

## **Lady Macbeth's Personality Is Highly Masculinized: A Critical Analysis of Her Character**

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### **Abstract:**

Gender issues play a part in every slant of human proffering and participation, including the production and experience of literature, whether we are consciously conversant with these issues. While sex is settled and at the same time fixed by physical form, gender can be essentially free of anatomy and is a societal construction. Gender criticism, like the gender studies of which it is a part, is based on the premise that while sex (a person's identification as male or female) is determined by anatomy, gender (masculinity or femininity in personality traits and behavior) can be primarily independent of anatomy, and is a social construction. (146)

**Keywords:** Masculinity, Femininity, Psychic Split, Power-drive, Phallogocentric, Defensive Manoeuvre, Hamartia.

Lady Macbeth desires to be less feminine and more masculine to procure her husband's goals. Lady Macbeth suspects

that her husband is too full of the milk of human kindness to do what must be done to become king in her computation and assessment.

LADY MACBETH. Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be What thou art promis'd: yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' the milk of human kindness To catch the nearest way: (14)

People postulate that there is a bond between mind and body; that is why Lady Macbeth covets to be unsexed physically or biologically to free her from the psychological idiosyncrasies of femininity and become more masculine. By being unsexed and giving up her femininity, Lady Macbeth aspires to glean and garner the qualities regarded as masculine and not feminine.

LADY MACBETH. Come, you spirits. That tend on human thoughts! Unsex me here, And fill me from the crown to the toe top full Of direst cruelty! (15)

Established gender roles cast men as sagacious and robust; they cast women as docile, weak, meek, amenable, and tractable. She hopes to become resolute, firm, incisive, trenchant, perspicacious, inexorable, and unrelenting -more like a warrior to effectuate and procure the necessary strength to kill and make her husband the new king of Scotland.

Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; women are emotional, weak, nurturing, and submissive. These gender roles have been used successfully to justify inequities, which still occur today, such as excluding women from equal access to leadership and decision-making positions. (85)

She, the masculinized woman, also maintains the lofty perch and enviable position. She wants to drive out from Macbeth's heart all the doubts, scruples, and fears which prevent him from getting the crown offered to him by fate and supernatural powers.

LADY MACBETH.

Hie thee hither  
That I may  
..... aid doth seem  
To have thee crowned  
withal. (14)

Lady Macbeth is not a patriarchal woman because she was not as culturally constructed and socially programmed as most women of the Elizabethan period are; she rebels against how to set parameters and traditional gender roles operate women.

Perhaps she was recovering because she learned to discern and resist that programming. In a nutshell, her personality extends Macbeth's personality because her traits are masculine. She challenged phallogocentric thinking and social constructionism.

LADY MACBETH. I have given  
suck and know. How tender 'tis to  
love the babe, the babe that milks  
me... had I so sworn as you I have  
done this. (20)

The masculinized version of Lady Macbeth seems to be a psychically defensive maneuver that resists her adopting the position of being a woman. It may be some sort of psychic split in her personality that is why she behaves like a male; her temperament is more masculine and less feminine. Even her husband Macbeth realizes this feature of his wife and says:

MACBETH. Bring forth men-  
children only, For thy undaunted  
mettle should compose  
Nothing but males. (20)

Last but not least, it seems that Lady Macbeth, under the impulse of power-drive and power competition behaves like a male because her internal personality is highly masculinized. Perhaps her hamartia was also the vaulting ambition. She has a lust for power which turns her into a more brutal and savage personality than Macbeth because high aspirations sometimes disrupt and fluster the personality. After the analysis described above, it may be

concluded that Lady Macbeth is the extended version of Macbeth's personality. At the same time, she was full of masculinized character traits. She tries to get rid of the feminine attributes of her personality.

Gender studies are indebted to the social historian Michel Foucault, who analyzed all sexual identities, whether perceived to be expected or transgressive, as constructed and reconstructed in various

eras of social discourse under the impulse of power-drive and power-competition. (146)

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