

PROVIDING FOR DUNCAN:
REPRESENTING HOSPITALITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY
IN SHAKESPEARE'S *MACBETH*

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ABSTRACT

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Felicity Heal has suggested that the early modern English perceived hospitality as a ritual in decline. Interestingly, the circulation of the idea of decaying hospitality coincided with an attempt to define what exactly it meant to be "English," particularly in comparison to what it meant to be "Scottish" with the ascension of a Scottish king on the English throne. This discursive intersection of declining hospitality and national identity is distinctly visible in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In this master's paper, I will argue that Macbeth's Scottish entanglement in the English discourse of declining hospitality casts the play's eponymous hero as doubly deviant: As a play portraying the repercussions of a breach in hospitality, Macbeth echoes and develops the rules and roles of hosts and guests found in early modern English travel literature, but as a depiction of a specifically Scottish host who stands in contrast to the English Edward and, by association, James I, Macbeth also participates in the discourse surrounding national identity. Therefore, when Macbeth and his wife murder their guests or welcome other murderers into their home, they affirm England's negative perception of Scotland and position themselves in direct contrast to English hosts of great renown. I will argue here that the play knowingly attacks an ideal that the English hold close to their hearts, perhaps precisely because they see it slipping away.

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INTRODUCTION

Around 1615, Catholic priest Thomas Worthington wrote and published a list of rules for “Inne-keepers, and also for their Guests” (Worthington). In his rules, Worthington makes clear the roles of host and guest: The host will provide food, drink, shelter, and sleep for guests, whom he labels “Gods children,” and, in return, the guest will be respectful of the building, host, and other guests. For Worthington, hospitality is a simple but pious exchange of room and board in which specific roles and duties are assigned to both host and guest.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Worthington’s piece is that he felt it needed to be written at all, let alone “fixed upon the wall of every Chamber in the house” as he proscribes in the extended title. Most of his rules seem like common sense, as in rule number six for innkeepers, where he entreats hosts to “content yourselves with an honest gaine, so using your guests as they may have an appetite to return to you when they are gone.” Charging guests a reasonable rate so they will do business with the innkeeper again makes sense, but with each new rule, Worthington feels he must remind hosts and guests what their proper duties are in the exchange of hospitality.

Felicity Heal offers an explanation for Worthington’s concern. She argues that particularly in the early seventeenth century, “It is impossible to read early modern texts without attaching the prefix ‘decay of’ to the notion of hospitality” (“The Idea of Hospitality” 80). Worthington, therefore, joins the ranks of numerous writers on society who mourn a perceived loss of hospitality in early modern England. Heal also argues that nearly all English writers idealized a not-so-distant past, where hospitality was better: “England was portrayed as having until recently been filled with great houses whose

chimneys constantly smoked, whose kitchens were seething hives of activity and whose boards groaned under the weight of good meats and beer” (80). The circulation of such an ideal leads Worthington to muse nostalgically at the beginning of his piece over the good old days of hospitality, in his case all the way back to the days of Christ, when “Our Saviour in the Gospel commend[ed] the use of Innes.” Thus Worthington’s concern is for a fallen ideal and representative of a discourse that manifests itself in many cultural products of early modern society.

Considering the numerous voices mourning the decline of hospitality in the early modern period, representations of social events, welcomes, entertainments, feasts, and banquets would have taken on added importance as characters attempted to live up to an idealized standard. Lisa Celovsky argues that Ben Jonson’s *The Forest*, for example, depicts a “liberal and wide-ranging entertainment practice” that serves to illuminate his contemporaries’ negligence of the custom (180). The Sidneys, she says, invoke a “full range of early modern associations” with hospitality, ranging from the proper expression of socioeconomic status, care of the poor, realization of virtue and courtesy, and maintenance of family legacy (179-80). In many ways, Jonson’s depiction of hospitality both laments contemporary negligence and provides an example of the proper way for hosts to act.

David Ruitter sees similar connections in Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale*. In the first scene, a Sicilian lord named Camillo tells the Bohemian lord Archidamus that the hospitality that the Bohemians have enjoyed for the past nine months has been a pleasure and that the Bohemians owe the Sicilians nothing for they have given Sicily good company for the length of their visit. Camillo further suggests that it is indeed the Sicilians who are in debt, predicting during the coming summer “a visitation which [Sicily] justly / owes

[Bohemia]" (1.1.6-7). Ruitter sees Camillo's grace in the exchange as an example of "true hospitality" rather than as an economic exchange that will require repayment (160). The tragedy for Camillo, Ruitter suggests, is that despite his offer of gracious hospitality, King Leontes "quickly dismantle[s] that idea (ideal)" and eventually alienates not only his Bohemian guests, but also much of his own court, including Camillo (171-172). As Celovsky suggests of the Sidneys in *The Forest*, Ruitter suggests that Camillo demonstrates an ideal for hospitality that could and should be followed in early modern England.

Other representations of hospitality abound in Shakespeare's plays, and in every case, as in Jonson's *The Forest*, the ability of hosts and guests to correctly perform their role serves as an early sign of the characters' personality and morals. For instance, in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, exiles Rosalind, Celia, and Touchstone request food and shelter from the shepherd Corin. Corin sadly refuses, explaining that his master is of a "churlish disposition / And little recks to find the way to heaven / By doing deeds of hospitality" (2.4.80-82). Although the audience is never introduced to Corin's master onstage, early modern playgoers would be able to tell that he is a cruel master of low moral fiber due to his denial of hospitality to the travelers. The refusal of this hospitality earns Corin's master the label of "churl"; Corin's behavior, on the other hand, places Corin at the other end of the hospitality spectrum when he offers assistance: "[T]here is nothing / That you will feed on; but what is, come see. / And in my voice most welcome shall you be" (2.4.85-87). He has very little, but he willingly shares what he has with his guests. Corin's master may be an inhospitable churl, but Corin's welcome earns himself the name of "faithful feeder" (2.4.99) and sets him up as an honorable friend to the exiled travelers for the rest of the play.

In early modern literature, therefore, good hospitality becomes a signifier of the host's liberality, generosity, and magnanimity. However, when the rules that govern hospitality are broken by either host or guest, as in *Winter's Tale* or *Macbeth*, the breach becomes an indication of parsimony, mischief, treason, or even evil, and tragedy inevitably ensues. For example, in *Winter's Tale*, Paulina traces all of Leontes' problems to the moment when he "betrayed Polixenes" (3.2.185), his guest. Following such a disturbance in socially acceptable behavior, Leontes has "[cast] forth to crows [his] baby daughter" (3.2.191), caused "the death / Of the young Prince" (3.2.194-95), and now "the Queen / The sweet'st, dear'st creature [is] dead" (3.2.200-01). Through one inhospitable act, Leontes has caused the death of his entire family and turned the "tale" into a tragedy.

Interestingly, in *Macbeth*, the difference between good and bad hosts is directly related to nationality, particularly for the monarchs of the two portrayed kingdoms as Edward of England's saintly beneficence functions as a direct foil to Macbeth's malevolent hosting in Scotland. This is perhaps because the perceived decline in English hospitality coincided with a period of English self-definition. Richard Helgerson suggests that following Henry VIII's separation from the church and parliament's declaration of England as an empire in the 1530s, English writers took it upon themselves to construct the concept of the English empire in literary and non-literary works (4). The quest for English identity would have been refreshed in 1603, argue Sharon Alker and Holly Nelson, when James VI of Scotland was crowned James I of England, which coincided with and perhaps prompted Shakespeare's writing of *Macbeth* in 1605 (379). Helgerson calls the task of defining nationhood a job for "a whole generation of writers...[who] belonged to different discursive communities" (4-5). It is not surprising, then, that labels like "English" and

“Scottish” reverberated culturally and found expression in discourses surrounding hospitality.

As a discursive community, travel writers are particularly suited to defining nationality because, as Tim Youngs writes, a major goal of travel writing is to establish “cultural affinities” or a “sameness to and yet remoteness from the members of the home society” (3). While passing through England and Scotland, early modern travel writers would have noticed such “cultural affinities” between the two nations. Benedict Anderson defines such societies as “imagined communities,” arguing that since even the smallest nation’s population is too large for each member to know every other member, the nation is actually a belief in shared characteristics among its inhabitants. As such, nations can be distinguished from one another not necessarily by actual characteristics, but by the “style in which they [those characteristics] are imagined” (6). By writing about other places and societies, early modern English travel writers would have defined England in terms of other countries, finding differences and similarities, but always comparing their experience abroad to their experience at home in England.

As Mary Fuller argues, early modern travel writing takes on further importance in the context of global exploration because late sixteenth and early seventeenth century English travel narratives became valuable as “a way of asserting national achievement” (“Making Something of It” 36). In the race to claim colonies in the New World, she writes, England was decades behind the Iberian countries, and careful recording of exploration in North American and Russia helped the English prove that they were catching up and

making important connections in the larger world.¹ Anthony Parr also notes the English discouragement in belated exploration of the new world and writes that “[a]t the end of the sixteenth century...interest in a wider world was vigorous but largely unfulfilled” (3). He argues for the travel play as part of the genre of travel writing and claims that plays like Shakespeare’s *Henry V* or the lost *New World’s Tragedy* would have satisfied this unfulfilled interest in the larger world. Parr seems to agree with Fuller that plays like these, along with the itineraries and non-fiction narratives that Fuller examines, helped the English to “see foreign subjects on the stage as part of a current debate about England’s place within and designs upon a larger world” (3). Travel writers in the early modern period were not just describing their experiences in other places, then, but also English national achievement in an effort to discover how their country fit into an expanding world.

Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is located at the intersection of two powerful early modern discourses. In this master’s paper, I will argue that Macbeth’s Scottish entanglement in the English discourse of declining hospitality casts the play’s eponymous hero as doubly deviant: As a play portraying the repercussions of a breach in hospitality, Macbeth echoes and develops the rules and roles of hosts and guests found in early modern English travel literature, but as a depiction of a specifically Scottish host who stands in contrast to the English Edward and, by association, James I, Macbeth also participates in the discourse surrounding national identity. Therefore, when Macbeth and his wife murder their guests or welcome other murderers into their home, they affirm England’s negative perception of Scotland and position themselves in direct contrast to English hosts of great renown. I will

¹ For more on travel writing connected to global exploration see Fuller’s “Introduction” to *Voyages in Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-15, and Mary Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 1-14.

argue here that the play knowingly attacks an ideal that the English hold close to their hearts, perhaps precisely because they see it slipping away.

ROLES OF HOSPITALITY IN *MACBETH*

In the early modern period, “good entertainment was often a matter of public concern,” and English citizens were very aware of hospitality and the role it played in their lives (Heal, *Hospitality* 2). The English would have heard about generosity and hospitality at church, particularly following Queen Elizabeth’s 1595 decree that her people fast, give alms, and generally support the poorest of the kingdom while the country endured an agriculturally and financially difficult year.² In his reign, King James would again foreground hospitality, twice urging his nobles to return to the countryside for the “better maintenance of hospitalitie” (James). Hospitality was even a subject taken up by writers who would seem to have nothing to do with the ritual: In 1608, for instance, William Heale used the rules of hospitality to write against wife-beating. He reasons that since a wife has left her family and depends on the “hospitality” of her husband, the husband would be committing the “greatest injury that can be against the law of *hospitalitie*” (24, emphasis original). “None who entered into an others house,” he writes, “should for the time of his abroad there, suffer any kind of injury upon any occasion” (Heale 24).³

Given the importance of early modern hospitality and the English focus on being good hosts, it comes as no surprise that in *Macbeth*, the roles of hospitality are thrust to the fore right from the start. Paul Kottman comments on this phenomenon, when Duncan in 1.4 thanks the victorious Macbeth and officially names him Thane of Cawdor. Kottman notes that the names and roles of each character are established before hospitality is exchanged:

² For a discussion of the decree and its results, see Steven Hindle’s “Dearth Fasting and Alms: The Campaign for General Hospitality in Late Elizabethan England.”

³ It bears noting that Heale’s remarks would apply to Leontes’ treatment of his wife Hermione in Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* (1611).

In *Macbeth*, such ceremonious scenes are staged in order to determine and *fix* the identity of the host and the identity of the guest, the sovereign and the subject. The names and identities should not be confused, for without the certainty, and the solidity, of these identities there can be no conventional hospitality.⁴ In fact, what we are here calling ‘conventional hospitality’ depends upon there *first* being host and guest, without confusion. (Kottman 94, emphasis original)

Kottman further defines the roles of hospitality in *Macbeth* by describing Duncan as the “host/King from whom all hospitality extends” (96-97). Once identities are fixed, Duncan can move on to an exchange of hospitality, and undertake the journey “[f]rom hence to Inverness” (1.4.42-43). This early identification of roles with Duncan as the good host king and Macbeth and the rest of the thanes as subjects and guests who rely on Duncan for leadership allows the rest of the play to be read as a series of exchanges in hospitality.

At Dunsinane, the roles of hosts and guests are reversed as soon as Duncan and his court enter the castle gates. Banquo immediately makes Macbeth’s castle appear to be a welcoming place by describing the martlet that has nested on Macbeth’s castle as a “guest of summer” (1.6.3), implying that Macbeth is now a host, rather than the guest of Duncan that he had been in previous scenes. Duncan draws further attention to his own role of guest by greeting Lady Macbeth with “See, see, our honored *hostess!*” (1.6.10, emphasis mine), then reminding her only a few lines later, “Fair and noble *hostess,* / We are your *guest*

⁴ Kottman discusses two kinds of hospitality in his essay. The first is “conventional hospitality,” which he defines as “the recognizable act of hosting a guest, or receiving a foreigner—always as part of an economy...of exchange, as part of a ritual or ceremony which ought to have an established code or set of rules, invitations” (90). The other hospitality he discusses is “weird hospitality,” which he defines as “that which opens and extends a space for the play, while at the same time keeping itself from *being* in this opening” (93).

tonight” (1.6.23-24, emphasis mine). The scene ends with Duncan asking her to “Conduct [him] unto [his] *host*. We love him highly, / And shall continue our graces towards him. / By your leave, *hostess*” (29-31, emphasis mine). Seven of thirty-one lines in this short scene contain references to guests or hosts. By its end, the demarcation of host and guest has been solidified beyond doubt, and the exchange of hospitality can and is expected to occur according to established rules of conduct.

Despite the fact that the roles of host and guest have been so clearly outlined, Macbeth’s position of host is complicated because he has just been awarded the title Thane of Cawdor, which confirms two of the witches’ three predictions for Macbeth. When Ross and Angus hail him Thane of Cawdor, Macbeth eagerly hopes that the rest of their words prove true for both himself and Banquo. Banquo, on the other hand, refuses to place trust in what he calls “instruments of darkness” (1.3.124), reasoning that the witches have no obligation to tell the truth about all things; in fact, they could easily have been truthful about “trifles” in order to conceal lies in more important matters (1.3.125). Later, Banquo admits to dreaming of the weird sisters, implying that they are still on his mind, but unlike Macbeth, he does not trust their predictions and refuses to take any action that would jeopardize his honor (2.1.21). Macbeth’s early acceptance of such supernatural advisors is troubling because it sets the tone for the rest of the play; until the bitter end, he relies on their equivocating advice to make decisions that impact the lives of all the rest of the characters in the play.

Macbeth’s new title also comes with a history, and as its new keeper Macbeth feels the burden of the previous thane’s treason and execution. As Rebecca Lemon argues, by gaining the name “Cawdor,” Macbeth has been given a model and, indeed, a “namesake”

for his own treason (28). Lemon sees the situation as a moment of failed didacticism: instead of learning from the previous thane's dishonorable downfall, Macbeth adopts his predecessor's treasonous habits and now plots his own crime. Gregory Keller, too, sees the danger of precedent for Macbeth: "What one does, Macbeth acknowledges, sets forth a model for similar action...to do this deed is to declare it worth doing; to declare it worth doing is to imply that others may, and perhaps even ought to, follow one's example" (Keller 43). Like Lemon, Keller finds that Macbeth's "bloody instructions" (1.7.9) will inspire others to follow in his own precedent, continuing a cycle of violence. By simultaneously naming Macbeth his host and Thane of Cawdor, Duncan therefore not only gives Macbeth literal charge over his safety, but also symbolically provides him with a precedent for treason and a continuation of violence. In other words, Duncan himself has set the stage for Macbeth to fail as both a host and a loyal thane, ultimately resulting in the Scottish king's own murder.

It is important to note that, Macbeth recognizes the treacherous nature of his plan to kill Duncan, and directly places the planned murder in the context of the roles and rules of hospitality:

He's [Duncan's] here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. (*Macbeth* 1.7.12-16)

Despite his reference to "double trust," there are at least three reasons Macbeth sees that make Duncan's murder especially scandalous. First, he and Duncan are related by blood: "I

am his kinsman.” Second, as a subject and thane, he owes service and loyalty to his sovereign. Finally, Macbeth recognizes that the guest-host relationship demands that he protect Duncan. Interestingly, Macbeth’s reasoning contains just two lines concerning his duties as kin and subject, but three lines on hospitality. He adds emphasis to his role as a host by saving it for last, giving it the position of final proof that this crime would be heinous. Thus, in terms of both length and rhetorical arrangement, Macbeth makes the breach of hospitality the most scandalous part of his crime.

It is also interesting to note that Macbeth theorizes about hospitality in much the same way as Worthington and Heale: All three believe the role of the host is to provide and protect, but, furthermore, all three see a direct correlation between family and loyalty and the responsibilities of hospitality. For Worthington, caring for guests is a religiously charged familial obligation, since guests are “God’s children”; in serving them, hosts serve God. Heale argues that a man has certain duties toward his wife since he has taken her away from her family and all those who used to care for her. By his juxtaposition of kinship and hospitality while meditating on murder, Macbeth heightens his own awareness of the services he owes Duncan and nearly frightens himself from his intended deed. Directly following his meditation, he tells his wife, “We shall proceed no further in this business” (1.7.32). When she recognizes his fear, Lady Macbeth spurs him on by insulting his manhood and his honor, claiming that she would have “dashed the brains out” of her own child if she had forsworn herself as Macbeth has (1.7.59). She gives him courage by rebutting all his fears of failure, sarcastically echoing Macbeth’s question of “If we should fail?” with “We fail?” as though failure is not even a possibility (1.7.60). If not for the

pressure and “undaunted mettle” exerted by Lady Macbeth, the combined weight of his duties as kin, subject, and host might have kept Macbeth from his crime (1.7.74).

The duties of the host are recognized as a heavy load by Shakespeare’s characters even as they bestow honor, and the language of burden manifests itself throughout the conversations about hosting Duncan. For instance, in the same scene in which Duncan defines who will be playing the role of host and guest at Dunsinane, he acknowledges to Lady Macbeth that his visit might be a bit of an inconvenience, a “trouble” (1.6.13), for her and her household, and he thanks her for her “pains” (1.7.13). Similarly, Macduff sympathizes with Macbeth saying he knows hosting Duncan is “a joyful trouble, / But yet ‘tis one” (2.3.38-39). For their pains and trouble, the Macbeths can expect some gain, however, both personal and political. To Duncan’s reference of “trouble,” Lady Macbeth graciously replies that it is with “honors deep and broad wherewith / Your Majesty loads our house” (1.6.17-18). She is willing to accept the role of hostess because Duncan’s presence allows her and her husband to serve their sovereign, a noble service that bestows honor on her family. Like his wife, Macbeth graciously replies to Macduff that “The labor we delight in physics pain” (2.3.40), agreeing that the trouble he takes to entertain Duncan is a reward in itself. However, even in their discussion of the rewards that Duncan gives them, the hosts continue to use the language of burden. Lady Macbeth’s use of “loads” and Macbeth’s choices of “labor” and “physics pain” for their description of Duncan’s honors underscore their heavy task of hosting the king. Hospitality, in other words, is an honor, but it is also a duty, an obligation, and a burden.

REPRESENTATIONS OF ENGLISH HOSPITALITY

Macbeth's excursion into England is very short—only one scene long—but it brims with indications of good entertainment and proper attention to ritual. Even the English weather contributes to the hospitable environment. In the first line of the scene, Malcolm invites Macduff to find some “desolate shade” in which they may discuss Scottish affairs (4.3.1). In referring to their need for shade, Malcolm implies two things: 1) that it is sunny outside and that they would be more comfortable in the shade while they have a long talk, and 2) that the pleasant weather does not suit the mood of their conversation concerning tyranny and death; “desolate” darkness is more appropriate for the topic of Scotland, where “each new morn / New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows / Strike heaven on the face” (4.3.4-6). The bright, peaceful, and welcoming environment of England needs to be obscured to accommodate such news.

English travel writer Fynes Moryson also observes this difference in the weather between England and Scotland. Upon his arrival in Scotland, Moryson remembers, “comming to Barwick in the moneth of May, wee had great storms, and felt great cold, when for two moneths before, the pleasant Spring had smiled on us at London” (154). This personification of the “pleasant Spring” in southern England adds emphasis to Scotland’s less hospitable weather, especially as the storms and cold are Moryson’s first encounter with the country. Travel writing critic Mary Louise Pratt sees the importance of such representations as a means of “produc[ing] the rest of the world” through differentiated descriptions of home and other societies (5). In his discussion of weather, Moryson makes the differentiation between painfully cold conditions in Scotland, while imagining that all Englanders enjoy warm climates. Further, in building what Tim Youngs calls “cultural

affinities,” Moryson establishes himself as a member of that English community with the more pleasant weather with his use of the inclusive “us” for the location of warmer weather. In a simple description of Scottish weather, he has already set the country up as a place with wild weather and, perhaps, correspondingly wild inhabitants. Stephen Greenblatt suggests such implications for the Jews in Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*; he claims that “The Jews themselves in their real historical situation are finally incidental in these works, . . . except insofar as they excite the fear and loathing of the great mass of Christians [in the play]” (42). In the texts Greenblatt examines, the Jews are an imagined community whose purpose is only to contrast with the Christians to create a feeling of hatred. For Moryson, even in his description of weather, Scotland is simply a cold, uninviting place that can contrast with more welcoming England.

Composing his *Itinerary* in 1598, Fynes Moryson belongs to the generation of writers that Richard Helgerson refers to as “writing” England. Further, as part of the discursive community of travel writers focusing on cultural affinities, Moryson notes such national traits as food, drink, and care for travelers (as well as weather and geography). For instance, in his travels in England, he asserts that English tables are set “not onely prepared for the family, but for strangers and reliefe of the poor” (150). He says that the English always prepare for “friends coming by chance” (150), so there is always extra, and guests are always welcome. His explanations for the excess food are a response to rumors he has gathered while abroad that the English are “gluttons and devourers of flesh”; while he acknowledges that often “in such plenty and variety of meates, everie man cannot use moderation,” he argues that the abundance that foreign visitors describe as excess is noble because it is in the name of hospitality (150). Moryson’s depictions and praise of English

manners group him with that camp of writers who, Heal claims, characterize England as a place “whose boards groaned under the weight of good meats and beer” for the better provision of friends, travelers, and the poor (80).

Moryson maintains his patriotic stance toward English hospitality throughout his *Itinerary*, later swearing that “the World affoord not such Innes as England that, either for good and cheape entertainment after Guests owne pleasure, or for humble attendance on passengers” (174). Just as the hospitality of individual citizens exceeds that of other countries, so the hospitality industry in England is better than anywhere else. In England, boasts Moryson, the inn’s “kitchen is open to [the guest], to command the meat to be dressed as he best likes,” and furthermore, “he shall be offred musick, which he may freely take or refuse,” both over dinner and at breakfast (175). At parting, “[the guest] shall have a reckoning in writing, and if it seeme unreasonable, the Host will satisfie him, either for the due price, or by abating part” (175). Moryson is impressed with these services, which he claims are more generous than in other countries he has visited.⁶ In his descriptions, Moryson is particularly proud to be English when it comes to the fairness and depth of service in the host-guest relationship, concluding the section on England with, “Lastly, a Man cannot more freely command at home in his owne House, then hee may doe in his Inne” (175). In both private homes and commercial inns, Moryson patriotically describes the English host as a perpetually prepared, attentive, and upright participant in the exchange of food, drink and shelter.

Another early modern travel writer, John Taylor, draws attention to the difference between the quality of English and Scottish hospitality when he traveled from London to

⁶ The countries Moryson traveled to were numerous. His *Itinerary* includes descriptions of his travel through twelve including England, Scotland, Ireland, and several countries on the continent.

Edinburg in 1618. In order to better experience the “divers things which [he] had heard of [Scotland],” Taylor intentionally travels without any money, hoping each night that an inn or individual will provide for him. Most nights, he is successful in finding food and lodging, and each night he writes—sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse—a “Description of his Entertainment in all places of his Journey.” In the English portion of this journey, he encounters consistently good hospitality, often remarking that a host “treated [him] like a sonne, more then a friend” or that a certain host “prov’d a mother unto [him].” With the exception of the two nights Taylor spends out on the road because he cannot find a town, each evening he is greeted with abundant food. For example, in Manchester,

[his hosts’] love they on the tenter-hooks did racke,
Rost, Boyld, Bak’d, too too much, White Claret, Sacke,
Nothing they thought too heavy or too hot,
Canne follow’d Canne, and Pot succeeded Pot,
That what they could doe, all they thought too little.

In other places, his hosts “caus’d [his] Linnen, Shirts, and Bands be washt” or “[his] Palfry shod” by the blacksmith at no cost to himself. At each place, Taylor is treated with the kind of generous hospitality that Moryson assigns to English hosts.

Chronologically situated exactly between Moryson’s and Taylor’s accounts of England and Scotland and developing the discourse of superb English hospitality, Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* portrays English hospitality as a ritual with a long history of generosity, with a host who not only provides for his guests, but who does so freely, in abundance, and without exclusion. As the quintessential good host, Edward hosts some of

the least fortunate people of his country in his own palace and cures them of “the evil” (4.3.146). Even while Malcolm discusses the state of Scotland with Macduff, a “crew of wretched souls” has gathered to see the king (4.3.142). Malcolm explains to Macduff that Edward does not shrink away from contact with these “strangely-visited people, / All swoll’n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye” (4.3.151-52), but rather restores their health: “at his touch...they presently amend” (4.3.144, 146). Malcolm informs Macduff that the king has often performed this minor miracle during his stay in England, and as Deborah Willis points out, compared to the tyrant Macbeth and the poisoning witches in Scotland, Edward of England appears a saintly host indeed (158). Willis goes so far as to argue that, without a healing, welcoming touch, Macbeth “lack[s]...a true king’s power” (158). The mark of a good king, in other words, is the entertainment of the weak, sick, and otherwise unfortunate; only bad kings receive criminals, witches, and other supernaturals as Macbeth does.

Such a benevolent king as Edward makes a logical host for Malcolm when he is forced to leave Scotland; his interactions with the prince of Cumberland prove Edward’s superiority as a host with his characteristic generosity and his desire to restore Malcolm to his rightful station. Even before the audience catches up with the exiled Malcolm in England, they learn from an unnamed lord that

The son of Duncan,
From whom [Macbeth] holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing

Takes from his high respect. (3.6.24-29)

Edward graciously welcomes Malcolm into his court in such a way that he is treated more like the son of a king than a supposed father-killer. Despite the fact that earlier in the scene Lennox accuses Malcolm and Donalbain of killing Duncan, the king grants Malcolm the benefit of the doubt and welcomes him as a victim, kept from his throne by the tyrant Macbeth. Unlike Edward, Shakespeare's audience would have known Malcolm was innocent of the crime, and by helping the innocent Malcolm, Edward would have followed an early modern principle of hosts, to "account honest men your best guests [and] hold their company better then their rooms" (Worthington), and he would have further proven the excellence of English manners and hospitality. It is unclear from the play how long Malcolm has depended on the kindness of Edward, but Edward has handled the burden of Malcolm's extended visit with grace. As Malcolm's stay comes to an end with the arrival of Macduff, Edward exercises his restorative powers one more time. Instead of offering to shoe his horse or wash his laundry (as Taylor's hosts did), he offers the military assistance of "ten thousand men" and the experienced leadership of Siward to support the Scottish cause (4.3.191). The newly-arrived Ross finds this news an unexpected "comfort" and praises the extravagant generosity of the English king and host (4.3.194).

King James joins this conversation of caring for the lowly and the weary traveler in a 1615 proclamation requiring the noblemen of England to spend at least nine months out of the year at their country estates "for the better maintenance of Hospitalitie" in order to increase the "mutual comfort" of all his subjects. Just as *Macbeth's* Edward recognizes the importance of hospitality in his role as the country's caretaker, James recognizes how a decline in hospitality subsequently leads to the decline of order in the greater part of his

kingdom. But hospitality is more than an indicator of civilized behavior; James' proclamation makes hospitality a matter of English character and pride and connects him rhetorically to that discursive community attempting to define England. In addition to making secluded city life a distasteful practice of "forreine Countreys," James asserts that "there was wont to be more mutual comfort between the Nobles and Gentlemen, and the inferiour sort of Commons in this Our Kingdome...then in any other Kingdome of Europe," implying that if his noblemen would return to their proper estates, England would be the most hospitable country in Europe as it had been historically, when England used to "live in the steps and examples of their worthy Ancestours, by keeping and entertaining hospitalitie." Between the comparisons with "forreine" countries and references to the once-strong "mutual comfort" of the "worthy Ancestours," it is clear that, despite the seventeenth-century desire to return to good, old-fashioned hospitality, James sees hospitality as a hallmark of England, just like Fynes Moryson, John Taylor, and Shakespeare.⁷

⁷ Seven years later, James issued a similar proclamation, giving his nobles ten days' time to leave London or face his displeasure. The goal of the 1622 proclamation was the same: to promote hospitality in the rural areas of England; and once again, James makes it a matter of English pride. He calls hospitality "the ancient and laudable custome of ENGLAND" in the title, and reiterates that he desires to "revive the ancient and laudable custome of this Realme" later in the document. In this second proclamation, he describes hospitality as "exceedingly decayed" compared to the less extreme decline that needs "better maintenance" described in his 1615 proclamation.

REPRESENTATIONS OF SCOTTISH HOSPITALITY

If hospitality is a defining characteristic of England in the early modern period, Scotland and its inhabitants can be defined by their hospitality, too. At first glance, Scottish hospitality would appear equivalent to that of the English because Scotland itself seems much like England. As John Taylor remarks upon crossing the border,

I being come to this long look'd for land,
Did marke, remarke, note, renote, viewd and scand:
And I saw nothing that could change my will,
But that I thought my selfe in England still
...Twixt it and England, little oddes I see.

After having built himself up with the purpose of being an “eyewitnesse of divers thing which [he] had heard of that Country [Scotland],” Taylor is disappointed to know that Scotland is actually much like his own country. Such high, exotic expectations of what he might find in Scotland may have been influenced by representations of Scotland like *Macbeth*, especially since Taylor’s journey occurs seven years after the first recorded performance of *Macbeth* (1611), but interestingly, travelers before the play’s production record a similar experience. Moryson experiences a letdown similar to Taylor’s when he arrives in Edinburgh: after first describing an “earnest desire...to see the King of Scots Court” as if it were some kind of foreign curiosity, Moryson sounds disappointed to find that Edinburgh is much like London with its “Noblemens Towers lying about it” and streets with a “common sort” of people (273). Both Taylor and Moryson seem initially disheartened that Scotland is not the wild, exotic place they had imagined.

Taylor's disappointment that Scotland is not dramatically different from England fades with his first lodging in the Scotland portion of his trip, where he finds accommodation in the town of Mophot. He describes his hosts as providing "good ordinary Country entertainment; my fare and my lodging was sweet and good, and might have served a far better man then myself, although I have had many times better." In this instance, Taylor's qualifiers are much different from those in his descriptions of English hospitality. In England, Taylor only experiences hospitality worthy of high praise, often claiming that he feels like family. In Scotland, the hospitality is given descriptors of "ordinary" and "Country," implying that while his hosts provide adequate hospitality, they are not quite the lavishly generous hosts of England to whom he has been accustomed.

Taylor's bad luck with Scottish hospitality continues into his second evening when he arrives late in the town of Blithe, leaving him the option of sleeping outdoors, or else in a "poore house where the good wife lay in Child-bed...and necessity made [him] enter, where [he and his guide] gat eggs and Ale by measure and by tale." Here, the food is less than plain, and after their small dinner of eggs and ale, Taylor and his guide are forced to sleep on the floor. To make matters worse, "in the night there were Pidgeons did very bountifully mute in [Taylor's guide's] face." At first light, Taylor and his guide depart for Edinburgh, where Taylor hopes to find better hospitality with some friends.

Following these two encounters with less-than-English hospitality, Taylor's fortunes improve, although there is always the chance that something may go horribly wrong in the night. Most nights he says his "entertainment was with good cheere, good drinke, good lodging, all too good to a bad weary guest" or that a particular inn is unmatched "in any of his Majesties Dominions." Despite these accolades, however, in the

middle of one night at one inn, Taylor is “stung with Irish Musketaes, a Creature that hath sixe legs and lives like a monster altogether upon mans flesh. They doe inhabite and breed in most sluttish houses, and this house was none of the cleanliest.” Another night near the end of his journey, Taylor describes his encounter with a “a wench that was borne deafe and dumbe” who “came into [his] chamber at mid-night”:

[S]hee opening the bed would faine have lodged with me...The best parts of her were, that her breath was as sweet as sugar-carrion...[S]he made such a hideous noyse, that I started out of my sleepe, and thought that the Devill had beene there...I arose, and thrust my dumbe beast out of my chamber; and for want of a locke or a latch, I staked up my doore with a great chair.

Although most of the time Taylor claims to have experienced exceptional hospitality from the Scots, it is clear from his combined experiences that the quality of Scottish hospitality is much less consistent than that of the English. Compared to a single poor experience in England, which he excuses, Scottish hospitality throws several unexpected situations at him, from birds defecating from the rafters to bed bugs and promiscuous deaf wenches.

Taylor downplays these negative hospitality episodes and others, in some encounters equivocating rather than giving a bad account. In one instance, at the Lord of Graunt’s estate, he writes that “our cheere was more then sufficient; and yet much lesse then they could afford us.” Perhaps he is only disappointed in the hospitality because it follows several days of hunting and superb hospitality from the Lord and Countess of Engye, but Taylor suggests that the Lord of Graunt and his wife could have afforded more, thus casting them as stingy and less than perfectly hospitable. In another encounter with Scottish hospitality, Taylor describes his welcome as “*not inferior* to any that I had had in

any former place” (emphasis mine); although, thanks to his previous experiences with pigeons, bedbugs, and the deaf girl, the reader knows that his standards are no longer very high.

Whereas Taylor takes questionable Scottish hospitality as part of the adventure of traveling without money, Moryson is less forgiving. He writes of one experience at an unnamed “Knights house” and comments on it, with some disdain, as a representation of the Scots’ diet and hospitality. First he notes that the table is “more then halfe furnished with great platters of porridge, each having a little peece of sodden meate,” very simple food in very small portions (155). Then he is disappointed that “when the Table was served, the servants did sit down with us,” maintaining no special placement for guests near their hosts (155). Moryson notes that his hosts are served marginally better fare, “a Pullet with some prunes in the broth,” although he does not seem very enthusiastic about that meal option either (155). Finally, Moryson is disappointed in the general atmosphere and attitude of the meal: “And I observed no Art of Cookery, or furniture of Household stuffe, but rather rude neglect of both”(155). Perhaps Moryson feels slighted because he was “sent from the Governour of Barwicke about bordering affaires” and expected to be treated with more respect; however, he claims that he and his companion were “entertained after their best manner,” implying that this is actually the best a traveler can expect from Scottish hospitality (155).

Another traveler, Sir Anthony Weldon, is actively hostile toward all things Scottish in his “A Perfect Description of the People and Country of Scotland.” Traveling with King James to Edinburgh in 1617, Weldon is particularly biting in his remarks regarding the hospitality and welcome of the English party. First, he has concerns for the cleanliness of

his accommodations: “There is a great store of...foul houses, foul-sheets, foul-linnen, foul-dishes and pots, foul-trenchers and napkins, with which sort, we have been forced to say, as the children did with their fowl in the wilderness” (1-2). Like Moryson, Weldon also scorns the food: “They have good store of fish too, and good for those who can eat it raw...For their Butter and Cheese, I will not meddle withal at this time, nor no man else at any time that loves his life” (2). Weldon finds lodging for him and his horse expensive, and commodities like tobacco and English beer are scarce (3). Overall, Weldon does not find the Scottish very welcoming and concludes that he cannot believe “so brave a Prince as King James should be born in so stinking a Town as Edinburgh, in Lousy Scotland” (21).

Weldon’s sarcastic travelogue of Scotland cannot necessarily be taken as an objective account of Scottish hospitality, but when it is read alongside Moryson’s and Taylor’s descriptions, the three represent a sampling of the discourse of Scottish hospitality during the early seventeenth century that decidedly casts Scottish hospitality as inferior English. Part of this discourse includes the assumption that the Scots do not provide a consistent quality of either food or manners. Both Moryson and Weldon remark on the plain, scant fare they are offered, and even the optimistic Taylor admits that at times he was entertained at a cost “much lesse then [his hosts] could afford us” or that he has “had many times better.” The manner in which meals are prepared is also a common point of discontent, with Weldon complaining that once Scottish cooks lay hands on a fish “it is worse then if it were three days old” (2), and Moryson likewise noting a lack in the “Art of Cookery” (155). Both descriptions fall far short of Moryson’s and Taylor’s adulations on the abundance of good English fare.

More serious than the food, however, are the dangers that await those who stay overnight with the Scots; both Taylor and Weldon imply as much. As described earlier, Taylor faces the dangers of bird feces and unwanted intruders, which he laughs off, but which still contribute to a general feeling of unease regarding Scottish hospitality. Likewise, Weldon initially forbears to write about King James' palace at Edinburgh, stating that it is a place sanctified by James' presence, but then proceeds to cut it down with the curious remark, "onley I wish it had been better Walled, for my friends sake that waited upon him [James]" (10). Like most of Weldon's remarks, this comment must be taken with a grain of salt. He and the rest of the minor officers of James' court had been instructed by the Privy Council to "provide thameselffis of ludgeings and stablis otherwayes" due to the scarcity of lodgings inside the Cannongate (qtd. in Nichols iii, 315). Weldon's exclusion from the castle where James was staying, compounded by the necessity of arranging his own lodging for himself and his horse, may account for his outrage at the "dear Lodgings, dear Horse meat [animal fodder]" he encounters in Edinburgh and would likely lead him to deprecate the palace from which he was barred (3).

Weldon's concern that the palace's walls may be conquered or collapse in the night is echoed by Shakespeare when Macbeth goes to visit the witches. Before demanding to hear what they know about his enemies and Banquo's son, he acknowledges that the witches have the power to make "castles topple on their warders' heads" by controlling the wind (4.1.56). Mary Floyd-Wilson suggests that it was a commonly held belief that witches could exert power over the wind for their devious purposes. She observes that King James wrote of witches "rais[ing] storms and tempests in the air" and Levinus Lemnius' warning against "evil spirits [in]...outward winds" and connects the witches with stormy weather

elsewhere in *Macbeth* (qtd. in Floyd-Wilson 144). Weldon does not talk about witches explicitly in his “Description,” but he does state that the country, though mountainous, “affords no Monsters, but Women,” a sting particularly directed at Scottish noblewomen (18). Weldon’s connection between toppling walls and dangerous women sounds remarkably similar to Macbeth’s experience, and despite Weldon’s refusal to clarify why he wishes the palace were “better Walled” or what dangers await his friends in the castle, the fact that he mentions it at all demonstrates his fear that something violent, or potentially even supernatural, might find his friends inside James’ palace in Edinburgh.

The potential for dangers in the night for guests of the Scots is particularly important for *Macbeth*: both instances of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth’s hospitality end in the murder of at least one guest. In the first instance, Macbeth’s entertainment of his royal guest Duncan resonates with Moryson’s description of Scottish evenings: “[when entertaining, the Scots] drink healths not without excesse, and ... they spend great part of the night in drinking, not onely wine, but even beere” (156). Likewise, the porter informs Macduff that the King, Macbeth, and the rest of the party were “carousing till the second cock” (2.3.18). Moryson also notes that at bedtime “their [the Scots’] custome was to present [guests] with a sleeping cuppe of wine at parting” (156). Lady Macbeth makes use of this custom by giving Duncan’s guards drugged posset as a bedtime drink without raising suspicion (2.2.6). Of course, the episode ends with the murder of Duncan and his guards, effectively taking Weldon’s and Taylor’s unease with Scottish hosts to another level and affirming that Scottish hospitality customs are dangerous.

“HE THAT’S COMING MUST BE PROVIDED FOR”:

MACBETH, THE HOST

Paul Kottman notes that the role of king, first held by Duncan, carries the privilege of being the center of hospitality; as such, the person occupying the position is unquestionably the host of whatever gathering he creates (96). Macbeth has proven himself aware of such responsibilities in his meditation before the murder of Duncan; however, immediately following the murder, Macbeth’s awareness of his role as host begins to unravel, leaving others to either help him regain control, manipulate him as he once manipulated them, or take advantage of his weakened position and assert themselves as a new host.

Macbeth’s castle as a setting serves as the first indication that Macbeth’s ability to perform as host has been weakened. When the porter finally arrives to let Macduff into the castle from the cold and stormy weather, he likens himself to the “porter of hell gate” (2.3.1), implying with “here you’ll sweat for ‘t” (2.3.5) and “here you may roast your goose” (2.3.11) that Macbeth’s castle has turned into an inhospitable hell. He immediately contradicts himself, however, and claims that “this place is too cold for hell” (2.3.13). This sudden change from hellish heat to bitter cold, is also indicative of a change in hospitality from the friendly welcoming scene when both Duncan and Banquo claim Macbeth’s castle “hath a pleasant seat” (1.6.1) and that “heaven’s breath / Smells wooingly here ... The air is delicate” (1.6.5-10). Even the bird imagery has changed from the beginning of the play: upon their arrival at Dunsinane, Banquo remarks on the martlet as a “guest of summer,” conjuring warm, welcoming imagery. Previous to Banquo’s observation, Lady Macbeth hears a “raven / ...croak[ing] the fatal entrance of Duncan / Under [her] battlements,” but

her dark imagery is lightened by Banquo and Duncan's descriptions of the castle atmosphere (38-40). Later, during the murder of the king, Lady Macbeth notices another bird associated with death—the owl, which she describes as “the fatal bellman” (2.2.3)—and this time, her deathly bird imagery is not contested. As a setting for hospitality, Macbeth inhospitality has transformed his castle from a heaven-like home to a stormy, hellish and soon-to-be haunted house.

Into such a house, Macbeth begins to invite strange guests, unaware, it seems, that his hosting of them is incompatible with his role as king and host. For example, he purposely invites two murderers into his home, even while he is playing host to Banquo and several Scottish lords. Indeed, Macbeth moves directly from a conversation with Banquo in which he wishes his honored guest's “horses swift and sure of foot” to a conversation with Banquo's murderers, ordering a servant to “Bring them [the murderers] before us” (3.1.39, 49). Importantly, this is the murderers' second visit in two days: the day before the portrayed conversation, Macbeth proved to them that Banquo is the villain who has left these two men and their families destitute; the present discussion finds them resolved to murder Banquo, whom they now believe their enemy. Macbeth's hospitality for these men excludes charity and alleviation of their plight; instead he compares them to animals: “Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men, / As hounds and grewhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, / Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are cleft / All by the name of dogs” (3.1.93-96). He offers a chance for them to reclaim themselves as human and “[n]ot I'th' worst rank of manhood” if they will help him secure his throne by murdering Banquo and his son (3.1.104).

Such manipulative hosting of Scottish subjects by Macbeth stands in direct contrast to Edward's pious respect and healing of his English countrymen a few scenes later. Whereas Edward meets often with "crew[s] of wretched souls" in order to heal them and temper their affliction (4.3.142), Macbeth offers no help to the poor beyond giving them the chance to "grapple [them] to the heart and love" of the Scottish king by committing murder on his behalf (3.1.107). Here, the murderers need to earn Macbeth's love, despite his claim of needing to "make love" to their assistance (3.1.125). Macbeth's favor is conditional upon the execution of his will and their services. Additionally, Macbeth demands that the deed be done at a safe distance from the castle because he "require[s] a clearness" (3.1.134). Unlike Edward, whose care for all is transparent, Macbeth must commit crimes out of the sight of others in order to safeguard his crown and cover up his original crime of killing Duncan, in a continuous quest to increase his own power through further acts of violence. Thus, Edward's gracious benevolence stands in direct contrast to Macbeth's manipulation of his afflicted subjects.

Throughout Macbeth's foibles of hospitality, Lady Macbeth proves to be an invaluable assistant. Each time other guests begin to notice Macbeth's lack of grace, she steps in to either remind him of his duties or cover up his inattention. For instance, when Macbeth spends time with Banquo's murderers, his attention is drawn away from his honorable friends and kinsmen. Lady Macbeth chides him for this, assuming he has been ruminating on their past crime instead of focusing on the present:

How now, my lord? Why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died

With them they think on? (3.2.10-14)

His reply proves that Macbeth is indeed not appreciating the present moment. Rather, his thoughts are on the future. He tells her that they have “scorched the snake, not killed it. / She’ll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice / Remains in danger of her former tooth” (3.2.15-17). Lady Macbeth’s advice helps him play the good host in the here and now and gives him crucial perspective on the current state of affairs: “Sleek o’er your rugged looks. / Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight” (3.2.30-31). But Lady Macbeth’s ability to help her husband in his role is diminished due to his refusal to share important information. “Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,” he tells her, “Till thou applaud the deed” (3.2.48-49). Again, Macbeth neglects to focus on his current position and instead concentrates on the promise of future security when the threat of Banquo and his descendents has been eliminated. What Lady Macbeth does not know at this point is that there is a larger issue under the surface of her husband’s neglect of his guests; instead of ruminating on past crimes, he has been hosting murderers in their castle and planning future deeds of violence.

At supper that evening, attention to the murderers again takes Macbeth away from his responsibilities as host to his guests, the Scottish noblemen, this time to hear the report on Banquo’s death. Once more, Lady Macbeth is left to cover for Macbeth. Perhaps due to the frequency of their meetings of late, the murderer now appears in the doorway unannounced by a servant, implying a level of familiarity and trust between the host and the murderer that adds unease and discomfort to the scene as a whole. Upon noticing the murderer at the door, Macbeth immediately abandons his guests, telling them even as he leaves to be “large in mirth” without him (3.4.11). Following the murderer’s less-than-

satisfactory report that they did not succeed and “Fleance is [e]scaped,” Macbeth tells him that they will meet once more the next day, which would bring their conferences to four times in as many days, before he returns to his guests (3.4.20). Once again, Lady Macbeth gently reprimands her husband for not “giv[ing] the cheer” for his honored guests (4.3.33). She reminds him that without “ceremony” feasts are “bare” of hospitality and that it would almost be better to “feed...at home” (3.4.36, 37, 35). Here, Lady Macbeth has gone further than her earlier complaint that Macbeth has been keeping to himself. In this case, he has actually left in the middle of a state dinner, leaving his guests without a host to make them feel welcome. Thanks to her assistance, Macbeth is able to call her “Sweet remembrancer”—the one reminding him of his duties as host—and return to his guests (3.4.37). Temporarily, at least, the Macbeths adhere to expected codes of conduct, and the meal continues.

As a consequence of his negligence as a host and inability to heed his wife’s advice, Macbeth’s meeting with the murderer has also left him with an image of Banquo in death.

The murderer describes him:

My lord, his throat is cut. That I did for him...

Safe in a ditch he abides,

With twenty trenched gashes on his head,

The least a death to nature. (3.4.16, 26-28)

As William Cain points out, Macbeth has not even seen Banquo dead since “[h]e is responsible for these later murders, but he does not commit them” (255). Cain argues that Macbeth’s relatively uninvolved position allows audiences to maintain sympathy with Macbeth, whom Cain dubs a “serial killer” (255), but it also means that without his

association with the murderer, Macbeth might not have experienced his “fit” (3.4.21).

When Banquo’s ghost appears to him, Macbeth sees exactly what the murderer described: “gory locks” (3.4.51), “brains out” (3.4.80), and “twenty mortal murders on [Banquo’s] crown” (3.4.82). Despite Lady Macbeth’s claim that “This is the very painting of your fear” the audience knows that it is an image conjured by the murderers, the guests Macbeth himself has invited into his castle, his company, and now, perhaps, his mind (3.4.61)

Throughout the dinner, Lady Macbeth desperately attempts to save face with the Scottish nobles, but the vision of Banquo proves too much for Macbeth and the evening’s entertainment disintegrates. At the first appearance of the ghost, Ross suggests the guests depart, but Lady Macbeth brushes her husband’s “passion” aside, and they return to their seats (3.4.57). When the ghost appears a second time and Macbeth shouts at it, Lady Macbeth tells the guests that such explosions are “a thing of custom,” but the mood is ruined (3.4.98). When Ross comes too near sensitive information by asking about the “sights” Macbeth appears to see (3.4.117), Lady Macbeth is forced to abruptly end the party and urges them to leave at once. Their banquet is in shambles, the Macbeths’ hospitality has openly failed, and the Scottish lords are now suspicious. Despite Lady Macbeth’s attempts to help her husband maintain his role as the good host, Macbeth’s outbursts have not only created an awkward evening for their guests but also potentially exposed their crimes.

Because Macbeth sees the witches as responsible for this current situation, he decides to once again neglect his position as king and host and seek inappropriate company and advice. Instead of keeping company with honest, religious men as Thomas Worthington advises in his “Rules for Innkeepers,” Macbeth goes to consult the

equivocating, satan-worshipping witches. Mary Floyd-Wilson writes that it is Macbeth's very Scottishness that makes him receptive to the witches: by portraying him and his wife as the last of the old line of Scots who are temperate in diet because their environment demands it, she argues, Shakespeare creates characters with a "weakened ability to regulate their bodies' borders...[making it] progressively more difficult in an environment where external spirits threaten to usurp the function of the internal spirits with every breath" (145). By employing early modern geohumoralism to examine the Macbeths' susceptibility to witchcraft, Floyd-Wilson directly correlates nationality and the choices people make in their personal relationships. Thus, Scottish Macbeth willfully chooses to seek out the weird sisters in order to "know / By the worst means the worst" (3.5.135-36). Despite recognizing that consulting the witches is "the worst means" to solve his problems, Macbeth goes to them.

Upon discovering the witches, Macbeth attempts to manipulate them as he did the murderers, but to no avail. Despite his command "that which [they] profess, / Howe'er [they] come to know it, answer [him]" (4.1.50-51), they will not be forced. Instead, they tell him what to do: "Hear his [the apparition's] speech, but say thou naught" (4.1.70), "Listen, but speak not to't" (4.1.89), and "Seek to know no more" (4.1.103). With their imperative language, the witches are in control of the situation, and Macbeth is the unaware, manipulated guest. Despite their control over him, they trick him into believing himself safely in power. The audience knows that the witches have already plotted to give Macbeth a false sense of security: "He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear / His hopes 'bove wisom, grace, and fear. / And you all know, security / Is mortals' chiefest enemy" (3.5.30-33). This they do through their use of the apparitions, at once warning Macbeth of

Macduff and easing his fears by telling him that none of “woman born” shall harm him and that he shall be safe until “Great Birnam Wood to Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him” (4.1.80, 94-95). Macbeth responds with “Sweet bodements good!” (4.1.96), thinking such things will never happen. Just before the witches depart, they give Macbeth one more feeling of control, this time appealing to his sense of hospitality. The first witch says to her companions,

I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round,
That this great king may kindly say
Our duties did his welcome pay. (4.1.129-32).

Here, they allow Macbeth to forget that he has been the one to search for and visit them at “Archeron’s Pit” (3.5.15). Instead, by referring to Macbeth’s welcome and their duty to repay his welcome by means of providing music, they depict Macbeth as maintaining both the role of host and the control over the situation, neither of which he currently possesses.

If as villains Macbeth and his wife represent violent Scottish hospitality, they must be vanquished by a character who understands what good English hospitality should be. Malcolm plays this role. Having spent time with the good host King Edward the Confessor in southern England who welcomes not only royal guests like Malcolm but also the poorest and most afflicted of his kingdom, Malcolm has had the chance to absorb good English hospitality. Malcolm never directly says how long he has been in England, but he does state that “often, since my here-remain in England have I seen” Edward cure his subjects of the evil” (4.3.149-50). If Malcolm has seen Edward host his people several times, he would have to have been a guest of the English court for an extended period of time. One of

Shakespeare's sources, John of Fordun's *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* states that Malcolm stayed with Edward for fourteen years (Fordun 181), more than enough time to gain an English understanding of hospitality.

While Malcolm is in England and Macbeth reigns, Scotland is devoid of hospitality that resonates with the worst depictions of Scotland in Anthony Weldon's sarcastic travelogue. In Lady Macduff's words, Macbeth's neglect of his responsibilities as king and host have turned Scotland into an unforgiving place, where "to do harm / Is often laudable, to do good sometimes accounted dangerous folly" (4.2.73-75). Likewise, in the words of Weldon, Scotland is a place where crimes go unpunished: "Fornication they hold but a pastime...At Adultery they shake their heads; Theft they rail at; Murther they wink at, and Blasphemy they laugh at" (15). The unnamed lord who tells Lennox that Malcolm is in England fills his speech with terms of hospitality and a claim that Malcolm's return would reverse the violent state of Scotland:

That by the help of [Siward and English soldiers]—with him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives.
Do faithful homage, and receive free honors,
All which we pine for now. (3.6.32-37)

Here, tables laden with meat, peaceful nights, and banquets given by trustworthy hosts are all components of good hospitality. Malcolm's English army, led by the experienced Siward, represents a potential return to hospitable conditions, where hosts may offer food and shelter, and hosts and guests may again trust each other.

Malcolm and Siward do indeed fulfill their roles as the restorers of hospitality in Scotland. England-steeped Malcolm wastes no time in renaming his Scottish thanes the English equivalent: "Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland / In such an honor named" (5.8.64-65). In doing so, he firmly defines the roles of king and follower, and also, as Kottman would argue, host and guest (94). Once the roles of host and guest are reestablished, the play ends with a gesture of hospitality on Malcolm's part as he invites his supporters to his coronation: "So thanks to all at once and to each one, / Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone" (5.8.75-76). This gratitude to everyone and acceptance of all guests demonstrates what he has learned from Edward: that hosts and kings should act with liberality, generosity, and magnanimity. Thus Malcolm sweeps away the hostile environment that Macbeth created through the murder of his guests, to be replaced by peaceful, English hospitality.

CONCLUSION

Many scholars remark upon *Macbeth*'s unsettled ending. For example, David Kranz sums up a large body of criticism by arguing that the "victimized good sons [of Scotland], Malcolm and Macduff, [have] more recently been interpreted as a cyclical return of violent, patriarchal, and oppressive figures who are not likely to be any better than Macbeth" (381). Carol Tufts also calls the moral restoration by Malcolm "temporary", and goes one step further to suggest that Donalbain's absence in the final scene provides a potential for more violence (180-81). In addition to the continuing cycle of violence, Mary Floyd-Wilson observes that women are completely excluded from the happy ending: Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff have been killed, and the witches still "contaminate the Scottish air" (159). Taking a wider, more political view of the play in the early seventeenth century, Sharon Alker and Holly Nelson suggest that the play's finale represents an anti-Scotland facet of James I and VI's plan to unite England and Scotland: "Malcolm's final act...foreshadow[s] the precise demands of Shakespeare's English contemporaries, that Scotland willingly embrace English practices" (390). In terms of cyclical violence, the exclusion of major players, and a potential portrayal of such controversial issues as James' unification plans, the ending of *Macbeth* is certainly unstable.

However, when read with a view for the intersecting discourses of hospitality and English national identity, *Macbeth*'s ending attains some stability and likely would have satisfied at least its English audiences. The early modern English would have been preoccupied with a perceived decline in hospitality, and a host murdering a royal guest would have been unthinkable. Furthermore, English travel writers would have already proven English hospitality as superior to that of Scotland, where the food was scarce and

manners were poor. Despite Floyd-Wilson's suggestion that Malcolm's "anglicizing force" is ineffective or relies too heavily on Scottish pliability, the utilization of English hospitality to bring peace to Scotland after Macbeth's reign of tyranny seems an appropriate resolution (159).⁸ Indeed, as Alker and Nelson note, Malcolm offers the best of both worlds: he combines the "impulse to anglicize" with "images of Scottish dignity, nobility, and power" (390).

Interestingly, Malcolm's anglicization of the thanes in the final scene also serves to eliminate the cycle of violence initiated by the Thane of Cawdor precedent.⁹ As discussed earlier, Macbeth builds his own treason on the model provided by the previous Thane of Cawdor, and he worries that his own transgressions will "return / To plague th'inventor" (1.7.9-10). However, Malcolm does away with the title of "thane," instead choosing to call the Scottish nobles "earls, the first that ever Scotland / In such an honor named" (5.8.64-65). In this shift, Malcolm marks the end of a bellicose Scottish era, and the beginning of a more peaceful one, inspired by the English Edward.

If hospitality and national identity are as important to the early modern period as I hope to have demonstrated here, *Macbeth's* ending mirrors a stable beginning. Under Duncan, roles and responsibilities in Scotland seemed well-defined and fixed, but were cruelly disrupted by the over-ambitious Macbeth and his wife. Macbeth himself recognizes that Duncan was a good king: "[He h]ath born his faculties so meek, hath been / So clear in his great office" (1.7.17-18). Despite this acknowledgment, Macbeth upset the order Duncan represented in a coup reminiscent of early modern travel writers' fears concerning Scottish hospitality. Following a period of spiraling hospitality so marked that even

⁸ A similar shift (though not necessarily tied to nationality) in host and hosting strategies also provides a happy ending for *The Winter's Tale*. See Ruiter 172-75.

⁹ For a thorough discussion of this precedent of violence, see Lemon 28.

Macbeth's subjects begin to murmur, Malcolm arrives to vanquish Macbeth, restoring peace and implementing good English hospitality.

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