

Macbeth: reversal of theme lit paragraph essay sample



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Like seeing a moon rising in the morning or stars replacing a clear blue sky, reversal is a common sight in Macbeth by Shakespeare. The theme of reversal is one of the most prevalent themes throughout the play. One of the first lines is the witches chanting " fair is foul, and foul is fair. " (I. i. 12) The witches chant that good is bad and bad is good which is a complete reversal of what is normally though, good is good and bad is bad not the other way around.

Reversal is not exclusive to humans. Even animals such as " a flaon, tow'ring in her pride of place, / [a mousing owl attacks and kills it]. " (II. iv. 15-16) Owls do not hunt flacons as flacons are the larger creatures, on top of that flacons are higher than owls on the chain of being, making the attack a complete reversal of the natural order. The natural order of Macbeth's world is reversed; things are supposed to be one way but are the total opposite.

Things are in such a disarray that " by th'clock ' tis day, / and yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp. " (II. iv. 8-9) While clocks read day time, darkness swallows the sun, making it look like night even though it is the middle of the day. The theme of reversal is one of the major themes in Macbeth and has a heavy focus on it, it is littered throughout the play, affecting people, animals and the world around the characters.