

November 2014

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Recommended Citation

Simon-Jones, Lindsey (2011) "Lexical Dichotomy and Ethics in Macbeth," *Selected Papers of the Ohio Valley Shakespeare Conference*: Vol. 4 , Article 8.

Available at: <http://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/spovsc/vol4/iss2011/8>

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Lexical Dichotomy and Ethics in *Macbeth*

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Medieval and early modern authors often suggested a relationship between the external and the internal, frequently implying that a person's or character's physical appearance signified their internal disposition. Authors/playwrights were particularly interested in the ways that negative qualities might be displayed on the body (perhaps most famously Othello's race or Richard III's deformity). Similarly, Tudor playwright Richard Edwards suggested that language might function as an external marker of a character's "nature." In his prologue to *Damon and Pithias* (1571), he noted that an author must "frame eche person so, / That by his common talke, you may his nature rightly know" (15-16). Of course, many of the earliest English playwrights manipulated regional dialects as markers of difference on the stage. Medieval morality plays, for example, "used it for a variety of purposes. In the moralities it [dialect] tended to be used for the wicked characters who were often portrayed as grotesque and hence as comic" (*Non-Standard* 73). Dialects associated with the southwestern regions of England were stigmatized in the earliest plays, but this regionalization had shifted to representations suggestive of northern dialects by the end of the sixteenth century (*Non-Standard* 76-77). However, stage dialects are notoriously difficult to localize, and as Paula Blank suggests, "Renaissance authors were not primarily concerned with verisimilitude, but rather with making difference" (167); what mattered, then, was not the linguistic accuracy of the "common" speech, but rather the creation of an aural and linguistic Other.

We know that Shakespeare could do dialect. *Henry V*, for example, exhibits Shakespeare's skill at portraying French, Welsh, and Scottish dialects, but in *Macbeth*, a play acutely dependent upon the image and people of Scotland, we do not find, even in the lowliest of characters, any portrayal of a Scottish dialect. Attributing the absence to King James' own dialect, ancestral ties to the character of Banquo, and desire to represent his reign as a unification of Scotland and England, Christopher Highley demonstrates convincingly that "Shakespeare had little choice but to shun the use of extensive Scots in *Macbeth*" (57). Indeed, stigmatizing the Scottish dialect had been politically dangerous for other playwrights and acting companies. Ben Jonson and George Chapman, for example, were jailed after their portrayal of the Scotsman in *Eastward Ho!* offended Sir John Murray in 1605, and, according to Sir Edward Hoby, after a 1606 Blackfriars' performance of *The Isle of Gulls* which included disparaging representations of Scottish speakers, "sundry [men] were committed to Bridewell" (qtd. in Highley 56). Highley concludes that there is no

representation of linguistic difference in *Macbeth* and that the portrayal of Scotsmen works to fulfill a “unionist fantasy” (57) while simultaneously suggesting that those differences can never be fully contained, as demonstrated by the “stubbled” and “stammering” (62) speech of the witches.

Although there is no overt use of dialect in the play, I would like to suggest that we do find linguistic difference in *Macbeth*, but that rather than turning to the tired, trite and (perhaps) criminal uses of dialectic difference to portray a character’s morality or vice, Shakespeare instead relies on a far more sophisticated portrayal of linguistic difference in this play: the juxtaposition of Latinate/Old French and Germanic/Old English lexicons. Consider, for example, Banquo’s and Lady Macbeth’s opening words upon Duncan’s arrival Inverness in the below selection where terms of Old English or Germanic origins are indicted with bold font and terms of Old French/Anglo Norman or Latinate origins are indicated by italic font:

BANQUO: **This guest of summer,**
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven’s breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle;
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate. (1.6.3-10)

.....
LADY MACBETH: *All our service*
In every point twice done and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house. For those of old,
And the late dignities heaped up to them,
We rest your hermits. (1.6.14-20)

Each passage marks the first time that either character has any significant interaction with Duncan after hearing (or hearing of) the witches’ prophecies. Lady Macbeth has already unveiled her tyrannous plans; Banquo’s reaction has been demonstrably more measured. The juxtaposition of these two characters’ responses is, I believe, reflected in their use of language. As the contrasts between bold and italic fonts in the passage shows, Banquo’s description relies more heavily on complex Latinate vocabulary, designed to elevate his status and to mark him as somehow more noble or kingly; while, Lady Macbeth’s lexicon is more predominantly based on terms of Old English or Germanic origins which

distance her from and mark her as an unsuitable heir to the throne. More specifically, 30% of Banquo's terms are derived from Latinate roots, compared to only 20% in Lady Macbeth's speech. In addition, Banquo's Latinate terms are grouped together more densely; every line (except the first) has at least two—and as many as four—Latinate derivatives, while Lady Macbeth's Latinate terms are far more sporadic, often occurring only once in a line.

The relationship between English and its Latin-derived, continental contemporaries is a long and complicated one. Historically, those languages we now call classical were held in the highest regard. Indeed, as Albert Baugh and Thomas Cable note, during the early Middle Ages, “the vulgar tongues seemed immature, unpolished, and limited in resource. It was felt that they could not express the abstract ideas and the range of thought embodied in the ancient languages” (199). However, the later Middle Ages saw a number of linguistic campaigns spreading across much of the Western world, asserting the excellence of vernacular languages for literary and official use. In England, the vernacular was not only in competition with the Latinate authority of the Church and classical literature, but also with the French authority of the aristocracy. Following the social and political upheaval of the 11th century, French became the language of prestige and power in England (Kibbee 27-28), serving, as Norman Blake has argued, two functions: “in one form as a language of bureaucracy, and in its other form as a language of literary excellence” (*A History* 133). Although a 1362 statute required the use of English in all courts of law, records indicate that both Latin and French maintained a strong hold on all court proceedings throughout the 14th century. John H. Fisher has documented the move in English parliamentary documents from French (and Latin) to English in the mid-15th century, citing only six petitions written in English in 1422, compared with 35 in French and 5 in Latin. Two decades later, English far outstrips both French and Latin; in 1444, there were 34 petitions in the native language but only 8 in French and 9 in Latin (880 n. 37). Despite the adoption of English as the language of Parliament in the 14th century and its relative dominance toward the end of the 15th century, English scholars and authors still struggled to assert the validity and eloquence of their language more than a century later.

Debates about the primacy of English and anxieties about its reception in the 16th century clearly show that languages of Latinate pedigree were still often perceived to be superior to English. George Pettie, for example, criticizes a public preference for Latinate languages in his translation of Steven Guazzo's *The Ciuile Conuersation* (1581) and complains: “There are some others yet who wyll set lyght by my labours,

because I write in English: and those are some nice Trauaylours, who return home with such quæsie stomackes, that nothyng wyll downe with them but *Frenche, Italian, or Spanishe...*” (iir). George Puttenham strives to demonstrate in 1589 that “our language [is] no less copious pithie and significatiue than theirs” (3) and Richard Carew is still fighting the same battle in 1614 when he sets out to “prooue that our English language, for all, or for most, is matchable, if not preferable, before any other in use at this day” (37). The charges against the English language of greatest significance to this study are of its brutishness. Richard Mulcaster desires in 1582, for example, to elevate English through education, “whereby we our selues also shall seme not to be *barbarous*, eue by mean of our tung, seeing fair speche is som parcell of praise, and a great argument of a well ciuilled peple” (50, emphasis mine). Pettie, too, concedes the poor standard in which English was held, suggesting that some readers disdain works in their own language “For they count it barren, they count it *barbarous*, they count it unworthy to be accounted of” (iiv, emphasis mine). The problem, then, is not simply that English was out of fashion or that there was a preference for the languages of the continent, but that the use of English suggests a debasement, a lack of civility, a kind of *barbarism*.¹

I do not mean to suggest here that Shakespeare felt his language to be barbarous. Indeed we see quite the opposite, for example, in *Henry V*'s “‘Englishing’ of Katherine’s body...in which the princess translates her own body, part by part, into the language of her conqueror” (Blank 166), or more generally in the second tetralogy where, as David Steinsaltz’s claims, Shakespeare “re-imagined old battles once fought with massed pikes and ranks of longbows upon the fields of France, as linguistic battles fought simultaneously with words and lines of iambic pentameter upon the tongues of Frenchmen and Englishmen, Frenchwomen and Englishwomen” (331). Nevertheless, I believe the data I have amassed shows that the language of *Macbeth* plays on deep-seated and long-held linguistic prejudices which suggested that, in some cases, the use of a particular kind of English (particularly in its archaic and Germanic forms) might imply one is unsuited for royalty and kingship.

1. Methods

The development of the Digital Humanities has opened some new and exciting doors for the study of Early Modern culture and drama. Michael Witmore, current Director of the Folger Library, for example, has recently begun using a digital lexical analysis tool, Docuscope, (developed by Carnegie Mellon’s English department) for computer-aided analysis

that broadens our understanding of Shakespearian texts. Although this study does not draw on the use of any new software, it does apply some of the techniques of Digital Humanities to the study of *Macbeth*. It began with a digital text of "The Globe Edition" of the Works of William Shakespeare edited by William George Clark and William Aldis Wright (1864) accessed via UVA's library website. The digital text was cross-referenced with *The Norton Shakespeare* (2nd edition, Greenblatt et al eds.) and any significant differences were tabulated and collated. What remained was a stable, digital text from which to begin the linguistic analysis.²

This project developed out my impression that even though the Macbeths were not using a dialect (Scottish or otherwise), their language was still somehow different than that of Malcolm and Duncan. I identified passages that seemed to stand out (like the arrival of Duncan to Inverness), and determined that the difference might be etymological. In order to understand fully the extent to which the Macbeths' speech patterns deviated from standard practices in the play, I undertook a project of statistical analysis. By copying each character's lines from the UVA website to a Microsoft Word file, and using the "Find/Replace" utility to convert each space to a line break, I compiled an expansive, comprehensive list of every term used by a particular character, in a particular scene. The list was then copied to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and multiple instances of terms were removed using the "Eliminate Duplicates" utility. Plurals, names, places, past/future tense verbs had to be removed manually. In the end, the Excel workbook was divided into seven different worksheets: Acts 1-5 including a column devoted to the terms used by each relevant character in that Act, a combined list comprising all of the terms used by each character, and a final sheet containing all of the terms used by all of the characters in all five acts (this list contained nearly 2000 unique terms).

Using the master list, the etymology for each term was ascertained from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED Online). Terms were categorized by their origins, with an emphasis on terms of either Old English/Germanic or Old French (Anglo Norman)/Linate roots; terms of unknown origins were noted but eliminated from the list and the few terms of Scandinavian or Scottish derivations were noted but not included in this study. Terms of OE/G or OF/L were then color-coded for quick, visual analysis. Prefixes and suffixes of different origins from the root term were noted, but left out of the analysis at this time. Hybrid words like "gentleman" and "prithce," which combine roots from both languages but stand as a single term, were tallied as half a word in the

final totals, while hyphenates like “temple-haunting” were counted as two unique entries.

2. Results and Discussion

Thus far, a preliminary etymological assessment of the play has been completed, providing a “big picture” look at the usage of G/OE vs. L/OF terms in the entire text. Table 1 depicts the overall findings for this study; terms of G/OE etymology are labeled in bold and L/OF in italic fonts.

Table 1: Comparison of **G/OE** and *L/OF* terms in *Macbeth*

	Duncan	Malcolm	Macbeth	Lady Macbeth	Banquo	Witches and spirits	% Avg
Act 1	68/32%	70/30%	67/33%	62/38%	71/29%	88/12%	71/29%
OE terms	131	40	220	211	128	143	
<i>OF terms</i>	62	17	110	128	52	20	
Total terms	193	57	330	339	180	163	
Act 2		73/27%	69/31%	73/27%	72/28%		73/27%
OE terms		33	238	113	87		
<i>OF terms</i>		12	105	41	34		
Total terms		45	343	154	121		
Act 3			63/37%	68/32%	89/11%	75/25%	74/26%
OE terms			399	130	75	112	
<i>OF terms</i>			235	60	9	38	
Total terms			634	190	84	150	
Act 4		67/33%	73/27%			76/24%	73/27%
OE terms		315	186			217	
<i>OF terms</i>		154	68			67	
Total terms		469	254			284	
Act 5		75/25%	74/26%	92/8%			80/20%
OE		117	331	79			

terms

<i>OF</i>	39	119	7
<i>terms</i>			
Total	156	450	86
terms			

Preliminary, statistical analysis deals only with the percentages of terms used (highlighted rows) and shows means of 73.25% (G/OE) and 26.75% (L/OF). Standard deviation (STD), “a common measure of the scatter or dispersion of a set of measurements, equal to the square root of the mean of the squares of the deviations” (OED) was also calculated to determine the normal/expected range of data and to identify percentages that fall outside of the normal/expected range. The STD for this table is 7.85%. Thus, G/OE usages at or above 77% and at or below 69% are significant by one-half of one standard deviation; percentages of L/OF usages are significant to the same degree at or above 31% and at or below 23%. In Act 1, the table demonstrates that nearly all of the main characters’ terminology is statistically significant. Admittedly, not all of the acts include such strong statistical significances (as is to be expected from a small sample pool). Nevertheless, a number of interesting trends are unveiled by comparing the usage percentages provided. Duncan only has speaking lines in the first act, so there is little room for growth or change; nevertheless his percentages of 68% OE and 32% OF provide a statistically significant baseline for “noble” characters. The witches use a very high number of G/OE terms in Act 1 (88%) and maintain a high average of 75% and 76% in the following acts. Their language stands in stark contrast to the other characters in Act 1 whose language is conversely high in L/OF terms (Malcolm’s use is just barely above the ½ STD mark at **70/30%** rather than the necessary **69/31%**). The contrast between the witches and the other speakers in Act 1 calls attention to the etymological and linguistic difference and sets the stage for more complex etymological relationships in the rest of the play, substantiating the hypothesis that characters who are more noble use a higher concentration of Latinate terminology while lowlier characters rely more heavily on G/OE lexemes.

As important as speakers like Duncan and the witches might be for an overall understanding of the play, far more interesting are the inferences that might be drawn from speakers whose vocabularies shift over the course of the play. Lady Macbeth’s lexicon is particularly significant; its high percentage of L/OF terms in Act 1 (38%) reflects her attempts to seem royal and noble in her interactions with Duncan. Comparing her vocabulary in Act 1 with the same in Act 5, we can see a

drastic conversion. There is a similar, although not nearly as dramatic, range in Banquo's use of L/OF terms, which ranges from 29-11%. In the case of Banquo, Acts 1 and 2 are relatively stable (although they are on the high side of the average), but Act 3 shows a marked drop in the percentage of L/OF terms used. Similarly, Macbeth's use of G/OE terms increases over the course of the play, with the exception of a dip in Act 3. In Act 1, Macbeth uses 67% G/OE and 33% L/OF; those numbers increase to 69/31% in Act 2, drop significantly to 63/37% in Act 3, then climb again in acts 4 and 5 to 73/27% and 74/26% respectively. Malcolm's vocabulary is slightly more perplexing. Acts 1 and 4 show a relatively high percentage of L/OF terms; however, acts 2 and 5 demonstrate a higher frequency of G/OE roots. Looking at the overall totals (averages from all speakers), it is clear that the use of terms of Germanic derivation increases over the course of the play from 71% in Act 1 to 80% in Act 5.

While these figures are persuasive, it is possible that they do not tell the whole story. Readers might suspect, for example, that there are simply more G/OE terms describing death and destruction available to Shakespeare and that the changes in etymology might simply be a result of subject matter and, thus, are more coincidental than deliberate. In that case, it might make sense to find higher concentrations of G/OE terms near the end of the text, wherein we find increased incidences of violence and murder. A close examination of topically and proportionally analogous passages, wherein Macbeth contemplates a planned or past murder (See Appendix A), then, eliminates thematic variables and might indicate whether the increased use of G/OE terms is also discernible in a more controlled environment. Table 2 demonstrates the findings of this comparison.

Table 2: Comparison of G/OE and L/OF terms in selections (Appendix A)

	G/O E terms	G/OE %	L/OF terms	L/OF %	x 4 L/OF per line	x 3 L/OF per line	x 2 L/OF per line	x 1 L/OF per line	x 0 L/OF per line	Double Terms
Act 1	182	84%	34	16%	3.5%	14%	14%	36%	32%	14%
Act 2	199	85%	35	15%	0	7%	38%	24%	31%	14%
Act 3	208. 5	84%	39.5	16%	3%	9%	25%	34%	28%	6%
Act 4	91	87%	14	13%	0	0	30%	46%	23%	0
Act 5	175	90%	20	10%	0	4%	16%	36%	44%	11%

The first four columns include the precise number and the percentage of total for both G/OE and L/OF terms in each of these selections. As was suspected, there is an increased use of G/OE terminology in the passages dealing with murder and regicide. In the Act 1 selection, for example, we see an 84/16% split in Macbeth's vocabulary; whereas, in the act as a whole (Table 1) we see a 66.5/33.5% split. Nevertheless, the percentage change in these thematic selections is nearly identical to the change in Macbeth's overall percentages from Table 1 (6% and 7% respectively). The numbers in Table 2 further suggest that the ratio of Germanic to Latinate terms in these passages remains relatively stable in the selections from Acts 1 through 3 but changes more drastically in Acts 4 and 5, and this is precisely the trend we see in Table 1 where Macbeth's G/OE usage percentages are in the mid-60s in Acts 1 -3 and climb into the mid-70s in Acts 4-5.

Although the overall balance of OE/G and OF/L terms in Acts 1 through 3 is relatively stable, a closer look at the way that the terms are used reveals changes that demonstrate a gradual dissipation and diffusion of OF/L terminology. Data from Act 1 indicates 17.5% of the lines contain three or four unique Latinate terms (3.5% and 14%, respectively), while a similar number of Latinate terms occurs at a rate of only 7% in Act 2 and 12% in Act 3. There is also a documented reduction in the instances of doubled Latinate terms—*poisoned chalice*, or *Vaulting ambition* in 1.7—as the play progresses (as shown in the final column). In Acts 4 and 5, on the other hand, there are more numerous instances of lines with only a single term of Latinate origin or none at all. Finally, in 5.1, 44% of the lines are entirely devoid of Latinate derivatives. In effect, the quantity of Latinate terms decrease, and those that remain are more widely dispersed in the passage; this diffusion places greater emphasis on the Germanic derivations and establishes a more obvious lexical change in Macbeth over the course of the play. Because each of these selections relies on the same character contemplating (either planning or recalling) murder, the changes in vocabulary cannot be ascribed to a thematic variable. Instead, they suggest a change in the portrayal of Macbeth. Given the close relationship between Duncan with L/OF terms and the alignment of the witches with G/OE terms (as well as Lady Macbeth's significant increase in G/OE lexemes in Act 5), it seems clear that the new emphasis on G/OE in Macbeth's language marks him as increasingly unstable and unfit for his kingship.

3. Conclusion

In Act 2, Macbeth fittingly proclaims, “Renown and Grace is dead” (2.3.90). More than merely mourning the murder of Duncan, his sentiment aptly reflects the linguistic dichotomy that will develop in the play. Renown and grace, both Latinate derivatives—signifying Duncan, the Macbeths’ morality, and the Latinate lexicon more generally--will, in fact, wither (it is likely too extreme to suggest that the language dies altogether). In the future, I hope to be able to show that there is an inverse linguistic relationship, wherein an increased use of Latinate languages signals a greater sense of gracefulness and regality. In addition, there are yet some unanswered questions in this study. The sample from Duncan, for example, is too small to be meaningful, the data from Malcolm is inconclusive, and a complete analysis of all of the characters may not support the trends suggested by this smaller sample. Nevertheless, what this study has shown is that, although the characters of *Macbeth* do not have phonetic dialects, they do demonstrate a kind of lexical dialect. Moreover, the data suggest that a character’s linguistic choices might reflect his/her overall character, marking ethical and moral Otherness through language. In this way, Shakespeare reworks the medieval trope of poor or sub-standard speech patterns signifying poor or sub-standard morality into something far more subtle and far more complex.

Notes

1. “Barbary” and related forms are used in the 16th century as descriptors for languages that are not Latin or Greek, but the terms are also used to suggest savagery and brutality, as can be seen in Shakespeare’s use of the term in *Othello*’s “barbarous brawl” (2.3.155) or *King Lear*’s “Most barbarous, most degenerate” (4.2.42).
2. Differences were not of statistical significance; however, only two texts were examined. In the future, a close examination of different editions might yield some interesting changes in the data set.

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Appendix A

1.7

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the *assassination*
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other (1-28)

2.1

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one halfworld
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates

*Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
 Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace.
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
 And take the present horror from the time,
 Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives* (33-64).

3.2

**We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:
 She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
 Remains in danger of her former tooth.
 But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
 Ere we will eat our meal in fear and sleep
 In the affliction of these terrible dreams
 That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
 Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
 Than on the torture of the mind to lie
 In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
 After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
 Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
 Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
 Can touch him further** (15-28).

**There's comfort yet; they are assailable.
 Then be thou jocund.: Ere the bat hath flown
 His cloistered flight; ere to black Hecate's summons
 The shard-born beetle with his drowsy hums
 Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
 A deed of dreadful note** (40-45).

**Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
 Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
 Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
 And with thy bloody and invisible hand
 Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
 Which keeps me pale! Light thickens; and the crow
 Makes wing to the rooky wood:
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
 While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
 Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
 So, prithee, go with me** (46-57).

4.1

**Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
 The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
 Unless the deed go with it; from this moment
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be
 The firstlings of my hand. And even now,**

**To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
 The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
 Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
 This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
 But no more sights! -- Where are these gentlemen?
 Come, bring me where they are (160-172).**

5.10

**Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
 On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
 Do better upon them (1-3).**

**Of all men else I have avoided thee:
 But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
 With blood of thine already (4-6)**

**Thou lovest labour:
 As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
 With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:
 Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
 I bear a charmed life, which must not yield,
 To one of woman born (8-13).**

**Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
 For it hath cow'd my better part of man!
 And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
 That palter with us in a double sense;
 That keep the word of promise to our ear,
 And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee (16-22).**

**I will not yield,
 To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
 And to baited with the rabble's curse.
 Though Birnum wood be come to Dunsinane,
 And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
 Yet I will try the last. Before my body
 I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;
 And damned be him that first cries "Hold, enough!" (27-34).**