nation miserable!

With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,

When shalt thou see thy wholesome days agagin,” (Line.1961-1963, Act.4. Scene.3)

In this blood related comment the horrible condition of the country comes out in front of the audience. Macduff's sorrowful condition also reflects through the comment.

In Chuckiii, we can get some information how blood affects all the characters.

“The imagery of blood seems to affect almost all the characters in the play. It affects Lady Macbeth in the scene in which she is found sleepwalking talking to herself after the murders of Duncan and Banquo : “Here’s the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.” [V. i. 50-1]”

(The Imagery and Symbolism in Macbeth: www.chuckiii.com)

The worse mental condition of Lady Macbeth relates in Act (5),Scene(1) when Doctor asks Gentlewoman about the reason of washing her hand again & again.

“Gent.: It is ia an accustom’d action with her, to seem thus washing her hands.

I have known her continue in

this a quarter of an hour.

Lady Macbeth: Yet here’s a spot.”(Line.2153-2156,Act.5,Scene1)

The actual mental condition of Lady Macbeth comes out through the above conversation. Earlier Lady Macbeth has no fear of blood but her sir makes her mind empty & horror grasp her whole heart. Besides the thirst of blood of Macbeth also makes her afraid which also causes her to suffer scyzofrania. She feels that her hands are full with blood & nothing can clean it. It is her day dream but it indicates swollen environment of her mind. She cannot take the burden of her crime any longer. The crime of murdering King Duncan destroys the mental stability of Lady Macbeth. So, the blood what she has washed earlier very easily seems covering her hands always. The reverse transformation of her condition of mind is reflected here.

Ansari also says about the mental downfall of Lady Macbeth,

“Her want of imagination makes her exclaim, “a little water clears us of this deed.” This want of imagination though it helps to make Lady Macbeth strong for immediate action, is fatal to her. It is owing to the dullness if her imagination that she does not understand the real nature of her husband, or the consequences of their crime. Nor does she understand herself any better than him. The realisation of the hideousness of their crime comes to her soon after the murder with the shock of a sudden disclosure, and at once she begins to sink. The glory of her dream soon fades away, and exhausted and sleepless she exclaims.”

He also discusses,

“The reality of conscience, of human feelings, has reached her to this pitiful state. She shuffles sleepwalking, across the stage. She tries to rub of an invisible spot of blood from her hand, and then, in the halting speech of the mad, she goes over and over the guilty details of her past. She can no longer tell a connected story, but we feel each remembered incident lacerating her brain.”

(Hasanuzzaman Ansari: ROLE OF LADY MACBETH IN MACBETH)

Then again Lady Macbeth's rotten condition comes to light when she gives the comment that the smell of the blood which also her proof of previous crime remains in her hands. She also thinks that all the perfumes of Arabia will not be enough to get rid her little hand of the smell.

“Lady Macbeth: Here's the smell of the blood still: all perfumes of Arabia

will not sweeten this little hand.

Oh! Oh! Oh!” (Line.2173-2175,Act.5,scene.1)

In this above blood imagery the reflection of the inner soul of Lady Macbeth comes alive. Shakespeare uses this blood imagery to express the depth of her crime which is the cause of her mental instability. Not only that in the next few dialogue she insensibly suggest his husband in her sick condition to wash his hand also rather the blood covering ghost of Banque attacks him again & again. Shakespeare uses these references of blood image to expose the weight of their crime; the innocent blood which they already shed now becomes the cause of their mental disturbance. This mental disturbance goes in such an unbearable level that it cause the death of Lady Macbeth. Writer's superb using of blood imagery makes audience more understanding about their transformation from good to bad. Lady Macbeth who was evil in her mind earlier than Macbeth becomes victim of her own vice. But Macbeth transformation is complex that it is assumed earlier. Because Macbeth is the man who has been afraid of shedding innocent blood for any reason becomes habitual of shedding innocent blood. The transformation goes so much deep that he cannot feel what his wife feels before her death.

In Ukessays, we get the idea of flowing blood's work from the beginning to the end of the play.

“At the beginning of the play, blood is used to represent Macbeth's loyalty and honor as a soldier. As the play progresses, he becomes a treacherous person, betraying King Duncan and murdering him. The blood now is associated with murder and Macbeth's treason. Towards the end of the play, the image of blood shows the unending guilt of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.”

In Study Mose, we can also know about the mental transformation of Macbeth & Lady Macbeth.

“However, Macbeth eventually transforms into a villain, who murders the innocent with a lust for power. For the most part, blood is symbolic of violence and destruction. The frequent repetition of this imagery represents the murder, and the emotion following the murder, which is guilt. Shakespeare uses imagery of blood throughout the play to exemplify and express the guilt of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth after their deeds.”

(Macbeth: The Bloodbath Essay: Study Moose)

Artman also discusses about the bloodthirsty nature of Macbeth in his criticism, “Blood Imagery In Macbeth”, He said

“Then, the images of blood and reeking gore set a tone of horror over the horrible killing of a friend and relation. This unification is constant throughout Macbeth. Blood images build up & become more frequent as Duncan is murdered, and the images instigate feelings of horror and disgust about this deceitful assassination. The same pattern holds true for both Banquo’s killing & the murder of Macduff’s family. When the blood flows quickly, so does the action.”

(David Artman)

### 3. Conclusion:

Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist in the history of English literature, gives us a great drama like *Macbeth* where he uses blood imagery to express the theme of the drama so much clear to the audience. From the beginning of the story writes uses superbly the images of blood to create the situations. When audience first see the image of blood in the time of two countries battle the image of that blood is indicating the pride of the characters. But gradually the situation becomes changed through taking the decision of murdering King Duncan which is the first heinous crime of Macbeth. In that time he becomes afraid of shedding innocent blood which comes out through his hallucination of seeing a dagger pointing to the chamber and dropping blood from it. Though after murdering King Duncan he becomes so upset and he thinks that the blood lines will never be gone from his hand. But her wife Lady Macbeth was strong enough to overcome the guilty conscience. In that area Shakespeare uses blood imager to expose the two opposite mental condition of both husband & wife. Because in that time Macbeth has some morality left in him but Lady Macbeth has nothing to feel the curse of their crime. But through the

development of the plot & events Shakespeare uses the same blood imagery to show their transformation from their earlier position. That means Macbeth becomes more & more blood thirsty who in one time feels nothing to shed innocent blood as much as he wish. The moral conscience gradually dies in him. He becomes a pure devil. But on the other hand his wife, Lady Macbeth's conscience of her previous guilt or crime has come up inside her mind which creates the worst kind of mental disturbance & causes her death. In the time of her sickness writer uses the images of blood to make us understanding what is going inside her mind. Not only the blood imagery shows the mental transformation but also creates the horrible atmosphere which actually reflects the central theme & character. All the time the ghost of Banquo creates the environment enough to feel the terror & fear. At last we can come to the conclusion that the uses of blood imagery not only work as an element of the drama but also play a vital role to establish the exact point what Shakespeare wants to expose to the audiences.

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