

## **The Buddhist Shakespeare!**

### **(Analysis on the core Buddhist notions concealed in Shakespeare's Macbeth and King Lear)**

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**Abstract:** For centuries the scholars have probed the plays of William Shakespeare (1564-1616), the greatest playwright of English Literature, to find out traces to determine his faith, but have failed. Even though the arguments have been centered upon the contradictory views that how the secular and Protestant opinions have been included in his writings, research to find out the influence of Buddhism on his writings is scarcely available. Shakespeare's sonnets have often been identified with the recurrent exploitation of the theme of impermanence, a core Buddhist teaching but his dramas have been hardly analyzed under this light. A close study of his dramas proves them to include Buddhist teachings, even if no reliable evidence has been so far found that Shakespeare at least read Buddhist texts. However, the analysis of the depths of human mind especially through the characters of the tragic heroes; Macbeth and Lear with their tragic flaws like excessive greed for power and egotism can be well explored under a Buddhist light. Moreover, the inclusion of the core Buddhist teachings such as kamma, anicca, dukka (caused by ignorance, attachment, and aversion), anatta, the relaxation of thoughts, the two guardians of morality (hiri and ottappa), importance of good company, etc., will be highlighted and discussed in relation to their presentation in the two tragedies under discussion. The main objective of the present paper is to bring out the giant figure of Shakespeare a potential resource for Buddhist scholars.