How is ambition presented in 'Macbeth'? Be able to identify relevant quotations and explore the effect on the audience.

Task: Write down this definition of ambition in 'Macbeth':

In 'Macbeth', ambition is presented as a dangerous quality. It causes the downfall of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and triggers a series of deaths in 'Macbeth'. Ambition is therefore the driving force of the play.
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Vocabulary:

- **hamartia**: a fatal flaw leading to the downfall of a hero.
- **hubris**: excessive over confidence (adjective: hubristic).
- **patriarchal**: a society controlled by men.

Using the words in a sentence:

Macbeth's hamartia is ambition.
Macbeth is hubristic.
Women were subservient in the patriarchal society of 1606.
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**Macbeth: Ambition**

Macbeth's ambition is driven by a number of factors including:

- **Prophecy**: The Macbeth witches prophesise that Macbeth will become King. Macbeth believes them and the various prophesies are realised throughout the play. However, it is unclear whether these prophesies are preordained or self fulfilling.
- **Lady Macbeth**: his wife is the driving force that encourages Macbeth to overcome his strong sense of guilt and take action on the prophesies.
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Macbeth’s ambition soon spirals out of control and forces him to murder again and again to cover up his previous wrongdoings. Macbeth’s first victims are the Chamberlains who are blamed and killed by Macbeth for the murder of King Duncan. Banquo’s murder soon follows once Macbeth fears that the truth could be exposed.
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Consequences
Ambition has a series of consequences in the play: Macbeth is slain as a tyrant and Lady Macbeth commits suicide. Shakespeare does not give either character the opportunity to enjoy what they have achieved – perhaps suggesting that it is more satisfying to achieve your goals fairly than to achieve them through corruption.
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Macbeth: "valiant" soldier

"dead butcher"
28th November

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First Witch
All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Second Witch
All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch
All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!
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[Aside] "Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is behind."

"My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical"

"Stars, hide your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires"

"Art not without ambition, but without The illness should attend it"

"Shalt be What thou art promised"
How is ambition presented in 'Macbeth'?  
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- "Pour my spirits in thine ear and chastise with the valour of my tongue."
- "Art thou afraid To be the same in thine own act and valour As thou art in desire?"
- "And take my milk for gall!"
- "Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor! Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!"
- "I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself And falls on the other."
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- "What cannot you and I perform upon the unguarded Duncan?"
- "Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand?"
- "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep"
- "O, full of scorpions is my mind"
- "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?"
How is ambition presented in 'Macbeth'? Be able to identify relevant quotations and explore the effect on the audience.

"blood will have blood"

"Out, damned spot! out, I say!"
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Ambition:

The witches plant the seed of ambition.

Macbeth has "deep desires" but he doesn't act on them.

Lady Macbeth persuades him to kill Duncan.

Macbeth feels guilty.

The consequence of excessive ambition is death.