

"Does she look like the innocent flower but become the serpent underneath ?": The Femme Fatal Lady Macbeth in the Misogynist *Macbeth***Huriyyah ALRaznah**College of Languages and Translation
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Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**Abstract**

Renaissance's society used to bring into play an ad nauseam cliché "a woman's place is the home". However, Lady Macbeth, one of William Shakespeare's dramatic characters, represents an image of the powerful woman. Because she enabled her husband Macbeth to ascend the throne of Scotland. This is when she urges him to commit a crime. Accordingly, Lady Macbeth was labeled as a femme fatale and a disastrous woman. However, when Macbeth becomes the king she switched to the role of the submissive wife. Contemporary readers would feel ambivalent toward Lady Macbeth's femininity; she is a mix of both a powerful woman and a formidable villain. Lady Macbeth's dilemma, in a nutshell, is that she is a disastrous wife to urge her husband to kill the king and she is a faint-hearted woman to feel guilty and let the pang of conscience destroy her mind. Thus, Lady Macbeth ends up marginalized, the same as her Renaissance counterparts. Correspondingly, this paper focuses on the connection of Lady Macbeth's demonic nature with gender discrimination and the misogynist attitude of Shakespeare. Bias against Lady Macbeth, here, is not just a product of individual male thought but is the result of the pervasive social norm of early modern patriarchy. The main methodological approach of this paper is the cultural study of the sixteenth-century feminism. Thus, interdisciplinary theory of feminist perspective in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* as well as the historical study of the marginalized Renaissance women are applied to probe into the reality of misogyny and negative representation of women in Shakespearean drama as alluring and evil figures. Therefore, the focused question within this non-thesis is why Shakespearean female characters, mainly including Lady Macbeth, are prejudicially undermined. In the end, the paper urges other researches to apply the sociological study of female power within Shakespeare's other plays to find out how all of the Shakespearean heroines are subordinate; following the Elizabethan social norm of disempowering women.

Keywords: empowerment, Elizabethan, Femme fatale, inferiority, Lady Macbeth, *Macbeth* Renaissance, Shakespeare, submission, Women

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