SHAKESPEARE’S ECONOMIES OF HOSPITALITY: BROKEN COMEDIES, BAD HOSTS, AND TROUBLESOME GUESTS

John Henry Sauls

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SHAKESPEARE’S ECONOMIES OF HOSPITALITY: BROKEN COMEDIES, BAD HOSTS, AND TROUBLEsome GUESTS

by

John H. Sauls

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look back at your earlier writing and see how far you have come.” I am, Dr. Cervone, and will continue to.

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Abstract

Examining four Shakespeare plays for moments of hospitality and inhospitality, the question must be asked, “Is hosting and guesting necessary to maintain strong community?” In this exploration, hospitality is examined in four of Shakespeare’s plays, tracing its effects on the communities within those plays, showing that without hospitable performance, community falters and may eventually break apart. Such exploration of what goes well and not so well with hospitality offers a wealth of insight into cultural studies. Specific characters from these four plays are crucial to this study, as they provide concrete examples of human interactions gone awry and then resolved, allowing us to examine them for ways in which patterns of power and greed, control and paranoia, affect communities. Three comedies and a romance have been specifically chosen, since hospitality in the tragedies has been thoroughly explored (Macbeth, Lear, Coriolanus, Titus Andronicus, and Julius Caesar for example).

Shakespeare’s characters show us how to live without preaching rules or religion. By living a performance for the other characters in the community of the play, readers and audiences can see the strengthening or weakening of a particular community. Hospitable performance either helps community, harms community, or harms one in service of another. In its own way, each play hosts another culture, and is both hospitable and inhospitable to it—which is fascinating in the way that characters in each play, specifically the three set in Italy, perform another culture, while hosting it at the same time. A reliance on the reader’s imagination, and not those of an audience, is assumed throughout, although audiences are considered as well. These plays were written to be performed, but it would be impossible an undertaking to imagine all the directorial and performative choices. Interestingly, it is always for an audience that hospitality
shows itself useful: in every hosted performance, the guest is a kind of audience, and the audience a guest.
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Shakespeare's Economies of Hospitality: Broken Comedies, Bad Hosts, and Troublesome Guests

**Introduction**

In this dissertation I examine hospitality in four of Shakespeare’s plays and its effects on the communities within those plays, arguing that without hospitable performance, community falters and may eventually break apart. First, I must argue that there is a host and a guest. The host gives gifts to the guest, initially for gaining trust (such as an invitation), and subsequently for the body of the guest (food, drink, shelter). Each character in the plays becomes for the reader a good example or a bad one, and I generally show the host in this examination, although there are what I consider to be bad guests. Typically, the “bad” designation I reserve for the host who refuses to give a gift, or who resents the giving of one. Bad guests are those who refuse gifts or do not appreciate the gifts. Such exploration of what goes right and wrong with hospitality offers a wealth of insight into cultural studies. Specific characters from these four plays are crucial to my exploration, as they provide concrete examples of human interactions gone awry and then resolved and allow us to examine them for ways in which patterns of power and greed, control and paranoia, affect communities. I specifically chose three comedies and a romance, since hospitality in the tragedies has been thoroughly explored (*Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Julius Caesar* for example).

Shakespeare’s characters show us how to live without preaching rules or religion. By living a performance for the other characters in the community of the play, readers and audiences can see the strengthening or weakening of a particular community. Hospitable performance either helps community, harms community, or harms one in service of another. Originally, Shakespeare seemed both the best-known author from which to argue, and the largest target as well. It may perhaps seem a fallacious appeal to authority to choose Shakespeare on the face of
it. However, I do attack somewhat an English reading of Italy and of culture. In its own way, each play hosts another culture, and is both hospitable and inhospitable to it—which is fascinating in the way that characters in each play, specifically the three set in Italy, perform another culture, while hosting it at the same time. Shakespeare plays with early modern English normativity while setting three of these four plays in Italy. Only *As You Like It* is set in England, and it differs slightly in its contrast of the inhospitable court with the generously hospitable green world, while standing out as the only play of the four that offers its community full reconciliation.

Though not my primary focus, social standing appears to be of importance to many of the characters in the plays. More powerful, wealthy characters tend to be in a better position to host others, but as we see in *As You Like It*, not exclusively so. In this exploration, then, I argue that there is, in Shakespearean ethics, a positive hospitable hermeneutic. A positive hospitable hermeneutic is the framework of the set of words and deeds performed for a guest by a host. “Positive,” I argue, is any good, any performance of word or deed to cause increased power in the guest, to or for the guest’s best interests, whether emotionally, bodily, socially or in combination, to imbue a guest with strength, hope, love, goodwill, bright future, and prospects of success. “Hospitable” is the realm of the host, the domain of the host, the collective words, deeds and material items and comforts associated with the host in a generous and beneficent sense: any hosting, I am assuming for purposes of my argument, is in its performative deed, “good,” in that it considers as its primary focus the well-being of the guest, and not the well-being of the host (though that may be a possible long-term result of any such set of words/deeds/material comforts). In short, hospitality is so pervasive within the communities of the plays that we have in large measure taken it for granted, when in fact it undergirds every communal endeavor these
plays represent both on stage and on page. As I mentioned earlier, I am primarily interested in a textual study of plays that have mostly been ignored, as opposed to well-trodden ones such as *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Julius Caesar*, in which the inhospitality is obvious. I am relying on the reader’s imagination, and not those of an audience, although the audience must be considered at times. These plays were written to be performed, but it would be impossible an undertaking to imagine all the directorial and performative choices. Interestingly, it is always for an audience that hospitality shows itself useful: in every hosted performance, the guest is a kind of audience, and the audience a guest.

Foundationally, and as historical backstory, ethics—and particularly the ethics of hospitality and community—has been the main concern of writers and thinkers at least as far back as Aristotle. In *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle writes, “If, moreover, friendship consists rather in the conferring of kindnesses than in the receiving of them; and if to do good to others is the characteristic of virtue, and consequently, of the good man…then it will follow that the good man will stand in need of friends to receive benefits at his hands” (Aristotle 294). I will argue that these ‘friends’ of Aristotle’s imagination who are the recipients of Aristotle’s ‘benefits’ are guests: guests at rooming, guests at board, guests at game, guests at play, indeed guests all around.¹ I read not only the words, but also the actions of guests and hosts in each of the four plays. As I do so, I must define some crucial terms. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “hospitality” as “The act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of

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¹ Aristotle shows us the importance of communal bonds, writing, “Thus, then, all friendship is, as has already been said, based upon some form of community. And hence it is that one must distinguish the friendship of relations and the friendship of brothers in arms from all other kinds. For those forms of friendship which obtain between fellow citizens, or between members of the same clan, or members of the same ship’s company, and with them all others of a similar nature, would seem to be more definitely based upon a community than are these, inasmuch as they all evidently involve and presuppose some contract with certain definite stipulations; and along with these one may also class that particular form of friendship which is based upon relations of mutual hospitality and protection between members of different States” (Aristotle 294). I call the problems in the plays breaches of hospitality for the very reason that they violate what Aristotle has described as “mutual hospitality.”
guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill.” What, then, is such an act, and how
does it relate to action within a play of five acts? How is receiving and entertaining important to
any literary understanding of community, and is it at all significant that the OED mentions
“guests, visitors and strangers” in the same line with “liberality and goodwill?” I argue that it is
no coincidence to group persons who may be guests and strangers, outcasts, and would-be
aspirants to community as recipients of ethical hospitality. In such a way, we may even come to
some literary understanding of strangers as potential friends: after all, hospitality is the hosting of
friends, yes, but in the best and perhaps we can say, highest sense, it is a hosting of one’s
enemies that defines its greatest value. One thing is certain, and that is that any hospitable
enterprise is a constant hosting of unknowns. Hospitality is risk. A stranger is someone the
community does not know, and about whom no judgment can yet be made concerning intention
to harm. From the perception of the community, then, a stranger is an unknown entity. An exile,
such as we will see in the text of the plays, is thrust out from community, either by the will of
others, or of self-will, or of both. An outsider is someone within community separated by cultural
difference. The outsider is tolerated, but not fully trusted, useful but not beloved.
I want to show that community is important, and not just to humans in general, but to the
characters who inhabit the plays. Further, I show that while the good intentions of the host may
not ultimately determine the outcome of the guest’s experience or value, nevertheless the host
must be willing to fail in the performance, and perhaps fail again and again in order to keep the
community alive. My argument proceeds from a close analysis of the following plays: The
Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice, As You Like It, and The Winter’s Tale (using
standard Shakespearean abbreviations Shr., AYL, MV, and WT). I specifically chose these four
because I wanted to examine in a microcosm, scenes of comedies that Shakespeare invests with
inhospitality, as opposed to plays such as *Macbeth*, in which the host murders the guest. Scholars have argued about these major scenes so often, and I was not interested in restating those well-trodden arguments. The critical landscape also tends toward other plays and minute moments. In short, I veered away from the obvious inhospitalities in the tragedies, preferring to show how the comedies were not always comic, but complex and problematic, and to, as Daryl Palmer writes, “…make Shakespeare’s romantic comedies generically accountable to a small portion of their cultural context—hospitable practice” (Palmer 60). The critics I rely upon are focused on the performative aspects of words and actions for hosts and guests. In examining these plays, I discuss Bakhtinian speech genres, the verbal moments that tell us what to expect as guests and as hosts.  

Throughout the dissertation, I define hospitality as a performative enterprise, and so necessarily a thing open to interpretation. Similarly, the plays are open to interpretation, and in two main ways—the audience/readers interpretation of the performance, and the characters’ interpretation of other characters’ performances. As with any text, a hospitable interchange may be read and examined, and I do so with the goal of judging them as either hospitable or inhospitable.

The problem of leaving home, further, of being exiled by power, is key in any understanding of hospitality in my argument. Home is the source of all material sustenance and comfort, the base from which all endeavor is made possible. Home is the center of community for Rosalind in *AYL*, but it can be subdivided. Home is also personal attachment and family.

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2 Bakhtin discusses the speech genres hosts perform for their guests, categorizing them as The Invitation, The Welcome, The Entertainment, and The Courteous Dismissal.

3 Lupton defines hospitality as a performative enterprise. Lupton, like Palmer, suggest that hospitality is not an intention, rather, an action to be witnessed by a guest.
David J. Gauthier, in his, “Levinas and the Politics of Hospitality,” informs us of two types of hospitality, and the spaces inhabited by them, with a foundation of understanding from Levinas:

As described by Levinas, hospitality operates in the two distinct realms: the ethical and the political. In the ethical realm, the self is morally obligated to welcome the stranger into the private space of the home; in the political realm, the self is politically compelled to welcome the alien into the public space of the homeland. However, Levinas’s powerful critique of politics renders the practice of political hospitality decidedly difficult. From this vantage point, what is required is an ethical transformation of the public realm in order to render it more conducive to hospitable action (Gauthier 159-60).

Since I define hospitality as a performative endeavor, it should become clear in the following chapters that to show honor to a guest is a performance of ethics, as Gauthier suggests. Performance takes the stages of the ethical and the political. The primary form of hospitality is material performance for material bodies, but it cannot exist without the accompanying speech genres in their proper timing. Guests look to hosts to guide them, and hosts are responsible (in the highest sense) to and for the guests during any hospitable performance, which in the plays includes characters such as Petruchio in Shr, Antonio, Bassanio, and the City of Venice in MV, both dukes in AYL, and King Leontes in WT. Done correctly, and the way we best observe what is correct is to see what Shakespeare’s characters get wrong, the guests are satisfied and community is strengthened. The host attempts to engender in the guest the idea that the guest has value as a person primarily by caring for the outer being, the body, but also through the hospitable speech that cares for the mind of the guest. The greater the physical care and detail of work invested, the greater the value, or so the host hopes. The guest is the final arbiter of what is
hospitable, but is responsible in the performance as well, a particular problem with Shylock in MV. Lastly, I argue that hospitality is a risk, albeit a necessary one that must be attempted for communities to remain vital. Without this risk, communities languish and fracture.

It is, admittedly, a murky enterprise to engage in speculation about feeling, so I use only words, the outward manifestation of what we must assume are true until further notice, namely, a line delivered by a character in the play at hand is the truth as far as we know as readers. The effect in the guest is difficult if not impossible to define, so I rely on the term phenomenon (Lupton and Kuzner) to explore it. As Julie Reinhard Lupton claims, “…phenomenology [is] inquiry into the conditions of human appearing; phenomenology concerns not ‘things in themselves’ (noumena) but rather how things take shape in consciousness (phenomena)” (J. R. Lupton 15). In other words, the phenomenon of a hospitable performance is the aggregate of the subjects involved (hosts and guests), but also all the things surrounding them, and how those things are utilized in the performance. In this way, with subjects and things together, a hospitable performance is closely related to a stage performance. In relying on the textual line, I advance my arguments about hospitality one play at a time, seeking to discover and analyze the patterns of hospitality that either work or do not for the given community in each examined scene of the play. In the next section, I want to begin looking at what attributes make a good host. One of these is the gift, and a gift can come in many forms, such as an invitation to dine, food, drink, shelter, and conversation. Later, I will show characters giving each other gifts of companionship, and willingness to exile themselves for that companionship.

**The Platonic Ideal of the Gift**

To look at hospitality, I want to examine what a host is, does, and gives. Gifts and giving are a large part of the hosting realm. If we would contextualize the gift and ground our claims in
the Western tradition, we must look to the bedrock of the Greeks. Emilie Kutash has done a
reading of Proclus’ thoughts on Plato’s *Timaeus*. In her book, she looks at how the idea of the
gift is theorized by Plato, as inspired by the teachings of Socrates, and commented upon by
Proclus. The birth of the gift is important to see in Western thought for what it brings to all other
gifts that follow. Without the accepted idea of a first gift, there would be no problem in these
plays, no hospitality to be revoked or breached:

The first gift of the Demi-urge, visibility and touchability, implies that everything is
organized in such a way as to be able to be apprehended from the outset (matter, on the
other hand, we recall from Plato [*Theology*], is ‘unknowable’). The first gift of the
Demiurge to the world is that ‘He first makes it perceptible with respect to the extreme
terms of sense perception (viz. sight and touch)’ … The recipients of this gift are the
objects of sense (*aisthêta*) … Limit shores up the world from its earliest creation; the gift
that makes things be ‘somethings’ is given at the very first moment of existence.
Perceptibility, after all, involves formal properties on the part of its objects: to be visible
and touchable implies visible form and contour, a lower form of intelligibility and an
outcome of the two extremes of elemental form … It is apparent that the elements and the
senses are in correspondence as early as the first gift (Kutash 50).

So first there is sense, a gift, a knowledge of all things because of this gift of perceptibility. If we
extrapolate forward to our Sicilian court in *The Winter’s Tale*, readers begin with knowledge and
perception of gift firmly in place along with all the manners and customs that form the core of
hospitality in the West, with all the ancillary satellite rules, some enduring, some mutable and
ephemeral. The basic ideas of gift, knowledge of the gift, how gift is perceived, and how hosts
and guests should behave begins here in the ancient foundations of Greek thought, the codex [Gr.

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κόδιξ] of Western morality. Without these beginnings of the idea of the gift, speculation upon the later forms, such as in a Shakespeare play, have little context in which to be grounded, and scant meaning to offer. In each play I examine, persons with greater power operate within a system far older than they, an unwritten code (though much written about) which existed centuries before their decisions to break vows of hospitality they did not create. Because these characters have broken with the proper “text” of hospitality then, justice must be sought in order to bring host and guest into a benevolent position once again. The hospitable equation must find balance. Gifts must be given and debts satisfied for hospitality to function. Kutash reconciles the laws of nature:

> Whether it is the cosmos, the state or the individual, there is no multiplicity that is not ruled by proportional equality. Not only physics but also politics and astronomy are all ruled by mathematical principles. Neoplatonists, citing *Gorgias* 508a, compared the power of geometrical equality to justice in the political contest. Ratios and equality apply to the ideal polis, as presented in *Republic*, when each receives what is appropriate or due it (Kutash 90).

Here we have debt and obligation simplified further into physical and mathematical terms. For example, a king and the polis (and where is the appreciable difference?) move geometrically toward the guest by extending hospitality for example, in *WT*, where all is well in Sicilia until King Leontes gets suddenly, and insanely jealous of his wife’s perceived flirting. The guest (and accompanying polis) in turn moves toward the king in complimentary orbit. Gifts of food, wine, lodging, and various comforts are given by the King, Leontes. Even the gift of his wife Hermione’s clever conversation is a gift, in that Leontes tells Hermione to go and coyly convince Polixenes, king of Bohemia, to delay his parting. The entire enterprise brings the parts together
in ways ordered by nature when each play according to Natural Law, given here that such law is reflected in Western tradition. Neither should seek wealth from the other, but give to keep from excessive receiving and host so as to magnify the guest. The breach occurs when the gift Hermione gives, namely her pleasant speech, becomes in the eyes of Leontes, a sexualized transgression. In Book one of his Republic, Plato quotes Pindar as saying:

And the great blessing of riches, I do not say to every man, but to a good man, is, that he has had no occasion to deceive or to defraud others, either intentionally or unintentionally; and when he departs to the world below he is not in any apprehension about offerings due to the gods or debts which he owes to men. Now to this peace of mind the possession of wealth greatly contributes; and therefore I say, that, setting one thing against another, of the many advantages which wealth has to give, to a man of sense this is in my opinion the greatest (Plato).

Hosting, as Pindar explains it, is closely linked with giving, as is paying debts “which he owes to men.” The Winter’s Tale abounds with talk of gift and debt from the very opening of the play. It is Leontes’ giving then regretting giving that causes the first and subsequent problems. Shr. as well touches on financial debt when Sly argues with the Hostess. Sly’s argument becomes the impetus for the entire Kate/Petruchio plot that becomes the bulk of the play. MV deals explicitly with an unethical loan bond that is ultimately resolved, though radically, in court by the close of the play. AYL begins with what is owed from an elder to a younger brother, and of that debt of ill treatment a ruler (Duke Frederick) owes to persons he has exiled. In the last chapter, Leontes, owes ethical debts to his wife, his son, his daughter, and his wife’s closest ally, Paulina. In the texts of these dramas, Shakespeare plays with the manners of the wealthy, the rulers of their own polis. In the moments of interest to me, the body is devalued, thus the inner self as
well—that is, there is an attack on personhood, and to a more serious degree, social standing. In the plays there are strangers (Shylock as the religious/cultural stranger), and enemies (Duke Senior, once banished, becomes an enemy as does his daughter Rosalind. Rosalind disguises herself as Ganymede, and becomes both enemy and stranger in the process).

A focus on the ethical treatment of others is a vital Shakespearean means of exploring the human subject, and I will focus solely on the ethics of hospitality. I do not nor cannot endeavor to talk about the difference between right and wrong as a holistic ethical study: my argument is predicated upon the effect that hospitality has upon local community in each scene of each play, and this begins with the body of the individual. Only upon exploration of a number of such scenes can I then argue about what is positive or negative for the textual community of this study, e.g. the characters most affected in the four plays, Katherine, Shylock, Rosalind, and finally, Hermione.

Critical Background

Criticism of the plays has of course varied widely over the 400 years since Shakespeare penned them, and I want to attend to the critical change in not only the words and opinions used by critics of Shakespeare, but the change in style, specifically about hospitality and the other in literature. Shakespeare and his contemporaries knew well their own cultural inheritance from the Classical Period regarding treatment of the stranger, and allusions to that set of cultures, particularly the Greek and Roman playwrights, abound. As far back as the seventeenth century, Ben Jonson wrote glowing praises of the practice of hospitality, such as in his “To Penshurst,” in

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4 Harbage notes that, “Except in a few scenes of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, there are not thirty consecutive lines in Shakespeare that do not levy upon the vocabulary of ethics, or relate in some way to standards of conduct, to choices between right and wrong” (6). Shakespeare was concerned with ethics, the way a person treats another with performative words and gestures. His main focus was small, communal hospitality, and he depended upon his audience to understand that, and reaffirm the lines of his plays.
which he sets as a model of charity and liberality the Sidney family. Jonson, in his elegy upon Shakespeare’s death also praised Shakespeare not solely for being a great author, but for being a writer who closely revealed nature: “Nature herself was proud of his designs / And joy’d to wear the dressing of his lines.” I claim that much of what Jonson found so interesting in Shakespeare is his portrayal of human nature, the focus of which is hospitable treatment. In the eighteenth century, Richard Steele found value in Shakespearean ethics, writing that Shakespeare was essentially a moralist of the common middling classes in a critical age that valued rhetoric over ethics and manners (Neumann 612). By the twentieth century, John Crowe Ransom claimed in “Criticism Inc.” that there was a need for a new way to look at literature, and that those who had of late attempted literary criticism were grossly unprepared for the undertaking. It is understandable that New Critics such as Ransom sought to break away from what earlier critics had focused upon, and yet the school’s almost total rejection of emotion was in some ways a denial of the human, which would include largely a denial of human reception of hospitality. Ransom’s contemporary, T.S. Eliot, applied scientific terminology to the study of literature. And certainly, since Ransom, Eliot, Cleanth Brooks and F. R. Leavis took a formalist approach to what for them would be a technical study of literature and not an affective one, specific studies of community or of the socializing influences of hospitality were largely ignored. Cleverly, William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley’s titular term, “the affective fallacy,” claimed that human feeling was a hindrance to proper criticism, not a virtue: “There may be a functional analogy for any alien object of emotion. Were it otherwise, indeed, there would be no way of understanding and describing alien emotions, no basis on which the science of the cultural relativist might proceed” (Wimsatt Jr. 37). The pair even go so far as to group “showing hospitality to the stranger” in the same alien category with “suicide” and “exposing babies.” The
New Critical style seemed to indicate that nothing was sacred and unapproachable, except for emotion. Whatever feeling, then, or honor, or values placed upon persons in communities through hospitable action, was not of import. In this vein, Shakespeare’s methods and motivations, his talent and ability were up for critique. In taking this strict intellectual and meaning-anchored approach, the New Critics did something valuable for literary criticism: they showed evidence that the Shakespearean pillar had cracks in it. Shakespeare is not a god, and the New Critics wanted to move away from past exaltation of the playwright. Their focus was reading the texts as they were, and judging them based on their merits in a close reading.

During this time, Samuel Schoenbaum and Stanley Wells approached the plays from a psychoanalytic perspective, borrowing terms from Freud or Jung, treating what I term hospitality from a view of character-ethics rather than social ethics. As such, these critics further developed Bradley’s character studies for a new critical climate. For such critics, individuals could be critiqued in ways not completely explained by culture. New Historicism in the 1980s saw society as more influential. History and power became more important as literary criticism largely ignored hospitality, assuming it was a known quantity, and a token set of kind actions taken largely for granted. Stephen Greenblatt famously wrote, “…fashioning oneself and being fashioned by cultural institutions—family, religion, state—were inseparably intertwined. In all my texts and documents, there were, so far as I could tell, no moments of pure, unfettered subjectivity; indeed, the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree…” (Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare 256). However, only a handful of scholars in the last few decades have examined the performance of hospitality as a fundamental
and foundational structure. Among these, notably, Leslie Fiedler, Julia Reinhard Lupton, James Heffernan, and Daryl Palmer have treated the performance of hospitality as a defining tenet of community, showing that hospitable performance is in fact central to literature, and central to the communities written about in that literature. Lupton argues the domain of the host is more about performance and less about materiality. Heffernan offers a fascinating delineation in his *Hospitality and Treachery in Western Literature*, arguing that hospitality derives from the Greek *hospes*, meaning “stranger” first, and secondarily, “guest.” *Hostis*, by contrast, means “stranger” first, and then, “enemy” (Heffernan, *Hospitality and Treachery in Western Literature* 2).

Heffernan implies that the human subject is altered from one not trusted to one trusted, and this basis is determined by the stranger’s reaction to the hospitable performance. In these defining moments, hospitality is the performance of the best human nature. In short, the attention given to hospitality in the plays was largely ignored for two centuries of criticism after Shakespeare wrote the plays, as it seems to have been taken for granted as a part of culture. Then, for about 150 years, deemed unimportant to literary discussion. Only in the past fifty years have critics sought to study hospitality as a part of culture necessary to produce characters and communities in the plays.

**The Plays**

I propose that four quite different plays can help us to understand in more depth how hospitality works—in a positive and a negative sense—for Shakespearean drama--and later for culture more broadly. I closely examine instances in *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of...

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6 Lupton, Kearney, Heffernan, and Palmer are my main, recent foci regarding this broader performative hospitality. Fiedler began my interest in the context of treatment of the stranger. His is a specific other-intense look, dealing with “woman, Jew, Moor, and savage,” which is foundational in what I am seeking to advance. Fiedler gives us a powerful look at society in Shakespeare (and in early modern England), and one that does solid groundwork for the larger societal argument I am making later in *MV*, dealing with differences of gender, religion, nation, race, and culture.
Venice, As You Like It, and finally, The Winter's Tale. These four plays provide examples of hospitality and inhospitality, then suggest ways these examples can lead to a better understanding of empathic action toward the guest/stranger and the affirmation of human value as a result of literary study both as research and in the classroom. What brings scholars and students alike back to Shakespeare, I argue, is this ability to perform hospitality in the plays, and to see hospitality’s on the human communities within them. Both scholars and students then, can share in the collective community that Shakespeare creates for us. In this way, we become co-creators of community with the plays.

Most importantly, I want to center my argument on the idea that learning to read Shakespeare is learning to live hospitably. Though persons in power both in the plays and in life breach hospitality in ways that can seem obvious, social norms evolve to the point that deciding what is a breach and what is acceptable is uncertain. If suspicious hosts commit breaches more far-reaching than they realize, and the community cannot or will not react with appropriate censure, something is lost, and humans are devalued. In studying Shakespeare’s plays, we learn how character interaction leads us to a better understanding of real-world hospitable action and inaction, both positive and negative. Any study of literature is a study of the ethics of human interaction on some level. Such study becomes a template for action on the real-world stage.

Curiously though, while there seems to be a general sense of hospitality governing each moment in each play, there is no strict rubric for hospitality that can possibly apply to all the dramatic situations in the four plays. Stable traditions dictate such hospitable moments, and the memory of how hospitality was played out in the past informs and guides the present. These memories, though, are subjective, varied, and arbitrary. The plays, then, are in fact literary artifacts that spell out how hospitality has been cataloged and archived for succeeding
generations of hospitable practice. Shakespeare may strain at the perceived borders of acceptable hospitable play, but he does not posit hard and fast hospitable rules. Characters drive the action of the plays, therefore: the characters within the plays do not give us strict morals as lessons, but instead show us hospitable performances and their consequences, negative hospitalities and ruptured communities. Leontes yells “Too hot!” in a moment alone, peering in the distance at his wife and Polixenes, and we wonder why the sudden jealousy. It is a moment such as this that gives the reader pause, suggesting that there is a problem with Leontes’ perception and his subsequent inhospitality.

Every now and again, we get reconciliation, healing of community, and it is always preceded by at least one hospitable speech pattern or performative gesture. We can still see the fabric of the past dramatic styles in Shakespeare’s endings, the justice meted out to those that broke with hospitable tradition, the marriages arranged: the mood is typically not that of dependence upon God, but dependence upon community. The tragedy of Lear, for instance, is not due to separation from God, but separation from community, even if the community is not as Lear had imagined it to be. The performance of community in these plays is the performance of communal religion, valuing the community over God, or said another way, Community-as-God.

Strictly speaking in the traditional sense, a host entertaining a guest at table, providing food, drink, conversation and lodging for the night in a safe space where the guest will be free from harm is a central tenet of human social behavior. Such performances are thought of generally as the only hospitality: lodging, food, conviviality. Yet since Shakespeare deals so pivotally with hospitable acts, I wish to argue for a pattern of ethical normativity. Many critics have deconstructed the spectacle of hospitable scenes and discussed how phenomenology interested both early modern and contemporary audiences and critics, but no critic has fully
delineated a framework of hospitable normativity found within Shr, MV, AYL, and WT, four quite different plays. These four run the continuum from comedy with problems, to a romance with problems. For example, in AYL, there is much comedy, detailed manners given by Corin, Touchstone, and Jaques, but it also contains members within community exiled as strangers, then brought back into full community. By the time I discuss WT, there is the death of a son, and a wife and former queen is regained, but wrongs cannot be undone. We can find some innate components in all four that, together, make a pattern worth investigating further.

People-problems are interesting to readers and audiences, and each audience is in varying degrees aware of which hospitable mores are flouted on the stage. Certainly by the time Shakespeare’s works were written, the Italian literary traditions had become English traditions (beginning in large part with Chaucer’s importation of Italian narrative forms). This is not to say, of course, that hospitality in literature did not exist beforehand in England, but certainly in her will to become more continental and sophisticated, England had to imitate earlier Renaissance examples of Italian courtly life, and working out a hospitable problem in ‘Sicilia’ on an English stage is a useful way to engage in an English solution to an old Italian (human) problem.

**Methodology**

My methodology for this approach is primarily a traditional one: using close reading for keywords and phrases, I show how characters in these plays perform hospitality in moments that act as fulcra for how the community is weakened or strengthened by their performance, where visitors, guests, and hosts interact in productive and unproductive ways for the community, as well as for the guests, who are always in some ways in the domain of the stranger or outsider. I derive my understanding of what I term ‘performative hospitality’ mainly from Lupton, who suggests that, “Shakespeare probes the scene of hospitality for its dramatic potential, that is, for
the kinds of action and the form of self-exposure that we risk each time we set the table” (J. R. Lupton 185). Lupton uses a close domestic inspection of material and setting, which is particularly useful when set against the backdrop of the stage.

If scholarly assumptions about hospitality are altered by evidence brought to light in these interactions between stranger and indigene, then those assumptions can be transformed into pathways toward a better understanding of human interactions in the Early modern period and perhaps beyond. Mikhail Bakhtin’s “speech genres” provides a useful way to construct the discussion of a hospitable hermeneutic. Bakhtin says that for every situation, certain keywords and phrases are applied depending upon the desired outcome of the event. These “speech genres” change as the performance of them dictates (Bakhtin 287). Analyzing certain patterns of speech in the plays will yield useful ways to interpret what follows within the community of the plays.

It seems worth exploring how we can gauge the ethics of a community by its members’ willingness to perform positive hospitality. In Shakespearean drama, certain crucial inhospitable acts divide individuals within a larger community from each other, placing strain on the persons involved to the point of communal dissolution. What is at issue is a matter of reception and perception, a subset to the performative phenomena. The appearance of a thing, a hospitable or inhospitable act, its performance, its unique phenomenon, is what is judged to be correct or incorrect, helpful, harmful, or simply confusing. Conflict between the stranger and the indigene (and those arising against the indigene who is suddenly suspected of being a silent stranger or enemy within a community) offer us little in the way of conflict resolution—but again, this assumes that we are seeking to keep communities together, a central idea my investigation is predicated upon. Humans are valuable, Shakespeare argues in many scenes (Leontes’ ultimate
reconciliation with Hermione in WT for instance); therefore, human communities which keep them healthy and thriving are valuable.

**Literature Review**

I want to mention some work done by critics that spurred my interest in hospitality, specifically James A. W. Heffernan’s book *Hospitality and Treachery in Western Literature* (2014 Yale UP) takes up the traditional good actions of the host, the guest, and acts surrounding the trust inherent in any hospitable-communal enterprise. Heffernan is useful for the ways in which foundational hospitality creates and sustains community in all four plays that are the subject of my study. Julia Reinhard Lupton’s *Thinking with Shakespeare* explores hospitality in depth, examining phenomenological aspects of hospitality and how these performative acts can be used to entertain as drama, and the ways in which domestic performance of hospitality affects the political sphere through such avenues as hospitable speech. This set of speech acts is useful for my argument about the ways characters in WT discuss the king’s breach of hospitality both before the fact and after: Shakespeare puts words in the mouths of his characters that I will echo in my argument about hospitable breach and methods of restitution and reception even of known persons. In addition to this grouping of hospitable speech acts, as a closely related perspective, Lupton makes a phenomenological move in examining Hannah Arendt’s “account of judgment” in weighing entertainment and culture. Lupton’s chapter “Hospitality and Risk in The Winter’s Tale” discusses the outcomes of Arendtian action and how such actions are acted as entertainment within a framework of hospitality, performed for an audience of persons present.

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8 Sokol and Sokol’s *Shakespeare, Law, and Marriage* (Cambridge UP, 2003) is a brilliant argument for what is completely legal and yet ethically horribly about marriage. The Sokols argue that only in WT is “…an actual ‘divorce’ named... The disguised King Polixenes unmasks himself to interrupt the public celebration of the handfasting of his son and heir, saying ‘Mark your divorce, young sir’” (IV.iv.417). For purposes of my argument this is an important element as divorce (Polixenes’ control over Florizel), and banishment (Leontes’ control over his queen Hermione) are both read as communal dissolution in the plays, and breaches of hospitality in several respects.
These performances become part of communal memory, and are in themselves phenomena. Hospitable phenomena make up what we know as culture. “Shakespearean drama,” says Lupton, “perhaps especially in its late, Stuart stages, draws out that politics in order to produce an art that attains to the status of drama while remaining at home in the world of entertainment” (J. R. Lupton 164). Though conflict may be entertaining, it is the working through the hospitable intention, and in many cases, seeing past such intention to the resolution stage, that perhaps is most anticipatory for an audience witnessing hospitable play. Such play can be on the stage and in the banquet hall, at court, or in the family home. Lupton weaves together a system of economies that does not merely depend upon actors and scenes, or only upon the psychological interior monologue seeking to answer the questions before such vile and inhospitable breaches are enacted, but expands her vision to include the environs around which power seeks itself in others. For Lupton, props, tapestries, flatware, colors, and sounds are as important in setting the stage for hospitality as are persons. Lupton shows us that things are material, but that persons are material bodies, thus objects of affect and influence in ways critics may not have considered. These phenomenologies also tie into Jennifer Bates’s work, which I discuss below, on Hegelian cultural evolutions that govern the ethical behavioral questions I consider a little later.

Daryl W. Palmer writes in Hospitable Performances: Dramatic Genre and Cultural Practices in Early Modern England that many scholars had been interested in hospitality until about 100 years ago, when the focus of inquiry on hospitality as a cultural phenomenon that is vital to community seems to have faded from view. Palmer picks up the thread of hospitable inquiry by presenting research on several early modern thinkers, such as Caleb Dalechamp, whom he quotes as saying the most important modes of hospitality lie in these four items: “earnest invitation, cheerful entertainment, faithful protection,” and “courteous dismissal or
deduction” (Palmer 1). Deduction, in this sense, is the dismissal of the guest from the hospitable performance, and is just as important as the performance (the meal, the conversation) if not more so. The deduction is the taste in the mouth long after the meal is done. Using such Early modern examples, Palmer constructs for us a set of arguments that show the importance of hospitality to community, the implications of which are unsettling particularly when viewed against specific breaching moments in Shr., MV, AYL, and WT. Further, hospitable mores, Palmer suggests, become a valuable method for exploring hospitality in detail. There are things that are done, and things that are not done, and tradition and custom, culture and the narrative of culture determine these doings, these performances.

F. R. P. Akehurst and Stephanie Cain Van D’Elden, editors of The Stranger in Medieval Society, take a more historical view, looking backward into the moments that Shakespeare used as tropes. Their work foregrounds the argument I am making here. Akehurst and Van D’Elden undergird my investigation into the early modern, specifically, they highlight contextual moments prior to the early modern period that give rise to similar themes I follow in supporting my claims of kind treatment of the guest as a first and necessary guide, and one who binds community together for indigenes, guests, and strangers.

David Ruiter’s brilliant article, “Shakespeare and Hospitality: Opening The Winter’s Tale” takes up as its focus hospitable gift and debt, and the ways in which what is given must be repaid in kind, and must be recognized to be repaid thus, or else will turn guest into enemy, host into hostile. Ruiter examines Derrida’s treatment of gift and debt and says of the play that “… only the one who endures the experience of being outside the home can truly learn hospitality, can accept the fit, without power” (Ruiter, Shakespeare and Hospitality: Opening "The Winter's Tale" 176). Ruiter here alludes to the stranger and the traveler—all those who for various reasons
are pushed from home or set out away from community. Ruiter further pushes the hospitable sphere so as to situate the host in the position to accept any stranger or foreigner as guest, without regard to the stranger’s identity, something Derrida examines in detail as “absolute hospitality.”

Richard Kearney and Kascha Semonovitch’s collection *Phenomenologies of the Stranger: Between Hostility and Hospitality* (2011) includes several chapters dealing with strangers, others, hospitable acts, hospitable inference and difference. The first chapter deals with defining the stranger as well as a critical look at national borders, immigrants as strangers, and the hostilities associated within cultural assimilation. As Kearney and Semonovitch point out, defining the stranger across cultures (for purposes of this essay, quite necessary in a New Historicist gesture backwards from modernity to Early modern England) is tricky at best: “These distinctions are facilitated somewhat in English by the fact that we have separate words for ‘stranger’ and ‘foreigner,’ whereas in many other languages there is but one: ‘l’éstranger, xenos, hostis (which can be enemy), der Fremde…” (Kearney and Semonovitch 3). Kearney and Semonovitch show us that appearances can make strangers of well-known friends, and attitudes can change, causing individual and group perception to affect trust and the future outcome of hospitable action and inaction.

In a broader theoretical, Kwame Anthony Appiah claims in *Cosmopolitanism* that culture is at the root of what I refer to as the hospitable act. Appiah’s modern view of theoretical inquiry allows me to more fully embrace the ways Shakespearean characters can be seen as actors on a worldwide human stage with implications for performances not simply across the stage or across the theater but across Early modern England, pushing past national borders, affecting both communities and individual mindsets. The concept of “empire” brings up national interests in
this conversation about hospitality, and Appiah mentions the skepticism that the existence of empire tends to foster: “The history of Empire,” Appiah writes, “… Persian, Macedonian, Roman, Mongol, Hun, Mughal, Ottoman, Dutch, French, British, American – has many unhappy moments” (Appiah 14,15). In the general sense, empire is inhospitable,⁹ and though this critique of empire is nothing new to criticism, I use it here as a foundational hospitable breach. True, in a play such as *Julius Caesar*, Rome may choose to extend rights of citizenship to conquered peoples, but only after subjugating them, and absorbing their home into the Roman Empire. Rome, in these instances was the newcomer, the stranger, demanding the host to alter their community. Regarding the conquering I argue is a hospitable breach, Appiah says, “to understand all is to forgive all” [from the old maxim “Tout comprendre c’est tout pardonner”] but he qualifies this statement by saying, “We often do forgive, once we understand” (Appiah 15). For Appiah, such forgiveness of breach is in communal self-interest, extending to the entire world. This specific portion of his argument, the forgiveness (by the guest), and his use of strangerhood and “the outsider” interweave well with my examination of the plays and my extrusion of their communities to all communities. Simply put, once a community accepts a stranger as a member of its community, that community is on the continuum of addressing what its borders truly mean. Taken far enough, the influx of new persons may cause the community to question who is and should be an insider, and who an outsider. The mid- to late nineteenth century’s insistence on staunch Nationalism is an example of such. Communities as nations, for

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⁹ Though I do not argue from the history plays, Shakespeare does consider empire in smaller ways. Duke’s, lords and other landowning authority held sway over their own small empires within a larger English empire. England was of course set on the foundation, literally and figuratively, of the old Roman Empire. In the communal sense, I focus on here, the Romans had to first dissolve the community as it existed, then bring citizens that would come into community, the new Roman community, for the benefit and under governance of Rome.
most of human history, did not exist. Therefore, it is possible to imagine a post-national world of communities.

To address the problem of stretching across four centuries from Shakespeare to more modern theoretical positions of humanist empathy, and to pick up that to which I have alluded earlier of Hegelian argument, I would offer a statement Jennifer Bates uses to support her work in a similar solution to the problem of anachronisms:

Productive syntheses do not always “work” in terms of a history or in terms of a Hegelian logical argument. But the tension involved in putting two heterogeneous things together is productive: One side illuminates the other, Hegel’s explanation of a topic: for example, the comparison of Shakespeare’s Coriolanus with Hegel’s discussion of Antigone in the Phenomenology, offers an alternative approach to Hegel’s account of the Kinship-State relationship in Ethical Spirit (Bates xiv–xv).

Bates argues that simply because two writers do not live in the same historical time does not mean that they do not wrestle with the same problems, the same questions, or that they do not seek similar answers to such. Historical-theoretical work of this kind can only be done by looking across a fair bit of time and tracing the development of ideas with which Shakespeare is concerned, and then sensing how these ideas evolve in cultural thinking up to the present. My work is but a moment in a long struggle of the treatment of strangers, travelers, foreigners, and outcasts. I can offer no definitive answers to the larger questions, but in some focused ways I hope to achieve some firm ground on which we may come to a better understanding of where we are in relation to the strangers in our world, what treatment of them is morally justifiable, and what is not.
Acting within the framework of dramatic hospitable act, using four plays, and positing a hospitable hermeneutic as a way to view and read characters’ words and actions within the plays, I bring to light the positive and negative hospitable acts of the plays in a more modern discussion of human empathy as it involves travelers, strangers, indigents, immigrants, and those who have lost power within their own communities. In this way, I hope to show the irreplaceable value that performing hospitality to those without power may benefit not only them, but ourselves. At some point in this process, we become humans, and not indigenes and strangers.

To a wider readership, and those who might not concern themselves with Shakespeare or the Early modern period, what I am doing is wading into a growing empathetic vacuum and cautioning that to ignore the needs of strangers, travelers, immigrants, and asylum seekers is to devalue the human in us all, which historically has led to increased conflict and widespread dissolution of human communities. In this way, I seek to show that the reading and teaching of Shakespeare is not the author responsible for the colonization of the world, though in a colonizing age, that inhospitable control may have been the intent of some. Rather, the humanizing moments of hospitality in the plays may offer something in the way of how to behave, if read closely and carefully. Theoretically therefore, and for the larger thrust of my argument in chapter four, I am depending upon cosmopolitanism, as it enlarges my argument from a Tudor/Stuart/English problem within a narrow, homogeneous community to a worldwide problem with communities across peoples. Trade, and the hosting it requires for disparate persons to trust each other is vital.

Andrew Shryock is fascinated with hospitality across cultures and sees the importance of hospitality for guests as similar, despite cultural differences. In his article, “Breaking Hospitality Apart: Bad Hosts, Bad Guests, and the Problem of Sovereignty,” Shryock writes what is perhaps
the finest statement of the importance of hospitality as a foundation which undergirds communities across time, and around the world:

As a zone of intersecting ethical traditions, the hospitality complex grows out of two foundational sources that were eventually brought together in regional scholarship. The first is the intellectual legacy of classical antiquity. Homer and Virgil composed epic poems devoted to the behaviour of bad hosts and wily guests; Greco-Roman mythology is replete with similar motifs, as gods and mortals penetrate each other’s social worlds; and classical philosophy, from Socrates to Seneca, turns repeatedly to matters of generosity and the political status of strangers. The second legacy is Abrahamic. A peculiar set of moral expectations, often extreme and contradictory, accompanies hospitality in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions, linking it to ideas that cannot be reduced to simple lessons in sharing and human kindness. These ideas surface in stories that evoke a sense of existential danger at the heart of social life…In all of these instances, hospitality is a test that can be failed; the stakes include life and death (Shryock 21).

In several encounters, as Shryock argues, someone of good intent performs tremendously hospitable acts, only to be rejected by the guests. As in so many literary situations, the problem hinges upon perception. Over time, perception tends to simplify into a monolithic scene. An example from antiquity are the epic poems of Homer (Iliad, Odyssey) in which communities waged war against each other for breaches such as kidnapping, in the case of the Iliad. In the Odyssey, Odysseus commits many breaches of hospitality and is shown poor hospitality. The Polyphemus incident, in which Odysseus steals his host’s cheese is one such example, although Polyphemus fails to act at all like a good host. But these examples can be perceived differently:
Menelaus will no doubt see his wife Helen’s departure as kidnapping, theft, rape, and inhospitality. Paris, however, claims that the goddess (Aphrodite) wills it. Meanwhile, for Odysseus as guest, his claim is that Polyphemus was a horrible host. Polyphemus, for his part, claims cultural difference. Strangely and inexplicably, Polyphemus does not submit to the gods, goddesses, or care about their ways, even though his father is one. An ancient tale such as this is a good way to contrast the way hospitality was viewed in centuries and millennia past: there is, many times, silence on the subject of why hospitality should be performed, while hospitality itself is performed and moments of hospitality are simply assumed to be part of civilization. R. K. Gibson, in his article “Aeneas as Hospes in Vergil, Aeneid 1 and 4,” argues,

The Homeric scenes include a number of repeated conventional elements, such as arrival at the destination, description of the surroundings, the offer of a seat to the guest by the host, a feast, identification of the guest, exchange of information, entertainment, offer of a bed, the detainment of the guest by the host, and finally bestowal of gifts by the host and departure of the guest. The Homeric poems gain much internal complexity from the repetition, variation and omission of these elements in individual hospitality scenes. The ancient commentators were apparently aware of this phenomenon (Gibson 186).

Gibson provides evidence that this heuristic of hospitality has been latent in our thinking about literary communities, and Shakespeare would have been aware of such thinking, if not explicitly in criticism, at least from scenes in the work of Homer, Virgil, and Plautus. I argue that there is an assumed hospitality expected by ancient communities, and that, as in the plays, our communities dissolve without its liberal and frequent performance. Authority such as Leontes in WT, the Venice city-state court in MV, and “new Duke” Frederick are responsible for the performance of hospitality in their domains. As such, they are responsible to do it in such a way
as to create a phenomenon of value, fairness, and trust in the perception of the community, the commonweal. Communal welfare depends upon such performance, but first and foremost the host, the authorized host, upon whom is bestowed the trust of the community, must show forth phenomena in the public memory that engender trust, faith, and strength to and for the humans that make up the community. Recently, scholars have discussed the problems inherent in breaches of hospitality within Shakespeare’s plays. They have though, as in the case of Lupton, Heffernan, and Palmer, offered larger avenues for the application of hospitality onto the world’s stage in modes of thought utilized by Hannah Arendt and later, Giorgio Agamben.

The plays are mere exercises in hospitality, showing evidence of literary communities that are strained when the performance of hospitality is neglected. If hospitality is to die, if the phenomena of hospitable performance should die, it would cease to signal to the other that she is valuable. When we do not put forth the energy to show the value of our guest, and give away a measure of power to that guest, we are signaling that the guest is not important. Moreover, we are alerting the community that the guest is not as valuable as the host, and that the stranger’s environs are not as worthwhile as the realm of the host. It is but the work of a few short steps, then, for a host to alter community from a vibrant and healthy domicile (in the larger sense, the polis) into a gang of bitter and vengeful individuals. Dissolution follows. Community allows individuals the ability to meet their needs in small exchanges of power. In a dissolved community, individuals find more and more disparate and desperate methods of meeting those needs. As Lupton argues, power seeks itself in others. Since power seeks itself in others, an individual outside of the community will take power (possessions, life) away from another individual in any way possible to meet their own needs. I argue against this rampant individualism as a result of the abuse of inhospitable authority, such as the case of Duke
Frederick in *AYL* banishing Duke Senior before the play’s opening, or as in *WT* of Leontes exiling his wife Hermione for what he perceives as adultery, both of which I will discuss in detail in the chapters.

In this dissertation, I take these critics’ arguments one step further, suggesting that in studying these moments of hospitable acts, we can better view hospitality in its rightful light, as central to both the transfer of communal power and communal health. I set out to showcase in Shakespearean drama certain crucial moments of hospitable action that may be thought good and proper, contrasting them with those that tear persons and communities from themselves. I argue that when the results of such hospitality are not as expected, we must rethink either our judgment or the framework by which we judge the service of host-to-guest and the response of guest-to-host. Tradition gives us guidelines, but tradition and memory are not enough. We must place specific cultural consideration against specific scenes to be able to see how Shakespeare cleverly reveals the results of the abuse of power inherent in negative hospitality, and in the lack of hospitality altogether. Little work has been done in this specific area within these four plays, and as such, I plan to shed light on an undeveloped area in Shakespearean drama.

**Chapter Summaries**

In chapter one I argue that *Shr.* is a production of a husband’s inhospitality toward a wife, a husband-host performing for a wife-guest. Petruccio takes Katherine into his home, hosts her badly by denying her food, speaks harshly to her, and attempts to reeducate her to see the world simply as he says it is, despite all evidence to the contrary. By play’s end, Katherine alters only her discourse, and in so doing, placates Petruccio by allowing him what he never knew he desired: public praise and respect he never earned. Katherine subsumes his role as host, giving Petruccio these verbal gifts he does not deserve, and the community is fully aware of these gifts.
Though Petruccio seeks to educate Katherine to his perspective, it is ultimately Katherine who educates Petruccio using language as her method.

Chapter two deals with MV and the hospitality of Antonio and Bassanio toward Shylock, Shylock’s toward them, and the undergirding hosting role of the City-State of Venice. With Shr., a wife, Katherine, is treated in hospitably and overcomes her husband’s mistreatment due to her sharp intellect and power of language. MV is a darker shift in inhospitality, seeing the party who wishes revenge to lose everything. All parties fail to show proper hospitable action: Antonio and Bassanio never apologizes to Shylock for their past derision, Shylock seeks revenge in issuing a loan bond with terms that are impossible upon forfeit, and Portia’s forced conversion of Shylock is an injury beyond non-payment of any loan. Bassanio seeks a loan of 3,000 ducats so that he has the means to woo the wealthy Portia. He approaches his friend Antonio (the merchant of Venice) for the ducats. Having leveraged his fortune on his many ships now at sea, Antonio does not have the funds, and appeals to Shylock, a Jewish moneylender in Venice, whom Antonio has derided many times in the public marketplace. Hesitant at first, Shylock agrees (after borrowing from his fellow lender Tubal). MV is a compound economy of borrowing from borrowers, and the chain of debt becomes somewhat of a metaphor for the chain of hospitality. Shylock sets his default terms in such a stark way, that for Antonio not to repay means his death. Ultimately, Portia, the wealthy heiress for whom Bassanio sought the loan in the first place, disguises herself as the legal expert Balthasar, holds court in the Shylock vs. Antonio case, forgives the loan, allows Antonio to control all Shylock’s goods, and forces Shylock to convert to Christianity. Problems abound, and inhospitality turns what is titled a comedy into a community crisis, and a fate worse than death for Shylock. Antonio originally came to Shylock for 3000 ducats, and ends up with everything he has. What is hospitable to Christian Venice is inhospitable and tragic for
Shylock. Antonio’s insistence that Shylock convert to Christianity is a gift in Antonio’s mind, but a loss of identity worse than death in that of Shylock.

In chapter three, I argue from *Ayl* that authority in the persons of Duke Frederick, and to a lesser degree Oliver, disrupts community when they seek to exert full control over members of their communities. Compared to the previous play, it is much lighter, owing to the full reconciliation of community at its close. Unlike *MV*, inhospitality fractures community, but ultimately, hospitality brings all back into community. Rosalind is banished, and wanders as a stranger out of her community. I specifically chose this play because of the hope of the return to community by banished members and the forgiveness hospitality brings as persons are once again welcomed and hosted. Rosalind, for her part must become someone else for her own safety while traveling (Ganymede, a man), but ultimately regains her original identity and is accepted into community once again. Community can be brought back together, and the play is rightly regarded as a comedy. But the negative hospitality shown to Rosalind, and to her banished father before her (in a familial legacy of ill treatment), is problematic and enhances my earlier claims regarding the responsibility of authority with regard the performance of hospitality. I argue that power and authority are enough to warrant the positive performance of hospitality for those in and out of community. Here also, if authority would remain in power, it must necessarily practice either positive hospitality, or barbarism and maltreatment of community to warrant the faith placed on that authority by the community. When authority in the plays chooses the latter, it sets ticking a clock of its own ultimate demise, and perhaps the demise of the entire community with it. Powerful persons bear the primary responsibility for hospitality, and the state bears this authority in creating a safe sphere of hospitality for its inhabitants, strangers, and travelers. The
plays, as I argue in detail, are thick with the perils of ignoble deeds done in the name of hospitality (or its vacuum) and the fractured communities that result.

Finally, chapter four explores the beginning polemics inherent in royal court problems of perception. In *AYL*, I showed how hospitality is able to heal all wounds. *WT* is the problem of a king’s untimely eroticization of his powerful queen, and though there is partial reconciliation, the sole heir to the throne dies, throwing the kingdom’s future into uncertainty. The hospitable problems in *WT* between Leontes (King of Sicilia), his wife Hermione (Queen of Sicilia), and Polixenes (King of Bohemia), serve to show how control and the perception of control lead to individuals being cast out of community: this is stranger-making of once beloved communal insiders. When Leontes accuses Hermione of having had sexual relations with his guest and fellow king Polixenes, Leontes breaches hospitality. His breach lies not only in his negative and reductive eroticization of his wife Hermione, but in the eroticization of the female host, Queen Hermione. Further, Leontes crosses hospitable norms by accusing his guest, Polixenes, of wrongdoing publicly, and without sound evidence. While more obvious example of inhospitality exist, such as in *Macbeth*, where the host murders his king and guest, I endeavor to show smaller moments of performative hospitality. These small moments occur more frequently, and their performance is not limited to main characters only, but to nearly all characters in the plays—in this way, hospitality is like an invisible web connecting every actor (whether in a play or in reality) to every other actor, every moment to all other moments. Each small hospitable act is a brick in a structure built of many bricks. Much scholarship has been done on how a community explodes rapidly such as in *Macbeth* or *Lear*. I want to show how community is built a brick at a time, or likewise destroyed.
Induced into Hospitality

In this chapter, I argue that *The Taming of the Shrew* (hereafter *Shr.*) induces the audience (and the reader) into the world of hospitality, though violently, inhospitably, yet at the same time educationally. And what I mean by “hospitality” here is a series of performative words and actions, enacted by a host for a guest with no requirement of reciprocity. In what follows, I explore the manor Lord’s elaborate prank upon Christopher Sly and the Kate/Petruchio play-within-a-play performed for Sly by the Lord’s players (I will refer to this also as the Kate/Petruchio plot). I then turn to how the play reveals the inherent problems in localizing and defining the term manhood, a state of being Petruchio alternately reinforces and problematizes. Petruchio’s attempt at creating a language and stark methodology to “train” Kate (much as a falconer or horseman would train an animal) only teaches her to fabricate her own discourse to train him. Finally, I ask the question: Have we missed the point of the play in reading *Shr* too seriously? For, if seeking to make others laugh is a hospitable and community-strengthening enterprise, we may have lost the aim of Shakespeare’s play entirely, and somewhat ironically.

The *OED* defines “hospitality” in several ways. I will concern my argument with a focused view on one, with a following alteration concerning the political agent responsible for state hospitality: 1) “The act or practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers, with liberality and goodwill.” The word comes from the Old French “hospitalité,” itself from the Latin “hospitalitas,” and further from “hospitalis.” 2) The ruler of a political area, responsible for offering hospitality in that political domain is the “hospodar,” an English borrowing from Romanian, and the editors of the *OED* note, it is probably from the
Ukrainian. In *Shr.*, I focus on both the lord and Petruccio as the ones responsible for practicing hospitality.

The Christopher Sly plot in the inductions at the beginning of *Shr.* is an old plot, one that is built on “… a story type that can be found in multiple traditions, spanning three continents and reaching as far back as the second century CE” (Burton 5). Shakespeare takes a story that is fourteen centuries old and attempts to make it relatable to his audience. He received the more specific ideas for both the Christopher Sly plot and the Kate/Petruccio plot from folk stories that were well known in his day, specifically the tales, “Lord for a Day,” and “The Taming of the Shrew.” Charlotte Artese writes, “Following Jan Harold Brunvand’s work on the folktale ‘The Taming of the Shrew’… Shakespearean scholars have begun to acknowledge that this tale is the source for the Katherine – Petruchio [sic] plot in William Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew.*”12 As Artese notes, like many of Shakespeare’s plays, the plots were already well known and would have been familiar to the mid-afternoon audiences in London. The crowd could easily see where the playwright was going and would readily notice any change. As such, Shakespeare could and did alter his plot, writing new developments and a new ending to distinguish his play from the commonly received tales (Artese 317). For instance, Shakespeare takes “Lord for a Day” and alters it by removing the ultimate joke at the end, the expected final moment when Sly is supposed to be shown he was never a lord at all. In excising this ending, Shakespeare places Sly in a perpetual space of finery, with several attendants, choice food and drink, and a doting wife at his side. He gives Sly a new identity as well as a higher social class, and he elevates the groundlings in the audience with him. The audience knows the plot of “Lord for a Day.” Therefore, when they see the setup, and the Lord’s detailed instructions about the class-based

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12 Quotations and spellings are from the Norton. In this case then, Norton has (from the Oxford edition), “Petruccio.”
prank in Induction 1, they expect Sly’s eventual realization that his past several hours have indeed been a farce, with all the shame and degradation of that awareness. The joke never materializes. It comes to seem as if class itself, with its distinctions, is immaterial, merely a temporal construction of the imagination, and the prank works well on Sly’s imagination. A rich person plays an elaborate joke on a poor person, and the fun (from the Lord’s perspective anyway) is in the public shaming and humiliation when the impoverished person finally realizes there was never fortune, or respect for a human for the human’s sake alone. In the two inductions, Shakespeare shows a world of the inhospitality of class distinction. He sets up these distinctions to contextualize what is at stake in the play: what matters is class, material wealth, and not much else. If one is poor, this portion of the text suggests, the poor had best be kind.

Sly is combative though, so is the Hostess justified in reacting to him in a similar fashion? Who would stoop to host a rude “beggar?” After all, she is “Hostess” for profit. Hostess does host him, and no doubt expects remuneration. In this exchange, Hostess is not hospitable, by my definition (“with no expectation of reciprocity”). I am not suggesting that she should give all away freely, but her behavior only inflames the situation. Shakespeare needed to show an initial problem for his plot, however, and to flesh out his characterization of Sly. Though Sly should pay the Hostess, his perception is that he deserves respect for his lineage, and the Lord’s prank gives him just that. Though we do not see the preceding moments, no doubt Hostess does her part, and carries no blame in the encounter. The first line opens in the middle of a confrontation with threatening overtones but no contextualization.13 The first induction shows a

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13 As I will show, these decontextualized inductions will contrast significantly with the play proper, in which the main characters are given significant backstories.
woman and a man, Hostess and Sly, verbally sparring back and forth, and the acted portion, the Kate/Petruccio play-within-a-play, will have more of the same.\footnote{Karen Newman argues about gender relation anxiety and its communal effects. As with the Hostess/Sly relationship, the Kate/Petruccio plot is similar relationship, and the proof text that the Lord puts on as a play for Sly. In effect, the Kate/Petruccio play-within-a-play only exists solely for the edification of Sly. So when Newman problematizes what Shr. places at the crux of a healthy society, namely that of a healthy marriage, we may examine it for what it says about all such relationships.}  

Readers first observe the Hostess hosting Christopher Sly as her guest in Induction 1. Sly has broken some glasses, angering the host, who scolds him for refusing to pay for them. As if his debt to the Hostess may be resolved by his reputation, Sly delivers the line,

You’re a baggage; the Slys are no rogues. Look in the chronicles; we came in with Richard Conqueror.

Therefore paucas palabras: let the world slide. Sessa!” (Induction 1.3-5)

Sly attempts to establish his identity here, one that is worthy of some monetary credit from the Hostess, seeking to earn by his imagined lineage respect from her. Sly’s method is by this time already archaic. Drinks cost money, and Sly either has none, or wishes to spend none for them. By telling a narrative of “Richard” [William the Conqueror], Sly tries to gain with a story what he lacks in funds, namely social currency, respect, and recognition. This social currency/respect/recognition are what Petruccio will later long for, though not tell Katherine, for he does not seem to possess the ability to express his need for them.

The Kate/Petruccio plot is the play the lord produces for Christopher Sly. It is part of the elaborate ruse to convince Sly that he is a wealthy and important lord, and the Kate/Petruccio plot occupies most of the time on the stage. If we forget this, then we have lost the chief idea of the play-within-a-play: the Kate and Petruccio plot is acted only, as the play’s text reads, by a hastily assembled crew of the lord’s servants playing the part of actors. As such, if we focus only
on the Kate/Petruchio plot, we miss the larger message: these are not professional actors, but
servants of a Lord, seeking to satisfy his extended joke upon Sly. If Sly is thought to dream that
he was a lord, then the Kate/Petruchio plot is merely a dream within a dream, and not to be taken
as history or even the present Early modern social reality.

Near the end of Induction 2, the servants set up the Kate/Petruchio play for Sly. Similar to
the Arabian Nights, Bartholomew, playing the part of Sly’s wife in the joke on Sly, begs absence
from Sly’s bed for a few nights, in order to tell a story that will help his condition upon doctor’s
orders:

**Bartholomew**: Thrice-noble lord, let me entreat of you

To pardon me yet for a night or two,

Or if not so, until the sun be set,

For your physicians have expressly charged,

In peril to incur your former malady,

That I should yet absent me from your bed.

I hope this reason stands for my excuse.

**Sly**: Ay, it stands so that I may hardly tarry so long. But I would be loath to fall into my
dreams again. I will therefore tarry in despite of the flesh and the blood.

**Messenger**: Your honour’s players, hearing your amendment,

Are come to play a pleasant comedy,

For so your doctors hold it very meet,

Seeing too much sadness hath congealed your blood,

And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy.

*Therefore they thought it good you hear a play* (Induction 2, 114-129, italics my own).
Shakespeare takes what the audience has come to expect, a consistently reinforced social hierarchy, and removes the ending to Sly’s “Lord for a Day” plot, changing the meaning. His changes are a nod to his audience, who mostly were working class people, not unlike Sly. Shakespeare changes a longstanding tradition, and no critic can say why. Perhaps he hoped to elevate Sly to please the poorer classes in his audience. As the play opens without the expected ending to this plot, and as the lord’s players are performing the Kate/Petruchio plot for Sly, Shakespeare suggests that the main plot will also change, or at least is malleable, simply a construction to be altered, as I will show later. Sly never again sees that he is poor in Shakespeare’s version of Shr. In this way, he is left as the greatest recipient of hospitality. In a related way, Petruccio is the recipient of generous hospitality from Kate. Both Sly and Petruccio, in the end, receive what they have not earned.

To better elucidate the point of the Lord knowing better than to lambast Sly, Maurice Hamington says of hospitality and its necessary material foundations, “Property plays a role in how hospitality constitutes identity. The host is usually conceived of as having some resource to offer or share with the guest” (Hamington 25). Indeed, this host, the Lord, does offer up a room, fine furnishings, food, drink, and even a young man dressed as a woman to be Sly’s wife. Yet the Lord does not do this—and this speaks to intent—as an act of hospitality, but as inhospitality. Still, existing alone as a material enterprise, the lord does fit the definition of Hamington’s material hospitality. To the Lord, this ‘practical joke’ (the term is never used in the play) is from his perception of benign privilege. To Sly, it is a significant disruption to his reality. Yes, Sly gets a meal, and a respite from hard labor stalking the streets as a tinker and a beggar, but his human personhood and dignity is thrown into question. It is not only the inhospitality shown toward Sly that is a problem in the play. The inhospitality toward Kate takes up the vast matter
of the play, for, as I will argue, Kate is a material placeholder in that she is the eldest sister. She must be married before her sister Bianca, and this sets up the Kate/Petruchio plot that highlights the inhospitality in the play.

The Kate/Petruchio Play-Within-a-Play

I want to discuss the inhospitalities in the Kate/Petruchio plot, so I will briefly summarize how the Lord’s players get us there: Lucentio, a gentleman of Pisa, sets out to travel to Padua from Pisa. When he meets the younger of two daughters, Bianca, he is love-struck. But Bianca's father won't let her marry before her older sister Kate does. Therefore, when Lucentio meets Petruccio at the close of 1.2, he realizes the perfect solution is at hand, and devises to disguise himself as a schoolmaster for Bianca, while Petruccio gets the elder Kate. Lucentio and Tranio discuss the plot in act I, scene 1:

Lucentio: I have it, Tranio.

Tranio: Master, for my hand,

Both our inventions meet and jump in one.

Lucentio: Tell me thine first.

Tranio: You will be schoolmaster

And undertake the teaching of the maid.

That’s your device (1.1.183-187).

Lucentio’s method is in stark opposition to the Lord’s crude manner of pranking Christopher Sly, yet both devices involve subterfuge. While the Lord substitutes externalities only, and solely for the ridicule of Sly, Lucentio seeks to refine his pupil Bianca’s interiority, so that he may, as he says, “…haply institute / A course of learning and ingenious studies” (1.1.8,9), his goal being the
formation of what he has come to know in his native Pisa as “grave citizens” (1.1.10). Lucentio differs from the Lord however, as Lucentio is moved by love.

By comparison, both Sly and Petruchio have connections to earlier literary texts. Similar to the older examples of “Lord for a Day” performed by Christopher Sly in the inductions, Petruchio shows his connection to older examples of braggart characters. Philip Collington states that,

By comparing Petruchio to the type’s most storied ancestor, Pyrgopolinices in Plautus’s *Miles Gloriosus* [The Braggard Captain] (ca 200 BC), as well as to sixteenth-century exemplars like Ralph in Nicholas Udall’s *Ralph Roister Doister* (ca 1545–52), Sir Tophas in John Lyly’s *Endymion: The Man in the Moon* (1588), and Huanebango in George Peele’s *The Old Wives Tale* (ca 1588–94), I will propose a different protagonist from the one to which modern playgoers and readers may be accustomed (Collington 81).

Collington suggests that Petruchio is only the latest in a protracted lineage of characters embodying braggart courtship, arguing that the character is nearly always a comic one, saying and acting out things which no reasonable person could take seriously.15 “Because the folio does not identify him as a specific type … editors often adopt Nicholas Rowe’s 1709 description of Petruchio as ‘a gentleman of Verona’ in their dramatis personae—fostering preconceptions at odds with a protagonist who claims indomitable courage …” (Collington 82). He continues to argue that because of Petruchio’s bragging, his position is that his experience, based upon his

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15 Collington compares Christopher Sly’s lineage in his ‘Richard the Conqueror’ line to a line of characters, bluntly stating, “The folio’s Christopher Sly boasts that his family ‘came in with Richard [the] Conqueror’ (Ind. 1.4), but Petruchio’s generic ancestry goes back to Pyrgopolinices the ‘vain-glory’ comic butt of ancient Rome.” Any shock or offense generated in a modern performance of *Shr.*, then, is due to a misunderstanding of this stock comedic character, the bragging soldier, and indeed Katherine Minola seems to misunderstand it as well. Petruchio is not to be taken seriously, though his words and actions cause her significant grief and pain.
words, is enough to qualify him to “tame a shrew” (4.1.190). Collington further elucidates that the braggart courtship style of Petruccio is diametrically opposed to the expected conduct of a gentleman. Further, the lord’s behavior in the inductions would indicate that he is, despite his position in society, not a gentleman either. No gentleman would consider it hospitality to perform an elaborate prank on a tinker and occasional beggar, Christopher Sly. If any of these three men, Sly, Lord, and Petruccio should know and practice hospitality, it is the Lord, for he has had the advantage of wealth, status, leisure time for educational pursuits, and a likeminded community of the same, relative to Sly and Petruccio. In opening the play with the Inductions the way he does, Shakespeare asserts that a man who should practice hospitality, chooses instead to practice inhospitality, and to show on a public stage that there is something amiss in Padua. I next move to the main problem of the play, Petruccio’s inhospitality.

Petruccio deliberately and systematically sets out to force Kate to conform to his idea of what a wife should be and how she should behave. We can be certain that Shakespeare read Chaucer, and was influenced by him. As Nathaniel Smith tells us,

…Chaucer’s framing fictions…make visible the strategically skeptical implications of both shrew plays—and the affective work they perform on audiences. Both plays present themselves as offering and then undermining antifeminist ‘instructional’ and mastering advice just as in Chaucer’s House of Fame (N. B. Smith 245). Smith argues that Shakespeare employed “Chaucerian-influenced framing devices” in the inductions and the Kate-Petruccio play-within-a-play. Just as Chaucer wrote in his dream vision

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16 Collington notes, “While the descriptors ‘gentleman’ and ‘adventurer’ are not mutually exclusive, ‘gentleman’ and ‘boaster’ are. In ‘The French Academie’ (1586), Pierre de la Primaudaye notes the ignobleness of bragging, ‘Let vs not...brag of our earthly race, but let vs glory in the integritie of maners’: in The Compleat Gentleman (1622).” If Chris Sly is no gentleman, despite his claims to the contrary, then neither is Petruccio for all his claims.
poems the idea that something is real when in fact it is not, Shakespeare’s Lord character puts on an elaborate and inhospitable show for Christopher Sly, causing Sly to awake in “an experience of sensuous comfort and visual delight” (N. B. Smith 234). What Smith calls “skeptical implications,” I call inhospitality. The Lord’s design is an inhospitable ploy. Petruccio’s is an inhospitable and extended framing designed to strip Kate of her character, personality, and person. Smith writes, “These problematic framings perform powerfully skeptical affective work on the poem’s readers, offering a promise of authoritative certainty that is repeatedly undermined, analogous to the way skeptics and rhetoricians argued on both sides of a question, in utramque partem” (N. B. Smith 236). Petruccio’s authoritative certainty is neither emblematic of hospitality nor manhood. “These playful strategies so important to Chaucer’s House of Fame,” Smith continues, “…take a darker turn in Shakespeare’s Taming of the Shrew, pressing audiences toward an open-ended, skeptical affect of wonder and doubt, raising painful and urgent concerns about the misogynist cultural dogmas surrounding marriage and gender” (236). In brief, Petruccio ignores Kate’s “painful and urgent concerns,” which becomes my evidence for claiming Petruccio’s inhospitable treatment of his wife Kate, the ultimate guest in an otherwise broken domicile of hosting and guesting. One could simply argue that as the lead character in a comedy, Petruccio is performing the role of the clown. However, as his manners take the bulk of several acts in the play, and are so extreme, I claim his effect on both Kate and the community has serious implications. If the community allows Petruccio’s inhospitable actions to go unchecked, they become normative, and what results, instead of a marriage and a strengthening of community, is a break that will not heal, and an invitation to further subversion and disruption. In the following section, then, I want to address some of the ways in which Petruccio is inhospitable, and I will begin with the notion of manhood.
Scholars in the last thirty years have argued at times that it was the early modern period or perhaps Shakespeare himself which gave a shape and form to the modern individual (the human). But what of the creation of the manhood of Petruccio, the husband, the agent of authority over a manor house? Up until now, I have been arguing that the two inductions generate a world of inhospitality; now I want to pivot to how the play’s version of masculinity within marriage creates a sense of inhospitality. Generally, a husband hosts the wife and the wife hosts the husband: A potential suitor invites a love interest to form a community using accepting speech genres. If the person accepts the invitation, then a community is formed, the marriage, which is then either strengthened or weakened and dissolved by performative acts of hospitality or inhospitality. I argue that Petruccio sets up an elaborate world of linguistic traps to block the very reciprocity that makes a healthy marriage possible. The honorable masculine character best illustrating what Petruccio imagines himself to be was traditionally defined by violent and assertive characters in literature, such as Odysseus or Beowulf, or of any such characters as Shakespeare would have read in Holinshed of the Greek and Roman heroes. In addition, the honorable masculine is dependent largely on accumulated financial assets (Odysseus regains his kingdom and Beowulf eventually builds one). Petruccio would love to follow in this tradition if only he could, but his methods are archaic, even by Elizabethan standards.

The beginnings of a characterization of Early modern manhood (in my analysis of Petruccio, specifically) are moored in a type of heroic masculinity from the literature of the

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17 See Burckhardt. Burckhardt addresses “the development of the individual,” arguing an advance in form, a member of community slowly realizing personal agency. See also Harold Bloom’s *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, and Martha Fineman’s “The Vulnerable Subject and the Responsive State.” For another way to view individuals roles within society, see Tarlow.
middle ages. I would tie that to the representation of hospitality shown by such characters: nothing new in form, yet Shakespeare is able to create in Petruccio a caricature out of a standard archetype. The version of hospitality in the play is nothing new, yet Petruccio upends any logical performance of it. Petruccio himself is not a style of celebrated hero, but seems to wish that he were, if we only judge by how he speaks. Petruccio’s performance of inhospitality in act four, scene one illustrates his methods. Petruccio has just scolded and driven his servants away, complaining about ill-prepared food:

**Petruccio**: ’Tis burnt, and so is all the meat.

What dogs are these: Where is the rascal cook?

How durst you villains bring it from the dresser

And serve it thus to me that love it not?

There, [throwing food] take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all,

You heedless jolt-heads and unmannered slaves.

What, do you grumble? I’ll be with you straight.

[He chases the servants away]

**Katherine**: I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet.

The meat was well, if you were so contented.

**Petruccio**: I tell thee, Kate, ’twas burnt and dried away,

And I expressly am forbid to touch it,

For it engenders choler, planteth anger,

And better ’twere that both of us did fast,

Since of ourselves ourselves are choleric,

Than feed it with such overroasted flesh (4.1.141-155).
Petruccio simply calls good food, bad food. His saying a thing exists (overcooked food) is his design to rearrange reality, specifically in this scene Kate’s reality. Kate, for her part, objects, but his “I tell thee, Kate,” signals one of many examples of Petruccio’s inhospitable nature, his anti-heroic quality. Petruccio’s speech patterns are inhospitable. I mentioned earlier that Bahktinian speech genres (The Invitation, The Welcome, The Entertainment specifically), are broken by Petruccio. He rudely and violently seizes Kate after making a mockery of the wedding ceremony, and virtually holds her a starved captive. He does not invite, welcome, nor entertain in any sense with his speech. In this way Shakespeare takes a man who could be a minor heroic figure, removes logic and reason (except for Petruccio’s violent and self-styled psychological conditioning forced on Kate), and instead of a hero, the playwright leaves us with a raging buffoon, cursing his servants with names, and gainsaying his wife to alter her sense of reality. Petruccio hypocrises himself, saying, “…I expressly am forbid to touch it, / For it engenders choler, planteth anger,” a moment after his own display of choler and anger at his servants. [Although, one could certainly say that there is a method to his madness -- he might be acting cruelly or inhospitably but he is not acting without "logic and reason".]

It is not only the loss of the ‘heroic’ in manhood that is a problem--Petruccio’s fear of his own financial loss of status, too, is nothing new. If Petruccio’s bold claims of his own financial strength are known before he can secure Kate’s hand in marriage, his reputation will surely suffer, and he might lose Kate if her father, Baptista Minola, should discover it. Petruccio seems to be searching for some type of masculinity that is honorable, unable to grasp or perform what that masculinity is. In fact, the word “honorable” does not seem to fit him. If he is masculine, it is only in a harsh tone of violence. He is not the only violent character in the play, as Kate is shown striking her sister in act two after binding her hands and striking Petruccio once in the
same act, while beating Grumio in act four. However, these actions are due to Kate’s frustration at being forced into a marriage she does not want, not designed by her to force anyone else. Petruccio’s actions are specifically designed to force Kate to acquiesce to his will. If Petruccio is honorable, it is only in the slanting sense of becoming a foil for Kate’s patience, and not for his material success. As Alexandra Shepard argues,

Men's economic standing could therefore have important implications for the evaluation of their worth and their manhood in 'patriarchal' terms. Patriarchal prescriptions of male self-sufficiency, economic independence and responsibility towards others informed the ethics of evaluation by which subtle status distinctions as well as broader hierarchies were established. Within this evaluative framework, economic impotence was deemed to undermine manhood because it brought about exclusion from credit networks. Worthlessness deprived men of their word, since they had no means to vouch for, and therefore could not be trusted (Shepard 89).

Petruccio, as Shakespeare writes him, is a farce. He is quite nearly everything he should not be. Shakespeare holds Petruccio up to ridicule his lack of proper manhood. Instead of an inchoate shrew to function as a foil for a man’s honor, as the Lord’s players attempt to show Sly in this play-within-a-play, Kate is presented as the oldest sister in a state of relationship/identity limbo, agitated by a persistent father (though kindly so), a mocking younger sister, and a community that expects her to marry first—while Petruccio is a clown with an estate in shambles, or as Kate calls him, “a madcap ruffian and a swearing Jack” (2.1.280). Shakespeare takes a story the audience knows, rearranges the details, and in the process shows us a story that makes us question every such couple narrative we have ever encountered. As Shepard claims,
Less well explored, however, are the principles of male honor and reputation underpinning early modern patriarchal ideology and social practice. Reputation, or 'credit', was a composite of social and economic appraisal, incorporating a wide spectrum of definitions of honesty ranging from chastity to plain-dealing. While historians have made considerable efforts to place constructions and experiences of femininity within this spectrum, the intersection of masculinity with early modern notions of credit lacks comparable analysis (Shepard 76, 77).

So then, as Shepard notes, financial credit is directly related to manhood as well, something Petruccio boasts of, but has little, thus his drive to attach himself legally to the wealthy Kate Minola and the 20,000 crowns her father has promised him. Petruccio’s words indicate a braggadocio figure using language to create all that is untrue. His courtship of Kate is almost completely fabricated using the discourse of an assumed manhood he never embodied, indeed never seems to have even understood. Shepard continues, switching to the masculine aspect, “…men too were 'carriers' of gender… [Shr] explores the implications of patriarchal expectations of self-sufficient economic mastery for the achievement of manhood in early modern England” (78). In short, to achieve proper manhood in the Early modern period, Petruccio believes that he must get a rich wife in order to obtain the credit necessary to attempt manhood status. Petruccio, though not poor, is not quite wealthy enough to sustain his manhood financially: securing Katherina, he hopes, will remedy this. As Park Honan puts it,

Based on old, brutal folk-myths of the young wife ‘tamed’ by a husband who beats and terrifies her, this play ostensibly focuses on an economic issue…A self-reliant suitor, on his travels, only need marry a wealthy gentleman’s daughter to prosper…the story takes
on issues of subservience and power, a male dread of dominant females, and a

Renaissance fear of women in domestic rebellion (Honan 134,135).

Honorable masculinity here is the term I use for a man who hosts generously from his stores of home and his possessions. Petrucco is anything but a generous host. To say that Petrucco is a man is true. To claim he had ‘manhood,’ is somewhat true, as he does possess an estate. However, to claim that he has honorable masculinity is false, as he must secure a fortune for the upkeep of his house and lands in the financial sense, and his inhospitality toward not only Kate but to the community at large, lands him in the role of chaotic rogue, a man on par with the Lord in behavior, and somewhat of a magnified Sly—brawling like Sly, but on a grander scale.

I next want to turn to Petrucco’s method of taming, his methodology of education, indeed reeducation, and his discourse employed in the process. In all of these, he practices a deliberate set of inhospitable words and actions which result in his own unwitting reeducation, and not at all what he hoped to gain. Kate simply learns in this process that she may praise Petruccio publicly, and it is all he desires: a public demonstration of language to inflate his struggling image in the eyes of his society. Public respect is all that Petrucco desires, though he does not seem to recognize this: Kate does, and alters her language accordingly. Petrucco, who in 4.6, attempts to force Kate into a reality he alone creates through action and language, finds himself by the close of the play in Kate’s linguistically ordered world, and by the same device Petrucco himself used, language:

**Petruchio:** Come on, I’ God’s name. Once more toward our father’s.

Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

**Katherine:** The moon?—the sun. It is not moonlight now.

**Petruchio:** I say it is the moon that shines so brightly (4.6.1-5)
By the end of the play, Kate has learned that words are what Petruccio demands, for she cannot control his actions. She uses the one tool in her arsenal, language, and gives him praise that he does not deserve, lies for truths, and performs in her words a character that does not exist. Petruccio wishes to be called a great man publicly, though he is none, much as Sly wishes to be in the inductions.

**Taming as Reeducation, Taming as Animal Training**

*Shr.* is a work of dramatic fiction, but the events are mirrored in Early modern English legal precedent. Even as critics focus on braggart courtship, capitalism’s relation to property obtained in marriage, and honorable masculinity, Eleanor Hubbard gives us a legal case from the time of the penning of the play.¹⁸

Shortly after his marriage in May 1589, Christopher Percy decided to tame his bride, a wealthy London widow. Since Margery Percy (alias Gore) had cannily taken steps to safeguard her estate, Percy, a Dorset gentleman in need of money, attempted to force her to relinquish her assets and forfeit her jointure by depriving her of food and drink, isolating her from her friends, and frightening her with wild and unorthodox behavior. He told her, according to witnesses, that he ‘would tame her and pull downe her peacocke feathers.’ Percy’s choice of words was highly unusual: no other husband sued for marital separation in London between 1570 and 1640 was accused of saying that he would "tame" his wife.

¹⁸ Hubbard offers a test case and argues that perhaps *Shr.* affected the behavior of the husband in the case. She surveys the London society and literature of the late sixteenth century to give a picture of what wives came to expect from marriage, including a strong claim that contemporary wives and many husbands would not have received the play well, rather seeing it as pure comedy only.
It is culturally coincidental that Percy used “tame,” as the play was not published in any form that we know of until 1594, but the fact that no other husband on record used the term “tame” in seventy years of English case law is informative as to how the common law system and its architects viewed marital roles. Ironically, the most colorful ‘peacocke’ feathers are to be found on the male of the species, and of course ‘peacocke’ is the male. Therefore, I imagine Percy was aggrieved that his wife was somehow falsely displaying male attributes, instead of the more muted feathers of a peahen. Even so, Percy was by far no Petruccio. As to what the society thought about normative behavior in a wife (and a husband), was that the husband should, as Shepard claims, “…provide - by 'getting money' through 'intermeddling' with other men - and on a wife's duty to protect such provision and her own honour” (Shepard 75). Additionally, that Percy employed methods of isolation and strange behavior is strongly reminiscent of Petruccio’s methods. One cannot definitively say whether or not Shakespeare was aware of the Percy case, but it does tend to lend a factual foundation for Shr., Kate, and Petruccio as well.

Education, or re-education (as brainwashing/gaslighting) play an integral part in the Kate/Petruccio play-within-a-play. Elizabeth Hutcheon argues that, “Petruchio's use of humanist methodology achieves a degree of success that has gone unrecognized by critics.” Hutcheon sets out evidence that the “domestic sphere…functions as a critical space in which different modes of training, both humanist and otherwise, can be tested,” in order to view Petruccio’s use of “humanist methodologies in the domestic sphere” and to showcase the inherent lack of gender in the humanist model (Hutcheon 316). As Hutcheon writes (supporting Lucentio’s aim of the educated citizen), “…if Petruchio makes Katherine subject to his will, she is so as the citizen is

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19 Dana Aspinall writes, “The dates surrounding Shrew’s early textual and stage history create more questions than they answer…The first documented appearance, both on stage and in print, of Shrew was 1594. On May 2, to the publisher Peter Short, was entered in the Stationer’s Register, ‘a booke intituled A pleasant Conceyted historie called the Tayminge of a Shrowe’” (7).
subject to the monarch, not as women are subject to men.” What this means, according to Hutcheon, is that reading the play as a gendered problem only is shortsighted, and that understanding the humanist rendering of the Elizabethan world allows us to come to a deeper meaning. After all, the ostensibly humanist methodology employed by Petruccio (in his unhinged way, granted) was originally developed for boys only, yet here used on Katherine. Pedagogy overwhelms the play. Gremio and Tranio have Bianca reading Greek and Latin early in act 2, a study very few women were allowed at the time, two exceptions being Elizabeth I and Lady Jane Grey.20

It is a problem for Petruccio to alter Kate’s entire approach to both marriage and himself with a humanist education. Readers can reasonably assume that due to her father’s wealth, Kate’s education is more substantial than that of Petruccio. So, Petruccio devises to ‘train’ Kate in a crude fashion—like one would an animal, his own brand of reeducation. This base method is perhaps the only way Petruccio may imagine, and probably the only one he is qualified to perform. Judging by his many allusions to it in words, Petruccio’s methods are akin to animal training.21 In 4.1, he says to Nathaniel, Peter, Grumio, and Curtis,

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,

And ’tis my hope to end successfully,

My falcon now is sharp and passing empty,

And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,

20 Very few women in the Elizabethan era participated in Humanist education. Shr. gives us fictional embodiments of this growing trend in Kate and Bianca. See Sarah Ross, The Birth of Feminism: Woman as Intellect in Renaissance Italy and England.

12 Kate is called an animal directly or indirectly fifteen times, including “Shrew” in the title of the play. All others are, in order, 1.2.110 “cat,” 2.1.169 “nightingale,” 2.1.205 “turtle,” 2.1.207 “wasp,” 2.1.222 “hen,” 2.1.269 “wild Kate” (wildcat), 2.1.270 “household Kates” (housecats), 2.1.285 “dove,” 3.3.30 “lamb…dove,” 3.3.104 “horse…ox…ass,” 4.1.170 “falcon.”
For then she never looks upon her lure.

Another way I have to man my haggard,

To make her come and know her keeper’s call—

That is, to watch her as we watch these kites

That bate and beat, and will not be obedient (4.1.168-177). The title of the play uses “tame,” after all. Petruccio refers to this taming as a political matter, indicating that it is a methodological platform from which he operates. However, he lowers himself from the opening line’s “reign,” suggesting that he is some sort of king, to “keeper,” meaning that he is now a trainer of an animal (in this instance a falcon). In treating the woman, Kate Minola, as a lower being, he lowers himself in the process. Petruccio is somewhat villainous in his actions, and as Maurizio Ascari puts it, “In the early modern period, the patriarchal assumption of female subordination characteristically informed not only the cultural representation of crime, but also its definition by law. ‘Petty treason’ involved a reversed hierarchical relation…” (Ascari 88). As male power was supported by violent suppression and subversion of femininity, reified by each action against a wife, it had a bulwark of support in common law. As such, Petruccio’s manner is an accepted way of keeping the “hierarchical relation” of male over female the status quo. Ascari terms the way Katherine herself responds to this relation, “domestic rebellion,” and is what she comes to find as her solution, at least for the moment:

Such duty as the subject owes the prince,

Even such a woman oweth to her husband;

And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,

And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel
And graceless traitor to her loving lord (5.2. 59-64)?

This is the only instance of Kate speaking a line that publicly supports Petruccio. She seems serious and generously (too much so) hospitable, willing to speak so kindly in spite of her recent tortuous experience caused by Petruccio--but this is comedy. As it happens, Kate has a tremendous gift of language, and like many of Shakespeare’s best heroines, employs it to her advantage. Kate is, here, using an intentional obsequious tone to disarm Petruccio and the entire assembly, which is more of a public performance than an honest statement of fact. She never once indicates earlier or later that she believes this final speech. Kate is being hospitable in that she is saving face for Petruccio in front of others. Elizabeth Mackay explores this idea, saying:

Kate

…receives lessons in grammar—more specifically, a vernacular grammar—that emphasize the parts of speech, their proper order, and the construction of sentences. She also learns subtle yet no less powerful lessons about exploiting and turning grammatical devices to her own argumentative purposes. Exploring early modern theories of grammar and grammatical order, as well as other grammatical “figures” deployed in scenes of Katherine’s taming, I draw attention to the possessive pronoun, a key to interpreting both Petruccio’s taming project and Katherine’s final speech” (Mackay 32).

Kate’s linguistic education becomes her key to gaining power. Her words, just as Petruccio’s, create realities. Those realities become power dynamics that have allowed her to remain single for this extended period, despite her father’s and her sister’s wishes to the contrary. She is even able to put off the monstrous Petruccio for a time with her words. At a certain point though, after
agreeing to many things Petruccio has spoken, Kate cannot allow any more of his pronouncements, saying,

Why, sir, I trust I may have leave to speak
And speak I will. I am no child, no babe.
Your betters have endured me say my mind.
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.
My tongue will tell the anger of my heart,
Or else my heart concealing it will break,
And rather than it shall I will be free
Even to the uttermost as I please in words.

**Petruccio:** Why, thou sayst true (4.3.73-81)

Kate takes command of this scene, insulting Petruccio (“Your betters have endured me…”), and telling him plainly that if he does not want to listen to her, to “stop your ears,” for she intends to speak anyway. Like Petruccio, gaining his will through words, Kate realizes that only through her words can she be “free.” More than any other exchange in the play, this contentious moment is the crux of the problem in this comedy. Here is where we have the culmination of comedy that cannot be comedic. Katherine’s will to her own mind is not a laughing matter, and she plainly explains that fact. Her humanity is at stake in her finding her own agency in speech, and stating it plainly to Petruccio in terms that he can understand.

**Kate Minola’s Final Word**

Many critics have theorized about what Kate means in her last public speech in the play, a speech which ostensibly shows her ‘tamed,’ but is so completely out of character as to render
her words enigmatic. Has she figured out that by feigning words, as Petruccio has all along feigned honorable masculinity, she can perform normative wifliness? Ascari says,

As we know, the real import of this monologue is much debated, since it is Katherine who has the last word in the play and her conversion is far from convincing. It is highly possible that here Shakespeare was simultaneously parodying and reasserting patriarchal tenets, thus catering for the needs of different kinds of public. Neither should it be forgotten that Katherine's taming is presented as a play within the play, whose privileged spectator is Sly, a beggar and tinker who believes himself a lord in the upside-down world of make believe that has been created around him as part of a contrived joke. The structure of the play in itself invites interpretative caution, since the inception - where a drunken Sly is thrown out of an alehouse by an assertive hostess because he has broken some glasses - harshly contrasts with the following fantasy of male dominance, in which the patriarchal laws are reaffirmed with a vengeance (Ascari 89).

So then, as Ascari suggests, are we to assume that the entire Kate/Petruccio plot is merely revenge for what Sly considers his own misuse at the hands of the alehouse hostess? It may be that Ascari’s term “interpretative caution” is indeed part of the play’s extended five-act joke: that comedy is what is intended, and modern readers simply are not fully able to wrap their interpretations around what was always meant by Shakespeare as a joke. And, if a joke, then Shakespeare has made a strong point about impersonating honorable masculinity—it is a joke, as is the Lord’s imagining that he may play his elaborate scheme upon Sly in the inductions. Perhaps, after all, Shakespeare is the Lord of the joke, and the reader Sly, awakened to find himself (or some form of him) in a world of vain imagining, caught up in what seems to be real,
but is not. For her part, Katherine practices social resistance throughout the play, and long before
she ever sets eyes on Petruccio. She argues with her father in act 1 scene 1:

**Katherine** [to Baptista]: I pray you, sir, is it your will

To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

**Hortensio**: ‘Mates’, maid? How mean you that? No mates for you.

Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

**Katherine**: I’faith, sir, you shall never need to fear.

Iwis it is not half-way to her heare,

But if it were, doubt not her care should be

To comb your noddle with a three-legged stool,

And paint your face, and use you like a fool (1.1.57-65).

Here is where Katherine, at the raw opening of the Kate/Petruccio play-within-a-play, violently
spews ‘masculine’ speech, with imagery of wounding, then toying with Hortensio, drawing
blood from his head, and smearing it all over him. Kate, with her chosen discourse, prefigures
Petruccio here, threatening physical force on one who would seek to flatter her with what she
assumes at the outset to be vain lies intent on seeking her hand and thus her fortune. I argue that
Kate never changes in the course of five acts of *Shr.* She only alters her discourse in public in the
final scene of the play to give Petruccio what he wills, In short, Kate learns to play a part that
Petruccio has authored but one that her interiority does not accept. Kate allows Petruccio public
flattery, and knows it is a grand lie. Her language is a covert power-grab that is every bit as
strong as what Petruccio uses on her in the course of the ‘taming.’ For his part, all Hortensio may
do is say, “From all such devils, good Lord deliver us” (1.1.66). Clearly unequipped and
unprepared for such an assault of language, Hortensio shrinks away, never to speak to Kate
again, except for three small passages: once in 4.3.38 when he timidly asks her a question on behalf of her husband, once in 4.6.11 where he kindly implores her to do as Petruccio says so matters will remain peaceful, and once only on Kate’s behalf, when he passes on a message to Petruccio, echoing the powerful woman in 5.2.103 with, “She will not.” With situational irony, the reeducation of Kate, it appears, has had the collateral effect of a reeducation of Hortensio to mirror her. To my knowledge, no other critic has spoken of this contrapuntal motion in Hortensio’s psychology. To his credit, Shakespeare devises Hortensio to circle backwards into a sphere that respects Kate’s word, though Petruccio (and all others involved) wholly miss it.

Robert Stagg argues that “Katherine Minola begins and ends The Taming of the Shrew speaking in the same gender. Pressed by her father in act 1 to consider Gremio and Hortensio as suitors, she rebuffs both (though she is principally speaking to the latter) with a masculine rhyme…” (Stagg 323).

Speaking principally of what he terms “masculine” rhyme, Stagg writes,

This is Katherine’s first rhyme in the play. Her couplet is “masculine” because its final rhyming syllables are also its stressed syllables (whereas in a “feminine” rhyme, the rhyming syllables are unstressed). As we will hear, Katherine’s final rhymes of the play are also masculine: boot/foot, please/ease (5.2.181–84). In between her first and final couplets, Katherine barely rhymes. When she does so, her rhymes tend to be shared or produced with another character (typically Petruchio) and are therefore not quite her own” (Stagg 324).

When we analyze Kate’s language, we can see she uses it to impersonate masculinity (aside from the fact that a male actor would have spoken the lines on the Tudor stage, a further complication). Perhaps Kate knows that the men will only respect a violent tone, and that to be
heard she must speak their language. For the audience, it is an education in the power of
language to create reality. Beginning and ending the play-within-a-play thus, Kate bookends the
play. Her clever code switching between stressed and unstressed rhyme shows how she yields
her own power over the conversation, in spite of what Petruccio and friends are up to. Kate has
her own methodology that amounts to social resistance. Ascari notes,

While Shakespeare seemingly sought to juxtapose the complexity of reality with the
ideological geometries of patriarchal society, opening up sub-textual readings that
amount to spaces of social resistance, the language of authority conversely aimed to
crystallize - in terms of class and gender - a status quo that was endangered by social
mobility (Ascari 89).

Petruccio embarks on a new methodology of training/taming Kate. But Kate is doing the same
thing in the beginning of the play that she is doing at the end—subverting language and upending
authority. If scholars are still writing about Shakespeare, it is because of his subversion. What a
society thinks it may witness on the Shakespearean stage might not be what they are shown. Just
as in actual life, people might surprise with the language they use.

Language, and Kate’s drive to use it in her way, will conclude my argument on Shr. I
want to look at some close language to do this. Richard Raspa makes a point about the word
“obedience,” and what it means be a wife and a husband, focusing on the other:

In my reading of Shakespeare, the turbulence that is acted out between Katherine and
Petruccio is less about demanding spousal obedience and following a husband’s
commands, and more about obedience in its etymological sense…Ob-audire [from the
Latin]…means to hear, to listen to, or to pay attention. In this sense, the domestic
quarrels between Petruccio and Katherine concern hearing, listening, and paying
attention to spouses rather than following their orders. What Katherine and Petruchio face, as well as the other two sets of brides and grooms, Bianca and Lucentio, and Hortesio [sic] and the widow, is this choice: to obey, that is, to pay attention, or to exasperate, to live life as outbursts of irritation. In comedy, husbands and wives can either listen to each other and discover who they are and what they want in life, as well as experience in the best moments the flash of desire and the rapture of intimacy, or they can blame their marital partners as the sources of annoyance and the insufferable obstacles to the attainment of happiness (Raspa 104).

Hosting is a risk, as is all hospitality, Shakespearean or otherwise. In accepting Petruccio’s offer, his invitation of marriage, Kate becomes a type of guest. As she assumes her duties over the manor house, including authority over the servants and possessions, she becomes a host. What Kate is able to do as a host is deal with a difficult guest, Petruccio, and gain public acknowledgement from him in public in the final scene of the play. In short, Kate is a host for Petruccio, and she hosts most strongly with her language. Kate learns to listen to Petruccio, filter out how he speaks, and truly hear what he needs. Perhaps Kate can never love this beast, but choosing to say what he wants to hear in public, even once, is her hospitable gift to him. She owes him nothing, but speaks the words anyway.

Kate has the agency to speak as she will, and does. Kate gives this gift in public to Petruccio and becomes a gift-giver, which, as I argued earlier, is the clearest indicator of a host, the generous gift giver (warranted by the guest or not). 22 What Sly could not get in real life in the
opening of Induction I, a kinder hostess, he is able to get in the Kate/Petruchio play-within-a-
play. Sly gets a picture of hospitality in Kate, a hostess who gives him a gift neither Petruchio, 
nor he himself, have earned, and do not deserve. No one shows Kate this way of hosting, and 
only through tremendous struggle on her part does she derive her method.
Economies of Inhospitality in *The Merchant of Venice*

Bassanio invites Shylock to dine in act one of *The Merchant of Venice* (hereafter *MV*). Bassanio desperately desires a loan of 3,000 ducats in order to woo the wealthy Portia. Shylock can secure this loan for him. In this invitation, there is immediately a problem. It is a problem of food, or rather, of not being able to eat certain foods due to religious tradition. Shylock perceives this as a slight. Whether or not Bassanio, and his merchant-of-Venice-friend Antonio, are aware of kosher food rules, Shylock is, and must deal with the difference from what his minority culture values within this majority culture.23 *MV*, then, is not simply a “comical history” as the Norton edition titles the play. In my argument, performance of hospitable acts is commensurate with the perceived value of the guest. Any exclusion is a negative performance, an inhospitality. Therefore, aware or not, Bassanio excludes Shylock from the food while inviting him for a meal. Bassanio, and by extension Antonio, devalues Shylock before the close of 1.3 with the invitation to dine, which as I will show, becomes a cultural impossibility for Shylock. Now, Bassanio’s perspective does not allow him to understand this exclusion. Often, when one makes a literary argument, perspective is the root of the problem, and the plot’s driving force. Shakespeare is especially fond of using his characters’ perspectival difference to cause miscommunication and mistaken identity. There really is no way Bassanio could see things the way Shylock does, even if he wanted to, and perhaps he does in earnest. Still, the problem remains. The problem that has been an issue for Shylock and other Jews has been a problem for millennia, and in *MV*, we only have a symptom of a disease. The invitation Bassanio offers is hospitable enough on its face:

**Bassanio:** If it please you to dine with us.

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23 See Seton-Rodgers. Nearly, but not all Jews, were expelled from England in 1290 by order of Henry I. It was during the interregnum when Oliver Cromwell allowed Jews back in on a large scale in 1656.
Shylock: Yes—to smell pork, to eat of the habitation which
your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into? I will
buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you,
and so following. But I will not eat with you, drink with you,
nor pray with you (1.3.27-32).

According to this exchange between Bassanio and Shylock, a culturally specific problem arises centering on money, pigs, Jesus, and the devil. However, before we can understand this passage or derive meanings from it, it would be helpful to first discuss some criticism on MV, cosmopolitan Venice of the Early modern period, and the historical reasons why the play was set in Venice.

Both the historical England and Venice were more cosmopolitan with regard to antisemitism when Shakespeare penned MV than is evident in the play.24 Much of the fear and loathing of Jews in the dialogue, especially the trial scene, was a holdover from an earlier time, not that it did not exist, but Shakespeare was able to sharpen his quill on the fear of difference that his audience well knew. The commercial lending aspect is directly tied to Shylock, his Jewishness, and his otherness. As a moneylender, one of only a handful of occupations he is allowed to hold, the ability to lend, and collect are his means of survival.25

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24 Shormishtha Panja explains how Shakespeare used reductive means to contrast Jews and Christians, whereas Marlowe had not, saying, “…he [Shakespeare] does not fully reflect the tolerance that marked this early modern trading capital. Shakespeare bases his play on binaries and antagonistic opposition between the Jews and the Christians in Venice while Marlowe consciously resists painting his world in black and white.”

25 David Landreth argues that money, or mammon (<Aramaic, “riches” or “treasure”) intrudes into literature of the Early Modern, Specifically Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe, Donne, and Nash in several ways: the mouths of characters tell of “mammon,” the undergirding of scenes depends upon debt structures, and the plot is many times driven by the need to pay those debts. Landreth continues to dissect how “commonwealth” is seen largely in terms of both the precious metals that undergird its ability to pay debt, and the political trust placed in the face of the ruler on those precious metals as they are stamped into coins.
The play, indeed early modern society of England and of Venice and continental Europe, centers around debt and money lending. In shedding light on money’s connection to literature, Linda Woodbridge writes,

Money and commercial thinking abound in the literature of the period. From The Merchant of Venice through Jacobean city comedy, plots of plays were often commercial and money-oriented. The opening scene of Thomas Middleton’s Chaste Maid in Cheapside, 1613, takes place in a goldsmith’s shop, where a gentleman brings in a gold chain to be weighed and haggles with the goldsmith over its worth, a reminder that goldsmiths often served as moneylenders… Money is an issue in many standard plot motifs: arrest and imprisonment for debt, beggary, attempts to marry a wealthy widow, manipulation of wardship for financial gain, the luring in of shop customers by a pretty shopkeeper’s wife as a newfangled variant of prostitution, extravagant consumerism that ruins young heirs, gambling as a vice that transfers aristocratic lands into the grasping hands of usurers. More traditional villains had been motivated by lust, ambition, or revenge; in Jacobean city comedy, the new ogres are usurers” (Woodbridge 9).

Usury was a growing concern, as Woodbridge argues, and the ones who practiced it professionally were monstrous in the eyes of a burgeoning commercialized economy. I argue that

As an aid to understanding the historical underpinnings of Venetian commerce, and the links between Venice, England, and the Continent, Maartje Van Gelder discusses Venetian cosmopolitanism, claiming that sellers from across Europe vied for positions of commercial power in Venice, due largely to its position near the Mediterranean, and its reputation around the world for acceptance and promotion of foreigners, Protestants, Islamists, and Jews. “Venice had instituted regular shipping and trade with northern Europe from the beginning of the fourteenth century, when an annual convoy of Venetian galleys was sent to Bruges and London. This regular galley route was organized by the Venetian state and was closely interlinked with the galleys bringing goods such as spices, silk, cotton, raisins, and saffron from the Levant to Venice. The return cargo usually consisted of English wool, woolen and linen textiles produced in the Low Countries, as well as amber and furs bought from the Hanseatic merchants in Bruges” (Gelder 41). Commercialism and the resulting cosmopolitanism were thriving.
the need for capital, such as Bassanio’s, created the demand for what the lenders supplied, and though Shylock’s bond is extreme, blaming all lenders as a monolithic unit is not ethical any more than allowing Jews to be lenders and little else is ethical. Inhospitality begets inhospitality.

Bassanio tells Antonio,

‘Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,

How much I have disable mine estate

By something showing a more swelling port

Than my faint means would grant continuance… (1.1.122-125)

Bassanio is telling Antonio what a lavish lifestyle he has lived. He urges Antonio to loan him more money to secure Portia’s hand, though he owes Antonio money already, and has been unable to pay it back for some time. Bassanio’s need for more capital in his speculative venture to secure Portia’s hand, and her capital make the play’s driving force an economic one. In the last four lines of this speech, Bassanio assures Antonio,

O my Antonio, had I but the means

To hold a rival place with one of them,

I have a mind presages me such thrift

That I should questionless be fortunate (1.2.173-176).

Bassanio leaves no doubt that this is a speculative venture. He, if successful, will be able to pay Antonio the money he owes, and have a fortune for himself as well. Commerce is on everyone’s lips, as Woodbridge continues,

*Commercial language permeates even plays whose plots are not primarily money-oriented*, even lyrics devoted primarily to love or to religion, even the most heroic of epics, the most elegiac of elegies. In an age when credit buying was widespread and
nearly everybody was in debt, characters in plays tend to say “I am in your debt” when they simply mean “thank you.” References to reckoning, accounts, inventories, bills of exchange, factors, merchants, usury, commodity purchase, and many kinds of coins circulate in Renaissance literature of all sorts” (Woodbridge 10).

The cultures of Venice, England, and continental Europe were changing, and borrowing and lending money on a large scale was something that was altering the way people did business and led their lives. It is easy to see the effect of finance on culture when a character on stage says, “I am in your debt” instead of a simple thanks. Marriage itself, which cannot be separated in any age from financial concern, becomes important in MV specifically, for it is the driving action of the play. Bassanio’s need to borrow money is his concern, and all of Venice, and England for that matter, would have had quite similar concerns as borrowing and lending took on an increasingly important function in society. Woodbridge notes,

It was a shopkeeping age, a bookkeeping age, and an age when despite Polonius’s maxims, nearly everybody was a borrower and/or a lender. In The Tragedy of Orestes, Thomas Goffe has one character caution another thus: “Trust not the heavens too much, although they smile, Good looks do mortal hearts too oft beguile: The heavens are usurers; A literature capable of conceiving the very heavens as usurers is one whose economics are worth investigating (Woodbridge 11). [emphases mine]

Woodbridge’s claims about borrowing and lending are evident in this scene as Bassanio is negotiating a loan from Shylock on Antonio’s behalf. Seeing “the heavens [as] usurers” is a somewhat shocking twist in religious ideation. For instead of a heavenly host, a god who gives generous gifts to persons in need, one is given a gift from the heavens with the understanding that each day accrues more interest to be paid in the future upon the gift, which is no gift at all.
In this exchange with Shylock, Bassanio is attempting to sweeten the deal by means of hospitality, a dinner invitation. Eventually, in act two scene five, Shylock does accept, and the injury to Shylock is worse than he imagined. Therefore, MV begins with what appears to Shylock a sarcastic and barbed invitation, a clear breach of hospitality. However, Bassanio has spent little time with Shylock, and therefore may not know at all about Jewish prohibitions against eating pork. Shakespeare shows two tribalist systems in business with each other, one Catholic, one Jewish, and neither knows enough about the other to fully appreciate invitations in the first place. Neither group knows what to expect, nor seems curious enough to learn. In the end, MV is not about love, marriage, or truly even strengthening the community (much as Portia may believe that is what she is doing upon prevailing in court and marrying Bassanio). In the long view, we see a Venice determined to rise to new heights of greed yet losing its system of ethics and laws in the process. The ultimate win by Portia, Antonio, and Bassanio at the close of MV is a dear loss for Venetian cosmopolitanism. In my reading, love, religion, and any other human call to virtue has very little to do with the play. This play is about obtaining power under the guise of love, sanctioned by religion. I would render the same reading of any such play entitled, The Comic History of the Catholic of Jerusalem. Any minority with limited choices, who has power and money stripped from them, reduces the reputation of the community as a generous host. My reading posits that MV is a play about the development of an increasingly justificatory legality of capitalist speculation and theft, destroying community in the process.

In tendering his invitation, Bassanio becomes, immediately, a potential host to Shylock’s potential guest. Shylock, however, mentions the pre-existing and irreconcilable differences. He mentions the unclean meat that is one of the most significant social markers of difference between Judaism and Christianity, pork, as reason that he cannot dine with Bassanio and
Antonio. He goes so far as to mention that “your prophet the Nazarite” put the devil into the pigs, implying that Bassanio should not eat it either. Shylock seems to be asking, “Do you not respect your own prophet? You would eat demon meat, and then invite me to share in your undoing?” Shylock refuses the hospitable meal, but not the gesture, on religious grounds. Shylock’s religion prevents his acceptance of a pork meal, and references the Book of Matthew, which recounts the story of Jesus exorcising demons into pigs (chapter eight, verse thirty-two). Shylock, unlike Bassanio, employs the text of the scripture—Bassanio’s Christian text—assuming Bassanio has read it and remembered it for himself. But Bassanio is operating under a new capitalist mode of profit motivation, not scriptural/textual motivation. This difference in philosophies is the ultimate problem later as Shylock holds to the letter of his bond, while the Venetian court discounts it.

The questions hospitality asks us to confront are many, but chiefly these: Should Shylock deny himself and honor another, a culturally/religiously different other, for purposes of a business deal? In short, is Shylock selling out for money? In a larger sense, is business itself inherently inhospitable? Is religion inhospitable when it does not allow hospitality to take place? When do the limits of both business and religion become inhospitable and render themselves more alike than apart? As we address these questions, we must first address Shylock’s acceptance and refusal of hospitality as offered by Bassanio in the text. Shylock’s refusal is central to the problem of community and serves as Shakespeare’s device to set up the examination of cultural difference and show the competing elements of power in a cosmopolitan though archaically represented Venetian society. After all, _MV_ is a work of fiction that glosses over perhaps 200 years of cosmopolitanism. The Venice of the sixteenth century was far more open and accepting than _MV_ indicates. Still, the fact that prejudice against Jews had been present
in culture for nearly two millennia resonated with Shakespeare’s audience, in part to mock the audience itself for their earlier narrow views. Venice, for all its cosmopolitanism, accepts all religions because religion is not what makes Venice cosmopolitan, rather, capital.

In this chapter, I examine the *Merchant of Venice* in order to make three observations, crucial for a proper understanding of the play within the context of hospitality. In performing a close reading, I show how Shylock is summarily maligned by a society bent on taking from minorities and aggrandizing power unto itself, a common form of inhospitality. I also show how capitalism’s need for capital itself demands that reasons be used/invented to justify taking value from anyone for any reason, including ad hoc religious/cultural ones. In examining legal patterns, I show how the play’s inhospitality is codified into a discriminatory culture.

**Majority vs. Minority**

If Shylock, as a member of a religious minority in early modern Christian Venice, finds himself unable to accept hospitality of this kind (Bassanio’s invitation to dine), because of his religion, then he can never hope to build full community outside of his own Jewish one. Now, it may be the case that he wishes to retain his outsider status, or at least maintain the particularity of his Jewishness. But, if he can reject his faith, then he can become, perhaps, an insider; if not, then he is relegated to the fringes of the Christian community. As long as he lives then, and holds to Judaism, he is an outsider within community. One could argue however, that as capital is the great equalizer, and Bassanio’s speculative capital (a loan from Antonio) is his prime motivation in act one, religion should matter little. As such, the perception of Venice, as illustrated in the above scene of invitation by Bassanio, is of an inhospitable man, not a devout man. Jewishness is, to Bassanio, exotic, archaic, and inhospitable. Bassanio does not care about this antique creed, he only cares about how best to procure the financing he desires.
Shylock’s ‘outsider within’ status is not a problem for him, provided he can survive on what earnings he can derive from lending money, which was one of the few options available to a Jew. It is worth noting that Venetian society, as portrayed in MV, includes and excludes persons from certain trades and occupations based upon their religious affiliation. Stephen Greenblatt, referencing the five-hundredth anniversary of the creation of the Venetian ghetto in 1516, explains that Jews were suddenly required to move from wherever they lived freely into an area that was poor both financially and environmentally. The area was an abandoned copper foundry, which, in the Venetian dialect was “geto.” Of the few occupations they were allowed to hold, one was lending money at interest. Otherwise, they were restricted to their homes at night, locked in by gates, and forced to pay guards to keep them there. With the exception of physicians allowed out at night to treat Christian patients, no one was permitted to leave the geto before sunrise (Greenblatt). Shakespearean drama is useful for what it shows in the way of difference from modern communities. The plays are valuable precisely for the way they deal with conflicting cultures and hospitable treatment. In MV, we observe a society not completely unlike the modern one (as Elizabethans saw one in Venice not unlike theirs), and then just as easily see our own society mirrored in this early modern Venice: we need not only be shocked at the old Venice. Audience members, Shakespeare might hope, could see themselves in it, performing similar inclusions and exclusions, and be shocked, or grateful.

Capitalism’s Need for More Capital (and Less Gender and Religion)

MV is a power argument, then, and that power is capital. As I have mentioned above, cosmopolitanism is developing in this increasingly currency-conscious city of burgeoning trade
with the world.\textsuperscript{26} The traditional roles of men and women are beginning to change with regard to their roles in procuring capital. Portia, a woman desired by Bassanio, is desirable mostly due to her inheritance. Venice, in particular, includes and bears others in its Catholic society for the purpose of aggrandizing this power of money. But just as Shylock seems to Bassanio and Antonio to be ‘other’ with respect to them, the recently Catholic Shakespeare family might look upon Venice culture as ‘other.’ It is a situational irony (and in the play, a dramatic one) that has an ‘other,’ (British and newly Protestant Shakespeare) writing a play about ‘others’ (Venetian Catholic Bassanio and Antonio) judging an ‘other’ (Venetian Jewish Shylock). Financial ideas permeate the play, and in so doing, exalt barter, trade, loaning, and leveraging capital against more capital over tradition, religion, gender, and law. Debt runs in a throughline from inception to conclusion, and the characters in the play (Portia and Antonio mainly) are made to be functionaries, derivatives of future profit.

The main structure of the play is derived from Bassanio’s scheme to leverage capital, which he has not the name to borrow, from his ‘friend’ Antonio. Antonio, who does not have the means because he is overextended with shipping concerns, asks Shylock for it. Shylock, in turn, does not have it due to his extended state of credit to others, and asks his acquaintance Tubal for it. Four individuals work to get their hands on the capital so that Bassanio may leverage it in somewhat of a long con to obtain the hand of the uber-wealthy Portia, the woman Bassanio calls in 1.2.161, “a lady richly left.”

Playwrights were writing about the concerns of their day, chief of which in my exploration are the financial concerns. Shakespeare’s audience could understand these, and it

\textsuperscript{26} For more on capitalism, trade, and cosmopolitan ideology in service of both, see Karim-Cooper, Landreth, Shepard, Szendy, Van Gelder, and Woodbridge.
explains the vituperative hatred of any person who would loan money at interest. Shakespeare placed himself at the forefront of such playwrights. Commerce and the math that made it possible (I will discuss derivatives later) functions, therefore, in the plays as in life. As Linda Woodbridge writes,

Many English playwrights were the sons of tradesmen—glovers, shoemakers, bricklayers. George Peele was the son of James Peele, author of the first native English double-entry manual and financial officer of the commercially oriented Christ’s Hospital. The math these dramatists would have encountered was commercial math. But in this period, all math bore important traces of commercial math. Historians of science such as Frank Swetz and Richard Hadden argue that innovations in pure mathematics were piggy-backed on commercial arithmetic. Hadden traces the commercial connections of Italian pioneers of the new math (Pacioli, Tartaglia, Bombelli), and all the English mathematics books foreground their usefulness for merchants (Woodbridge 16).

The need for capital, and of making it grow, meant that constant lending and speculative ventures must be sought out both in England and in Italy, and the “new math” made it all possible. The early modern math gave us the beginnings of what would later become the venture capitalists (read Bassanio) and his borrowing in hopes of future gain, borrowing that, in the play, causes Antonio to become a derivative of capital, which I will explore later.

It is worth noting, as is the case so many times in the plays, that a man seeks wealth and status through a woman, and not the other way round. Further, this play is so focused on capital, that Portia’s gender becomes less relevant in light of the larger financial argument that overshadows gender. That Portia is a woman only serves Bassanio in his pursued betrothal. Her traditional feminine attributes are minimized (domesticity) in favor of her wisdom as a potential
mate in a legal union by way of her riches, political connections, and later, the added value of her wisdom at the law as “the young doctor of Rome” (4.1.52,53), disguised as a man. Comedies, as \textit{MV} sets out to be according to the title, might frequently show persons assuming a different gender as needed, such as Portia needing to appear as a man for the privilege of arguing the legal case at the play’s close. Upending the natural order of the day was considered a comedic standard, so we cannot take this too seriously, but when Antonio’s very life and Shylock’s identity are held in the balance, it becomes quite serious. While Portia is rich, beautiful, and commands language, ultimately she is in service of the status quo of inhospitable Venice.

In the character of Shylock, Shakespeare constructs a red herring: the vengeful Jew who, by all appearances and quite two-dimensionally, lives solely to avenge the ill-treatment of his people for all times and in all places. The red herring is placing only Shylock in the role of greedy individual, working at his profession, while Bassanio is the greedy individual who, because of his status as communal insider, blames the communal outsider, Shylock, for doing what Bassanio ultimately does: win Portia’s seemingly inexhaustible fortune. One could argue they are both greedy. However, Bassanio is considered ‘enterprising,’ while Shylock is simply ‘greedy Jew.’ What a difference being an insider makes. Bassanio, for all the evidence we have in the play, has the profession of borrowing from Antonio. Shakespeare does provide an intelligent character with a quick wit in the female character of Portia, which is laudable for the late sixteenth century. Here is a playwright willing to take a risk. Shakespeare gives his female characters keen wit and wisdom in several of the plays. At the beginning of the play, Portia is the prize, the bounty to be had, the object. Suitors come to vie for her hand in marriage. By the end of the play, in court, Portia is the agent, the subject, arguing the case disguised as a legal expert. Portia herself holds such power, rising to the conclusion of the play because of her fortune yes,
but also because of her cunning argumentation. Like Kate in *Shr.*, Portia wins the day for her insider group with her command of language. Unfortunately, she becomes the prime agent in diminishing cosmopolitanism in Venice, and instead of being a wealthy gift-giver to the other, Shylock, a good host, she makes Venice a punitive place to be if one is a guest and an other. As for the supposed villain of the play, Shylock, all he ever actually does is write words in a bond that are extreme. Nothing is ever done with them. His endured years of public derision, being spit upon, kicked, and called a dog by Antonio and retinue (act one scene three) are expressed in the words of this bond. For this extreme written phrase in 2.1.145,146, “an equal pound of your fair flesh,” he is impoverished, stripped of all, including his identity as a Jew, a fate worse than death, but laughably just in Venice. Shylock would have done better to mention it verbally only and not commit it to writing. Shakespeare is the real villain in portraying cosmopolitan Venice in this way. These are more in line with the actions of the English in 1290, when it expelled, with few exceptions, its Jews.

**The Weight of Antonio’s Debt**

Antonio is sinking down into what his counselors claim is an economically induced depression, for as he tells them “In sooth, I know not why I am so sad” (1.1.1). We are supposed to laugh at a comedy, or rest assured that it is a justly ended drama in which the protagonist remains alive. Antonio’s psychological pressure renders him unable to ascertain any direct cause. The cause itself is unknown even to Antonio, who utters, “And such a want-with sadness makes of me / that I have much ado to know myself” (1.1.6-7). Antonio finds himself in the midst of an identity crisis brought upon by either his large debt, or something else to which we are not privy. While his many ships, laden with cargo, are away on the ocean, Salerio advises him, “Your mind is tossing on the ocean, / there where your argosies with portly sail…do overpeer…”
Counseling Antonio are his five advisers Salerio, Solanio, Lorenzo, Graziano, and the one who causes the main problems of the play, Bassanio. Antonio says to Salerio “Your worth is very dear in my regard” (1.1.62), making us question whether he is referring to Salerio as a trusted friend, or estimating Salerio as worth a lot financially. It becomes increasingly difficult to separate hospitality and value. Readers cannot ever seem to get away from worth, value, money, currency, numerical expressions of higher and lower, rankings of more and less. Economic valuation of worth, both financial and personal, drive these economies of hospitality, and a good host is one who gives as much as possible to the guest. Be it stale bread or fine pastry, the good host shares what is available.

Depression, anxiety, and fear begin the play when Graziano says to Antonio, “You look not well, Signor Antonio. / You have too much respect upon the world” (1.1.73,74). Antonio speaks of the worry of the early modern world. This is a city of finance, and as such, Antonio must constantly think of the best way to increase his fortunes. To have an increase, as Shylock will later explain, one must accept risk, and risk is worry. Antonio is overburdened with risk, world-weary of business. Part of Antonio’s depression may be due to the bad advice and hollow wisdom he endures at the hands of his associates. Graziano says to Antonio, “Let me play the fool…There are a sort…as who should say ‘I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips, let no dog bark’” (1.1.88,93,94), inverting the value of wisdom even as he spews it forth to Antonio. Lorenzo, offended, says to Antonio, “Well, we will leave you / Then till dinner time. / I must be one of these same dumb wise men, / For Graziano never lets me speak” (1.1.104-07).

Shakespeare gives these small moments of comedy in the play, which was eventually categorized as a comedy, but turns out to be a dramatization with serious cultural undertones that keep
coming back throughout history. The small comedic moments have a disarming effect, rendering the later seriousness more acute.

Later, when Antonio entreats Shylock for the loan on Bassanio’s behalf, Antonio tells Shylock that he must vary from his usual path regarding borrowing at interest: “Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow / By taking nor by giving of excess, / Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend / I’ll break a custom” (1.3.56-59). In Venetian society, as has been mentioned, Antonio is a merchant. He is allowed to be a merchant because he is a member of the sanctioned religion. He does not need to borrow or loan at interest, for he is authorized by the state to be a merchant, which Shylock is not, and cannot be, because he is a Jew. Antonio’s privileged position allows him to explain why he normally would not stoop to such a low estate. Antonio is saying that he would not even be having this conversation with Shylock, were he not doing it for a friend. So, his using the word ‘friend,’ is another key problem of the play: Antonio acts as a good host to Bassanio. However, Bassanio is acting as a bad guest, taking advantage of an overextended man who is already depressed because of his extreme financial commitments as I discussed in act one scene one. Bassanio is not acting as a friend here, or he would have already paid Antonio back for the earlier loans. Bassanio is becoming a further strain on the already troubled Antonio. Bassanio’s request of a loan from Antonio is the reason for all the resulting problems of MV, and results in Antonio’s ultimately coming to Shylock for the funds, a man he has cursed and spat upon publicly. To be sure, Shylock does not help, but he is not the instigator of this loan. Bassanio bears full responsibility for the problem of debt and repayment, but not for the punishment. Antonio becomes a type of financial derivative\(^\text{27}\) in this loan structure. Antonio, the

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\(^{27}\) According to the International Monetary Fund, financial derivatives are, “…financial instruments that are linked to a specific financial instrument or indicator or commodity, and through which specific financial risks can be traded in financial markets in their own right. For Shylock, his bond condition that forfeiture of the loan, “Be nominated for an equal pound / Of your fair flesh to be cut off and taken” (1.3.145,146) is what I metaphorically refer to as a
merchant of Venice, is the body that shall have right of attachment by Venetian authority by way of Shylock’s bond. Bassanio is not liable except by word of his friend Antonio. Finally then, Bassanio’s exhausting the generous hospitality of Antonio becomes the impetus for all of the subsequent action in the play. The weight of Antonio’s debt is born by him alone until Shylock is made the villain.

**Gift, Debt, Loan, and Sacrifice**

Antonio becomes an enabler of Bassanio, not for Bassanio’s need but “to supply the ripe wants…” What is staggering in this moment is the hypocrisy of Antonio and Bassanio both, who chastise Shylock for loaning money at interest, while Bassanio’s stated reason, his “ripe wants” are to borrow the capital, win Portia’s hand, and enjoy the benefits of her great wealth, as he says,

> In Belmont is a lady richly left,…

> Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued

> To Cato’s daughter, Brutus’ Portia,

> Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,…

> O my Antonio, had I but the means

> To hold a rival place with one of them,

> I have a mind presages me such thrift

> That I should questionless be fortunate (1.2.165-67,173-76).

Yes, Portia is beautiful. But there must have been many beautiful poor girls in Venice. After all, Portia’s inheritance, should Bassanio manage to best the casket trick, is vast, and would solve his monetary difficulties—in fact, it is the reason he seeks to borrow from Antonio in the first place,
and Bassanio’s scheme to borrow in hopes of greater gain becomes the genesis of the entire plot. Bassanio passively begs Antonio for capital to use in a risky enterprise to obtain more capital. Through the end of the play, Bassanio never repays Antonio. Shylock’s loan becomes a ‘gift’ to Antonio at the bond trial, which in turn becomes Antonio’s gift to Bassanio. Venetian society allows theft, in a circuitous fashion in order to prop up its majority power. By the trial scene in 4.1, \( MV \) has evolved into a play about a merchant who is too free with his friends, and due to this, he is in debt to a moneylender he cannot repay.

As I mentioned in the opening of the chapter, Bassanio extends an invitation to dine to Shylock. If Shylock had accepted Bassanio’s offer, would it have eased the problem inherent in the play, or would it have been a further insult for Shylock to have accepted the invitation, yet simply refused pork, seeming rude? Before we can wrestle with that question, we must first negotiate another scene which is not between characters, but between Shakespeare and his audience. In 1.3.35-46, Shylock gives an aside:

How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchant most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Curséd be my tribe
If I forgive him (1.3.37-47).

Shakespeare imagines his Jewish character to be full of hatred. He sets up Shylock as a straw man, to be an object of ridicule and judgment by first telling his audience that here is a man to be judged. Here is a man who cannot forgive. Here is a man with an “ancient grudge” that is not explained, but may well be imagined by a Christian audience. It is a brilliant move by a writer of fiction and entertainment to play upon the cultural hatred of a majority group, and MV is one in a long line of such texts. Shylock’s second line, “I hate him for he is a Christian,” does not make sense logically, for it is too stark a statement, with no context or pretext in the play. This context is culturally based. Shakespeare can safely assume his audience will understand from a cultural, historical point of view, having heard stories about Jews, as well as seeing other playwrights’ work. Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* is the strongest example, a play almost always referred to in Shakespearean criticism alongside *MV*. If Shakespeare were looking to set up enmity for its own sake, the “ancient grudge” motif is a good stepping-off point, seeing as nearly all of Shakespeare’s audience would have been Christian, at least in the cultural sense.

Shakespeare uses the latent hatred of this Jewish straw man to otherize Shylock, and galvanize hatred and unforgiveness of some ancient wrong, perhaps the murder of Jesus (by Romans in a Roman colony), or other acts, such as the taking of interest (usury), which in the Early Modern period was increasingly common among Christian lenders. Wrongs do not have to be named in this play, only alluded to, and Shakespeare knows that merely bringing up the language of hatred and unforgiveness will be enough to incite both in his audience. If money is the only thing that Venice will accept to allow Shylock to exist within its walls, then there is no other way for him
to survive than to earn interest as a money lender. However, Venice does not have to love him for it.

As an other, then, Shylock cannot truly ever accept the hospitality of Bassanio or Antonio. His status as a person of a religious minority prevents his acceptance. He must convert to Christianity to accept hospitality. In so doing, Shakespeare shows us that the ancient way of Homer’s *Odyssey*, for example, the idea that all strangers come from Zeus, and are to be shown hospitality, is altered now. All strangers, so long as they will convert to Christianity, come from God, is the new social norm in the Venice of the play and to a lesser degree historical Venice. Shakespeare points a finger at a true cosmopolitan city state, Venice, while London was far from true cosmopolitanism when Shakespeare was writing. While we have in the play nothing as severe as the Spanish Inquisition, for Shylock, conversion would be a complete tragedy worse than losing religion—he would lose his identity.

What is particularly significant about Shakespeare, though, is that he is willing to enter into the fray of otherness as fearlessly as he does. Shakespeare does not shy away from difference in consciously bringing it up. In fact, he shoves it to the fore and demands that his audience deal with it together, in public, and on a stage. This Elizabethan culture too, the one that created Shakespeare, was the type of society that wanted to explore otherness, for reasons not the least of which was to emulate this Venetian society. Harry Berger, Jr. explores this sense of otherness in “Mercifixion in The Merchant of Venice: The Riches of Embarrassment.” Berger states,

No discussion of the play can proceed without taking into account the darker implications of Shylock's bond discussed and impressively documented by James Shapiro in *Shakespeare and the Jews*. He shows that it was more than possible for Elizabethan
audiences, who "were entertained with catalogues of Jewish villainy," to feel that "an occluded threat of circumcision informs Shylock's desire to cut a pound of Antonio's flesh." Furthermore, they might have associated circumcision with "ritualistic and surreptitious murder." But if it's important not to forget what may lie behind Shylock's proposal of a "merry bond," it's equally important to factor in the situation that led him to propose it.  

Berger notes that circumcision is related to the flesh Shylock seeks from Antonio, should he forfeit his bond. The idea that a Jew is a blood-hungry figure goes back centuries, known as “blood libel.”  

As for his bond, as I have stated earlier, Shylock only writes an incendiary phrase into the bond, demanding a pound of flesh from Antonio upon forfeiture. English Christendom, as Berger, Shapiro, and Teter all argue, seemed to tremble at any Jew mentioning flesh. Ironically, Jesus the Jew is lauded for offering his own flesh. Perhaps the giving of flesh in some way is akin to a host, while the taking of it (or writing it in a bond) is akin to being a bad guest.

To conclude what I mentioned at the beginning of this section, Bassanio’s invitation to Shylock is inhospitable to Shylock in a way not explained in the play. Shylock cannot eat food that is not kosher. He never tells Bassanio this. Bassanio never asks why. The secrets of culture

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28 Berger refers to and quotes from Shapiro’s book, originally published in 1996 and republished in 2016. Shapiro states, “When I wrote this book twenty years ago, there were things that I had failed to see. I ended Shakespeare and the Jews with a plea that, however uncomfortable the play made Jews feel, it would be a mistake to censor or suppress The Merchant of Venice. For, like a canary in a coal mine, the play in performance identified what was often undetectable in a culture: the presence of noxious and residual bigotry.”

29 Such blood libel persists. Magda Teter writes, “In May 2015, members of the British Movement, a white supremacist group in the United Kingdom, gathered in the town of Lincoln to ‘revive a tradition of the English Middle Ages.’ The group proceeded to the Lincoln Cathedral, where they wanted to honor ‘Little Hugh of Lincoln,’ a nine-year-old boy who died in 1255. Little Hugh’s death was blamed on the Jews and became the first case in England to result in their execution, though it was not the first such accusation. A shrine devoted to Little Hugh was fashioned, and the story was included in contemporary chronicles and local ballads. In the fourteenth century, the story entered popular works of literature, the most famous among them, Chaucer’s ‘Prioress’s Tale’ (Teter 1).
only lead to misunderstanding and mistrust between the two. Flesh of pigs, and flesh of people are bodily representations of culture that cannot be overcome in the play.

Scott Oldenburg, writing of inclusion and exclusion in *Alien Albion: Literature and Immigration in Early Modern England*, supports what I have argued, and advances a complicated toleration claim: “The modes of multicultural community I describe have anti-alien violence and discrimination as their backdrop, and with provincial globalism in particular one must note the way in which immigrants are included in the economy but also treated unequally” (Oldenburg 12). Certainly, *MV* is a true mark in exemplum of Oldenburg’s claims. Shylock the Jew, as the religious alien, cannot ever hope to call in the debt of a pound of flesh (which is Shakespeare’s anti-alien-violence-device), nor even get repayment at all unless it is on the majority’s terms. Christian society permits Shylock but does not empower Shylock. Venetian community uses Shylock as a bank when necessary (a worst-case option here for Antonio), but disallows Shylock’s terms, and inserts standard Venetian terms finally, even when at first going along with Shylock’s.

**The Problem of Shylock**

As much as the title suggests, when readers look at the lack of cosmopolitan behavior in *MV*, it is arguable that the play does not take place in Venice, rather in an imagined and xenophobic Venice that neither resembles the actual Venice nor a city in England in the early seventeenth century. This Venice belongs to Shakespeare, an author creating a figure in Shylock vindictive enough to demand death as payment. In this city, it is considered comedic to demand Shylock’s conversion, a fate worse than death to a Jew, resulting in loss of faith, loss of culture, and loss of identity and connection to his own community, yet never quite allowing for full inclusion into the Christian community because of latent memories of Shylock’s past religion.
and profession, not that we are given evidence of Shylock’s post-conversion life. Oldenburg continues, “Certainly knowing more about immigration enhances our understanding of early modern life, but noting the way various emergent communities competed with the idea of nationhood also draws attention to the constructed nature of the cultural borders that define us.” Those who come into our community, and those who accept us into theirs, do so on contingency: what value can we add to their society? This question is imperative in seeking to determine whether the newcomer will add or subtract from the wealth and power of each community. Shylock, for his part, adds wealth and finance, which is the only quantifiable attribute valued by Venice. His religion is tolerated for the sake of his wealth.

In Shakespeare’s England, immigration and national identity were problematic, while religion complicated matters. However, nationhood and political boundaries were dynamic, and rapidly being defined. As Oldenburg maintains,

We would not want to revive early modern England’s insistence on assimilation, but just as people in sixteenth-century England tried to see beyond the divide of English and alien to perceive shared interests and common goals, so we too might learn to see that borders merely get in the way of our recognizing how much we have in common with those we deem alien. (Oldenburg 19).

Whether across religion, nationality, or time, the commonality Oldenburg claims among humans is compelling when we look at the close interaction Shylock has with Bassanio and Antonio. What could be seen as bitter commentary from all three could also be performed and perceived as good-natured ribbing amongst friends, with little or no alteration. If we but imagine any of the barbs slung at Sir John Falstaff by his nearest friends, they would perhaps wipe away anything Bassanio or Antonio levelled against Shylock. What is at issue in hospitable treatment here, then,
is the otherness ingredient. An insider cannot truly ever offer hospitality to an outsider if the outsider is prevented from accepting it because of religious prohibition. Sir John was an insider (until Henry V that is, when Henry turns his back on him). Sir John is not a cultural or religious outsider as is Shylock. As the play progresses, when words turn to inhospitable deeds, we see the hatred for Shylock, or at least for his kind, both religiously and professionally. It is a revenge against difference taking place in MV. Standing walls of culture (religious, gendered, or otherwise) separate such outsiders from insiders. Either a more generous form of hospitality is needed, or a forced move to create an insider from an outsider.30

The perspective of the other is seen no more clearly in my four plays than in MV, from the eyes of Shylock. He is the arms’-length citizen, the stranger we deal with only because there is no friend who can provide money for our desire to make more money. Bassanio clearly and directly speculates that if he may borrow 3,000 ducats, he can woo Portia and capture the use of perhaps hundreds of thousands more ducats, perhaps millions. MV strongly implies that to handle money, lucre, after a certain point is a sin. Therefore, Shylock can be the fall guy for a society that allows him to lend but does not accept him in so doing.

In the beginning of act three, as Shylock is discussing the terms of their loan agreement, Bassanio asks Shylock if he has heard anything in the common talk that would indicate Antonio to be less than a trustworthy risk. Shylock continually says that he thinks Antonio is a good man, and able to repay the loan. Shylock begins this way, praising Antonio, but then casts shadows of doubt:

30 Oldenburg’s chapter, “From the Dutch Acrobat to Hance Beerpot,” focuses on xenophobia, and as such, the term “stranger” from the Greek “Ξένος” (xenos), meaning the stranger or the foreigner. I use the term “stranger,” “other,” “outsider,” to make my arguments, precisely because the terms are not interchangeable. Shylock is no stranger, for example, but a cultural outsider because of his religious heritage. However, Shylock is capitalism’s pragmatic insider. Shylock is also an “other,” but a “necessary other” in the furtherance of Venetian commerce.
But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land rats and water rats, water thieves and land thieves—I mean Pirates--And then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats: I think I may take his bond (1.3.18-23).

Shylock, as much as anything else, survives by being able to assess risk accurately. He is a gambler in the sense that he risks and leverages his monetary substance on future gains. Should Shylock not take into the equation some pertinent point, or fail to see a hidden variable, or misjudge a visible variable, then his potential profit is lost, as well as some or all of his principal substance. In so doing, Shylock assesses not only ships, but persons. He must not only critically assess what evidence he has come to know of Antonio, but also that of the sailors, the predatory persons (pirates), and unwanted consumers of cargo (land and water rats). In addition, he must consider the age of the ship/s, and any other factor such as when where they last repaired in dry dock, and when last fitted with new sails. Shylock assesses risk because he has to in order to survive. To flourish is another pursuit altogether, and levels of difficulty over that of survival. But Shylock, for all his analysis of potential risk, makes an insane demand of Antonio’s pound of flesh.

Two different cultural inheritors view moneylending differently, as evidenced by Antonio’s exchange with Shylock. To Antonio, things are as they are because heaven decrees it. To Shylock, human will is involved, and human choice makes the outcome what it is:

**Shylock:** When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban’s sheep,

This Jacob from our holy Abram was—
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf—

The third possessor; ay, he was the third—

Shylock establishes that Jacob is the third patriarch, or a key figure in the history of the Jews. It is worth noting that with Abram, Judaism was invented. It did not exist before him. In establishing this lineage, Shylock is building a foundation argument such that he, Shylock is authorized to make a claim about monies profited from monies loaned. Shylock begins in such a way as to make the profit of one activity, sheep herding, analogous to the profit of another activity, the saving, keeping, loaning, and calculating of the profit from loaning capital.

to thrive, and he was blest;

Antonio: And what of him? Did he take interest?

Shylock: No, not take interest—not, as you would say,

Directly interest. Mark what Jacob did:

When Laban and himself were compromised

That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied

Should fall as Jacob’s hire, the ewes, being rank,

In end of autumn turned to the rams;

And when the work of generation was

Between these wooly breeders in the act,

The skillful shepherd peeled me certain wands,

And in the doing of the deed of kind

He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,

Who then, conceiving, did in eaning time

Fall particolored lambs; and those were Jacob’s.

This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not (1.3.71-86).

As there was no currency, Shylock argues, the ancients encouraged the sheep to breed to the advantage of the owners. He is claiming that the ancients behaved this way, and that in the present, money is the ‘sheep,’ and thus should be encouraged to breed more sheep. Shylock goes into some significant detail here though: 1) He describes the sheep as, “…eanlings…streaked and pied” which were assigned to Jacob after a manner of share-crop agreement [with Laban, his father-in-law], 31 2) he mentions the season of increase, and 3) he discusses the ‘skillful shepherd’ and the particulars of the method he employs to guide the sheep to the other sheep. This knowledge of sheep psychology evinces a close knowledge of the behavior of sheep based upon study and observance. Shylock too, in his time, has observed and studied finance, the ways moneys are lent out at interest, and paid over a period of time, with increase. What we have here is a man who has been left an option of career who has creatively and industriously worked that option until he has become successful. Shylock has learned the ways of sheep and people.

Shylock’s mention of this passage does not mean that it is only for him. Antonio, as a Christian, has coopted this passage for his own use as well. In his freedom, Antonio may take interest or not, and has over time loaned monies to Bassanio, a fair-weather friend who has not always paid Antonio back, thus Bassanio’s admission, “‘Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, / How much I have disabled mine estate / By something showing a more swelling port / Than my faint means would grant continuance (1.1.122-25). Bassanio, with a clever gloss, admits to being a spendthrift, and declares the premise upon which all of the proceeding trouble in the play is

31 Jacob asks Laban for payment after serving him for fourteen years. When Laban asks what the payment shall be, Jacob says, “Pay me nothing! If you will do this thing for me, I will again pasture and keep your flocks: let me pass through your whole flock today, removing from there every speckled and spotted animal—every dark-colored sheep and every spotted and speckled goat. Such shall be my wages” (transliterated from Hebrew to English as Bereshit Va-Yetse’ 30:31-34. In the third century BCE, the portions were translated as a whole into Greek and called Genesis).
based: Bassanio’s reckless nature. What is more, Antonio has become an enabler of Bassanio’s behavior. Over time, it becomes clear that the showdown in court we see in act four over the bond was destined to happen sooner or later—but how convenient when it should happen with a scapegoat to blame, Shylock, who demanded impossible terms of forfeiture in the first place. It just happens that the court loves a fortune-hunting rogue of its own, Bassanio, over a legalist with few career options allowed by Venice, who is not its own, Shylock. This bias is no surprise to readers of Shakespeare, or to early modern playgoers of English sensibility, who by the time the play was first performed on February 10th, 1605 (Royal Shakespeare Company) would have already been familiar with several similar plays, such as Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Venice* (1592), which, according to Lieke Stelling, “…presents a deeply and unusually cynical view of Christians” (Stelling 113). Shakespeare writes a “deeply and unusually cynical view” of Jews just as easily.

**Three Stages of Character Development**

Shylock begins with his daughter Jessica, his business as a moneylender, and the disdain of the local Christian majority, whose needs he is allowed to supply as one of the few vocations open to a Jew. By 2.3, a twenty-line scene solely dedicated to Jessica’s flight, Jessica has abandoned Shylock for hatred of living as an outsider: “Alack, what heinous sin is it in me / To be ashamed to be my father’s child!...O Lorenzo, / If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife-- / Become a Christian and thy loving wife” (2.4.15-20). By 3.1, though Shylock has Antonio at a disadvantage, and spends the rest of the play losing everything he has and is. Much like Lear, Shylock has a beloved daughter and a fortune, and ends the play with neither.

Act 4.1.328-9 shows us what kind of play this is: majority tribalism casts a grim eye on an old and hated minority scapegoat. Shakespeare coyly makes the Catholics in this Venetian
court the accusers, as Graziano exclaims, “A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew! / Now, infidel, I have you on the hip” (4.1.328-9), the reversal of what Shylock intended as his revenge when Shylock says, “If I can catch him once upon the hip / I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him (1.3.41,42). Graziano is the mouthpiece of a Venetian community that claims revenge on an other’s seeking of revenge on one of their own—“one of us.” Inhospitality glistens with the hate of a community in that the Venetian court goes too far in seizing Shylock’s fortune, and Shylock goes too far in demanding a pound of flesh. Only Shylock is punished for his mistake. The significance of the hip lines spoken by Graziano and Shylock metaphorically refer to an advantage one wrestler has on another, but bringing to mind the financial advantage of “interest,” or “usury,” money made on money lent.32 It has biblical origin in the story of Jacob, who wrestles with God (God appearing as a man). Eventually, God has Jacob by the hip in a wrestling hold. Shylock tells Bassanio of the story of Jacob’s ‘interest,’ his gain by selectively breeding the goats, and implies this other moment in Jacob’s life.

Andrew Shryock speaks of negative hospitality of the kind we find in MV. In his article, “Breaking Hospitality Apart: Bad Hosts, Bad Guests, and the Problem of Sovereignty,” Shryock describes hospitality as another language insinuated just below and interwoven throughout the primary spoken language in a given interaction, such as the interaction between Bassanio and Shylock in 1.3, in which he, bound by religious/cultural prohibition, refuses Bassanio’s dinner invitation because he does not eat pork. Here the pair have a human interaction with no shared cultural language. Each is dealing with a cultural other. Shryock says,

32 Shylock has already used the story of the patriarch Jacob’s clever use of genetic engineering to increase his flocks. Here he hearkens back to the story of Jacob wrestling with the angel in Genesis, chapters 30-31 as an argument for why he is allowed to collect what Shylock calls “thrift,” or as he tells Bassanio, “Which he [Antonio] calls interest” (1.3.46).
Hospitality is a shared language of human interaction, a first link between Others, a medium of greeting and exchange. Its status as a first and shared language is enhanced by the fact that it is always a second language as well, one spoken to outsiders, newcomers, and total strangers. Recent fascination with hospitality in philosophical quarters builds on related aspects of sharing and human difference. The status of foreigners is central, for instance, to Derrida's reflections on 'unconditional hospitality', just as the 'law of universal hospitality' was central, over two centuries ago, to Kant's formula for 'perpetual peace' among nations…What is worth emphasizing here is that hospitality, as a topic of debate and moral analysis, seems always to expand beyond itself, to encompass other times (Shryock 22).

Bassanio has no cultural frame of reference precedent to his invitation to Shylock to dine. His hospitality in this scene is not, as Shryock mentions, “a shared language of human interaction,” and we cannot know his intention. Perhaps he does honestly wish to be hospitable. If he does wish to be, he says nothing of Shylock’s refusal. Bassanio makes no overture, for example, to not serve pork, or to prepare food acceptable to Shylock in a kosher kitchen. If greed were the pure motivation, it would seem that Bassanio would use the venture as a way into Shylock’s “shared language,”: hospitality in invitation, in preparing food, in hosting-- and all for profit. Bassanio does not. After Shylock’s refusal, he remains silent. Shylock could have been more polite in refusing, but after Antonio’s past actions again him, he remains cold.

**Derivative and Theoretical Flesh**

Shylock draws up a bond in which he demands a pound of flesh from Antonio as security. No pound of flesh is ever taken. No action makes that carnal seizure possible. The flesh acts as a surety for the bond, which upon forfeiture of the money owed, can satisfy the lender.
Peter Szendy, who has called this a type of “derivative,” a speculation upon capital, writes about the metaphor that is flesh and capital-principle in his article, “Dividual Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice and Dividual Capitalism.” In his view, Antonio is the capital, and the pound of flesh is the derived and traded specie. Antonio is the principal, and his pound of flesh is the secondary by-product of value traded upon the principal. It should be, in an ethical sense, that we do not trade persons or parts of persons. Shylock can be judged inhospitable for writing the ‘pound of flesh’ clause into the bond. One cannot separate the pound of flesh from Antonio without killing Antonio and thus losing the principal, the human being. But in the financial markets, derivatives upon commodified principals (gold, corn, pork bellies) are traded by the millions each day. What would seem impossible in reality to trade (a part of the whole without trading the whole, or even involving the value of the whole) is possible since rules governing it are constructed and used to make the impossible possible. As Szendy argues,

The description and classification of derivatives is as variable as that of figures in the long history of rhetoric. Not unlike the Jakobsonian reduction of the plethora of tropes inherited from classical tradition to “two aspects of language,” metaphor and metonymy, the many varieties of financial derivatives have been distributed in two main categories: on the one hand, futures are contracts obligating the two parties to sell or buy an asset at a predetermined date and price; on the other hand, options offer the right, but not the

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33 Jakobson combines two elements of language, metaphor and metonymy, to structure meaning in poetics and linguistics. Considering the ways in which money and language is used in MV it is but a small step to a shared acquisition of financial language that must take place if the profit Bassanio and Shylock hope for (as well as Antonio with his ships, and Tubal from his lending to Shylock) may be realized. Solely on the linguistic principles metaphor and metonymy, meaning may be deconstructed much as the speculation of the futures prices of goods deconstructs and untethers the value of goods such as a ship’s hold of wheat, a hogshead of oil, or a debt to be paid at a future time. I would further suggest that synecdoche, in which a part is used to represent the whole, is a related concept in literature. After all, “pound / Of your fair flesh” from Antonio’s body would be the death of Antonio’s whole body.
obligation, to buy or sell an asset at an agreed-upon price during a certain period of time. The 1980s saw the development of a third type of derivative contract—swaps—that allows two companies, for example, to switch the currencies in which the payments of their debt are due (currency swap); or they can exchange a fixed interest rate for a floating rate, and vice versa (interest rate swap)...it is with swaps that derivative contracts started to be cut loose from a form of risk management linked to commodity stocks in order to become mainly financial products. Most importantly, with the unheard-of proliferation of these contracts, what emerged was “their capacity to ‘dismantle’ or ‘unbundle’ any asset into constituent attributes,” to deconstruct it, I would say, “and trade those attributes without trading the asset itself”: “Derivatives are priced, bought and sold without any change of ownership of the asset to which the derivative relates.” In sum, what circulates, what is exchanged, is not the harvest but its price to come; it is not a given capital but the interest rates that it generates (Szendy 64).

Shylock demands that if Antonio should forfeit in his bond, he shall, “let the forfeit / Be nominated for an equal pound / Of your fair flesh… (2.1.144-46). Here, as Szendy suggests with financial derivatives, Shylock treats Antonio’s “pound of flesh” as a derivative, and Antonio as principal capital, secured with a contract (Shylock’s bond). Antonio is bound, suggesting he be bodily tied or chained to the value of the contract and its future value. Antonio has walked into an agreement in which he is a commodity, and his flesh is a derivative of said commodity. In the same way, Venice has made Shylock the moneylender, and forbade him any other vocation because of his religion. Shylock, then, is a necessary agent of this economy, and a derivative of capital also. Venice has made Shylock a derivative unit of interest on the principal of the city. Shylock, in turn, further derives interest in Antonio’s flesh should the bond be forfeited.
Metaphor, as Szendy mentions, referring back to Jakobson, allows one word to act temporarily another. Financial metaphor allows one product to be another (or to act as another). Shylock cannot be Catholic (actually, he can be if he converts): but he is permitted by Catholic Venice to loan money. A Catholic should normally not borrow money from a Jew, but in cosmopolitan Venice, it is allowed. By the play’s close, Antonio has borrowed nothing of Shylock. He never pays back the principal or the interest. Shylock has in effect simply gifted the 3,000 ducats to Bassanio through Antonio’s good credit. It is Shylock who has borrowed of Tubal only. The moneylender winds up in debt because Shakespeare’s Venice is more like thirteenth-century England that the historical Venice perhaps ever was, especially in the late sixteenth century. Antonio acts as a derivative unit for Bassanio, Shylock, and Venice itself. Antonio’s body is a test case to show what majority power can do to minorities. Bassanio uses Antonio’s good name and credit to get Portia. Venice, in turn, uses Antonio’s derivative flesh to void a bond to Shylock as if it were never made. Such are the results of speculative capitalism. The result of this financial speculation is, in a word, inhospitable, when it results in Shylock’s loss of all that he has, most importantly, his identity as a Jew.

As a member of a special community, Shylock has to navigate two competing legalities: ancient Jewish law that has come down to the early modern (and one of the main structural pillars of European legal tradition), and Venetian law inherited from the Roman Empire. Jay Berkovitz, writing in “Law’s Dominion: Jewish Community, Religion, and Family in Early Modern Metz,” explain this peculiar duality, saying,

“Legal culture”…refers to how individuals navigate the options they face when they seek to resolve their differences. Whether the focus is judicial culture or legal culture, we are less concerned with the question of compliance per se. Indeed, the failure to obey the law,
whether in deliberate opposition to legal norms or as a result of laxity, by no means negates the role and function of the law as an all-encompassing framework that defined the duties and responsibilities imposed by the state, on the one hand, and those required of Jews as members of duly constituted and autonomous communities, on the other.

(Berkovitz 23).

Berkovitz mentions difference as something that must be navigated. He separates “judicial culture” from “legal culture,” to show how the way a set of differences is adjudicated might or might not be in accordance with the way laws are written. Shylock, for his part, is not the one on trial; Bassanio is. Bassanio has forfeited his bond, and Shylock has used his legally binding contract to bring the matter to a Venetian court. Because of Portia’s desire to have Bassanio cleared, she mentions items extraneous to the law that no one can verify, and none seek to do so. The court, in effect, due to Shylock’s status as a minority, places Shylock in a trial-within-a-trial, breaks their own law of lending, and because their favored son has prevailed, calls the whole affair satisfactory. Shakespeare’s audience then, one may imagine, can enjoy this resolution, without feeling guilty. Shakespeare has the whole dirty business play out on an English stage, but not in an English court.

Shakespeare calls into question such inhospitable treatment of Shylock as a moral failing of Venetian society (though such did not exist in the way Shakespeare writes it). He is saying to his audience that, “We must not do the same.” *MV* has, inherent in it, a warning from Shakespeare that England needs to heed at peril of its own disruption. The treatment of lenders, merchants, and other strangers who are not of the native culture (Christian, Catholic, of prominent families) says everything about what a society is. Performance of the stranger’s value, hospitality commensurate with the perceived value of the stranger, shows the value of the
society. Venice, the city state, and England, the state, were quite different from each other at the
time when Shakespeare wrote *MV*. Venice itself was a crossroads of culture, and the play
shows this. Catholics do business with diasporic Jews and Islamic merchants from Turkey
(Barzman 5). Karim-Cooper writes, in an article for the British Library,

> We know from contemporary accounts that Venetians, Cypriots, Greeks, Jews and Turks lived on the island, which had been culturally diverse since the medieval period. This exciting cross-cultural dialogue contributed to a global impression of Venice as a city of great opportunity, wealth and magnificence (Karim-Cooper 1).

When I argue the hospitality of Venice, much of it surrounds commerce. I use not only the resident referred to by Karim-Cooper or Barzman, but the traveler as well. In an economic hotspot, people want to visit, trade, and prosper if they can. Shylock, in *MV*, is the traveler. He has made a home in Venice, but he is treated as an outsider in many respects, in small barbs, such as with Bassanio’s dinner invitation on behalf of Antonio. In court, he is clearly on trial, and not treated as a native son. The interchanges in *MV* are what Andrew McRae terms “commercialized hospitality,” writing “A marked expansion of commercialized hospitality can be dated roughly from the Reformation” (McRae 7). For strangers to trust, one must show them kindness, invite them to dine, to sit and talk over coffee or tea, and to hopefully forge some kind of human connection. The potential trading partner can trade with anyone. The hospitable treatment of them is in hopes that they will gain trust and gain trade.

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34 Venice was a city-state, and England a state: It would be impossible to contrast Italy with England outside of a vast historical study, for the two developed in quite different ways with respect to the power individual cities held in contrast to say, London. Also not useful would be to compare Venice to London, as London was interconnected in ways Venice was not. Geography played a part, but The Roman Empire’s development and fall, as well as the huge and elongated north to south sprawl of the Italian peninsula made the development of the city-state within a continentally adjacent country a necessity for consolidation of local economic power.
The Several Economies

There are, as my title suggests, several economies in *MV*. The first is Bassanio’s personal economy, his motivation to secure three thousand ducats and leverage it against many more thousands of ducats, controlled by Portia. Portia herself is the vehicle for her father's wealth by means of the casket trick in act two scene seven. The casket trick, in which suitors choose one of three (gold, silver, or lead) is itself a metaphor for the death resulting from seeking a fortune by way of love. As an example, one suitor, Morocco, picks the casket lined with gold, but only a skull and scroll are inside, on which is written a lesson about looking to gold for treasure. In this speculating city, the caskets serve as a reminder of the end of all human life to rich and poor alike. Bassanio becomes a kind of villain of the play: he’s the driver of the plot, a spendthrift who is not unlike a prodigal son who never left home. He spends everything on which he can lay hands, and requests the 3,000-ducat loan of Shylock to use as leverage in the Portia enterprise. However, when he finally chooses his casket in hopes of finding Portia’s likeness inside, he has a rare moment of wisdom, saying,

So may the outward shows be least themselves.
The world is still deceived with ornament…
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.
No none of thee, thou pale and common drudge [silver]
‘Tween man and man. But thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threaten’st than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence,
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence (3.2.73,74,100-107)!

It is uncharacteristic of Bassanio to speak this way, but suddenly he gets wise. He chooses the plain, unadorned lead casket, and Portia’s likeness is inside. He wins her hand. In and around this scene is the poesy of love, of wooing, and for the first time besides a mere hint in act one scene two, Bassanio speaks only of simple love, and not of borrowing or speculation.

Antonio (the eponymous merchant of Venice) becomes an enabler of Bassanio’s speculation. He finds himself an unwitting venture capitalist in the sense that he seeks to aid Bassanio in leveraging this money he's borrowing in the hope that Bassanio can gain more through securing Portia's hand and wealth. Antonio enables Bassanio to enact this scheme, but even the mighty Antonio cannot raise the capital, so in turn he goes to a moneylender, Shylock, who is a Jew and is legally only allowed to loan money-- he can survive no other way by law-- except in a handful of Venetian occupations allowed for Jews, and none for which he is qualified.

Venice, and its city-state economy are dependent upon speculation in hopes of profit. Profit, similar to hospitality, determines the value of a human being by valuing difference, at least in Shakespeare’s fictional account. In many ways the performance of hospitality is related to the performance of a financial contract. The society classifies humans in terms of likeness and difference and gradations of both to make it simple to determine what may be lent, what may be borrowed, and what may be stolen (due to outright seizure, such as in court with legal language or due to non-payment of a loan). Hospitality is a means to an end. Hospitality’s ultimate goal is security within community. Even people who do not consciously practice hospitality still practice it unknowingly. In a country such as Italy, too large to imagine for most in the Early Modern Period, the city state was where these hospitable-commercial performances played out.
On balance, the scheme of Bassanio works very well because he is of the majority religion, a majority culture in Venice, and the majority predictably takes the money from the minority (in this case, Shylock) but they also take it from the person Shylock borrowed from, Tubal, and from their own reputation as a legitimate city-state in which to lend. Future profits dictate all of these economies and the behavior of the agents is what I am focusing upon. I derive my hospitality argument in examining the way these agents treat each other. The hospitality claims derive from the way they perform when they don't have to treat each other a certain way purely for commerce. The hospitality of aggrandizement or consolidating power is performed by different characters in distinct ways, but Bassanio is consistent and makes a safe bet that his culture will win out in the end, for his friend Antonio has seen him through dark days up until now. Bassanio is a hopeful spendthrift and a lover of fortune. Taken simply for financial discussion the play is not unlike my discussion of The Taming of the Shrew in which a man tries to woo a wife to gain her father's fortune.

As I claimed in the outset of this chapter, MV is not simply a “comical history” play, as Shakespeare’s title suggests. Stephen Schillinger, in, "Conversations with Shylock: The Merchant of Venice, Authorship Trouble, and Interpretive Instability in the Period of Early Print," indicates that Shylock may indeed be a mere doppelganger for an English outsider in Venice, and somewhat agrees with Kenneth Gross's book Shylock is Shakespeare35, which would tend to cast Shylock as both a religious other as well as an English outsider in one person (while

35 Gross draws a myriad of comparisons between Shakespeare and Shylock: Two notable are that Shakespeare’s father John was a sometime moneylender, while the playwright had to constantly seek funding for his productions, speculating on future profit. Gross cleverly explains, “Shylock’s ferocious idiosyncrasy makes a strange place The Merchant of Venice within the Shakespearean canon as a whole. In the play, a character intended as one piece of a larger dramatic machine [I draw parallels with my earlier discussion of synecdoche and derivative piece] so draws the poet’s attention that he gains a life that threatens to dominate or deform the whole. If this begins as an accident, it leads to a genuine breakthrough, and after Shylock something in the plays is different. He looks forward to many aspects of the later plays—the wild interiority of the tragedies, for one thing, and their way of rooting into reality, private and public, through staging voices of rage…” [emphasis my own]
simultaneously being a Venetian outsider, albeit a financially necessary one). Schillinger's claim lies rooted in the idea that the writer is an outsider, and that finding one's way through the Elizabethan pressure on literary and dramatic success is to inhabit the confused mores by which Shylock must himself navigate.

Shylock makes an emotionally charged and politically unpopular mistake to include a pound of flesh in his authorship of the bond with Antonio. One takes a hazardous risk in hoping to seek legal and fatal revenge when one is in the minority—which adds to the importance of financial speculation: large bets win large sums. Revenge cannot be legal, for legality is about justice. However, Shylock's dependence upon settled Venetian law is shaken when the same Venice changes its mind in court and bows to Portia's sparkling wit, ignoring legal precedence, signed bond, Shylock's career, and identity altogether. So, like Shylock's hope of success in a changing world of uncertain standards, the speculator must never become complacent about what acceptance can be gained in a financial risk of the form Shylock designs. If Bassanio bets big, Shylock bets bigger, and has his identity stripped from him. Shylock’s mistake is seeking revenge through the law, which is, after all, supposed to uphold justice.

What religious power performs in early modern Venice, political power performs in much of the modern world. Religion has given way to the political in this play, not that religion does not undergird the politics. What many times was religious difference in such exchanges as we see in Bassanio and Shylock’s negotiation, is now political difference rooted in traditions of religion. However, whether religious or political, the power dynamic remains. The underlying normativity on which a community bases its laws, customs, traditions, and hospitable acts, remains—such normativity is not clearly or even positively defined, but there is clear and negative effect when these customs, traditions, and hospitable acts are tested. The Merchant of
Venice is a play about such a test: one in which both the city-state of Venice, and Shylock himself, fail. Both become inhospitable. The Venetian court should have declared the bond void on its face, and gone no further. Shylock, in demanding terms far too extreme (a pound of Antonio’s flesh), deserved something for his many verbal and other assaults from Antonio, but not a pound of flesh. Bassanio, who wants a loan for future gain, Shylock the lender, and Venice itself, become monstrous in their demand for capital and the dominance it allows. I would add that, unknowingly perhaps, Shakespeare takes a difficult cultural subject and brings it to the fore, asking his audience to grapple with the hospitality of otherizing not just Shylock, or Jews, but of any person. I argue that the highest form of hospitality is dealing generously with a difficult guest. Shylock, as Shakespeare writes him, is a difficult guest in Venice, and as Antonio’s lender, a difficult host as well.
As You Like It, Artificial Exile, and Nature’s Hospitality

I want to discuss a play that has not been discussed at length with regard to hospitality in order to attempt such an exploration and provide something that may have been overlooked. Additionally, As You Like It is gratifying for me as a reader in that it is the only play I work with that has a near total reconciliation of community by play’s end. My arguments all center on how power makes strangers of community members. In AYL, Oliver, an eldest son, denies his younger brother Orlando a good education, angering Orlando, leading to his exile. Duke Frederick has exiled Duke Senior, and then later Rosalind, Duke Senior’s daughter. Shocked at her closest friend Rosalind’s exile, Celia, Duke Frederick’s daughter chooses to exile herself on ethical grounds. Oliver and Duke Frederick perform inhospitality, exile insiders, and create strangers to court by casting three community members out into the forest. Shakespeare concerns himself with hospitality in the text by choosing to write his characters’ inhabitation of spaces according to the ritual of the way guests and hosts inhabit those spaces of exchange. Traditions of spaces, speech patterns, and cultural mores inform the ways each character behaves and speaks, and how groups behave and speak in each other’s presence, as we would expect. However, I am arguing that a positive ethical hermeneutic governs the plays, and not just the ones I choose here. I ground this historically as a framework, “Tudor-Stuart hospitality,” but discuss it as specific to Shakespeare. While no one set of transcribed rules governs in these four plays, Tudor-Stuart cultural normativity abounds, and that culture is inherited from Roman culture, specifically Latinate textuality and political structures. I define this cultural inheritance as hospitable expectation, and when this expectation is thwarted, there is communal fissure and dissolution. AYL fractures communities by breaking the hospitable expectations, but then Shakespeare reconciles them. Because of the reconciliation, this play is called a ‘comedy.’ Shakespeare gives
us enmity, death threats, exile, and hunger before we can laugh, though. These problems are fascinating to explore in the plays, where they occur to other people, and that is the great value of staging a play, or reading one for that matter. Paul Kottman is interested, too, in the plays’ conflicts between characters, claiming,

> It is practically a critical truism, with good reason, to note that throughout his career Shakespeare stages forms of betrayal, infidelity, usurpations, and perfidy of all sorts. In fact this truism may serve to illustrate the manner in which Shakespeare reveals inherited forms of social life not only in crisis but also in radical dissolution. For, like all tragic deeds, acts of betrayal—whether of individuals or of collectives—lay bare, and threaten to devalue, the worth of the social bonds and attachments that they tear asunder (Kottman 13).

“Social bonds and attachments that they tear asunder,” could be the secondary title for this play—*As You Like It, or Social Bonds and Attachments Torn Asunder*. This tearing is the rending of the fabric of hospitable society, and it happens in several key moments that I will discuss. *AYL* is the only play I deal with that shows every tear healed, and all reconciled, save for Duke Frederick, who gives away all, but leaves without a word. Though it may not be entirely realistic, it is a positive comedic drama in the way it suggests that those that we push out before long may return to us.

**Why *As You Like It***?

Critics have wrestled with how Shakespeare toyed with the ideas of hospitality to the stranger, the traveler, the immigrant, and all manner of others in other plays. These treatments are interesting to someone concerned with the ethics of hospitality. When a Moor becomes a prominent leader by virtue of meritorious service in *Othello*, only to be brought down by the
perception of non-acceptance, by way of a dominant and impossibly-omniscient instigator (Iago), ethical lines are crossed. Leslie Fiedler laid the groundwork for the idea of the otherizing of the woman, the Jew, the Moor, and the New World savage in *The Stranger in Shakespeare.* In it, Fiedler gives examples of where othering has been done before Fiedler shows the moral wrongs done by the state to the others, but here again, these were others in the first instance. The only connection I can claim here to Fiedler is to the “woman as stranger,” though my argument is more about political abuse of hospitality and less because of womanhood in its own right. What I will do, however, is take up the problem of the entrenched insider, the full member of community who has a stable place, who is then cast into exile by a *force inhospitalière* (an inhospitable force). In the case of *As You Like It*, Duke Frederick, the ruler, the hospodar, the chief host, first citizen, indeed princeps, casts out Rosalind, because her father has been banished, ostensibly, but when we read closely, we find that it is actually because she is more beloved of the people in the mind of Duke Frederick than his own daughter Celia. It is virtue that marks Rosalind as a person deserving of praise from the people. Paul Kottman speaks of the problem of social transgression, and its effects:

…Shakespeare increasingly challenges us to consider acts of betrayal not simply in light of the social values and normative ethics they might bring to light. Rather, betrayal and misdeeds in these dramas compel reflection on the inadequacy of our inherited ways of making sense of our shared words and deeds and of responding meaningfully to transgression (P. A. Kottman 14).

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37 For more on “princeps,” the principal citizen (first citizen), as the one who sets the stage of hospitable action for the state, see Smith: One enlightening description reads: “Princps (Gk. ἡγεμών: Mon. Anc. Gr. 7.9, ἔμοι ἡγεμόνος), the title of courtesy customarily given to the Roman emperors of the first century, and less commonly to those of the second and third.” The use of the term, as one which conveniently expressed the pre-eminence of a single citizen, was familiar to the writers of the later Republic (W. Smith).
Celia instantly recognizes this transgression, and gives up all allegiance to her father, Duke Frederick. She understands the “social values and normative ethics” already at work in her father’s court, and sees his words and behavior as wrong, and as breach of hospitality. She states her ethical case for hospitable expectation:

I did not then entreat to have her stay.

It was your pleasure, and your own remorse.

I was too young that time to value her,

But now I know her. If she be a traitor,

Why, so am I (1.3.63-7).

Celia sees the problem, and expected better. I will make the point that Celia does not deny Rosalind is a traitor. Celia merely says, “If she be a traitor, / Why, so am I.” Celia’s implicit claim here is that to object to injustice and inhospitality is traitorous in her father’s evil dukedom. She now chooses to act, though at great personal and material loss. She chooses to empathize with Rosalind’s state, and becomes a sojourner in the way of the exile by exiling herself, much as Adam, an aged servant, has done for Orlando.

Duke Frederick is afraid of Rosalind’s power, and says as much to his daughter Celia.

She is too subtle for thee, and her smoothness,

Her very silence, and her patience

Speak to the people, and they pity her (1.3.72-74).

The people are the community, and in their voice is a kind of justice. At the very least, “they pity her,” is Duke Frederick’s admission to his daughter that grumblings of pity may turn to revolt should Rosalind not be silenced or exiled. Vox populi, vox dei (<L. “The voice of the people is
the voice of God”

and here in this communal sentiment there is undeniable power. Communal power causes Duke Frederick to fear for his own daughter’s station. He feels that the virtuous Rosalind will overshadow his daughter’s future, subsuming his daughter’s power. It seems that virtue is a good thing, unless another has it in high degree, wherein it may cause the people to imbue Rosalind with their allegiance. It seems clear that Duke Frederick understands that the people value virtue. Virtue must include positive hospitable performance, and hospitable performance is the pathway to sustained power, though in the short term power may be gained, as in the case of Duke Frederick. He knows this pathway, and he intently advises his daughter Celia about it.

I mentioned earlier that Early Modern England was influenced by what by then were centuries-past Roman customs. Freyja Cox Jensen writes of the pervasiveness of Roman culture in Early Modern England:

The role of ancient Rome in the learning and intellectual life of early modern England should not be understated. A vital, classical literary culture was encouraged by the educational practices learned in boyhood: the ‘Roman’ frame of mind which their early schooling engendered in young men fostered intellectual habits that became ingrained in the higher ranks of society, as latinate learning pervaded both explicitly historical literature and a far broader range of reading material. Furthermore, the prevalence of Roman history in numerous and varied kinds of printed texts meant that ideas about the ending of the republic and Rome’s transition to an imperial form of monarchy reached a

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38 See Boas, who notes, “The usual dictionaries of quotations attribute the proverb ‘Vox populi vox Dei’ to Alcuin [the Saxon] though he himself says it was current in his time, the late eighth century. In any event, no one has found an earlier occurrence of it. We now give in translation the entire text in which it appears, in a letter to Charlemagne. It is dated, according to its latest editor, Dümmler, about 798.” I use this to mean to community speaks and should be respected, but Alcuin used it quite differently when writing to Charlemagne, saying in essence that the people are to be led, not followed, and that the voice of the people is not necessarily the voice of God.
wider audience than merely those men who had attended the grammar schools and
universities (Jensen 215).

The pervasiveness of Roman culture brings old Rome to bear upon the minds of many in Tudor-
Stuart culture, and the behavioral performance that first citizen-ruler has upon all cannot be
denied. For Duke Frederick, his absolutist banishment of Duke Senior, which readers can only
imagine, and banishment of Rosalind, which we can read explicitly, are in perfect keeping with a
Caesar, or even of a Nero.

I want to examine the way Duke Frederick’s political ideology interferes with hospitable
behavior. David J. Gauthier cites Levinas as being wary of politics, and contrasts it with ethics,
writing,

On the one hand, Levinas is suspicious of political thought and practice. On the other
hand, Levinas calls for a politics that is fundamentally ethical in character. As it turns out,
this contradiction renders problematic the hospitality ethic that propels the movement
from anarchy to justice. As described by Levinas, hospitality operates in the two distinct
realms: the ethical and the political. In the ethical realm, the self is morally obligated to
welcome the stranger into the private space of the home (Gauthier 159).

It is not a leap to suggest that Gauthier’s affirmation of “the two distinct realms” are the realms
of Duke Frederick’s court and Duke Senior’s welcoming Arden. The power necessary to
maintain Duke Frederick’s court relies on the politics of exiling perceived enemies under penalty
of death, as in the case of Rosalind, where Duke Frederick explicitly tells his niece,

You, cousin
Within these ten days if that thou beest found
So near our public court as twenty miles,
Thou diest for it (1.3.36-38).

This is a “politics that is fundamentally [not] ethical in character,” a direct opposite from Levinas’ proposition. The ethical character is easily seen in Duke Senior’s politics, which are simply the politics of finding food, clothing, and shelter for those that have followed him into the forest of Arden. Duke Senior has come to this green world with little else save the companionship of those loyal friends who have followed him there. As Orlando and Rosalind have both been threatened upon pain of death to flee in exile, one can assume that Duke Frederick threatened Duke Senior with the same. Nancy E. Wright and A. R. Buck write in their chapter, “Cast out of Eden: Property and Inheritance in Shakespearean Drama,” that “self-interest undermines social relationships,” and this self-interest is inhospitable:

…the in As You Like It, self-interest undermines social relationships. Frederick, the younger brother in a noble family, usurps its dukedom from the legitimate heir, Duke Senior, and Oliver, the eldest brother in a gentry family, not only neglects his responsibilities to Orlando, his youngest brother, but also threatens his life…characters flee from the city and the court to find protection from unruliness in secluded retreats (73).

Duke Frederick and Oliver, the exilers, are most assuredly self-interested, undermining the “social relationships” Wright and Buck describe. By play’s end, all are forgiven, brought back (somewhat miraculously in this early comedy), and so though we are not faced with Lear’s problem of exile and death at the hands of his daughters Goneril and Regan, Shakespeare presents to his audience a real problem. What are the solutions for community when radical self-interest refuses to negotiate, but instead chooses to send away those insiders who find themselves at odds with power’s inhospitality?
Home, and its Importance

As I said earlier, the banishment is a hospitable problem, of making an outsider out of what was an insider. Duke Frederick casts Rosalind out under pain of death. She does not feel the same way about leaving home as Celia must, though, for it is Rosalind’s father, Duke Senior, who has already been banished to Arden, and it is her pull of heart to want to follow her father. Her father is more “home” than the court of an inhospitable host. Duke Frederick changes Rosalind’s home in an instant, and so she sets off to find hospitality elsewhere. Duke Frederick’s decree to banish Rosalind is similar to what occurs when Oliver banishes Orlando. Duke Frederick warns Rosalind that if she “beest found / So near our public court as twenty miles, / Thou diest for it” (1.3.37-9). To be banished may not be as horrible as being executed, yet it is to exist away from the comfort of the known, and fear of the unknown is high on the list of human dreads. Gauthier equates home with self-identity, and claims that home defines what it means to have a self:

The home enables the self to recollect itself because it welcomes it into its confines. By extending an original welcome to the self, the home enables it to dwell in the world…In the fact that the act of dwelling [is] an earlier extension of hospitality, one can say that the dweller is, first and foremost, a guest. The host’s uncertain identity as host, an ambiguity mirrored in the French term hôte, which connotes both host and guest, is reflected in the various courses of action that are available to the self once it has achieved refuge in the home (Gauthier 161-62).

Gauthier’s clever use of the French is useful in a cultural look at textuality taking place in the Ardennes, what with Shakespeare’s moving the French home to his local “Arden.” Throughout
my examination, the exile is forced to leave home, and in so doing, loses their own hosting
domain and their guesthood in their own home. Identity is lost in the process.

The Orlando plot is similar to Rosalind’s, and Adam, an aged servant who chooses to
follow Orlando into exile, in a telling description of the lack of hospitality present in this society,
laments to Orlando:

Know you not, master, to some kind of men
Their graces serve them but as enemies?
No more do yours. Your virtues, gentle master,
Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.
O, what a world is this, when what is comely
Envenoms him that bears it (2.3.10-15)

Adam points to the reality of the lack of performed hospitality that “some kind of men” practice.
If there be any “graces” within them, they are but diametrically against their true evil natures,
thus serving only as “enemies” to their true natures. However, Adam points out to Orlando that
he is different, that his “virtues” [read Aristotelian virtues], are the classical and good ones that
engender communal cohesion, and that in this present state, in a community influenced by Duke
Frederick, these virtues are like a kind of poison. Good traits in Orlando, Adam perceives quite
wisely, are self-destructive to a good citizen when the good citizen exists in an inhospitable state.

True to Adam’s earlier description of his “virtues,” Orlando briefly considers begging or
rogueing, but stops himself: he determines to hold himself to a higher ethical standard of
existence even though he himself has been ill used. Orlando’s fealty to Adam is directly due to
Adam’s pledge to follow Orlando earlier. Adam, echoing Celia’s earlier promise to Rosalind,
tells Orlando, “…Let me go with you, / I’ll do the service of a younger man / In all your business
and necessities” (2.3.55,56). Orlando, grateful for the older man’s loyalty, and truly in need of aid himself, responds,

O good old man, how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed!
Thou art not for the fashion of these times,
Where none will sweat but for promotion,…
But come thy ways. We’ll go along together,
And ere we have thy youthful wages spent,
We’ll light upon some settled low content (2.3.57-62, 67-69).

Orlando realizes that even in his current society (400 years ago for readers), hospitable performance is fallen to such low degree that Adam shines like a diamond of virtue. Now, to be fair, the state of hospitality may not have been any better in the days of say, Aristotle, but here is the trope that the ‘good old days’ were far preferable to now. Somehow hospitality is always performed better in an imagined past that the present community has forgotten. Orlando throws in with Adam, and the two resolve to travel along, a hospitable micro-society together.

Virtue plays a role in the character of the women, however, that readers will not find with Orlando’s character. Duke Frederick (who for all his inhospitable action recognizes good traits when he sees them) describes Rosalind’s, “silence and her patience,” that seems reserved for her alone as a feminine agent, holding less power in the community. There is a marked difference in Orlando’s raging at his eldest brother Oliver and Rosalind’s meek discussion with Duke Frederick, precipitating her banishment. The result of both encounters is the same exile, but it must be made clear that neither Rosalind (daughter of Duke Senior), and Celia (daughter of Duke
Frederick do not have agency to act as forcefully as does Orlando. At the end of act I, scene ii, Orlando asks Le Beau which of the two women was Duke Frederick’s daughter. Le Beau replies, “Neither his daughter, if we judge by manners—,” indicating that due to hospitable performance, the Duke has banished both his daughter Celia and Celia’s proxy, Rosalind, from inhabiting the space of feminine ward of the court, inheritor of name, and benefactress of material hospitality. The reason this banishment is inhospitable is found in the next few lines as Le Beau says of Rosalind:

The other is daughter to the banished Duke,
And here detained by her usurping uncle
To keep his daughter company, whose loves
Are dearer than the natural bond of sisters.
But I can tell you that of late this Duke
Hath ta’en displeasure ’gainst his gentle niece,
Grounded upon no other argument

**But that the people praise her for her virtues**
And pity her for her good father’s sake.
And, on my life, his malice ’gainst the lady
Will suddenly break forth. Sir, fare you well.
Hereafter, in a better world than this,
I shall desire more love and knowledge of you (1.2.240-52).

Instead of Duke Frederick honoring Rosalind’s virtue, he exiles her because, “the people praise her” for it. Le Beau longs for an imagined “better world than this,” and perhaps he is referring to
heaven, but he does not explicitly say that. Le Beau may simply be referring to a world in which persons with power, such as Duke Frederick, perform hospitality.

Rosalind has lost her father, Duke Senior, to banishment (for reasons of power we imagine). We are given this news in a by-the-by fashion by no less than the mighty Charles, Duke Frederick’s wrestler, in 1.1.86-90:

There’s no news at the court, sir, but the old news: that is, the old Duke is banished by his younger brother, the new Duke, and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new Duke; therefore he gives them good leave to wander.

Oliver hears this of Charles, and wonders aloud if Rosalind has been banished with her father, Duke Senior. It is interesting that Oliver, having only recently banished his younger brother Orlando and his servant Adam, is hearing the inhospitable agency performed by another, his doppelganger, Duke Frederick. Paul Kottman discusses from the point of view of social bonds in the plays, saying,

Shakespeare’s dramas, I argue, compel us to regard the social bonds on which we depend for the meaning and worth of our lives together as being, in spite of that total dependence, fully dissolvable. The plays therefore throw into question the very inheritability, or transmissibility, of human sociality (Kottman 4).

Duke Frederick is the personification of inhospitality in this play because he dissolves social bonds, or attempts to. Kottman’s argument that persons are totally dependent is useful here, as it is Duke Frederick that cannot see this dependence. He imagines, in his arrogance, that his power enables him to control social bonds, beginning with his banishment of Duke Senior. As for
Derrida’s argument about absolute hospitality, such becomes a null set without social bonds, which make up strong community. Duke Senior, the ultimate hospitable host, accepts all strangers in his court of nature, and indeed seems in no hurry to return to his former court from which he was exiled. He never once speaks of it, nor does anyone else. In fact, Shakespeare never shows him at court. It is as if he prefers to remain for a time in this pastoral and welcoming space a bit longer, allowing the recent trouble back in Duke Frederick’s former court to dissipate. Exiles, strangers, and travelers have found welcome and refuge here (Rosalind and Celia, Orlando and Adam). They are offered material comfort for their material bodies and kind words for their troubled minds. Duke Senior hosts his guests, fostering phenomena of performing human value as only caring for the other can.

To posit absolute Derridean hospitality, and then to show evidence of it, is in fact impossible in the plays. I argue that the closest we may come to it is the true hospitality shown by someone who has lost nearly everything: Duke Senior. Only Duke Senior knows what it has been like to command a dukedom, and then to only command forest creatures, to have slept upon silk pillows, and now to only sleep on dried leaves of the forest bed. Duke Senior gives because he has lost, not in spite of the fact of loss. “As a virtual synonym for hospitality in Shakespeare’s plays, the word *entertainment* can signify anything from the grand reception of a king to the modest feeding of a single visitor at a table in the forest, as in the banished duke’s ‘entertainment’ of Oliver near the end of *As You Like It* (4.3.141-42)” (Heffernan 140). This single visitor in the forest, Orlando, is welcomed by Duke Senior. It is the same reception, the same acceptance of another that binds all hospital action together. Every good host knows that to perform acceptance of another is foundational in the performance of hospitality in service of community.
In my first chapter, I introduced the term hospodar as a ruler of a political area responsible for offering hospitality to the community. In *As You Like It*, there are two such hospodars: Duke Frederick, an example of inhospitality, and Duke Senior, the embodiment of Derrida’s absolute hospitality, himself the banished host of the Forest of Arden, a figure of gentleness, about whom James A. W. Heffernan writes,

…the banished duke of *As You Like It* exemplifies hospitality at its most disarmingly kind. Near the end of act 2, when the famished Orlando discovers the duke and his followers seated around a table of fruit in the Forest of Arden, he draws his sword…But the duke’s kindness instantly subdues him…This victory of gentleness over aggression shapes the whole play (Heffernan 146).

Duke Senior, more than any other character in the play, is hospitable enough in spite of his circumstances, that he becomes the closest thing to Derridean absolute hospitality of any character in any of the four plays I examine. He gives without condition, accepts without reservation, and welcomes all without question.

James Kuzner, author of some brilliant work in the politics of the self in literature, notes, in his chapter “Theater of Hospitality,” part of his collaboration with Julia Reinhard Lupton in *Shakespeare and Hospitality: Ethics, Politics, and Exchange*,

Without question, the feigned, hedged hospitality of *As You Like It* is unlike the radical, infinite hospitality that, as I point out later, fascinates Derrida: a total, unconditional, dangerous openness in advance of any other. Readers have long acknowledged that

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39 Derrida’s much cited “absolute hospitality” is discussed in detail in Judith Still’s valuable *Derrida and Hospitality: Theory and Practice*.

40 I am using the *Folio’s* spelling, “Arden,” to foreground my argument in the English pastoral, though my text throughout is from the Norton, which uses the Fr. “Ardennes.”
Arden’s dangers distance it from Arcadia, yet the forest is commodious and comic enough that infinite hospitality appears there only to disappear, as risk dissolves in fellow feeling. Arden calls for a hospitality that, in its performativity, is of a more quotidian order than that imagined by Derrida. All the same, this ordinary, finite hospitality helps us to think through a problem of political life and of everyday living: of how to be hospitable when we don’t mean it, when the best we can do is play along (Kuzner 157-58).

Kuzner critiques the hospitality in the play, and illuminates several key things: 1) that Derrida’s idea is not at all what Shakespeare had in mind, for reasons I will tease out later, 2) that Arden is a manufactured Nature, though more natural than life at Duke Frederick’s court, and 3) that the hospitality performed in Arden works well in a society razed by political will-to-power, though short, seemingly, of Kuzner’s Hospitable Ideal, neither practical nor possible in the real world, despite Derrida’s claim. Further, Kuzner’s “when we don’t mean it” seems an unreliable indicator at best: no one can judge another’s true motivation, nor can we objectively judge our own. Feelings are mercurial and ungaugeable. We only have the text of *As You Like It*, the characters’ words, and an intuition as to what they may mean in a given situation with other characters.

Kuzner, focusing on how “the fantasies that others have about themselves—can be virtue,” performs a reading of Orlando barging in to interrupt Duke Senior and his retinue:

In act 2, scene 7, Duke Senior, Jaques, and some lords are gathered together for fellowship when Orlando, desperate to find food for Adam, bursts upon the scene sword in hand. What stands out most to me in the exchange that follows is the composure, even the calm with which the ducal company receives the armed man. Neither Jaques nor
Duke Senior, for instance, register any distress; when Orlando commands them to ‘eat no more’ (2.7.88), Jaques, ever a stickler, points out that he in fact has not eaten at all, while the Duke inquires coolly as to whether distress or just poor breeding accounts for Orlando’s boldness. When their intruder indicates that it is the former, the Duke observes that ‘[y]our gentleness shall force / More than your force move us to gentleness’ (2.7.101-101), but for now Orlando would rather just force with force: ‘I almost die for food,’ he says, ‘and let me have it’ (2.7.103).

Kuzner argues that in this scene, Duke Senior is Derridean in his approach to Orlando’s force, approaching, and perhaps even embodying Derrida’s concept of Absolute Hospitality. However, I posit that it is not at all that the Duke is absolutely hospitable, but that he has lost so much of his former self, his titles, possessions, connection with a beloved daughter, and power to rule, that he no longer cares whether Orlando takes any little the Duke has left. Nevertheless, gentleness is the rule in Arden, and all resolves itself shortly when Orlando realizes these are hospitable souls that mean him more good than harm.

Kuzner further states that “Orlando can behave as gently and as deferentially as he wishes, but as far as the Duke’s hospitality goes there is little difference between commanding and being commanded, being Duke Senior and being Orlando,” which is an interesting philosophical identity to ponder, and a frightening one. Simply existing is enough to cause one’s being cast out of community. Orlando’s selfhood is not clear from the beginning in the sense that he feels a lack of power inside himself: he is the powerless to Oliver’s power, the lesser to Oliver’s greater. Likewise, Duke Senior is the lesser to Duke Frederick’s greater. Both relationships function on a kind of temporal power, but ethically Oliver and especially Duke Senior are the greater characters. In the short term, then, brute force, threats, and exile seem to
work. By the play’s close, ethical hospitality restores justice. Duke Senior is able to empathize with Orlando (who rushes in, sword drawn, yelling demands), because he is able to instantly recognize the fear and desperation that comes with loss of home and exile. Duke Senior, because of this, is truly hospitable, but not absolutely hospitable: he would not allow Orlando to run him through just to prove a point about being a great host. Duke Senior knows, after all, that he is surrounded by his merry men, themselves more than practiced with swords, daggers, cudgels, and who kill forest game frequently (else they would all have starved to death long ago). These forest guardians surround Duke Senior. He is a benevolent father of Arden, not a wilting flower, and not absolutely bent on power, as Duke Frederick seems to be. He is the former Duke after all, still retaining significant social bonds and social power, who finds himself transformed into a forest host to an entire community of exiles who have followed him there.

Warren Staebler, who compares these characters’ actions with the ethics of Derrida, writes, “After [Orlando] has learned from Adam that Oliver is planning to murder him and has agreed to flee, even though he has not the remotest idea of how he will sustain himself, he pledges himself never to beg or rob humanity in order to do it; he is ready rather to subject himself to the malice of his bloody brother” (Staebler 96). Orlando seems to be performing Derrida’s style of absolute hospitality even at the expense of himself, and his own life. I refer to hospitality that results in favorable outcome for the characters as ‘comedy,’ in the Shakespearean sense, but it is not at all comic. It may be a sad fact of hospitality that it is a risky endeavor so many times ending in tragedy, as we shall see in the next chapter.

In AYL, Shakespeare inhabits the problem of the social stranger, the exiled member of community. Duke Frederick, the newly seated ruler of the land, is princeps, and as such, sets the tone for all action in the text. Others seem to think as Duke Frederick thinks, and imagine
themselves free to act as Duke Frederick would act. Therefore, the ones holding less power react, such as Orlando, recently banished from his brother’s house, telling Rosalind just before he wrestles,

…But let your fair eyes and gentle
wishes go with me to my trial, wherein if I be failed, there is
but one shamed that was never gracious, if killed, but one
dead that is willing to be so. I shall do my friends no wrong, for
I have none to lament me; the world no injury, for in it I have
nothing. Only in the world I fill up a place which may be better
supplied when I have made it empty (1.2.154-60).

Orlando speaks like Hamlet here, full of emptiness, and tragedy. He claims he was “never gracious,” never showing in hospitable manners. If it is true what Orlando says, that he fills a place better supplied by another, perhaps he is right: he is not fulfilling the hospitable function he needs to perform, and, therefore, must disappear, or perhaps alter his performance in the world, and appear to be something else. Paul Kottman argues about the “strengths and limitations of various forms of social life,” saying that,

Indeed, such crises come to form the dramatic horizons against which Shakespeare increasingly challenges his audience, as if to see whether they will be, or can be, moved by what they see. If we consider that theories of tragic representation from Aristotle to Hegel (and beyond) teach us to regard dramatic representations as portrayals of a series of actions that expose the strengths and limitations of various forms of social life, portrayals offered to an audience whose affective response to the drama is by the same token inseparable from a critical reflection on the social stakes of the actions that they
represent to themselves, then the radical nature of Shakespeare’s dramatic strategy becomes apparent. For Shakespeare not only challenges his audience to consider the fates of protagonists whose lives depend on political, familial, or economic bonds that are then put into crisis; his plays also dare us, I argue, to respond to predicaments in which the transmission of any inheritable sociality is radically imperiled (Kottman 4).

Orlando’s performance, a relative act, is what accounts for his state in the world. Orlando accepts an estrangement, and is perfectly willing to inhabit estrangement, which is, after all, to be a stranger. Orlando mentions doing “the world no injury,” conscious that it is a reality of action and inaction, that he performs actions to injure or heal the world. Shakespeare writes a moment in AYL of the consciousness of hospitable performance, and its effects on the world. Kottman’s claim that “lives depend on political, familial, or economic bonds” fits perfectly here with every conflict not only for Orlando, but also for Rosalind, Celia, Adam, Corin, and the earliest exile in the play, Duke Senior and his retinue.

Thus far as readers of AYL, pastoral life is hospitable, and courtly life inhospitable, that provides a stable structure of behaviors for the bulk of the play. Duke Senior invokes the green world of fairest hospitality and natural textuality:

Now, my co-mates and brother in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,
The seasons’ difference, as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter’s wind,
Which when it bites and blows upon my body
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say
‘This is no flattery. These are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.’
Sweet are the uses of adversity
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything (2.1.1-17).

Duke Senior is explaining that all real power comes not from artifice, but from nature. Nature is true power. Courtly life is artifice, an imitation of nature, an imitation of real power. All else is merely proxy-power, a poor substitute for nature’s true power. Court is the proxy for nature, and its politics a substitute for the workings of nature. The buildings at court are only sad imitations of the reality of the trees and mountains of the pastoral world. After all, the pastoral is the slower and more contemplative, lending its pace and time, allowing for the space that hospitality requires in which to be performed. Courtly life, by contrast, is busy, full of intrigues, full of jealousies, and does not allow the same languid space and time for adequate hospitable gesturing. 

As You Like It reveals moments of both arenas from the very beginning, in fact, before the beginning. Immediately, we see even in the list of characters, that Duke Senior is “living in banishment.” Why is he in banishment? Shakespeare announces this problem of community which we need to address before we as readers can get to the first line of the text in earnest. I will
attempt to show evidence of the ways failures of hospitality lead to banishment, exile, and strangerhood, and the ways that hospitality brings reconciliation.

Shakespeare plays with several contrivances in *As You Like It*, some of which he will employ in the later plays. Shakespeare introduces four doubles in this play, whom he then sets against each other: the two Dukes, Senior and Frederick, contrast in speech and hospitable behavior; two brothers vie for social and political power and position, two women swear a solemn pledge to each other to protect and defend each other in the forest of Arden as exiles, and the two men created by the women in their exilic identity create a fourth doubling, of which only the women and the audience are aware. Ironically, this dissembling they undertake to protect themselves from the others, in this case, ‘other’ men. For, in this world women are not safe in the pastoral realm, at least in their imagination. Rosalind and Celia (disguised as Ganymede and Aliena) Shakespeare pits the courtly world versus the pastoral world in another device. *As You Like It* creates a problem of courtly-public versus pastoral-private. The women disguise themselves as men because they imagine the pastoral world, in the forest of Arden, to be full of unknown men with unknown motivations, a private world wherein what is done to them cannot be known because it is not a public space.

I want to correlate the pairings of exiles in this play to make the point about community being absolutely necessary. Duke Frederick banishes Rosalind from court under penalty of death: “You, niece, provide yourself. / If you outstay the time, upon mine honour / And in the greatness of my word, you die” (1.3.81-83). His banishment sets up the biblical trope of the woman who sticks by her friend despite all loss and misfortune. Celia makes a pledge to go with Rosalind into the forest, to relinquish her name and all her inheritance. Giving up one’s name includes shedding all identity, all reception, but also all deception, and all banishment. Celia has erased
the past by erasing her name. Ruth’s virtue is what brings her ultimate reward. Shakespeare’s audience would have been familiar with the story of Ruth, and the community of two it details. The social bond of one woman to another, come what may, is the essence of strong community that I attempt to illustrate again and again. Shakespeare makes Celia, Duke Frederick’s daughter, the one who pledges fealty to Rosalind, the banished duke’s daughter, perhaps out of a feeling of guilt for what her father (Duke Frederick) had done. These endearing and personal moments of interaction show hospitality from one person to another. For Orlando, Adam pledges fealty and loyalty in hospitable fashion as a pledged companion and aid. Both Celia, in her commitment to Rosalind, and Adam in his promise to Orlando are choices to show hospitality at great cost. Both are in stark contrast to the actions of Duke Frederick, who chooses to dissolve community rather than strengthen it.

Shakespeare’s text troubles us with the age-old filial rivalry, another old biblical trope. First, and not shown in the play, Duke Frederick banishes his brother Duke Senior from court. Second, act one scene one shows Orlando opening the play by complaining to Adam, a former servant of his father, about being ill-used by his brother Oliver. It is worth mentioning that Shakespeare is fond of doubling beginning letters in names, then driving a characteristic wedge to distance the two personalities from each other. As I just mentioned with similarities to the biblical Ruth, Orlando and Oliver bear similarities with the Cain and Abel story in *Genesis*. Orlando, angry over his treatment from Oliver, asks for his inheritance from Oliver, and Oliver replies “And what wilt thou do – Beg when it is spent? Well, sir, get you in. I will not long be troubled with you. You shall have some part of your will. I pray you, leave me” (1.1.64). The scene between brothers is part Cain and Abel, part prodigal son, and shows inhospitality’s effects
on community. Oliver becomes like the new Duke, sending the unwanted brother away, creating, as I have said, an outsider of an insider.

**Textual Tyrants and Hospitable Heroes**

As I will show in chapter four, Shakespeare’s trope of the tyrant plays the centerpiece of this banishment component to negative hospitality. The positive idea, of course, is that a host encourages a guest (family, friend, acquaintance) to stay, and not be cast out in a banished state, never to return. In this section, I compare scenes of two exiles, Rosalind from her community, and Orlando from his. The Rosalind exile occurs as Duke Frederick bursts in suddenly in 1.3.33:

> Mistress, dispatch you with your safest haste,
> And get you from our court

These two lines are the casting out, and after Rosalind’s questioning shock, he confirms, then adds the banishment clause:

> Within these ten days if that thou beest found
> So near our public court as twenty miles,
> Thou diest for it (1.3.36-38)

Duke Frederick, circumventing any further punishment for being found near court, immediately pronounces death. He does not allow for any intermediate levels of transgression, just that she dies. He does not even say that he will kill her, or that his agents will do the deed. He simply says, “Thou diest for it,” as if God himself wills the death, and it is to be as a natural occurrence. This rashness on the part of Duke Frederick is a transgression of Nature, for his court is not Nature in the true sense: Duke Frederick’s court is artifice, and as such, artificial Nature. He does not reign from the seat of natural power as is enthroned in Rosalind by virtue of her kindness and her empathy. Rosalind has the power of the people on her side because they see her as good, and
worth supporting and preserving. Further, Duke Frederick’s seat of power is a proxy-nature because it is not pastoral but artificial, his man-made creation that can never quite hold the beauty of the original.

Back at court, Rosalind, protests her innocence to Duke Frederick before her banishment, but Duke Frederick counters,

Thus do all traitors.
If their purgation did consist in words
They are as innocent as grace itself.
Let it suffice thee that I trust thee not (1.3.46-49).

Apparently, Rosalind has impressed Duke Frederick with her logos and pathos, but not her ethos. For mere lack of credibility in the Duke’s eyes, Rosalind’s argument to stay in community is ignored, and he casts her out: that lack of credibility is not due to her, but due to Duke Frederick’s mistrust of her father, Duke Senior, currently living in banishment already. So, Duke Frederick brings a sense of homogeneity to the banished state: daughter with father, and his troubles can end, or so he may imagine. It is the words, though, that make up a significant problem for Duke Frederick, and one he cannot seem to overcome. He cannot argue with her logic, and so to end his problem, he casts Rosalind out of court, out of his community.  

Bakhtin’s “speech genres” are useful in analyzing these types of interactions where hospitality is breached. Different types of language are used in different hospitable situations, and the performance of speech is as important as performance of provision for the guest. Speech is the beginning of materiality in the way that it introduces materiality that is forthcoming such as drink, food, a set table, or simply a comfortable chair. Mikhail Bakhtin’s speech genres are related to the verbal component of the inhabitation ritual: certain words are spoken for the guest and host in certain spaces: welcome at the entrance, gracious complementation at table, courteous dismissal afterwards, reinvitation, and when breach occurs, reconciliation.
Our other pair Orlando and Adam are likewise threatened, and Adam states the seriousness of
Orlando’s situation, that he is to be exiled from life (killed), if he does not make himself a
stranger to the abode, with

…this night he means

To burn the lodging where you use to lie

And you within it. If he fail of that,

He will have other means to cut you off.

I overheard him and his practices.

This is no place, this house is but a butchery.

Abhor it, fear it, do not enter it (2.3.23-29).

The ruler decrees punitively in one type of speech genre (Duke Frederick, Oliver). Bakhtin
writes

“…utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through
their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical,
phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all through their
compositional structure. All three of these aspects—thematic content, style, and
compositional structure—are inseparably linked to the whole of the utterance and are
equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication.
Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is
used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances. These we may call
speech genres (Bakhtin 1).

The banished reply in another type of speech genre, Orlando and Rosalind by force, Celia by
choice, and Adam by choice in part, though Oliver does exclaim, “Get you with him, you old
dog” (1.1.69). All the exiles in the play show the reactive speech that both accepts and does not accept the exile, but hopes for a brighter future in another place, among another community. The “thematic content, style, and compositional structure” Bakhtin describes are here in the text of the play. Oliver has made Orlando’s home no space in which he is allowed to exist with hospitable treatment.

As I shall take up in the next chapter concerning the lack of hospitable domicile, Orlando feels the weight of the hospitable vacuum as Adam, a former servant of Orlando’s late father, tells him not to come in:

What, wouldst thou have me go and beg my food, 
Or with a base and boisterous sword enforce 
A thievish living on the common road? 
This I must do, or know not what to do. 
Yet this I will not do, do how I can (2.3.32-36)

Adam, who follows the banished Orlando to assist him as he travels, is, by 2.5, worn beyond his ability to travel farther, and Orlando, true to his spoken bond, tells him,

…If this uncouth 
forest yield anything savage I will either be food for it or bring it for food to thee. Thy conceit is nearer death than thy powers. 
For my sake be comfortable. Hold death awhile at the arm’s end. I will here be with thee presently, and if I bring thee not something to eat, I will give thee leave to die. But if thou diest before I come, thou art a mocker of my labour. Well said. Thou lookest cheerily, and I’ll be with thee quickly. Yet thou liest in
the bleak air. Come, I will bear thee to some shelter, and thou
 shalt not die for lack of a dinner if there live anything in this
desert… (2.6.6-14).

Orlando performs hospitality for one who cannot repay him. In actuality, as it is Adam’s money
the pair have spent traveling thus far, it is Orlando who is in Adam’s debt, but, Orlando is
virtuous, and vows to feed Adam somehow, when he could simply abandon him to the forest
were he like others with more courtly ‘virtues.’ AYL is unique in the four plays I examine in the
hospitality shown to those who make bonds of friendship (Orlando and Adam, Rosalind and
Celia, Duke Senior and almost everyone). Ironically, by play’s end, Duke Frederick restores
what he had seized, and exiles himself, disappearing before any apology or restoration can be
had.

In 2.7.126-32, when Duke Senior has calmed Orlando in his forest domain, and offered
Orlando food. Orlando refuses, keeping his vow to Adam, who rests just outside Duke Senior’s
camp, saying,

Then but forbear your food a little while
While, like a doe, I go to find my fawn
And give it food. There is an old poor man
Who after me hath many a weary step
Limped in pure love. Till he be first sufficed,
Oppressed with two weak evils, age and hunger,
I will not touch a bit (2.7.126-32).

Orlando shows a maturation here from his earlier, raging self. He is willing to forget himself in
order to help another, Adam. Orlando shows evidence in the play of the strongest protagonist, the
character who undergoes the greatest transformation. Duke Frederick, yes, has an instant reversal
readers are aware of secondhand, but never see in the character’s own words. Rosalind, Duke
Senior, and Celia all remain relatively stable in their temperaments. Orlando begins this play
arguing with his brother Oliver, and complaining about his ill treatment. By act two, scene seven,
Orlando is a selfless host, willing to go hungry to give gifts of sustenance to his poor servant
Adam.

**Englishing the Arden**

I want to examine another character’s lines to illustrate my claim of natural hospitality as
ethically and poetically superior to Duke Frederick’s inhospitable voice. Corin, an old shepherd,
is a voice of hospitality and poesy as he meets Rosalind (who is disguised as a man, Ganymede,
for protection while travelling. In act one, Rosalind proclaims to Celia, “Alas, what danger will it
be to us, / Maids as we are, to travel forth so far! / Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold”
(1.3.102-04). Rosalind speaks of inhospitality of a sort that highwaymen practice: rape and theft
of maidenhead, and distant and only secondarily, theft of gold. Celia and Rosalind feign
disguises, and become different people. Celia is now “Aliena,” playing on the word “alien,”
which is the root of my discussion of the stranger. Rosalind dresses as a man (Ganymede) to all
the eyes that perceive her, performing the spectacle and phenomenon of maleness, and is a
gendered stranger to her hidden self. The two journey on, and in act two, they encounter Corin.
A humble hospitality is played out when Rosalind and Corin have an exchange, in which
Rosalind says, “I prithee, shepherd, if that love or gold / Can in this desert place buy
entertainment, / Bring us where we may rest ourselves, and feed. / Here’s a young maid with
travel much oppressed, / And faints for succor” (1.4.66-9). Corin responds:

> Fair sir, I pity her,
And wish, for her sake more than for mine own,
My fortunes were more able to relieve her.
But I am shepherd to another man,
And do not shear the fleeces that I graze.
My master is of churlish disposition,
And little recks to find the way to heaven
By doing deeds of hospitality.
Besides, his cot, his flocks, and bounds of feed
Are no on sale, and at our sheepcote not
By reason of his absence there is nothing
That you will feed on. But what is, come see,
And in my voice most welcome shall you be (2.4.70-82).

Corin is the humble-hospitable. He is the embodiment of what it means to offer oneself as sustenance to the other. Therefore, if I can claim to approach Derridean Absolute Hospitality, it is here in Corin (and as I mention later, with Duke Senior). In this scene, Corin realizes that he is the other, empathetically identifying with Rosalind on a one-to-one host-to-guest level, and equates imagined material hospitality with sustenance of the self. Here, hospitality defines itself as the willingness to provide a sustenance that cannot truly be provided, by the attitude of helping with only scant ability to help. Corin says, “…in my voice most welcome shall you be,” indicating that the voice is the only, and perhaps most important reality of hospitality.42

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42 Similar to Corin, the voice of hospitality in *The Odyssey*, Odysseus’ shepherd Eumaeus welcomes him back home, unaware that it is Odysseus to whom he is speaking, unable to provide material hospitality to him, yet welcoming him nevertheless with hope of discovering some way to provide sustenance for what he only knows is a stranger and a traveler. Homer has Odysseus disguised when speaking to Eumaeus, and Shakespeare has Rosalind disguised as she seeks help from Corin.
Hospitable Expectation and The Matter of Manners

I wish to pivot now to discuss manners and types of speech genres that indicate hospitality in several scenes. First, Touchstone, answering Jaques, mentions “Books of manners” in his reply in 5.4.81-88:

O sir, we quarrel in print, by the book, as you have books for good manners. I will name you the degrees. The first, the Retort Courteous; the second, the Quip Modest; the third, the Reply Churlish; the fourth, the Reproof Valiant; the fifth, the Countercheck Quarrelsome; the sixth, the Lie with Circumstance; the seventh, the Lie Direct. All these you may avoid but the Lie Direct; and you may avoid that, too, with an “if”.

Touchstone, with his eight degrees of manners, instantly makes me think of Bakhtin and his six hospitable speech genres. Touchstone is attempting to sound formal to impress Jaques, and speaks of the manners as a sort of guide to hospitable and inhospitable speech. Bakhtin does not refer to them as rules, but describes them as a similar guide of performance of the host for the guest. For his part, Kuzner reads in these scenes those who Shakespeare verbally codifies as possessing incorrect manners, which is simply to behave toward others inhumanely. We need only look to the text for evidence of this. There is, simply put, judgment by manners in this text. Codes of manners rule it and dictate its lines and plotlines. Le Beau, speaking of which is the true daughter to Duke Frederick, says, “Neither his daughter, if we judge by manners—” (I.2.238). Le Beau has made a judgment of Duke Frederick’s behavior toward both of these young women, and it becomes for the reader a chorus’s comment upon Duke Frederick. We, as
readers of this text, only have such minor characters’ clues on which to form our own opinions, and make our reading. Further, Touchstone’s edification of Jaques elucidates quite fully a Shakespearean speech genre. These verbal patterns are found throughout, and dictate the force of the text, how the characters read each other’s realities, and how they choose to respond. The expectation of how to act and react is in these very speech genres, and that is precisely how Shakespeare employs them. Kuzner is fascinated with Corin’s critique of his master,

…the shepherd Corin criticizes his master by remarking that he “is of churlish disposition, / And little recks to find the way to heaven / By doing deeds of hospitality” (2.4.75-77). Whether any character recks to find the way to heaven by doing such deeds, scenes of hostility (between Oliver and Orlando, not to mention between Duke Frederick and just about everyone) create the play’s community conflicts, while scenes of hospitality (when Duke Senior invites Orlando to feast and Rosalind invites Orlando to her cote) enable its resolutions. These scenes, we will see, are highly stylized… (Kuzner 157).

As I mentioned earlier with this scene, conflicts are the problem: no one would study hospitality if conflict did not necessitate the invention of a system of speaking and behavior (hospitality) to avoid and to prevent such conflict. Further, regarding the evidence of the rule of manners in the text, if we but look at the text in another way to compare and contrast the court manners to the manners in the forest of Arden, we can see that there is some difference; Touchstone, a court clown, gets into a heated interchange with Corin, a shepherd, which becomes a central argument between artifice and nature, showing us the relative nature between the court and the forest of Arden. What is acceptable in one, is unacceptable in another. Touchstone and Corin are showing evidence that they hold acceptable ethical codes to be correct and proper within their environs.
**Touchstone:** Truly thou are damned, like an ill roasted egg, all on one side.

**Corin:** For not being at court? Your reason?

**Touchstone:** Why, if thou never wast at court thou never sawest good manners. If thou never sawest good manners, then thy manners must be wicked, and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, Shepherd.

**Corin:** Not a whit, Touchstone. Those that are good manners at the court are as ridiculous in the country as behaviour of the country is most mockable at the court. You told me you salute not at court but you kiss your hands. That courtesy would be uncleanly if courtiers were shepherds (3.2.32-43).

Corin, unfamiliar with Touchstone’s doubletalk, finally admits, in lines 63-66: “Sir, I am a true labourer. I earn that I eat, get that I wear; owe no man hate, envy no man’s happiness; glad other men’s good, content with my harm; and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck.” Corin is of nature, and is part of nature’s process, nature’s hospitality. The text provides us evidence here of cultural difference, a relative difference: what is acceptable in one is unacceptable in another. Yet, in each realm, there is a humanist good: Touchstone and Corin, both argue that following a prescribed process will bring a good result. Yet, outside of their own humanist bailiwick, a relative good emerges between them.

Corin is a hospitable harbinger, charged with the duty of hospitality. We do not ever see his master, nor hear his name. Therefore, we can conclude that Corin himself is the architect of his own morality, a person who defines himself by his choices, by his actions of hospitality. His master away, Corin chooses to receive Ganymede and Aliena (with little or no material comfort:
he makes the choice to take on a further debt of materiality than that of only self-provision, to provide for others.

**Hospitable Phenomenon: The Performance of Human Value**

I mentioned phenomenology in early chapters, and now want to argue through that lens about *AYL*. Like the other plays, the intent of an individual cannot be known, so speech genres and actions are the only evidence available, making the performance of hospitality all the more important. Kevin Curran and James Kearney imply that we cannot know the actual intentions of persons by what they seem to be (phenomena). In their article, “Shakespeare and Phenomenology,” they make the claim,

> If phenomenology as a philosophical school can be broadly characterized as the study of sense experience from the first-person point of view, then historical phenomenology can be characterized, more narrowly, as the study of sense experience during a specific historical past. There are two important premises at work in historical phenomenology. First, that feeling and sensing have a history. The way we feel sad is different from the way Shakespeare felt sad; the way we smell perfume is different from the way Queen Elizabeth smelled perfume. This is because the two experiences occur in distinct cultural, institutional, and discursive contexts (Curran & Kearney 354).

We cannot, as Curran and Kearney discuss, ever be in the historical past. So then, we can make inquiries and speculate upon them. Philosophically, then, hospitality is an exchange of behavior, the performance of human value by persons wishing to exchange show for goods, fealty, loyalty, in any combination and in any direction. I am leaning, however, on the idea of ethical performance in order to strengthen community by showing the guest that they are valuable to the community.
Hosts perform for guests, guests perform for hosts, hosts may perform for each other, and likewise guests may do the same. Persons desiring investiture, or vestment in power may practice hospitality to first open the door to negotiations of power in an attempt to create a memory in the guest’s mind to statistically better the odds of future reciprocity. This exchange model is not necessarily inhospitable or unethical, but simply not the highest form that I argue is needed by the community. If the exchange model is the only hospitality performed, then the self is the object, not the community. This “performance of value” is a tricky claim to make theoretically: Performance assumes relativity in the simplest sense: Alter performance, and alter outcome. However, the complication arises when I claim that the will-to-perform is driven by interest in the other: interest in the other’s welfare assumes a humanism, a valuing of the human being on some level. Self-interest may indeed drive many such performances, but that is not the true hospitality about which I am arguing. Self-interest as an end goal in itself is, in short, inhospitality. The opposite of self-interest is other-interest. One of the most important virtues of the plays, and of the ancient world, is offering hospitality to the stranger. Heffernan writes of the rights of strangers in view of approaching others’ homes. Orlando is the stranger who approaches Duke Senior’s home, and finds himself fully accepted. Heffernan tells the story of Aeneas, saying,

When Aeneas and his men are blown off course by ferocious winds in the first book of the Aeneid, they are dumbfounded to be denied “hospitio…harenae,” the right to land on the beach. This is the right that Immanuel Kant envisioned when he proposed the law of universal hospitality, meaning “the right of a stranger not to be treated as an enemy when he arrives in the land of another” (Heffernan 7).
By contrast, Orlando is immediately accepted into Duke Senior’s Arden camp with open arms though Orlando, in his desperation and fear bears arms against a perceived foe at first, as they are in the play notes, “like outlaws.” The scene is perhaps the most comic in the play, and involves the melancholy and brooding Jaques, with a comedic rapier wit. Duke Frederick’s gentle manner in welcoming Orlando is pure hospitality. As the Duke responds kindly to Orlando’s sword, it is perhaps, after all, Derridean absolute hospitality. Comically for a hospitable analysis dealing with a meal, a host (Duke Frederick), and guests, namely Jaques, Orlando’s command, “Forbear, and eat no more!” is so inhospitable and evinces such self-interest, that it is complete comedy. No one should ever attack the host and guests and halt a meal (Orlando does not think he is approaching a "host"; he thinks he is approaching someone in the forest from whom he is going to steal food if necessary). Jaques is ready to die, seeing as this obvious fool is not to be reasoned with, but gentleness again prevails, as Duke Senior says, simply, “What would you have? … Sit down and feed, and welcome to our table.” This scene is the textbook for how a host should handle a difficult guest, an armed one at that. Orlando says that he knows good manners and breeding, meaning that he is from a culture where manners and hospitality are known and practiced. Julie Reinhard Lupton writes of our shared needs and interdependency, saying,

A philosophy oriented around human being in the trembling vulnerability of our multiple dependencies on each other and our permanent exposure to the scars, mutations, and new births delivered by the slings and arrows of our own signifying practices. The prematurity of the human infant deposits it instantly into a cradle of material, linguistic, and mammary prostheses. Human dependency entails not only the hunger we share with animals but also our constitutive reliance on speech, housing, clothing, and the attention of others for both physical survival and social recognition. This dependency means that
bodily care is always also care for and by the social body, as well as alienation within it

(J. R. Lupton 14).

Lupton frequently returns to the needs of the body, the shared needs of all bodies that make up every society. It is difficult to point to any point as a universality, but this must be one: being a human being means having some type of body, a body with needs that must be met socially in so many ways. We cannot all grow our own food, nor transport it, nor always afford it, or prepare it. When Orlando finds himself famished, with Adam left behind starving and exhausted, he finds himself abandoning his “inland bred” manners. He is ready to steal rather than starve.

I began this chapter claiming that power makes strangers of community members, and so it does. By the close, it has brought them back into insider status. Oliver, full of regret, a changed man, reconciles with his outcast brother Orlando. Rosalind reveals that she is actually a woman, and now finds love in Orlando. Duke Frederick leaves court determined to kill his brother Duke Senior, but upon meeting a religious man on the way, converts, repents, and leaves altogether. Duke Frederick relinquishes his crown to Duke Senior. It is almost too good to be true, and so it is dramatic comedy. These resolutions do not take place in the other plays I discuss in quite the same fashion. No one dies, no one is forced to convert, and four couples find wedded bliss with a great celebration. We are allowed to see a full circle of hospitable breach, exile, and pain, and forgiveness and the restructuring of a healthy community. The phenomena of shared experience is played for an audience who would have wished for such in their own lives, as well as for the many readers (even today) who might hope for the same. Hospitality loses the early battles, but finds ultimate triumph in the words and welcomes of its characters. As You Like It ends how we would perhaps wish it to end, as if Shakespeare has allowed us, his guests, to choose.
The Winter’s Tale and Shakespeare’s Hospitable Phenomena

In researching hospitable practice, I came across a seemingly old quotation, for which I have not been able to find an attribution: “If a longer table is built, a wall becomes unnecessary.” This is the best wording for the hosting of guests that I have yet read. It does not apply to the behavior of Leontes, King of Sicilia in Shakespeare’s The Winter’s Tale (WT). I argue in this final chapter that exiling a person from court, similar to what occurred in the last chapter, is inhospitable, particularly when there is not just cause. WT takes the actions of the ruler of the last chapter, Duke Frederick, a step farther. Leontes exiles his wife for what he perceives to be flirting with another king. Leontes had ordered her, Queen Hermione, to convince the other king, Polixenes of Bohemia, to remain as their guest some time longer. When Hermione attempts Leontes’ order, he becomes jealous, enraged, and eventually exiles her, expecting her death. I argue that more than simply having his pride wounded, Leontes believes Polixenes has violated his hospitality, thus making justified all the other monstrous action Leontes takes, namely public accusation, throwing the entire Sicilian kingdom’s future into fear and uncertainty. This monstrous action of inhospitality, though, is in response to a perceived inhospitable act, that of Polixenes sleeping with Leontes’ queen, Hermione, and of impregnating her, threatening the royal lineage. In the last analysis hospitable revenge is not hospitality at all. A king should be hospitable. But Leontes becomes inhospitable specifically when he makes his public accusation. Community is degraded and fractured from there.

Somehow critics are still fascinated, still interested in playing with the questions of what makes women and men act in such varied and animalistic ways, and what those ways say about breach of hospitality. Daryl Palmer writes in his book, Hospitable Performances, “Without a doubt, the practice of hospitality goes back to the dim origins of human consciousness, but for
Elizabethans and Jacobean, the mention of hospitality conjured up visions of a golden age” (Palmer 1992, 2). Shakespeare would have to find a way to showcase such hospitality without didacticism if it were to be well received by king and commoner alike. Therefore, by the time we come to *The Winter’s Tale*, which Shakespeare penned between 1609-11, we may come to judge Leontes, King of Sicilia, as a cold-hearted man by the way he accuses his guest in act one and condemns his wife by the first scene of act two. But what Leontes does is not so much the issue as what causes him to do it.

The said child, Mamillius, is an inhospitable gift from Polixenes for which Leontes is now indebted, or so Leontes believes. After all, it is Leontes who pressures Polixenes to stay a while longer in Sicilia, and to breach Leontes’ own hospitality to force Polixenes into hospitable debt. Leontes’ forceful hospitality will be explored by the use of historical exploration of the traditions of hospitality and the guest, the gift, and a close reading of the vows and oaths implicitly and explicitly given by Leontes, Polixenes and Hermione. Tracing traditions back to ancient Greek thought, I explore the legacy of hospitality, and ground these claims of the Jacobean stage in Western thought.

Hospitality is rooted in many things, but love of another and the desire to show gracious accommodation for them is one such reason. Palmer writes,

The origins of hospitable action grew from our common sense of ritual from the earliest of human interactions. The very notions of host and guest contain inherent equivocations that upset easy assumptions. The word host derives from the Latin hospes and hospitis. In these etymological origins and in Renaissance usage, the single term host signifies both host and guest. Hosting means both the offering and the receiving of hospitality. The role of host thus commits one to a rather volatile chain of metonymy. The entertained remains
a host and the host a guest. Motives remain in constant abeyance and authority in doubt. Does the host entertain to be entertained? Does the host entertain only to be displaced in the manner of Agamemnon, Odysseus, Gloucester, King Lear…Does the guest want more than hospitality, as Leontes suspects in *The Winter’s Tale* (Palmer 3)?

How can one be both host and guest? I will explore further how host can be akin to gift giver, and guest to receiver, and how both roles can reverse, and there is a way in which the process should not logically take place at all, how it seemingly cannot, though it would. Hospitality includes mutual understanding, oath, vow, and trust. Hospitality, on some levels, presupposes a kind of love for each other, and Shakespeare shows us how it can come to be that hospitality at the highest plane of community can break down. Allan Bloom, writing on Shakespeare’s ideas of love and friendship argues,

> Shakespeare’s depiction of love does not require an elaborate psychology to explain the miracle of deep involvement, because he does not need to derive community from the premise of radical isolation and selfishness. He does not begin, as does Rousseau, from a Cartesian radical doubt and then try to put the machine back together again. He begins from the evidence that we are involved, presupposing that self and other are not in extreme opposition. Although natural science may teach us many useful things, Shakespeare does not presuppose that it is simply the privileged way of knowing or that it can dissolve the most powerful everyday experiences that men and women have (A. Bloom 2).

If then, as Bloom has suggested, we are already naturally involved, we are then already existing in a state of hospitable action, of hospitality. The unnatural act here in *WT* is to break that
hospitality, to sever the deep involvement Leontes and Polixenes already share with each other and between each other’s kingdoms.

So once again, the very beginning of WT, strange though it is for a beginning, is this:

Archidamus: If you shall chance, Camillo, to visit Bohemia on the like occasion whereon my services are now on foot, you shall see, as I have said, great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia.

Camillo: I think this coming summer the King of Sicilia means To pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him (1.1.1-6).

Bohemia and Camillo are speaking in the polite and political language of services, gift, visitation, and state debt; in short, they are speaking of the rules of hospitality. The idea of the gift and the debt come from Derrida, which I will explore more fully later. Whether or not we can read this opening as a footprint for the play, two things are clear: there is substantial difference between Polixenes and Leontes, and Leontes owes Polixenes a visit. At the beginning of act one scene two Polixenes says, “And yet we should for perpetuity / Go hence in debt. And therefore, like a cipher, / Yet standing in rich place, I multiply / With one ‘We thank you’ many thousands more.” To which Leontes replies, “Stay your thanks a while, / And pay them when you part” (1.ii.8-9). Leontes is suggesting that Polixenes is in his debt, and should remain so until he would begin to pay Leontes’ hospitality with thanks, to “reappropriate” the gift, as we will see. David Ruiter, in his article, “Shakespeare and Hospitality: Opening The Winter’s Tale,” writes:

Equally unquestioned is the growing worry that Polixenes shares with Archidamus about getting far into Sicilia’s debt… the King of Bohemia eloquently tries to balance the
ledger sheet a bit with both his acknowledgement of said debt and his stated gratitude for Leontes’ generosity. While Camillo has earlier denied such a debt, his king seems, oddly at this moment, to affirm it. Leontes does not respond with the hospitable words we might expect, such as: “Don’t worry about it, Polixenes; hosting you is my pleasure.” Or more simply, “Forget about it. My house is your house” (Ruiter 162).

Ruiter says that these kings are keeping tabs on each other, which means that the two are not the great friends we have been led to believe Archidamus and Camillo were speaking of in act one scene one. Further, Ruiter states that Polixenes is well aware of the debt he owes to Leontes, and he makes certain to begin thanking Leontes for the origination of the debt, which is the gift of hospitality; Leontes refuses the partial payment on the debt.

King Leontes is inhospitable. As King of Sicilia, he demonstrates this by exiling his wife, resulting in the neglect and death of his son and sole heir. Leontes is able, through the tireless criticism and action of Paulina, to get his wife Hermione back, though sixteen years later. WT stands as an adaptation, in which Shakespeare takes possession of Robert Greene’s novel Pandosto, and illuminates critical moments of provocative hospitality achieved by focusing and reimagining moments from Greene’s prose novel, dramatizing them for his particular ends. Shakespeare, of course, was writing for the stage, hoping to increase dramatic effect, and alters many moments toward that end of entertainment. In truncating Greene, he allows what he knows of human imagination to feel its own offenses. It is easy to argue that Shakespeare intentionally elided such moments in Pandosto which would have allowed us to excuse Leontes’ jealousy. We must mark, though, Shakespeare’s obscuring the logical progression of the king, Leontes. of Sicilia. Leontes becomes disgusted and enraged at the motions of his wife Hermione’s body (he cannot hear her speak for she is too far away), and we as readers cannot see good cause for such
rage. Before we explore the problems of hospitable action and inaction though, we must take a
closer look at the play’s structure.

To begin with, the structure of WT is standard, with five acts, divided into scenes of not
unusual length, with the possible exception of act one, scene one, which is a scant forty lines,
and appears to be a description of things to come. Shakespeare uses this short scene in 1.1.1-40
to quickly take the place of the ancient Greek chorus so skillfully used by Sophocles. Yet,
Shakespeare puts characters and situations behind the arras so that we cannot see them properly.
The characters I discuss below refer to specific persons, two kings, and King Leontes’ son
Mamillius, yet the bulk of their language obscures that which otherwise might be clear.

Structurally, we begin in act one, scene one with Archidamus and Camillo in an
abbreviated mode of the Greek chorus. Strangely, though Archidamus is a Bohemian Lord and
Camillo a Sicilian Lord, the pair are speaking in prose and not in iambic pentameter verse, which
is unusual for lords and other persons of high status. Act one, scene one accounts for an
extremely brief synopsis of this play. In line five and six Camillo says,

I think this summer the King of Sicilia means
to pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him (1.1.5,6).

Camillo mentions payment and debt he says Leontes “owes,” thus inserting an idea of a
monetary economy (which I develop more fully in my chapter on The Merchant of Venice).
Camillo speaks here in his duty as a Sicilian Lord. Camillo is in full knowledge of this debt that
Leontes owes to Polixenes, yet, interestingly, Archidamus says in line seven “Wherein our
entertainment shall shame us we will be justified in our loves.” Archidamus speaks of
entertainment, which we can read here as closely related to hospitality, in that entertainment is
performed by the host for the guest, and strengthens the relationship and the community.
Entertainment and hospitable performance were considered synonymous in the early modern. The suggestion, “entertain the guests,” is an example. Already Archidamus, a Bohemian Lord, is stating that Bohemia and/or his King Polixenes is somehow deficient in hospitality. We can take it to be the case that Bohemia is not as hospitable, Polixenes is not as hospitable as Leontes’ Sicilia but, perhaps Archidamus is just being modest and in keeping with ambassadorial and hospitable custom.

Nevertheless, a few lines down we see Camillo, agent of Leontes, claiming that it is Archidamus who is going too far: In line fifteen, Camillo says, “You pay a great deal too dear for what’s given freely.” as if somehow Bohemia is in error. The takeaway here is that these two lords, in describing what will happen in the play in a clever shorthand that they both seem to know well, are setting forth a problem and a difference: Archidamus with his line three, “great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia,” and the discussion in line six of pay, line seven’s “entertainment” (hospitality), and Camillo’s line fifteen, “pay a great deal too dear for what’s given freely” all seem to suggest that Camillo and Archidamus are involved in some kind of bartering. They are, it seems, haggling over hospitality. And further complicating this negotiation, while harkening back to this Grecian model of the chorus, it turns out to be some kind of Capitalist chorus at that. We are nearly to the end of act one, scene one, and already in line twenty-seven, after they’ve been bargaining and accounting for past gifts (line twenty-four’s “interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies”) Camillo tells Archidamus, “The heavens continue their loves.”

Camillo has introduced the most troubling part of the entire play. I argue that this play enacts a problem of hospitality, and further that it is a problem of hospitality because of capitalist gift and debt, paying and owing versus what is payable and what is deserved. As such, the play
allows a different critical perspective that is valuable--what is paid and what is paid “too dear” versus what is “given freely,” causes Camillo’s line, “The heavens continue their loves” to take all human reason and choice out of the hands of those keeping the records. *Hospitality, as these two tell us, is analogous to currency.* Hospitality is a currency, and thus we have been shown a model of the host and the guest. Camillo problematizes this model with “heavens.” Whether or not Archidamus can decipher Camillo’s words, it can only spell trouble. Are the kings Leontes and Polixenes in control of their own choices, or are the heavens. In my earlier chapter on *The Merchant of Venice*, I discuss Goffe’s *The Tragedy of Orestes*, and the line, “The heavens are usurers.” Perhaps this is part of the issue here with a nod to the classical plays. The heavens cannot be trusted to hospitably guide human kings. They can hardly be trusted to guide themselves. The economic reading continues in line twenty-seven with Camillo’s “The heavens continue their loves,” speaking of the two kings Leontes and Polixenes. The heavens, again under the spell of the Greek chorus, are something altogether different from what can be accounted “owed” and “paid.” The Greeks knew (absolutely in their literature) that the heavens could not be trusted or, if the heavens could be trusted, it was only that they could be trusted to hijack the affairs of men. Human beings were well-known to be the mere playthings of the gods and goddesses. So when Camillo states that “the heavens continue their loves,” all this means is that the heavens are going to wreck the entire situation. And, curiously, it is Camillo, Leontes’ trusted lord, who speaks the line for us. Leontes then, is representative of the heavens, our own little Zeus. Contrasting with Camillo’s sentiment, is Archidamus’ line twenty-eight and nine, “*I think there is not in the world either malice or matter to alter it.*” Archidamus speaks of the world. Camillo speaks of the heavens. There is a big difference, and that is a problem. There are
two hospitalities working in this play, and that can only mean upcoming conflict. Walter S. H. Lim argues,

Shakespeare's play makes use of the Ovidian-Petrarchan legacy to create a dramatic narrative that demands to be read metalinguistically and metatheatrically. Dealing with representation, theater communicates in a self-reflexive manner the resistance of language to efforts aimed at ordering it through the logic of equivalence… (Lim 327).

Restated, there is no real way to reconcile these two hospitalities using language alone. Readers and audiences alike understand \( WT \) more by looking at not only the play, but its earlier sources. For example, Paulina is brought in late in the play as a statue, and Leontes acts not unlike Ovid’s Pygmalion with his statue. I discuss this more later. For now, Archidamus and Camillo are two lords with no linguistic equivalence, and there can be no logical one either. The inequivalence leads to conflict.

**Act One, Scene Two, Two Hospitalities**

Camillo trusts the heavens to continue the love of the two kings, Leontes and Polixenes. The heavens rule Leontes, and so his mind is not his own. His fortunes are ruled by the heavens, and the heavens are uncertain. One may find oneself at the top of the favor of the gods one day, and on the outs the next. Leontes and his behavior, his very emotions, seem governed by the heavens. He is rash one day and remorseful the next. It only makes sense, then, that Archidamus’ Bohemia, which Archidamus represents for us in this play, is a world of logic and reason. He is operating in the sphere of humans who use the only device they can in the world: the intellect. Archidamus does not speak of the affairs of the gods or goddesses, the heavens or the planets. Therefore, if we take a look back to line two through four of the play, “you shall see as I have said great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia,” we now understand that there is
great difference, indeed all the difference in the world, for one, Leontes, is governed by the heavens, and Polixenes the world.

Stepping back for a moment, readers can see that Shakespeare penned act one, scene one with these two lords speaking in prose, and I argue that the reason they speak in prose is that they speak more reason and less poesy. Structurally, this scene is set apart from the rest of the play. Where Shakespeare writes other scenes in prose, such as in act four, where we have the officer reading the oracle’s words, or Autolycus plotting and coney catching, here, enjamed next to act one, scene two, in which Polixenes speaks his first line, there is a regal change: “Nine changes of the wat’ry star hath been / The shepherds note since we have left our throne / Without a burden” (Shakespeare 1527). Polixenes, the guest-king from Bohemia, speaks in poetic form, befitting his stature. Though Polixenes is a King, and naturally speaks in verse, he is conscious of the mental structure we know as debt. Here again we hear, in lines five and six, “And yet we should for perpetuity / Go hence in debt.” Polixenes echoes the words of Camillo and Polixenes from act one, scene one of this hospitable economy. Once again we are faced with hospitable debt, and Polixenes tries to repay the debt by telling Leontes in line eight, “With one ‘We thank you’ many thousands more” Leontes replies to him in line nine, “Stay your thanks a while, /And pay them when you part.” But just as soon as Leontes reassures Polixenes that all will be well with the debt, Polixenes says in line ten, “Sir, that’s tomorrow. / I am questioned by my fears of what my chance / or breed upon our absence.” Polixenes, though seemingly the more logical and steady mind of the two kings, is beset by fear. Shakespeare does not introduce fear for nothing. Where there is fear, there is trouble.

The main problem with WT, is that Leontes reacts so explosively and vociferously toward his wife and his guest. Leontes breaches hospitable mores. He accuses his wife publicly of
adultery. He accuses his guest, Polixenes, of sleeping with his wife, also publicly. Leontes’ paranoia, or so it seems in the play, provides him the justification he needs to cross commonly accepted lines of what is done and what is not done by a host for a guest. Critics have written that Hermione is portrayed unfairly in these moments of act one. Some have said that the unfairness, if any, is written into Leontes’ character. What I want to explore though, is the way Leontes breaches hospitable tradition by publicly accusing his guest and his wife of infidelity against him. Leontes destroys his main line of succession in the process of these accusations. His son Mamillius dies of neglect away from his mother Hermione, whom Leontes banishes for her alleged crime, intending her to die. Ironically, Leontes casts aside as worthless the greatest living value he possesses, that of his wife and son, and also the unborn daughter Perdita. By breaching hospitality in this moment, Leontes quite nearly destroys his future and the future of his kingdom by relegating it to an uncertain fate. He gets his wife back, but not the time lost. He reunites with a long lost daughter, but his son and heir is dead. At the end of act one, for all the reader knows, the kingdom, upon Leontes’ death, will be up for grabs, and his in hospitable actions set that uncertain future into motion. In unpacking these moments of slight and arrogance, insult and forced loss, we can make some useful conclusions about what characters use to justify their behavior. Inherent in these hospitable moments are several conceptual issues which cause

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43 Kottman argues about Hermione’s ill treatment, writing, “Imprisoned by Leontes, from whom she is now estranged, barred from seeing Mamilius, her son, and informed that her newborn daughter is to be burned alive, Hermione is ‘hurried here, to this place, i’th’open air, before I have got strength of limit’ (that is, before fully recovering from giving birth to her daughter) – to a public trial.” Kottman’s argument centers around the innocence of Hermione, and her suffering through a religious lens. That upon Hermione’s return, Paulina brings her out as a statue, is reminiscent of a statue of Mary, innocent and suffering.

Eric Langley claims that Shakespeare used Ovid’s Pygmalion as a model for Paulina. “While the hot madness of lust overcomes the Ovidian sculptor [Pygmalion], the Shakespearean penitent [Leontes] feels only the warm blush of ‘shame’ (1.37); it seems the visual ‘wonder’ of Pygmalion before his ‘perfect Virgin’ is both antecedent and antonym to the specular ‘wonder’ (1.22) of this later art observer faced with his ‘perfect woman’ (5.1.15). Langley continues that it is easy to misread Hermione’s statue in the play if one sees it as purely a borrowing from Ovid.
problems many of them insurmountable ones. Leontes feels he has been wronged, so he decides on punitive action. Leontes orders his lord Camillo to kill Polixenes.

First, I want to talk about the accusation, particularly that of Leontes. There is uncertainty in the mind of Leontes, and this is why he behaves as he does. He accuses Hermione of adultery. Of course, this perceived adultery is bad in the mind of Leontes because he desires control of his progeny, as a King with a bloodline to maintain would. Leontes commits a hospitable breach against his wife, a public one, when in 2.1.61-64 he directly accuses Hermione of sexual infidelity: “Bear the boy hence. He shall not come about her. / Away with him, and let her sport herself / With that she’s big with [unborn Perdita], for ‘tis Polixenes / Has made thee swell thus.” Leontes, here, performs an act of direct accusation, and it is the most damaging to community and to kingdom. This is a public accusation, for Hermione, Mamillius and the queen’s ladies are present, along with Leontes and his lords as well as Antigonus. It is from this moment that the decline of the kingdom is set in motion, for any resolution after the effects of this act and accusation is lackluster, not a healing, but a poor substitute. Leontes seals Mamillius’ (his only male heir) fate beginning with this accusation. The king is without heir in his mind, doubting his lineage in Mamillius, and banishing Hermione with her unborn child Perdita, a child he believes to be that of Polixenes.

Leontes creates the problem of the gift and the debt. By the end of play, Polixenes forgives Leontes’ earlier order to kill him. This forgiving act makes Polixenes the very highest form of the guest, along with Hermione. Polixenes performs that which is not only gracious and accepting of the gift of the host, but a guest that will forgive a host of the most egregious action against a guest. Socially, then, we have many problems. The root of the social problems though, are problems of value. Gifts create debts, hence gifts are debts as soon as they are given. It seems
that Leontes, more mindful of the control of the value inherent in his wife, is disgusted when he imagines that another has control of her value. So we, in essence, find ourselves with a value problem. Control of Hermione’s value blinds Leontes to hospitable mores and customs, and he breaks with tradition via his public accusation. Leontes is not wrong to suspect infidelity, nor to even accuse his wife in private, allowing her the opportunity to defend herself. Yet it was Leontes himself who told Hermione to sweet talk Polixenes. Derrida describes hospitality in the sense of “one’s dwelling place, one’s identity, one’s space, and one’s limits” (Derrida 149). Therefore, when I look upon Leontes’ actions and reactions, I find a strange sense of the function of identity, his use of his space, or domicile, and the limits of his power. For a treatment of the gift, of thanks, and what are implicit in both, Jacques Derrida has said,

The only thing I would say about the gift—this is an enormous problem—is that the gift is precisely, and this is what it has in common with justice, something which cannot be reappropriated. A gift is something which never appears as such and is never equal to gratitude, to commerce, to compensation, to reward. When a gift is given, first of all, no gratitude can be proportionate to it. A gift is something that you cannot be thankful for. As soon as I say “thank you” for a gift, I start canceling the gift, I start destroying the gift, by proposing an equivalence, that is, a circle which encircles the gift in a movement of reappropriation. So, a gift is something that is beyond the circle of reappropriation, beyond the circle of gratitude. A gift should not even be acknowledged as such. As soon as I know that I give something, if I say “I am giving you something,” I just canceled the gift. I congratulate myself or thank myself for giving something and then the circle has already started to cancel the gift. So, the gift should not be rewarded, should not be reappropriated, and should not even appear as such. As soon as the gift appears as such
then the movement of gratitude, of acknowledgment, has started to destroy the gift, if there is such a thing (Caputo 18-19).

So when *The Winter’s Tale* opens and Camillo mentions that Bohemia owes Sicilia, he is, in Derrida’s understanding already attempting to cancel the debt his kingdom owes, to appropriate the gift in another way, to reappropriate it. Each time a debt is mentioned, it is as if a box containing a gift were picked up and shaken to remind the receiver of what is at stake in the conversation as well as what rules govern the hospitable relationship. The justice of the gift is that it has power over the receiver, a power which may be leveraged by the giver, if the giver were not giving in a hospitable sense. Another way of simplifying this idea of the gift is how John Caputo simplifies Derrida’s conceptualization into logical operators:

To put it very simply: suppose that A gives B to C. What would be more simple than that? If A gives B to C, then C is grateful to A and owes A debt of gratitude, with the result that C, instead of being given something, is now in debt. On the other hand, A is more or less consciously and explicitly pleased with herself for her generosity. …Thus, the aporetic result of A’s giving B to C is that A, instead of giving something, has received and C, instead of receiving something, is now in debt. The result, in short, is that as soon as a gift is given it begins to annul itself, or that the conditions which make the gift possible also make it impossible (Caputo 41).

Caputo’s explanation is helpful if we use it to view how Leontes assumes power by giving a hospitable gift in the first place, and then extending his power by forcing a protracted visit. Another way to explain the nature of the gift is to imagine making deposits into a savings account for future monetary security. On its obverse, this is ridiculous. One could simply keep the deposit and remain in possession of it. However, one desires the bank to be in one’s debt, to
be obligated to pay the money back to the depositor. For Bohemia and Sicilia, their kingdoms are the banking sector, and the kings are the bankers, a monstrous arrangement, and as Derrida observes, “an enormous problem.” In addition to Leontes’ hospitable gift to Polixenes in hopes of future repayment, there exist consequential permutations to his decisions and actions. Leontes does not think through all of these actions at the outset. Once forcing Polixenes to stay, Leontes is in a mode of regret—a kind of giver’s remorse—and “Too hot, Too hot,” is Leontes’ verbal reaction in 1.2.110. Leontes, in subsequently accusing Polixenes of laying with his queen Hermione and of fathering the child she now carries, forces himself into a position of determining the justice of the gift Leontes gave in the form of hospitality: 1) Leontes’ accusation taints Hermione, so Leontes must dispense justice with regard to her, and 2) Leontes must reconcile the new terms of his political and social relationship with Polixenes, even if reconciliation is simply a just equanimity without further friendship. When he says later “I’ll reconcile me to Polixenes” (3.2.153), the reader is not yet clear about his meaning: “I’ll be sure to make things right with him,” or the vindictive, “I’ll show him.” By the end of the play’s comedic turns it appears that things shall be righted after all, but first, there is Mamillius’ death and communal deterioration.

Next, in examining how some of the problems we mentioned earlier arise, Shakespeare shows us a tongue problem, a problem in the use of language used as invitation. We see it first in 1.2.19-21 when five persons are standing together. Polixenes says, “Press me not, beseech you, so. / There is no tongue that moves, none, none I’th’ world / So soon as yours, could win me.” Polixenes is speaking in a tone of intentional good grace: he attempts to flatter Leontes. The reader expects this manner of speech from one king to another in a time of peaceful discourse. The tongue is the first, best tool of hospitable action. Polixenes understands how to use the
tongue in the normal course of governance and diplomacy, and Shakespeare shows us evidence of that in these lines. Seven lines down, Leontes replies to him, “Tongue-tied, our queen? Speak you” (1.2.28). Polixenes has just told Leontes, “There is no tongue that moves, none, none i’th’ world / So soon as yours, could win me (1.2.19-21). Yet Leontes, true to hospitable norms of polite refusal, does not take Polixenes literally. The dramatic tension is palpable in WT when we witness Leontes’ public accusation levied against Polixenes, his boyhood friend and fellow king. Yet, kings are states. Kings are used to conflict, accusation, intrigue, mistrust, and even bloody war for that matter. What is truly wounding and inexcusable in WT is Leontes’ accusation against his wife Hermione, and his disavowal of his son Mamillius and the unborn Perdita.

**Leontes:** Is he won yet?

**Hermione:** He’ll stay, my lord.

**Leontes:** At my request he would not (1.2.86-88).

Leontes may be doubting Polixenes at this point, since Polixenes said Leontes’ word would soonest change his mind. The main heat of the action comes in 1.2.110,111 when Leontes says as an aside while watching Hermione speak with Polixenes,

Too hot, too hot:

to mingle friendship farre is mingling bloods.

Leontes exclaims his jealousy, and no one can hear it but us. Neither Hermione nor Polixenes are aware. Leontes breaks up his community beginning here. This breach is important because Leontes becomes the agent of a paranoid action, breaching the hospitable mores of his world. He accuses his wife of sleeping with his boyhood friend and fellow king Polixenes. Leontes goes so far as to claim that his son, Mamillius, and the unborn Perdita are in fact the progeny of Polixenes: this claim is a problem, indeed a hospitable problem of the first order, because what
Leontes has done is accuse a guest in his domain of wrongdoing in public and within earshot of others for certain communal dispersion. The secondary problem is that once Leontes breaches public hospitality, there is no controlling the provenance of the original action. A commoner may perform such a breach and create gossip. A king’s breach creates history. What is worse for Leontes in particular, he not only creates historical gossip, but he de-creates his own lineage. For in the process of accusation and his resolutive method of justice, he banishes his pregnant wife and son, loses his son to a death-by-neglect, however does regain his wife and the teenaged Perdita. It is not a complete tragedy, but far from full reconciliation as in the preceding chapter with *AYL*.

Now in the greater context of history, many kings sought to procure and proclaim the Early Modern English goal of lineage. Leontes’ breach, then, when placed against the backdrop of history, means that the loss of heir is worse than the loss of king. Had an assassin killed Leontes, for example, Mamillius as heir would become king, and the line would continue. With Mamillius dead, all is lost for this family’s fortunes (what is left of it), and the entire community (kingdom) is in a fractured and uncertain state. At the heart of this *WT* problem is hospitable breach, and the broken hospitable contract is with a vested member of the community, King Polixenes. Polixenes reigns over an allied kingdom, but is a friend to Sicilia, and as such is invited as a guest of community.44 Because of the good standing of Polixenes, and the past relationship the two share, my claim is that Polixenes is in-community.45

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44 See Desai. King Leontes’ Sicilia is on the Mediterranean, while Polixenes’ Bohemia is the modern Czech Republic.

45 Though *in communitas* is a useful term here, it originally defined an anthropological, liminal community, those communities that would exist were they to be in an extant state of exclusion, such as a leper colony or an ancient Hebrew temporary setting outside of community such as a niddah (menstrual-purification encampment). There exist any number of such outcast communities in literature, and I am arguing that WT is no exception. The main idea I want to consider is how members of a community of insiders (a guest king, a queen, her son, her guest, her servants,
Context and Deals with Devils

To contextualize this examination of *WT*, we could easily begin with many related literary types of negative hospitality. Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* is an exercise in community lysis in which two power brokers, Lucifer and Mephistophilis, finally come to take possession of their rightful, contractual property, the body and soul of Doctor Faustus, who in lines 130 through 132 exhales in one last moment of anagnorisis, “Adders and serpents, let me breathe awhile! / Ugly hell, gape not—come not, Lucifer-- / I’ll burn my books—ah, Mephistophilis!” (Marlowe 78). Even as we see Mephistophilis, in bodily form, in shocking incarnation standing before us in this moment of imaginative empathy for the good Doctor, we know the man has made a deal that must be kept. After all, there are norms, and this is just business, and an extreme example of what Derrida termed “the gift and the debt.” Communities must have mores, conventions, and manners. There are ways to do things and ways not to, and cultural tradition is one of the last things with which human beings will dispense in time of disaster, war, or plague. Once a deal is struck, a deal is binding. And of course, as in *WT*, the problem with *Doctor Faustus* is the problem of becoming a stranger to community, even if you are a guest and merely slighted and cast out of town, and not cast out of the realm of the living and into weeping and gnashing of teeth and outer darkness. No matter from where one is cast, the wound, really, is all in the casting. Ripping someone out of community is painful, and makes one a stranger. But it is painful for the subject as well. *WT* shows us that Leontes regrets and agonizes over his decision. For Faustus, his desire for knowledge was such that it cost him more her friends) become a community of outsiders because of breach of hospitality. Mamillius, of course, is the most extreme outsider because his state is altered from heir-apparent to former heir, from only son to former son. 

46 Louis B. Wright, editor of this edition and Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library from 1948-68, says of Faustus, “[Marlowe] dramatizes the downfall of a learned man who made a pact with the devil to gain infinite knowledge. From the time he first conjured up Mephistophilis until he was dragged down to hell, repentance could have saved him had he not been blinded by his intellectual pride.” Pride and ego cause Leontes, and the kingdom, to suffer for the sixteen years Hermione is away.

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than he bargained for. Better said, it cost him exactly what he bargained for. His mind made a
hell of heaven. In *WT*, Leontes misreads a hospitable performance of his wife Hermione, as she
enacts that which Leontes had asked her to do immediately before: win the guest-ship of
Polixenes for a little while longer. Hermione is performing the words and gestures, and Leontes
suddenly becomes enraged due to his mental gloss of her performance through a lens of
eroticization. This erotic lens is a problem.

Recent scholarship will help us to shed light on this issue. Julie Reinhard Lupton has
written often on Hannah Arendt’s social philosophies. Lupton has explored hospitable acts and
their existence as performative phenomenologies. Phenomena, as my chapter title suggests, are
scenes that flash before us, challenging us to confront the truth of what we see, perhaps forming
new truths within new insights. With hospitable phenomena, there is more involved than meets
the eye, and threads exist in the tablecloth of performative hospitality that are only visible on the
underside, to which a guest at-table will never become privy. Performances of manners for an
audience of guests require that we meet the eyes, nose, mouth, spirit, heart, soul, memory, and
expectation—indeed the fancy—of our guests. If we value community, hospitable performance
demands service after the sale, and in ways perhaps we had not anticipated (or at least Marlowe’s
good doctor did not). Lupton asks us to consider how Shakespeare affects us where we live,
among modern notions of performance not on the wooden boards of the Globe, but on the slate
and tile of hostelry. In so doing, Lupton causes us to stretch *WT* into another sphere. It is
precisely this “other sphere” in which I wish to operate in chapter one, framing what is a rubric
for the creation of the other in and out of community, and also laying the groundwork for what
will become the greater result of this otherization: the modern crisis of empathetic vacuum,
otherwise simply known as the death of empathy. So this communal *WT* has in it the seeds of its
own destruction, yet I argue that Leontes’ is to blame for his hospitable breach, and not simply excused because he is some cranky king: we cannot dismiss this play’s problems by saying Leontes was in his cups, Falstaff perhaps, but not Leontes. Lupton writes, “Hermione’s fateful address to Polixenes in the first act of The Winter’s Tale recasts the banqueting house of formal hospitality, organized by the semipublic exercise of semiprivate virtues, into a political scene of suspicion, accusation, and trial” (Lupton 10). Where the problem lies is that it becomes acutely problematic when we see a guest turned into a criminal in such a court of public opinion, as I have alluded to earlier.

Lupton tells us, remarking upon Arendt, who in turn has borrowed it from ancient Greece, “Wherever you go, you will be a polis,” (Arendt 198). For the king, every matter is a matter of state, a grave matter, and a matter of the grave into which he has buried his only son and heir, and dug his own. But it is explicit in Lupton’s “semipublic exercise of semiprivate virtues” that we are caught between two worlds. After all, what is “public?” And what is “private?” And why is this partially defined by Lupton as “a political scene?” All Leontes did was simply ask his wife to influence his guest to stay longer. But what we must consider here, is that a man asked a woman to sway another man’s opinion. Perspective is a problem also, and when we use Lupton’s idea of “semiprivate” virtues, and view it from that angle, we can see how it complicates matters when a woman’s “semiprivate” is brought to bear upon a man’s “semipublic”: Hermione’s affection for her husband, under his authority, bidden to affect a

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47 Hannah Arendt’s On the Human Condition calls to the fore many people-treating-people moments as performed things, only one of which she explores as “polis,” not referring to a city as a geographical and political area in which activity and business-commerce is guarded over by security forces such as police or military, but as “the organization of people acting and speaking together.” As such, this Arendtian look back to the ancient Greeks idea of the polis as valuable, and its implications into the performance of each person-as-polis, is highly useful. Indeed, this is the very reason that looks into Shakespeare are useful: the actions of one community of humans is useful in determining the actions of another community of humans. If it were not useful, we should all immediately quit our futile historicism (as Nicholas Watson terms it, “looks to the past,”) and become post-modernists.
change in Polixenes’ decision, in the sight of a few others (servants, a child) is not completely public, such as out in a marketplace, but “semipublic” as Lupton observes. In this semipublic being not quite public, then it is also not quite private. So then what Leontes observes as Hermione flirting with Polixenes, itself not scandalous, or even unexpected, becomes for Leontes the flagrant direction of Hermione’s private gifts upon Polixenes, private gifts intended for Leontes and Leontes alone, or at least as he may imagine. Leontes’ decision to act on this observational reading of Hermione’s gift giving to Polixenes is his hospitable failing. Leontes’ perception and his resulting outburst makes what is private, public, in a semipublic and non-sexualized space, shaming himself in front of others to the degree that he exclaims, echoing what I had begun before my analysis,

Too hot, too hot:
To mingle friendship farre is mingling bloods.
I have tremor cordis on me. My heart dances,
But not for joy, not joy. This entertainment
May a free face put on, derive a liberty
From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom,
And well become the agent. ‘T may, I grant.
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
As now they are, and making practised smiles
As in a looking-glass; and then to sigh, as ‘twere
The mort o’th’ deer—O, that is entertainment
My bosom likes not, nor my brows. —Mamillius,
Art thou my boy (1.2.110-122)?
First of all, to be quite fair to the character as written, we have no proof that Hermione did not sleep with Polixenes, conceive Mamillius, or even that there is not sexualized thought in the minds of Hermione, or Polixenes, or both. But the court of public opinion, and we should nod to Lupton, the court of “semipublic” opinion, is still governed by evidence. Such existential proof is needed in a court of law coming down to us from the ancients and into the modern system of jurisprudence. Proof of existence is not necessary, however, in the semipublic court of Sicilia. The king is the law. His opinion may not be the only one that matters, but it is the most far reaching and destructive as to all matters, and not just of the semipublic, but of the public at large, including the other “public” arena, namely Polixenes’ kingdom of Bohemia. Since Polixenes is also a king, the wound is enlarged out from the semipublic to the extra-public as it involves not just the Sicilian court, or even all of Sicily, but also all of Bohemia. After all, it is not only Leontes who insults Polixenes. Sicilia has just insulted Bohemia, and there will be hell to pay. Leontes is both instigator but also victim of any ill will between these kingdoms), but perhaps the greatest personal tragedy is that Leontes has insulted his queen, his wife Hermione. The binary of the king and queen has been severed, and becomes, for the bulk of the play, disastrous.

At issue are the collective mores and traditions of both kingdoms. I wrestle with the idea of the king as the law, and since a man is the king, and a man’s imperfect whims govern the man, then whim becomes law, and that is a problem. But, I am not stating the positive nature of the creation of the idea “The Rule of Law,” for it is a misnomer and an entirely other project. Rather, what I am stating is that here, in Leontes’ reading, is his flirting wife. He sees in her a sudden and sexualized other. The tradition of the eroticized hostess pervades literature, indeed was the impetus for Shakespeare’s adaptation of WT in the first place. Greene’s novel Pandosto
elucidates his prose tale with a rather decided turn that allows us to imagine it in a way quite separate and apart from the way Shakespeare adapted it for the stage.\footnote{48} Leontes’ accusation is not simply in public, it takes place in the royal home. This is not simply a public, and tragic breach, but a breach of the domicile, wherein hospitality is born, nurtured, and practice. James A. W. Heffernan, writes, “At their best, as most of us know from experience, the pleasures of hospitality approximate the pleasures of love. Few other stimuli can match, let alone surpass, the taste of a good meal in the house of old friends or convivial new ones. Ancient literature pays tribute to such pleasures” (Heffernan 1). While the reception of such warm conviviality seems naturally true, we might think, humans do not always perform positive hospitality as a natural consequence. However, when “the taste of a good meal in the house of old friends” is performed, as Leontes correctly hosts it before his raging jealousy, both kingdoms and communities were strengthened.

\footnote{48} It should be noted that Greene’s \textit{Pandosto} is quite different throughout from \textit{WT}, but this key moment in which a king regards his wife in eroticized imagining is shared. P. G. Thomas, editor, notes, “The changes, which Shakespeare introduced into Greene's narrative, are due in the main to the exigencies of dramatic form. The long-winded speeches and dreary monologues of the novel lack dramatic propriety. Consequently, the speeches are either omitted altogether, shortened, or converted into dialogue. At the same time, the action is concentrated in deference to the claims of dramatic unity. When, for example, the first act of the play opens, Polixenes is already about to depart, and is only restrained by Sicily’s importunity” Milford alludes to the setting out of the tale by Greene himself, who begins as simply as any tale, with the description of a country in which lived a king, and his queen. Shakespeare, in his frequent style, begins quite differently, setting up the encounter in a way misleading to his audience (and his readership), by portending a near future in which great events are to unfold, only to shock us into a much different hospitable reality once human judgement, and its errors, act upon a community of other humans.
First of all, we must address the question of why Leontes would want Polixenes in his debt. Perhaps the better question is why would Leontes not want Polixenes, another king, in his debt? Power, money, possessions, pride, and increased agency are all factors to consider gaining in having a powerful person in one’s debt. Forcing these deposits on Polixenes will grant future dividends. Accusing him of fathering a child may also, but we cannot answer for Leontes’ decision to accuse, except to say that a rash king will make rash decisions, not considering long on the effect to persons around him. Leontes’ decision to breach hospitality with Polixenes and Hermione is the central problem about which we may only guess the motivations.

As for the gift in general, irrespective of debt and obligation because of the gift, it can be stated that a gift is “just” a gift when given anonymously, not expecting any return, nor seeking any recognition for the action of giving. Further, a gift given from one friend to another is just. This innocent gifting is justice already. But these exchanges between Sicilia and Bohemia sully the gifting state of friendship’s gifts. These are public and state gifts, known to all involved, and as such are governed by a set of rules and expectations, manners and customs, vows, and thoughts of return in the future. In the case of the unborn child early in the play, we have a public, state, personal and living gift, about which Leontes says, “No, I’ll not rear / Another’s issue” (2.3.193). Leontes sees a gift given in treachery, not in friendship, an illegitimate child. As for the accused, Hermione echoes Leontes’ earlier words, “Stay your thanks a while, / And pay them when you part” (1.2.8,9), with her own when she entreats Polixenes to stay longer, but with the addition of certain key terms that we shall explore:

You put me off with limber vows. But I,

Though you would seek t’unisphere the stars with oaths,
Should yet say ‘Sir, no going.’ Verily
You shall not go. A lady’s ‘verily’
As potent as a lord’s. Will you go yet? /
Force me to keep you as a prisoner,
Not like a guest: so you shall pay your fees
When you depart , and save your thanks. How say you?
My prisoner? or my guest? By your dread ‘verily’
One of them you shall be (1.2.48-57).

Here in Hermione’s words there is evidence of the vows mentioned at the beginning of our
discussion. To “unsphere the stars with oaths,” is a way of saying too many words make nature
appear unnatural. Vow is present, implied by Hermione’s words. It seems that even as a guest,
Polixenes and his kingdom of Bohemia are bound by the vow of the guest while in the First
House of Sicilia, and Hermione (with Leontes’ insistence) is not about to let Polixenes forget that
fact, a fact which draws upon all of the combined traditions of Mediterranean hospitality which
owe their lineage to ancient Greek thought grafted in with those traditions that belong to the
staged representation of England which Shakespeare has husbanded. Hermione is performing the
action of a good hostess, but of course it is Leontes who is her final authority. Hermione here is
acting as agent of the state, in the name of the king and within his full authority. Hermione would
have the authority anyway, carte blanche, as the queen, but in this case she has a recent
dispensation from Leontes due to his words at I.2.27, “Tongue-tied, our queen? Speak you.”

Leontes is pressuring Hermione to place further pressure on Polixenes. Also, Hermione in one
moment uses the same words as Leontes verbatim, further cementing her role as ligate: “save
your thanks.” Leontes confirms at I.2.87, “Is he won yet?” to which Hermione replies at line 88,
“He’ll stay my lord.” Metrically, Polixenes words in 1.2 are mostly in iambic pentameter, befitting a king. For her part, Hermione’s are likewise mostly in iambic pentameter. On balance Leontes de-evolves into prose, barking out short, curt sentences, the implication being that his manners, morals and his psychological state have sunk as well.

In this act, Leontes begins to show himself to be below manners, and in this sense is no longer kingly, which could mean his very authority is on unstable ground. This instability is in fact more real than the threat of Polixenes’ alleged child assuming the Sicilian throne, whether he knows it or not. Performing manners is a vital part of being a proper king. Bad manners rob power. In choosing to be unmannerly, Leontes seems more ‘commoner’ than king. Leontes however, in a later and brief eloquence waxes anastrophic: “The causes of their death appear, unto / Our shame perpetual” (3.2.235,236), becoming poetic once again as his mind begins to grasp the human tragedy he now understands has been wrought by his command.

But if Leontes can be said to have in a sense forced Polixenes to stay, or at the very least pressured Polixenes to stay in Sicilia longer, can this even qualify as hospitable gifting? Is this then not openly coercive measure? And if coercion, then Leontes would in fact owe Polixenes some form of restitution, a debt, a payment. But as reality is only what each king perceives, the exchange could be both hospitality and or harm, depending upon whose mind we choose to inhabit. Therefore, let us look into the mind of the guest, Polixenes. Here is a man who has been hosted by Sicilia, which is clearly a gift up to the point of Leontes “Too hot” outburst at I.2.110. The moment Leontes erupts, for Polixenes, is an insult to Bohemia, a breach of hostly etiquette and a breaking of the momentary and traditional vows of hospitable tradition toward the guest. Early on, Polixenes speaks to Leontes, refusing hospitality, saying, “…My stay / To you a charge and trouble. To save both, / Farewell, our brother (1.2.26,27). The Oxford English Dictionary
defines “charge” as, “A material load; that which can be borne, taken, or received,” and Polixenes usage of “trouble” as, “Disturbance of mind or feelings; worry, vexation; affliction; grief; perplexity; distress.” Polixenes, as a guest, feels that to receive further gifts of hospitality will only cause him grief and perhaps guilt for being in such debt to Sicilia. He feels he has outworn his welcome, in spite of his host’s urging. This bad form is not quite the atrocious Atreus killing his nephews and feeding them to Thyestes as Seneca has set down for us, but Leontes is clearly on the wrong side of hospitality. Hospitality is insistent, yet in no way forceful; when it is forceful, it is no longer hospitality. What Leontes does to Polixenes is a mild form of kidnapping.

These advantages of peace of mind brought about by treating others well become the definition of hospitality Plato gives us. Using the words of Pindar, we can say that Leontes is neither “good” nor “a man of sense,” nor is Leontes concerned at the beginning of the play with “apprehension about offerings due to the gods or debts which he owes to men.” By the end of the play, these choices bring Leontes to the point that he is willing to say of his condemned wife,

So much to my good comfort as it is
Now piercing to my soul. O, thus she stood,
Even with such life of majesty—warm life,
As now it coldly stands—when first I wooed her.
I am ashamed. Does not the stone rebuke me
For being more stone than it? O royal piece!
There’s magic in thy majesty, which has
My evils conjured to remembrance, and
From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,
Standing like stone with thee (5.3.33-42).

In brokenness, here is a man realizing the full force and effect he has produced in others. The seeds he so illustriously sowed in acts one and two have ripened into fruit, rotted, and he has consumed them pit and all. He knows that justice must be done, the beginnings of which must lie with him humbling himself. He must begin somehow to repay the debt, even if he cannot come up to the full price, having lost Mamillius to his own accusation, believing his wife to be dead. Natural justice has been mocked. The ethical ideas of justice that apply here are at least as old as Socrates, who, conversing with Polemarchus in book one of the *Republic*, says:

*Tell me then, O thou heir of the argument, what did Simonides say, and according to you truly say, about justice?*

He said that the repayment of a debt is just, and in saying so he appears to me to be right. *I should be sorry to doubt the word of such a wise and inspired man, but his meaning, though probably clear to you, is the reverse of clear to me. For he certainly does not mean, as we were now saying that I ought to return a deposit of arms or of anything else to one who asks for it when he is not in his right senses; and yet a deposit cannot be denied to be a debt* (Plato).

When thinking of just debt, and just repayment in this way, we might pause to consider that Polixenes does not return evil for evil, and comes out smelling like a rose. In one sense though, this restraint does not seem natural. Is not Polixenes the “natural” king from Bohemia, the place of nature in the play? Leontes’ deposit of inhospitality is a debt Leontes owes Polixenes, yet good Bohemia refuses to engage in collective action. In this way of refraining from acting just as he is entitled, Polixenes inverts the gift/giver relationship. He does not repay Leontes, though he could, which makes him a moral debtor of the highest order. Polixenes thus makes his Bohemia
(his polis) naturally good in a way that is a new nature governed by a higher natural law which is rendered by Shakespeare as a world of just nature acting gently to all, the possible exception being Antigonus, but only because of Antigonus’ strict adherence to Leontes’ unnatural acts. Leontes brings the evil of Leontes’ own city-state with him as an intruder into the higher nature of Bohemia. As Hannah Arendt says, “Wherever you go, you will be a polis” (Arendt 1998, 198). As for Autolycus, things could be worse. Though he invades this nature, he is not revolting when held up against Leontes. Nature has its thorns with which to contend. Julie Lupton writes about Shakespearean phenomenologies of hospitality, saying, “Manners are war by other means, and hospitality both is and is not labor, manifesting the emotional and physical expense of all household efforts by transforming them into social gift and public offering while reminding all the participants of their real costs” (J. R. Lupton 371). Is this then Leontes’ grand scheme? Is he trying to wage war upon Bohemia, to dictate for that natural order a perversion of nature that he has created with inhospitality? Sicilia is performing a ‘role unnatural.’ As Lupton writes,

Hospitality, I argue, is at once a theater of persons and a theater of things; indeed, it hosts these two dimensions of phenomenological access and asks them to break bread together. The ritual scripts, spatial routines, object inventories, and physical settings of hospitality integrate the sensible and the ethical platforms, as well as the historical and transcendental aspects of the phenomenological project, within a single environment of entertainment. Hospitality is a sequence of sociosymbolic actions that links the world of objects and the provisional persons who tend them (including women, servants, and children) to dramatic action. Phenomenological analysis calls us to unlock (not simply to analyze, but also to perform and reinvent) the affective labor, self-disclosing risks, and creaturely dependencies disclosed by hospitality events as they are themselves invited to
appear in the local traffic patterns and transcendental convocations of Shakespearean

drama (J. R. Lupton 367).

The phenomenon of inhospitality in The Winter’s Tale is a performance of hospitality and
inhospitality. Leontes’ unnatural ‘war’ against Bohemia is dually a war with hospitality, a
perversion of the proper host, an attack on the proper guest. An attack on a guest is an attack
against nature, this higher nature wherein, since the Greek thinkers, we now dwell. By giving us
this duality of Sicilia and Bohemia (“…you / shall see, as I have said, great difference betwixt
our Bohemia / and your Sicilia” Archidamus reminds us in the opening line of the play),
Shakespeare foils the unnatural autocrat by producing a natural democrat, and holding the two up
together on stage for us to compare.

Felicity Heal, in her book, Hospitality in Early Modern England, writes that,

…the social interchange that is the guest/host relationship demands that both parties
behave according to learned conventions about their roles. In some cases, the guest’s role
may be the more difficult: as the outsider he has obligations to accept the customary
parameters of his host’s establishment (Heal 192).

As an outsider, Polixenes performs according to his role of guest. Leontes, as host, has not
learned his role as host, has forgotten, has only partially learned/forgotten, or is ignoring
hospitable mores on purpose. Leontes simply cannot seem to behave “according to learned
conventions.” Heal mentions that the guest must “accept the customary parameters of his host’s
establishment, and here we have a host who cannot accept these very parameters. Would a man
alter the parameters of hospitality set down since the Greeks and find impunity? How would
Leontes be able to believe he could? In any valuation, Polixenes is the good guy here. He does
more than is expected of him, suffers much, escapes quietly, and is restored when Leontes
eventually begs his forgiveness. Heal writes,

perhaps the greatest value that a guest could display was…that of thankfulness; this
would be expressed to a private host in a cheerful willingness to do him favours in return,
and to a public host, in the case of an alien received by the commonwealth, in observation
of the laws and a willingness to accept any obligation laid upon him (Heal 194).

Polixenes does indeed, however tentatively “accept any obligation.” He is put to the test in a
sudden, shocking manner. He is cheerful when he could be otherwise, patient when he could be
planning revenge. Heal speaks of the rules of gratitude for a guest, such as those called for by
Henry Peacham, saying, “Others…had earlier advised on the correct postures of gratitude for a
guest, but few of the civility writers seem to have endorsed the full ritualism of the Italian
approach. Rather, there was a concern not to challenge the spontaneity of hospitality…” (Heal
198). While we will not delve into the different approaches Italian hospitality assumes and how
they contrast with Jacobean hospitality, it is enough that Shakespeare saw this Italian polis-
world’s customs fascinating enough to set his play here in the not-to-distant-exotic, the natural-
unnatural.

In conclusion, we sought to show evidence supporting the claim that Leontes believed
Polixenes had violated his hospitality, his wife, his kingdom and himself, how Leontes acted
monstrously and unnaturally in a repayment of monstrous action on the part of Polixenes.
Monstrosity, we saw, was not kingly, not natural, and through examining the origins of the gift,
we set out to show how Leontes challenged the foundations of the gift and of hospitality. Close
reading of the play, its language, and how it traces the breach of hospitality provided us with a
way to define and assign meaning to the actions of Leontes, Hermione and Polixenes, this royal triangle.

Finally, I want to close my discussion with a look at poor, misguided Antigonus, simply following orders to take a baby to justice on the wild Bohemian shores of the natural world. Though the play ends comically (except for poor Mamillius), we shall end here with the tragedy “in media”: Though Leontes’ command was for natural justice, the true natural justice prevails in the form of one stage direction: “Exit, pursued by a bear” (3.3.57). The judge presiding on the correct application of justice is a bear. There are few consequences we could imagine that would be more natural, albeit unexpected. Our humble bear seems to be the natural judge, bringing justice back into balance in the way nature dictates. If the human will not bend to nature, nature will break the human. Here on the green shores far away from Leontes and his court control, nature is free to do as she wills, and as representative of the polis, Antigonus is the embodiment of the polis unsheltered from wild animus, and as such Shakespeare chooses to display nature’s enmity with Leontes, who is a natural human who has transformed himself into a kind of unnatural king—a kind of unjust bear of his own making. Leontes is not a bear, however, he assumes bearishness, a bestial mode, violates hospitality, and breaks harmony between himself and Bohemia. In so doing, he also does harm to himself personally and as a head of a kingdom, Sicilia.

I set out in this chapter wanting to talk about communities, and since I wish to talk about them, I want to talk about hospitality. Hospitality is the amalgam word used to describe niceties done by a host for a guest. But hospitality’s function is much greater: it is the social glue that holds community together. Without it, community dissolves, and we are reduced to individuals in the act of seeking a community that cannot exist, free agents who, without community, are
enslaved to our individual quest of meeting our needs outside of community, which becomes untenable. Individuals meet their needs by working amongst other individuals. Individuals working together is what forms community. The “how” is my concern in this exploration. And within that “how” are guidelines about how and how not to go about working together that I claim are “hospitable rules.” I know of few persons who, academics in particular, who like rules per se, but given that communities are important, and given that it is important to maintain these communities, hospitality must be played out, performed if you will, in a certain way to show the other individuals in the community that they are important as persons and as vital members of the community. Otherwise, we do not show individuals that they are vital, they cease to feel valued, and they break with the community. But these breakaways, these detachments do not forget why they broke with the original community, nor do they easily forgive; it is absolutely important to keep this break from occurring in the first instance if we are to have a strong community.

The problem immediately inherent in WT, is the king problem, with which we can do nothing: Shakespeare wrote the play with the King of Sicilia as protagonist, and we read it as such. Since no one in WT but perhaps an armed insurrection can change the king (and change the king’s decrees in the process), we are left with the inhospitable acts of Leontes, who not only breaks our rule of hospitality (do not accuse a guest of wrongdoing publicly), but indeed accuses nearly everyone of something: Hermione of sex with his guest, his son of being the spawn of the guest, and Camillo his faithful lord of treasonous behavior. No one, short of killing him, can stop him. Yet, it is Hermione’s close friend Paulina who acts as mediator, and it is her work through the course of the play that ultimately brings Leontes his wife back. In so doing, Paulina becomes the agent of hospitality in the play, the one who gives the gift of reconciliation. And so this is the
problem: an inhospitable king. The unsaid question then becomes for the community: “How can we change the king?” and “How long must we be patient in waiting for him to change?” The other characters set to work on this, chiefly Paulina, but that alteration lasts a full sixteen years.\textsuperscript{49}

No reasonable person would read WT and come away feeling that there is no problem with community. The play is not a comedy but a romance, a fanciful undertaking. Yet even romance has its problems, thus the humorous resolution to the problem is performed for us, community is reconciled, and all is as well as can possibly be after what Leontes has done. In WT there is a problem. There are many problems, and it is that assumptions about hospitality have not been adhered to. What is broken is community due to Leontes’ inhospitality. Therefore, with such a sense of brokenness, of breach, this presupposes that some larger system of ethics exists. I wish to call attention to these systems, giving words to the sentiments that exist in a reading of a play, even if in so doing, my methods seem obvious once explained. The god term, the term underlying all of these preceding claims is hospitality, rooted in a humanist idea, rooted in social bonds, and without its performance, no community may long remain.

\textsuperscript{49} Greene’s Pandosto, the inspiration for WT, has Bellaria (Shakespeare’s Hermione) actually die.
Works Cited


