

## MOTIFS OF POWER, BETRAYAL AND DESTINY IN W. SHAKESPEARE'S *MACBETH* AND A. SAPKOWSKI'S *THE WITCHER* (PART TWO)

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**Abstract:** The aim of the article is to examine the motives of power, betrayal and fate in *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare and *The Witcher* by Andrzej Sapkowski. William Shakespeare is a great writer of all time, as evidenced by his works. One of the greatest works of this English playwright is *Macbeth*, because it contains many timeless themes. The three main themes in *Macbeth* are power, betrayal and fate, which come together as a whole. It's similar with *The Witcher* by Andrzej Sapkowski. It is worth noting, however, that *The Witcher* belongs to contemporary literature, while "Macbeth" was written in the 17th century. Despite such a large time difference between these works, some similarities can be noticed.

**Keywords:** motif, power, betrayal, destiny, *Macbeth*, *The Witcher*

### MOTYWY WŁADZY, ZDRADY I PRZEZNACZENIA W *MAKBECIE* W. SZEKSPIRA I *WIEDŹMINIE* A. SAPKOWSKIEGO (CZĘŚĆ DRUGA)

**Abstrakt:** Celem artykułu jest zbadanie motywów władzy, zdrady i przeznaczenia w *Makbecie* Williama Szekspira i *Wiedźminie* Andrzeja Sapkowskiego. William Szekspir jest wielkim pisarzem wszech czasów, o czym świadczą jego utwory. Jednym z największych dzieł tego angielskiego dramaturga jest *Makbet*, ponieważ zawiera wiele ponadczasowych wątków. Trzy główne motywy w *Makbecie* to władza, zdrada i przeznaczenie, które łączą się w całość. Podobnie jest z *Wiedźminem* Andrzeja Sapkowskiego. Warto jednak zauważyć, że *Wiedźmin* należy do literatury współczesnej, natomiast *Makbet* został napisany w XVII wieku. Mimo tak dużej różnicy czasowej pomiędzy tymi dziełami, można dostrzec pewne podobieństwa.

**Słowa kluczowe:** motyw, władza, zdrada, przeznaczenie, *Makbet*, *Wiedźmin*

### Comparative Analysis of the Motifs in "The Witcher" by Andrzej Sapkowski and "Macbeth" by William Shakespeare

Polish writer Andrzej Sapkowski took many motifs from William Shakespeare's "Macbeth", including motifs of power, betrayal, and destiny. He developed

these motifs in his series of the fantasy novel “The Witcher”. This saga consists of two short stories and six volumes. The paper will analyse two short stories “The Witcher The Last Wish”, “The Witcher Sword of Destiny”, and two volumes of “The Witcher Blood of Elves”, “The Witcher Time of Contempt” in comparison with “Macbeth” by William Shakespeare. It is worth explaining at the outset who the Witcher is. The main character of the series is Geralt of Rivia, commonly known as the Witcher or the White Wolf. The Witcher was created for special tasks: he kills all sorts of monsters on the orders of a higher authority, such as the mayor, king, or queen. In doing so, he encounters various adventures that lead him and his friends to these three motives. Interestingly, both writers use the aforementioned motifs alternately. The motif of power precedes the motif of betrayal because when Macbeth comes to power he must first betray his king. The betrayal stems from the destiny that weird sisters foretold Macbeth's future. It is similar in “The Witcher” that the three themes overlap in the works.

Starting from the beginning, Geralt is a creature very experienced by fate, so he knows a lot about the mechanisms of power. The Witcher describes how power affects human behaviour because he has witnessed such situations more than once.

– “Sure they are”, said the Witcher. – In Jamuralek, for example, the old man Abrad reigns [...] he will not sleep unless someone is attacked in his consciousness. He has slaughtered all his kin and depopulated half the country in what you termed unconscionable fits of rage. Oh Stregobor, it would be beautiful if the rulers' atrocities could be explained by a mutation or a curse. (Sapkowski 2014: 103-104)

In “Macbeth”, the title character himself and his wife committed an act of treason and murdered King Duncan so that Macbeth could take his place on the royal throne. Lady Macbeth got the royal guards drunk with wine, explaining to them that they too were guests at their estate. In this way, Macbeth sneaked up on King Duncan and killed him, while Lady Macbeth planted knives on the royal guards as evidence of their alleged regicide. In both works, there is an arc about murders in palaces, especially the scene of stabbings is very relevant here because Macbeth killed the king with a knife.

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain? [...]  
I see thee still,  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. (Shakespeare 2014: 30-31)

In this soliloquy, Macbeth takes an obsessive approach to crime, plotting against his king, whom he hosts at Inverness Castle. A key element is the play of imagination, as Macbeth imagines the whole act of carrying out the murder. It is worth noting the rhetorical questions Macbeth asks himself. There is the possibility that Macbeth is still hesitating before committing the betrayal. At the end of Macbeth's monologue, there is the sound of a bell and at this point, Macbeth makes his decision.

The similar images can be noticed in “The Witcher The Last Wish”

– “Stregobor,” said Geralt. – Such is the world. You see a lot when you travel. [...] In the cities, you stumble over dead bodies in the gutters every step of the way. In palaces, they stab each other with daggers, and at feasts now and then someone falls under the table, blue from poison. I'm used to it. (Sapkowski 2014: 99)

These passages from both works show the true face of a man when it comes to the struggle for power.

In the first story of “The Witcher The Last Wish”, Queen Calanthe, during the wedding ceremony of the princess Pavetta, warns the Witcher about the people who hold power.

Do not speak in this way to those in authority. More than one will not forget such words to you, and you know kings, you know that they have different means. Dagger. Poison [...]. There are hundreds, thousands of ways that kings use to avenge their offended pride. (Sapkowski 2014: 152)

These were also the strategies executed by King Macbeth. Macbeth's reign was characterised by terrible terror. Macbeth surrounded himself with spies who reported on their other subjects. Among these helpless victims was Lady Macduff, wife of the Scottish nobleman Macduff, who had set out for England to seek the rightful heir to the throne. Macduff's son was also killed. Of course, in “The Witcher” Queen Calanthe, points out that there are many ways to get rid of rivals, for example, it can be murder with a dagger or poison. Whereas in

“Macbeth”, the main character with the help of his wife kills King Duncan or hires private assassins.

FIRST MURDERER

What, you egg?

Young fry of treachery!

Stabbing him

SON

He has killed me, mother.

Run away, I pray you!

[He] dies.

Exit Lady Macduff, crying “Murder!” Exeunt Murderers,  
following her (Shakespeare 2014: 77-78)

This situation shows all the cruelty of Macbeth and resembles the words of Queen Calanthe from “The Witcher”.

What is more, cruelty towards subjects in “The Witcher” is performed by a certain Chappelle, who is the governor, the secret service of Novigrad. The character and how this character acts are very similar to Macbeth. Chappelle has unparalleled power; everyone trembles before him because whoever opposes Chappelle is lost without a trace. It is the same with Macbeth's exercise of power, whoever opposes his regicide is murdered. A perfect example of this is Banquo, his friend who was with Macbeth on the moors where the weird sisters were foretelling the future. As Banquo began to unravel Macbeth's actions and what had happened to King Duncan, Macbeth ordered private assassins to kill Banquo and his son Fleance because he feared Banquo would discover the truth and his successors, including his son, would become kings of Scotland. Macbeth surrounded himself with spies, as did Chappelle.

MACBETH

Both of you

Know Banquo was your enemy

[...]

MACBETH

So is he mine; and in such bloody distance

That every minute of his being thrusts

Against my near'st of life: and though I could

With barefaced power sweep him from my sight

And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,

For certain friends that are both his and mine,  
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall  
Who I myself struck down [...] (Shakespeare 2014: 50-51)

In this scene, Macbeth uses a method of manipulation assuming that Banquo was an enemy not only to him but also to his subjects. He tries to justify himself to the robbers. He is governed by falsehood and hypocrisy. He describes his friend Banquo as someone very dangerous, a threat to his life, which is not true. Banquo is not a threat to anyone; it is a manipulative game that rulers usually use to control the minds of their subjects.

Returning to “The Witcher”, it is worth noting one of the characters, Chappelle, who is cruel to the subjects of Novigrad.

It was Chappelle, the governor for security. Novigrad’s secret service reports to the church. Chappelle is not a priest, but he is the grey eminence of the hierarchy, the most powerful man in the city. Everyone, even the Council and the guilds are shaking their pants at him, for he is a scoundrel of the highest order, Geralt, as drunk with power as a spider must be with blood. Although quietly, it is said in the city what he can do. People disappearing without a trace. False accusations, torture, stealth, terror [...]. (Sapkowski 2014: 171)

However, there is a difference between the two characters. Macbeth is the King of Scotland, which means he holds supreme power in the country. Whereas Chappelle is only a governor, someone else has authority over him, so Chappelle is not as important as Macbeth.

Another point worth noting is the lust for power and the ambition of the future ruler. A man is driven by ambition, sets himself difficult goals, and strives to achieve them. This is accompanied by audacity and questioning someone’s loyalty. Such situations occur in Shakespeare’s play, and it is not only Macbeth and Lady Macbeth who have overweening ambitions. In this context, attention must be paid to Banquo. Macbeth’s friend seems to mock his friend during the prophecy however, he wants to draw the attention of the weird sisters:

You greet with present grace and great prediction  
Of noble having and of royal hope,  
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.  
If you can look into the seeds of time  
And say which grain will grow and which will not,  
Speak then, to me, who neither beg nor fear  
Your favors nor your hate. (Shakespeare 2014: 13)

The effect of ambition on human behavior is worth noting. Banquo knowing that his successors may be kings of Scotland tries to suppress his ambition compared to Macbeth. After the death of the King of Scotland, Banquo begins to think about what exactly happened. However, no one knows whether Banquo would have tried to use the witches' prophecies to show his ambition if Macbeth had not ordered him to be killed by paid assassins.

In "The Witcher", the person who has overweening ambitions of his own is King Niedamir, who already has his kingdom and all sorts of blessings, but he still hasn't had enough and wants more. It is the same with Macbeth: after the battle, Macbeth learns that for his brave service during the battle, he receives a new title. Macbeth becomes the Thane of Cawdor, however, despite such a high position, Macbeth wants more. Macbeth wants to become King of Scotland at any cost:

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. (Shakespeare 2014: 31)

Both characters have inflated ambitions and thus want to conquer more, they abuse their current power. King Niedamir wants to gain the throne of Malleore just as Macbeth wants to gain power in Scotland. King Niedamir is just as brutal as Macbeth in his actions, as whoever opposes him or stands in the way of his empire is murdered.

The Throne of Malleore is mine anyway because I have three hundred armoured men and a half thousand pedestrians in Caingorn against their thousand shields. And they deem me anyway. For so long I will hang, cut, and roam the horses until they deem me. (Sapkowski 2014: 75)

Of course, there is a difference between these two characters, Niedamir is already a king and wants to conquer more kingdoms and Macbeth is just a Thane of Cawdor who only wants to win the crown.

Power means might, it causes fear of people because the person in power might be ruthless in his actions. However, it is not always so, the ruler can be someone kind, good before whom every citizen does not fear for his life and feels safe. King Duncan was such a ruler. He surrounded himself with kindness and wanted to do as much good as possible for his country. Unfortunately, some people created conspiracies behind his back. One of them was the commander of the Scottish army and Lady Macbeth. The conspirators were very cunning be-

cause they knew when to murder their king. A perfect example of one of the behaviours of the conspirators against the King is Lady Macbeth. Here, Lady Macbeth summons the spirits of evil during a ritual to help her carry out the murder of King Duncan. This whole ritual shows Lady Macbeth's ruthlessness as she has decided to kill the King at all costs. After this ritual, Lady Macbeth kindly welcomes her King to Inverness Castle. The behaviour of Macbeth's wife demonstrates what a man is capable of to gain power.

That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full  
Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood.  
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,  
Wherever in your sightless substances  
You wait on nature's mischief! (Shakespeare 2014: 21)

In this ritual, Lady Macbeth on hearing of the King of Scotland's arrival at Inverness Castle decides to seize the moment and murder him in cold blood. This woman is driven by strong emotions, she is full of cruelty and has the inner strength to commit treason against her king. It is worth emphasizing that in this scene Lady Macbeth tries to get rid of her feminine traits because she does not want to be weaker than a man. In those days it was common knowledge that a man was someone strong, higher in rank than a woman. Here Lady Macbeth wants to possess the qualities of a man to commit a cruel murder.

King Duncan is a perfect example of a ruler who was very naive and had a lot of trust in his subjects. One example of his trust is the situation in act one. King Duncan agrees to stay overnight in an unfamiliar castle because he has confidence in his host, Macbeth. Thanks to this trust, Macbeth and his wife commit an act of betrayal, moreover, they commit regicide. The King of Scotland must have been naive and careless to allow such a situation to happen. Lady Macbeth, for example, when she welcomed the King of Scotland to her castle, said only good things and plotted behind his back. Because of his naivety and recklessness, the King was murdered. A ruler should be on his guard because even the most loyal person may sooner or later disobey.

This type of ruler is also shown by Andrzej Sapkowski in "The Witcher The Last Wish". Eltibal, a renowned magician conducted various researches

on a prophecy in which, shortly after a solar eclipse, princesses born would bring disaster to the world. Eltibald's research led to the murder of many innocent princesses – mutants. This is what Eltibald and the Council of Wizards wanted, to create confusion. One of the puppets in the crown who could be deluded was the Prince of Creyden. Through manipulation, Eltibald and the Council of Wizards succeeded in deceiving the ruler, because the prince was naive and believed in everything, just as King Duncan believed in mere goodies, and in the end was murdered. The Duke of Creyden was manipulated to the point of sending his daughter Renfri to certain death because he was just a puppet in the crown.

It is widely known what Eltibald and the Council of Wizards were about at that time. You used the delusions of a madman to consolidate your power. To shatter alliances, to mess up dynasties, in a word, to tug harder on the strings attached to the puppets in your crowns. (Sapkowski 2014: 101)

The puppets in crowns stand for kings who are puppets in the manipulator's game. Their victims highly trust such persons. The same was true of King Duncan because he had great trust in Macbeth. But he did not suspect what would happen at night. He was a kind of puppet whose trust was used by his subjects against him.

The motif of dream plays an important role in Shakespeare's tragedy and fits in with the motif of betrayal. Dreams show how crime may affect a person's psyche. The title character of Shakespeare's play and his wife struggle with numerous nightmares because they committed terrible crimes to gain power. Macbeth, at the numerous persuasions of his wife, even blackmail, killed his king. Lady Macbeth, of course, aided in this murder, tricked the royal guards, and at the very end planted their daggers at the scene of the crime. After the murder, Macbeth and his wife struggle with hallucinations and nightmares that prevent them from living in peace. In this scene, Macbeth begins to hallucinate after committing treason against his friend. During a feast at the castle, Macbeth is hallucinated by Banquo, specifically the ghost of his dead friend. Note the main character's reaction to the news of his friend's absence. He is hypocritical, knows perfectly well what has happened to Banquo, and in front of his subjects explains his absence in a nonsensical manner. Suddenly, when Banquo's ghost appears, Macbeth panics. He thinks that everyone sees the ghost. At this point, the first consequences after the crime, or more precisely the betrayal, will appear.

## MACBETH

[To ghost] Thou canst not say I did it; never shake  
Thy gory locks at me. (Shakespeare 2014: 58)

In “The Witcher Time of Contempt”, the main character Geralt also has nightmares, but they are caused by the numerous crimes he had to commit on behalf of a higher power, such as the king. However, the dream element links these characters, as the nightmares or hallucinations are triggered by the numerous crimes they have committed for their benefit or by the orders of a higher power.

In “The Witcher Blood of Elves”, Sapkowski takes the following quotation as an epigraph to the sixth chapter:

Murder is always murder, regardless of motives and circumstances. Therefore those who kill or prepare murder are criminals and criminals, no matter who they are: kings [...]. None of those who devise and inflict violence have the right to consider themselves better than a common criminal. For all violence by its very nature inevitably leads to crime. (Sapkowski 2014: 228)

This quotation emphasises that there is no excuse for the crime committed. Of course, the social position of a given murderer does not matter. He may be a king or a judge, but that still does not excuse him from committing this terrible deed. Even those who are just devising a plan of action are no different from a common murderer. Macbeth was the commander of the Scottish army, which means he was a very high-ranking nobleman. He had high ambitions, which he let control him, his mind. However, his high position does not in any way excuse him for the crimes he has committed. It is worth noting that Macbeth did not just murder once. He also murdered his friend Banquo, Lady Macduff, and her son. Of course, he was aided in this by paid assassins; anyway, it was he who gave the order to kill them.

The last sentence from “The Witcher Blood of Elves” proves that all violence leads a man to crime.

For all violence by its very nature inevitably leads to crime. (Sapkowski 2014: 228)

When Macbeth committed his first crime, he began to commit more murders. It is important to note that every crime Macbeth commits is with someone else’s involvement. The first crime with the help of his wife, and the subsequent crimes with the help of paid assassins. Perhaps Macbeth thought that giving the

order to kill innocent people somehow justified him because he only gave the order and someone else carried it out. Crime leads to another crime, the story in a way comes full circle because when Macbeth decided to kill King Duncan he passed a sentence on himself. He started committing more crimes, it was an obsession for him because with no potential evidence he killed people to get rid of the growing problems in his mind. For example, Banquo was his friend, they served together in the Scottish army, but it did not matter to Macbeth. He was afraid that Banquo's descendants would become kings of Scotland, as was foretold by the weird sisters.

It is also worth noting the motif of destiny because this motif leads to the other motifs: betrayal and power, which were mentioned earlier. The motif of destiny in "Macbeth" and "The Witcher" begins both works and is present all the time, until the very end of both works. Starting from the very beginning in "The Witcher The Last Wish", the main character Geralt of Rivia comes to know about his destiny during the wedding ceremony of the princess Pavetta. This all happens by right of surprise. The law of surprise is a very old law that binds together a certain person, a woman or a man, and a child, which is the very surprise and is associated with this destiny. The law is that a person offers another person whatever the recipient wishes. The recipient of the gift utters the famous words "You will give me whatever comes out first to welcome you" or "You will give me whatever you find at home that you do not expect" (Sapkowski 2014, 169). However, the law of surprise was particularly unusual because this law was not used randomly. The law of surprise was then uttered as a reward for saving someone's life.

Coming back to the ceremony, Geralt found out about destiny by circumstance, just as Macbeth found out by case. Of course, it was pre-planned by the weird sisters, but Macbeth did not know it. During the wedding ceremony, a brawl occurred between different dynasties. There was a clash ensued in which Dunny was also involved. All the candidates threw themselves at the Hedgehog to kill him. Geralt saved the Dunny-Hedgehog from the wrath of Queen Calanthe and completed his destiny. Thanks to this destiny, Queen Calanthe consent to the marriage of her daughter Pavetta to Dunny. The curse was lifted from Dunny, and he returned to his human form. Dunny wanted to thank Geralt, he asked what he wanted and Geralt spoke the words of the law of surprise. And here is a very big difference between Witcher and Macbeth. The White Wolf wanted to escape his destiny; he did everything to prevent it from coming true.

No, no, and no again. I never look back. And I will never go back to Cintra, I will avoid Cintra like a plague nest. I will never go back there. (Sapkowski 2014: 142)

In this passage, Geralt wants to escape his destiny at all costs because he fears the moment when destiny will be fulfilled. The destiny is in the kingdom of Cintra, or rather, in the little princess Ciri, granddaughter of Queen Calanthe.

On the other hand, Macbeth after the prophecy of the weird sisters, did everything to make this destiny come true. First, he writes a letter to his wife Lady Macbeth. In this letter, he describes the situation related to the witches on the moor and informs his wife about his new title Thane Cawdor and adds the information that mysterious phenomena greeted him with the title “Hail, king that shalt be!” (Shakespeare 2014: 20). This letter written by Macbeth describes the following steps that Thane Cawdor will make in the next scenes. Macbeth wants, even desires, for this prophecy to come true, while the Witcher, on the other hand, flees from his destiny. In contrast, when Geralt meets his destiny from the law of surprise, destiny is fulfilled. Little Ciri is left with Geralt, who acts as a father to her. Together they are destined for each other.

A key element that encapsulates the motif of destiny is the weird sisters in Shakespeare’s work. The weird sisters are three witches who appear to Macbeth on the moors. They have unusual powers, including being able to take on animal form, but this animal has no tail. The weird sisters also foretell the future. Very similar witches can be seen in the Witcher game “The Witcher Wild Hunt 3”. The game “The Witcher Wild Hunt 3” was created based on motifs contained in Andrzej Sapkowski’s literature, however, this game is not an adaptation of his books. The game features the main characters from “The Witcher”, including Geralt and Ciri. The name of the game “The Witcher Wild Hunt 3” comes from Slavic mythology, which means a retinue of wraiths riding skeletons of horses. Of course, there is also the theme of the Wild Hunt in the game, as these wraiths haunt Geralt of Rivia both in the game and in the books. The whole game creates a story in the form of a film, as players in this game become the Witcher.

[...] the Wild Hunt appeared, a procession of spectres galloping through the heavens, and the Wild Riding, as is generally known, always heralds war. (Sapkowski 2014: 10)

Back to the subject of witches, there are the witches, the Ladies of the Forest (Krzywuchowe Moczary). Also, there are three of them like in “Macbeth”, they have magical powers and predict the future. The role of all these witches is to have power over humans. They symbolize evil, their predictions are concrete, but they deceive the characters. The witches from both “Macbeth” and the game “The Witcher Wild Hunt 3” personify the temptations through which people are led to their doom. A key thing worth noting is the location of the

plot, in “Macbeth” the weird sisters show up on the moors, they know exactly that Thane Cawdor will be there. In the game “The Witcher 3 Wild Hunt” witches will appear on the marshes, wherewith the help of ears hung on the trees they know exactly about all the problems of the villagers. Both places of action are deserted areas, they contain something dark. It is worth paying attention to the behaviour of these witches because in both works you can see the witches at the cauldron.

The Ladies of the Forest and the weird sisters act as intermediaries of evil in the human world because through their prophecies people are led to perdition. People believe that this is their destiny, and they do everything to fulfil it. In the example of “Macbeth”, we can see that he does everything to become king of Scotland and succeeds. The people of the village of Velen also come to the witches to learn their destiny, but there is one catch. In exchange for their prophecies, the witches expect them to make a sacrifice. Also, in both works the witches play the role of evil, they bring chaos to the world, and through their prophecies, people commit terrible crimes.

All things considered, these three motifs play a significant role in “Macbeth” and “The Witcher”. The motif of destiny appears in three parts “The Witcher The Last Wish”, “The Witcher Sword of Destiny”, “The Witcher Blood of Elves” and “The Witcher Time of Contempt”, where you can also see the motif of power and betrayal. Power often shows what a man is capable of, what inner demons he has inside him. Power in “The Witcher” is shown in a very brutal way, just like in “Macbeth”. Moreover, the main character of Shakespeare's tragedy can be compared to several characters from “The Witcher”. This proves that Macbeth himself is unique in his way, as his behaviour can be compared to many people, for example to Chappelle, who was mentioned in this literary work. Chappelle was only a governor, but he had the whole people in his grip because he knew how to manipulate others well. He was ruthless just like Macbeth; he surrounded himself with sheer cruelty and his ambition became a marker to take the throne of Scotland. In turn, the motif of power precedes the motif of betrayal, because before committing the crime Macbeth and Lady Macbeth had to betray King Duncan, they started plotting behind his back. However, a side effect of this endeavour was hallucinations, for example, Macbeth saw the ghost of his dead friend Banquo during a party in the castle. On the other hand, the Witcher was tormented by nightmares as he committed all sorts of crimes.

The theme of destiny is also worth mentioning. In both works, it is very important because this motif sets everything in motion. Macbeth, influenced by the prophecy of the weird sisters, wanted this prophecy to come true. In any

case, Geralt of Rivia tried to escape his destiny at all costs, when destiny met Geralt was already bound to it. In Macbeth's case, it turned out differently because the next prophecy of the strange sisters came true and Macbeth was killed by Macduff. The role of the witches is very important here as the weird sisters wreaked havoc and chaos. Similar witches can be seen in "The Witcher Wild Hunt 3", who also predict the future and demand something in return, wreaking havoc. Even in appearance, they resembled the weird sisters from "Macbeth". As you can see, William Shakespeare's tragedy is still a work full of inspiration not only in literature but also in computer games. It is worth noting the time gap between these two works. They are at least 380 years apart, and the motifs of power, betrayal, and destiny are still present in literature, which gives them immortality.

## Conclusions

This thesis discusses motifs of power, betrayal, and destiny in literature. It shows what role the motifs play in literature, and describes motives of the characters behaviour and actions in "Macbeth" by William Shakespeare and "The Witcher" by Andrzej Sapkowski.

The first part examines the three major motifs of power, betrayal, and destiny in Shakespeare's "Macbeth". Analysing this play, I came to the conclusion that these motifs are related to the main characters, the supporting characters, and the situations associated with them. The motif of power is broadly defined because it has several meanings. This motif is related to King Duncan, who shows kindness to his subjects. In turn, Macbeth shows power as brutality in the hands of a usurper. Macbeth's power is manifested through terror towards his subjects. This is seen in the situation with Lady Macduff and her son, who is murdered on Macbeth's orders. Of course, power is also presented as the power of women over men. Lady Macbeth has power over her husband, can manipulate him, and uses blackmail when Macbeth contemplates murdering King Duncan. The Weird Sisters also have power over Macbeth, all thanks to the first prophecy on the moors.

The next motif of betrayal in "Macbeth" was also discussed. The betrayal stemmed from Macbeth's grand ambitions, which surpassed him and led to his regicide. Of course, Lady Macbeth is also a traitor because she persuaded and blackmailed her husband to commit the crime. However, the most important motif is the motif of destiny, because that is where it all began. At the very beginning of the tragedy, the weird sisters foretold Macbeth's future and from that

moment Macbeth started thinking about becoming king. Shakespeare uses these motifs to show the problems that humanity the community has faced since time immemorial.

The second part analysed the aforementioned motifs in Andrzej Sapkowski's "The Witcher" in comparison to William Shakespeare's "Macbeth". These three motifs are equally important in "The Witcher The Last Wish", "The Witcher Sword of Destiny", "The Witcher Blood of Elves" and "The Witcher Time of Contempt" by Andrzej Sapkowski. Although they differ in many respects. The motif of destiny is presented differently in "The Last Wish" than in "Macbeth". Macbeth's future was foretold to him by the weird sisters on the moors, while the Witcher's future was foretold to him at Princess Pavetta's wedding ceremony by the Law of Surprise. The motif of destiny in "Macbeth" and "The Witcher" is also presented in a different way. Macbeth wanted the prophecy to come true, believed the words of the weird sisters and killed King Duncan to become king. Geralt, on the other hand, having learned about his fate, tried in every possible way to avoid it. The Witcher was afraid of the moment when this destiny would be fulfilled.

Additionally, the second chapter compares the weird sisters from "Macbeth" and the witches, called the Ladies of the Forest from the game "The Witcher Wild Hunt". In both works, the witches are linked to the motif of destiny.

The works are very different in terms of literary genre and large time-span, but they are connected by the analysed three motifs. Shakespeare using the motifs of power, betrayal, and destiny in "Macbeth" shows unchanged human nature. In conclusion, Shakespeare's "Macbeth" is a timeless play that continues to inspire many authors today, such as Andrzej Sapkowski.

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