

Shakespeare and Superstition: A Study of how Shakespeare uses Superstition in Macbeth and Julius Caesar

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ABSTRACT

It is a critical analysis of the use of superstition in some selected plays by William Shakespeare. The main purpose of the study was to analyze how Shakespeare uses superstition in the two selected plays, Macbeth and Julius Caesar to structure his plays. The survey looked into the consequences that befell the main parts for following or ignoring superstition. The two plays were selected using purposive sampling and were analyzed using the content analysis method. In this study, the researcher selected all the texts from the two plays with reference to superstition. The study used the New Historical Criticism as the theoretical framework. This theory looks at a text by considering all the historical aspects that might have influenced the writer to write the type of text that he or she has written. The survey brings out that Shakespeare uses superstition such as dreams, omens, apparitions and ghosts in his plays to bring in some dramatic effects, chaos and also to bring in close to confusion amongst the characters. It also discloses that the main characters reacted to the supernatural visions and warnings in various ways, Macbeth follows superstition and Caesar ignores the word of advices. In the end they are both affected negatively. Established on the findings of the study, this study recommends that more studies should be done on some other components used by William Shakespeare in the same plays as easily as their effects on the roles.

Keywords: *Shakespeare and Superstition-Macbeth & Julius Caesar-Historical Criticism – Theoretical framework*

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Introduction