Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being

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Worldly Shakespeare, In Worldly Shakespeare Richard Wilson proposes that the universalism proclaimed in the name of Shakespeare's playhouse was tempered by his own worldliness, the performative idea that runs through his plays, that if 'All the world's a stage', then 'all the men and women in it' are 'merely players'. Situating this playacting in the context of current concerns about the difference between globalization and mondialisation, the book considers how this drama offers itself as a model for a planet governed not according to universal toleration, but the right to offend: 'But with good will'. For when he asks us to think we 'have but slumbered' throughout his offensive plays, Wilson suggests, Shakespeare is presenting a drama without catharsis, which anticipates post-structuralist thinkers like Jacques Rancire and Slavoj A iA ek, who insist the essence of democracy is dissent, and 'the presence of two worlds in one'. Living out his scenario of the guest who destroys the host, by welcoming the religious terrorist, paranoid queen, veiled woman, papist diehard, or puritan fundamentalist into his play-world, Worldly Shakespeare concludes, the dramatist instead provides a pretext for our globalized communities in a time of Facebook and fatwa, as we also come to depend on the right to offend 'with our good will'.

2 2 2 . Ibid., appendix 4, 'The Douai manuscript', pp.374-87; James Shapiro, 1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), p.251. For dramatic performances at Douai, see A.C.F. Beales, Education Under Penalty: ..."