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LADY

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In the character of Lady Macbeth Shakespeare is dealing with one in whom harshness and cruelty could co-exist with feminine tenderness, and strangely enough all the evil thoughts which she had and all the wickedness which she from time to time displays arose from a typically feminine characteristic — her love of and ambition for her husband. It is true that she personally was ambitious and her ambition lay more in seeing great things for her husband than in acquiring ranks and possession for herself.

But her wish to see Macbeth achieve the highest rank she was so moved by his letters in which he describe his first encounter with the witches (Act-I, Sc-II). But from the start she recognize that she would have to use her own strong will to prevent his moral scruple or conscience deflecting him from the kind of action which she — with calculating realism anticipated might be required to translate the witches prophecies into reality. And when her husband wavered she shamed him into by questioning him about his manliness and said if she once promised to kill her own child she would not have any hesitation or compunction in doing so (Act-I, Sc-III). Lady Macbeth's influence was a decisive factor in bringing Macbeth to murder his king. In contrast with her cruelty

Lady Macbeth like some of the great psychopaths of recent European history displays a sentimentalism often sentimental. She is affectionate towards her husband. She could not herself murder her sleeping guest because he resembled her late father. (Act-II, sc-II). In her self-induced hysteria when the murder is discovered she faints. (Act-II, sc-III).

To Lady Macbeth the milk of human kindness in her husband is a defect in his nature, an obstacle to the full exercise of his man-ness or valour. But within herself this instinctive sense of her accepted values of life is vaguely perturbed by other intimations.

Adventently or inadvertently she describes the quality of Macbeth which he lacks, the quality which would assure to Macbeth, the valour of self-realization and illness.

"Thou wouldst be great  
Art not with ambition but without.  
The illness should attend it."

Speculative: Lady Macbeth is not given to the summation about the ethics. Life for her is the expression through action of impulses, which are strongest within her. They are set towards a realization of those objects, which the world seems to hold

as things of highest worth in life, the rewards of undaunted valour. She stands with in a moral world which is giving way far more than she realizes. to a higher order.

Lady Macbeth thus fought a constant battle between her natural instinct and callous cruelty through which fame was to be gained and ambition satisfied. ~~Here~~ At first the later triumph and her strength of will forced Macbeth to murder his king. Her strength was again evident at the Banquet scene, where her calmness & cunning distracted the guest, attention from her hysterical husband. But gradually ~~when~~ her conscience and remorse and she could warn Macbeth that dwelling on past deeds might even his senses. (Act - II, sc - II) - in her sanity which broke beneath the cumulative weight of guilt. In the sleep-walking scene (Act - II, sc - I) we see how her mind had become deranged and we can't but feel pity when we learn of her suicide — Pity for a wasted life, and her talent and strength so abused that in the end they destroyed themselves. Thus the human sense of humanity's are common to Ptolemy and to Shakespeare. The evil is unnaturalness rather than unrighteousness.