



## **LUST FOR POWER: THE HUMANISTIC UNIVERSALITY OF AMBITION IN SHAKESPEARE'S *MACBETH***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Literature keeps a record of all the significant events and presents it in a variety of ways. It can either be a poem, novel, drama or any literary form. Drama has been present not only as a form of entertainment but a way to awaken the consciousness of the audience. One dramatist who has truly embodied this task is William Shakespeare whose plays have been mounted, discussed and reimagined for all to see, understand and internalize. These plays have transcended time as it is still relatable to society today. Specifically, *Macbeth* successfully presents the horrors of being consumed in one's ambition for power. Thus, this qualitative content analysis investigated the presentation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, in terms of plot, theme, conflict and characters. Through the analysis of the play, the human values and actions as they are presented were further analyzed by utilizing humanism, mimesis and affectivism. The study revealed that first, through the plot, the human value of ambition is apparent, a trait most people have. Second, through the theme and conflict, the life's message imitated is the destruction brought on by ambition that goes unrestrained by moral limitations. This can also be seen in the past and present situation of the Philippines with leaders consumed with ambition to gain power that they have ignored their moral compass. Lastly, through the actions and personalities of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, the emotional responses aroused by the play are fear and anger. The same can be said with Philippines' Ferdinand Marcos and Imelda Marcos who lived lavishly using status and power during their regime. Therefore, even beyond its time, William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* reveals the human values and its influence through the plot, theme, conflict and characters.

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