

MICRONATIONALIST THEMES IN EARLY
MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

A Thesis by

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The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts with a major in English.

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DEDICATION

To my son, David Lee Ferguson, my father,
Basil Lee Ferguson, my mother,
Alberta Zongker, the Microcon Organization,
and His Excellency President Kevin Baugh of
the Republic of Molossia

ABSTRACT

This thesis identifies and analyzes micronationalist themes in Early Modern English literature. The purpose of this thesis is to identify modern micronationalist themes in Early Modern English literature, primarily as evidenced by the works of William Shakespeare and John Donne. This work illustrates that, while modern concepts of micronationalism were absent in the Early Modern era, its underlying principles were familiar to these authors and expressed in their poems and plays. Analyses of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* and Donne's "A Valediction of Weeping" and "The Sunne Rising" demonstrate that both authors were familiar with and employed micronationalist themes in their writing. To illustrate this point, similarities between modern micronations and fictional depictions of such in the works of Shakespeare and Donne are emphasized.

Utilizing examples of actual micronations throughout history, this research presents evidence that micronationalist themes are evident in both authors' works, largely as a result of the emerging English nationalism of this era. It maintains that micronationalist themes in Early Modern English literature profoundly influenced the establishment of modern micronations. This is especially evident in regard to questions involving the supranational legitimacy of the Church, patriarchal doctrine, and egalitarianism, as well as the colonization of the Americas during this era.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. THE HISTORY OF MICRONATIONALISM: MIDDLE AGES TO THE PRESENT.....	1
II. SHAKESPEARE AND THE RISE OF ENGLISH NATIONALISM	7
III. MICRONATIONALIST THEMES IN AS YOU LIKE IT.....	16
IV. MAPS, COINS, AND DONNE’S PEDANTIC SUN	23
REFERENCES	34

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORY OF MICRONATIONALISM: MIDDLE AGES TO THE PRESENT

This thesis identifies and analyzes micronationalist themes in Early Modern English Literature, in particular, works by William Shakespeare and John Donne. To this end, micronationalism is examined and defined as a subset of the wider concept of nationalism itself. The histories of various micronations, from the Middle Ages to the present, are evaluated in regard to their relevance to literature authored by Shakespeare and Donne. The objective is to demonstrate that, although the term “micronationalism” was not coined until the late twentieth century, the works of both Shakespeare and Donne contain elements of this ideology.

As previously stated, the concept of micronationalism is a relatively recent notion. The earliest recorded use of the term first occurred in 1976. (Bongartz) Micronationalism can be understood as a subset of nationalism, which itself concerns the formation of political entities usually characterized by territory, a permanent population, a government, and the ability to interact with other states. Micronationalism specifically refers to diminutive political entities which mimic these characteristics of traditional, established states, but are largely unrecognized by the international community. Micronationalist claims to sovereignty are often based upon the declaratory theory of statehood formulated at the 1933 Pan-American Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States which maintains that political entities which claim to be states are entitled to self-determination irrespective of their recognition by other states. The essential difference between microstates (such as the Vatican, Liechtenstein, Monaco, and San Marino) and micronations is that the former are widely recognized by established, traditional states and various international organizations, whereas the latter are not. (Roth 124)

In contrast with traditional states, micronations usually assert sovereignty over much less extensive territory and are comprised of much smaller populations. The contrast between these two nationalistic entities often precipitates a sort of “chicken and the egg” debate regarding who begat who. Obviously, the modern nation-state is based upon and has evolved from smaller political and familial entities from the distant past: the nuclear family itself, the clan, the tribe, the first nascent towns and villages. However, most contemporary micronations have developed from (and are often dependent upon) established and powerful nation-states with rich and extensive histories.

The first documented use of the term “micronation” as it is presently understood appears in a *New York Times* article dated 28 March 1976 pertaining to the International Micropatrolological Society, an organization dedicated to the study of this phenomenon. (Bongartz) However, the origins of micronationalism predate the 20th century. Proto-micronationalist entities existed in Europe as early as the 11th century. One such proto-micronation is the Sovereign Military Order of Malta which was originally established by the Hospitallers of St. John in 1048. The Order of Malta is particularly noteworthy in that it is still currently in existence, but functions without a defined territory, foreshadowing the development of virtual or cyber micronations during the latter half of the twentieth century. The Order of Malta developed from the Knights Hospitallers, a medieval military order associated with the Holy See. This order was “originally founded to assist sick or injured Christian pilgrims . . . Papal bulls granted them certain rights, including territory.” Eventually, “the Hospitallers evolved into the ‘longest-lived, and most international’ of the twenty-odd religious-military orders which emerged out of the Medieval World of Latin Christendom” (Alessio and Villegas-Aristizábal 584).

The events and developments which first endowed the Order of Malta with legitimacy involved its having been recognized by the temporal and spiritual authorities of its time. The Order was recognized by the Holy See in 1113 after which time it developed into a military organization.

The Holy Land was lost to the West in 1291. Under the direction of the Vatican, the Order administered the Island of Rhodes, only to find itself once again without territory following the conquest of the island by the Ottoman Empire in 1523. By 1530, the Order had taken possession of Malta. The Order's dominance of Malta ended in 1798 when it was ousted by Napoleon's forces. Today the Order continues to function as a quasi-state completely without territory, excepting two buildings in Rome. However, unlike most unrecognized micronations which claim territory, the Order "maintains diplomatic relations with over 100 states, enters into international treaties, issues its own passports, and is granted" permanent observer status "in many international organizations, including the United Nations (UN)" (Allen and Prost. 175-176).

Bereft of land, the Hospitallers serve as an example of deterritorialized micronationalism. Another form of deterritorialized micronationalism is envisioned by proponents of "seasteading." In 2008, "The Seasteading Institute" (TSI) was founded by venture capitalist Peter Thiel (founder of PayPal) and Patri Friedman (grandson of economist Milton Friedman). The basic goal of TSI involves the colonization of the sea, both within and beyond territorial waters, by "building modular floating structures . . . within the zones of national jurisdiction—as well as the high seas." TSI maintains that "All land on earth is already claimed making the oceans humanity's next frontier" (Ranganathan 205-6). As a practical matter, however, in spite of TSI's having been in existence for fifteen years, no seasteading projects have ever been completed, which casts doubt on the feasibility of the concept.

Just as the Order of Malta inspired a variety of political entities to style themselves as sovereign nations in spite of their deterritorialized status, other micronations from this era demonstrated that states composed of even minimal territory are capable of sustaining their independence for centuries. The Republic of Cospaia is an example of such a nation. Located in northern Umbria close to the Tuscan border, "Cospaia is now a small hamlet in the Province of

Perugia.” In 1440, an error on a new map commissioned by the Papal States and Tuscany resulted in the exclusion of “a strip of land about half a kilometer wide, and Cospaia village found itself in a no man’s land.” Its inhabitants eagerly and swiftly declared their independence as the sovereign Republic of Cospaia thereby exempting themselves from taxation by Tuscany and the Papal States. Both Tuscany and the Papal States profited from lucrative duty-free business opportunities in the newly founded statelet. Unfortunately, this situation attracted a multitude of smugglers, leading in 1826 to an agreement between Rome and Florence to “put an end to the independence of Cospaia.” (Breschi 53) As Cospaia’s independence was maintained during his lifetime, it is quite probable that Shakespeare was aware of its existence or at least of other similar states in Italy, such as Seborga, Noli, Senarica, and Piombino.

The portrayal of the rustic band of exiles in *As You Like It* illustrates concepts which come into play when we examine micronationalist concepts in Shakespeare’s work. This is particularly true of North American micronations and other quasi-nationalistic entities established in the northeastern forests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These now defunct micronations are remarkably similar to the enclave depicted in Shakespeare’s Forest of Arden. One of the most notable of these was the short-lived Republic of Madawaska located on the Canada-U.S. border between the Province of New Brunswick and the State of Maine. The republic’s establishment was primarily due to the efforts of John Baker, an American who had been granted logging rights pertaining to a small and disputed tract of land on the border between the United States and Canada. At this time, the Canadian government asserted its authority over the region. On July 4, 1827, Baker, along with other American and French settlers, declared the region the independent Republic of Madawaska. A Madawaskan flag was designed and displayed, an act which particularly infuriated Canadian authorities. (Scott 44-45)

Hostilities culminated in the Aroostook War of February 1839, when forces of the Maine state militia seized the region in which Madawaska was located. Known regionally as the “Pork and Beans War,” its only casualty was a farmer’s pig which was inadvertently shot by one of the militiamen. Subsequent negotiations resulted in the division of Madawaska by the governments of New Brunswick and Maine. (Sprague 78-79) Just as Senior in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, was restored to his dukedom by his brother Federick, who had wrongfully usurped the title, Baker is still honored as a hero in the region and an annual festival celebrates the memory of the Republic of Madawaska (Rowell 7-8).

Perhaps the most widely-known and most successful contemporary micronation is the Principality of Sealand, which was founded in 1967 by Paddy Roy Bates, a former British army officer, fishing magnate, and pirate radio entrepreneur (Dennis 263). The site of his newly established principality was an abandoned World War II anti-aircraft gun platform, known as Fort Roughs. As the platform was located outside of territorial waters and had been abandoned, the British government forfeited any legal claim to it (Lyon, 640). Bates and his family landed on the platform and he declared himself head of state, taking the title of Prince and bestowing on his wife, Joan, the title of Princess.

In 1968, the British government ordered naval personnel to evict Prince Roy and his family from Sealand. These forces descended upon the principality reinforced by a Royal Maritime auxiliary vessel supported by helicopters. Members of the royal family resisted by firing warning shots and lobbing Molotov cocktails at the invaders (Dennis 266). Following this incident, Bates and his son were arrested by British authorities and charged with illegal possession of a firearm in connection with the failed eviction incident. The presiding judge in the case dismissed these charges, ruling that the alleged incident did not take place within the jurisdiction of the British courts (Lyon 641).

Prince Roy died in October of 2012 at the age of 91 in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex at which time his son Michael (who had already been appointed regent and head of state) assumed his father's title. Michael's mother, Princess Joan, died in March of 2016 (Urbina 2019). The principality has since engaged in various enterprises to generate revenue, including an abortive attempt to locate internet servers in Sealand and tentative plans to increase its territory by attaching floating platforms to the original structure, but most income is derived from the sale of postage stamps, coins, specie, and aristocratic titles. (Dennis 270) Of the principality's future, Prince Michael has commented that he "expects his descendants to preside over Sealand for many generations to come" (Lyon 656).

CHAPTER TWO

SHAKESPEARE AND THE RISE OF ENGLISH NATIONALISM

By necessity and tradition, micronationalist states are often closely associated with traditional, well established nations. (The tempestuous relationship between Great Britain and the Principality of Sealand is a particularly poignant example of this.) Traditional nation-states, as well as their micronationalist counterparts, have both looked to authors and poets to develop a canon which serves to define the essential characteristics of that state. For England, William Shakespeare was such a poet. As John Foster and Andrew Murphy have argued, he has remained “unchallenged as England’s national poet since at least the eighteenth century.” Shakespeare’s work was essential in formulating the English self-image which would see the nation eventually rise to the pinnacle of power, its vast influence encompassing the entire globe. Shakespeare also contributed to the study of emerging nationalistic concepts themselves by examining “in his plays, complex issues of state formation and dissolution; the merits and demerits of monarchies.” On the opposite side of the political spectrum, he studied the structure of republics and, in particular, the difficulties inherent in the establishment of multi-ethnic states. Through this process, he helped define the English sense of “. . . its internal and external others.” Such “internal and external others” are the forerunners of modern micronations in the West. These are groups and individuals who may not considered themselves truly integrated into the nationalist political entity that they are ostensibly a part of (Foster and Murphy 186). It is his examination of England’s “internal and external others” which demonstrates “that Shakespeare has continued to assert a profound influence over national identity discourses in Britain and beyond” (Foster and Murphy 187). Indeed, so many varieties of nationalist aspirations are represented in Shakespeare’s work that

“every form of nationalist or anti-nationalist has found something in Shakespeare to use, to repurpose or to critique” (Foster and Murphy 187).

Shakespeare's 1599 play *Henry V* includes one of Shakespeare's most prominent examples of nationalistic identity conflict in the conversation between the Welsh Captain Fluellen and his Irish counterpart, Captain McMorris (Shakespeare, III. iii, 1-85). During the course of their exchange, McMorris appears to be offended by Fluellen's remarks which are critical of his work in the tunnels beneath Halfleur, particularly when the Welshman makes statements referring to his Irish identity and the Irish nation itself. McMorris returns, “Of my nation! What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a basterd, and a knave, and a rascal. What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?” (III.iii, 66-8) McMorris also appears to feel that he has been slighted by Fluellen for being insufficiently loyal to the English cause as a result of his Irish nationality. However, it is certain that his defense of the Irish homeland and the Irish people themselves indicates that McMorris is not totally integrated into British society. This is hardly surprising given that Henry's multi-national force included Welsh, English, Irish, and Scottish soldiers some of whom may not have felt completely comfortable fighting for an ostensibly united Britain. The overarching and fundamental question posed by micronationalists and Shakespeare's McMorris is directly related to the defining characteristics of the nation-state and its citizens. Precisely what *is* a nation? This question is fundamental to *Henry V* and the legitimacy which many micronationalists seek, as well as the legitimacy of their traditional counterparts.

Henry's army itself is analogous to a micronation, or at least an extension of the larger nation from which it was formed. Indeed, most armies throughout history are essentially smaller versions of the state which they represent. The analogy is especially apt in this case as the English army finds itself surrounded by powerful enemies bent on its destruction, with no hope of aid from its mother nation. (Although very different in terms of scale and consequences, one is reminded of

Sealand's struggle for independence from Britain, the micronation from which it came.) Many aspects of life in Henry's camp are similar to the functions of a small state and anticipate some of the issues that typically arise as micronations develop, including the enforcement of discipline, the challenges of provisioning a group of people with only meagre resources available, and the determination of its troops and leadership to prevail and, in a sense, preserve its independence. There is also a distinction between those men serving in the army and those who remain behind in England, to the extent that the army is portrayed as an almost separate and particularly distinguished entity.

In Act III.vi, Henry rebukes the French herald who has delivered a demand that he negotiate with the French for his ransom, proclaiming that the inevitable defeat of the English army is assured and with that its identity as an independent entity will be lost. In addition, Henry's forces are greatly outnumbered by the French and many of his soldiers are ill. Not unlike the leaders of some micronations, Henry acknowledges his army's weaknesses, but remains defiant. To the herald Henry replies, "Go, therefore, tell thy master here I am;/ . . . My army but a weak and sickly guard:/Yet, God before, tell him we will come on" (III.vi, 153-56). In this instance, one is reminded of the dogged resistance of Madawaska's John Baker against overwhelmingly superior British Canadian forces or Paddy Bates' armed response to the attempt of British authorities to remove him and his family from Sealand.

The individual identity of the men in Henry's army contrasts with the state of the men who have remained in England, almost as though the two groups are of different nationalities. The first duty of the soldiers is to each other, not to their brethren who failed to accompany them to France. There is an egalitarian tone in the king's speech to his troops prior to the Battle of Agincourt, an assertion that they are fundamentally different than those at home on the other side of the Channel, even a suggestion that the most common foot soldier may attain noble status by virtue of his deeds

in service of his army's cause. No matter how base-born a soldier may be, the king contends that "This day shall gentle his condition:/And gentlemen in England now a-bed/Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not/here" (IV,iii, Line 63-5). The soldier, then, is not merely a citizen of the realm, but more importantly, a citizen of this particular army, an entity separate from the nation itself, indeed, a kind of "micronation."

Shakespeare's analysis of nationalist issues in *Henry V* demonstrates an interest in historical accuracy in regard to his portrayal of events. Certainly his depiction of Henry, events which transpire, and the contents of conversations in the play cannot be considered historically accurate in every respect. However, his use of documentation (as reliable as possible for his time) demonstrates that he intended to base his historical plays and his analysis of nationalistic themes upon verifiable primary sources. To this end, he based much of this play upon accounts available in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, as dependable a source of reliable historical accounts as one could find during the Early Modern era. Written by Raphael Holinshed, as well as other contributors, and first published in 1577, this document contains a great deal of material pertaining to actual events as portrayed in *Henry V*. Shakespeare consulted the *Chronicles* as source material for a number of his plays and "Such confidence in the absolute primacy of Holinshed as the source for each play has been expressed by many other scholars of authority." An example of Shakespeare's attention to historical detail is illustrated by Canterbury's speech advocating for war with France. Law observes that, in regard to *Henry V*, "All editors of the play note that Canterbury's speech in advocacy of the war follows Holinshed line for line, frequently word for word." Such attention to historical detail, although possibly plagiaristic, lends an air of legitimacy to Shakespeare's analysis of nationalist issues within this play (Law 38-39).

Maynard unequivocally posits that "The question of nationalism and national identity is at the heart of Shakespeare's history plays." However, it would be a mistake to cast him as an

uncritical champion of British nationalism or, as Maynard puts it, a myopic supporter of “Tudor political philosophy.” Conversely, in Shakespeare’s history plays, “the undercurrents of social unrest that remain unresolved . . . have given rise to the belief that these plays, whether consciously or unconsciously, are politically subversive” (Maynard, 981-982). Neither view tells the whole story. What *is* apparent is that Shakespeare deconstructs orthodox notions of traditional nationalism to demonstrate that these concepts are not as immutable as they may appear to many proponents of the modern nation-state. He accomplishes this in *Henry V* through repeated accounts of Henry’s appeals to the patriotism and commitment of his troops, thereby casting doubt on the concept of nationalistic solidarity. Henry must constantly remind them that they are a “band of brothers” united by nationalistic bonds. The tenuous notion of national unity is personalized and sanctified by Henry’s urgent appeal to his troops to “Cry—God for Harry! England! and Saint/George!” which identifies the nation with the person of the king and a divine Patron Saint (*Henry V* III.i, 34). All of this serves to emphasize Shakespeare’s belief that a nation is primarily a concept, not something tangible. This is entirely in keeping with micronationalist philosophy which often emphasizes the decidedly ambiguous nature of nationalistic concepts themselves.

Shakespeare demonstrates the chimeric quality of the nation-state in *Troilus and Cressida*, in contrast with his having celebrated the legitimacy of British nationalism in other works. Greenfield notes that, “If Shakespeare’s histories maintain an investment in some idea of national community, *Troilus and Cressida* works programmatically to reveal the nation as a collection of fictions” (Greenfield 181). Apart from the aforementioned exchange between Fluellen and McMorris, which seems to cast doubt upon the concept of a shared national identity among the English king’s troops, much of *Henry V* focuses upon the solidarity, inclusivity, and legitimacy of Britain as a distinct political entity. In contrast to *Henry V*, “In *Troilus and Cressida* . . . the

bastard Thersites speaks from a cosmopolitan, extranational perspective. During the climactic battle he cheers alternately for the Trojans and for the Greeks” (Greenfield 181-82).

In *Henry V*, the legitimacy and cohesiveness of the nation is extolled. In one of the play’s most moving passages the king emphasizes the exclusive quality of the nation, although confirming as well the fraternal bonds uniting his troops, referring to them as “We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;/ For he to-day who sheds his blood with me/ Shall be my brother” (*Henry V*, IV, III, 61-3). By contrast, Thersites rejects the implied fraternal bonds of nationhood. It is his very illegitimacy which “liberates him from the ideological claim of the nation, whose central trope imagines citizens as brothers” (Greenfield 182). In the same manner as micronationalist ideology challenges traditional concepts of the nation-state, this play’s “continuing power to disturb derives from its relentless attack on nationalism’s narratives, its tropes, its strategic amnesia, and its assumptions about human character and agency.” (Greenfield 182)

While Shakespeare could not have been familiar with contemporary micronationalist ideology, he must surely have been aware of the existence of diminutive self-governing entities in the Europe of his time. As we have seen, during various periods throughout the Middle Ages hundreds of such states came and went. In addition, modern concepts of the nation-state in general *were* developing during the Early Modern period and Shakespeare was undoubtedly very much aware of this as well. Indeed, as has been illustrated, Shakespeare himself contributed to modern concepts of the nation-state, particularly in regard to England. As a result of his contributions, it is clear that he analyzed aspects of this emerging nationalism and that his works reflect both its virtues and its defects. As has been illustrated at various points in this essay, nationalism writ large is based in some respects upon ill-defined criteria, much of which is noted by Shakespeare in the

works he produced. Such ill-defined criteria lead in part to the rise of contemporary micronationalist ideology itself.

In spite of Shakespeare's unfamiliarity with modern micronationalism, prototypical examples of this ideology were known during the Early Modern era. One such example involves the aforementioned Order of Malta, to which the island was ceded by the Emperor Charles V with the understanding that the Order would defend the entire archipelago "against the Turks and make it a 'bulwark of Christendom.'" In 1522, prior to this cession of Malta, the Knights of the Order "had been defeated by the Turks and were compelled to leave their fortress at Rhodes. They had lived in exile for eight years." The Turks did attempt to wrest Malta from the Order during the Great Siege of 1565, one year after Shakespeare's birth. "Many European powers followed the Great Siege . . . since the fall of Malta would make Sicily and the rest of Italy vulnerable to the Turks." While one cannot assume that Shakespeare was intimately familiar with the history of the Order of Malta, its geo-political significance as a bastion of the West in defense of Italy and, indeed, of European civilization itself, suggests that England was one of the many European powers keenly interested in the outcome of the Great Siege of 1565. Within Shakespeare's lifetime, a diminutive state deprived of its territory for almost a decade was able to reestablish itself in Malta. Shakespeare's Europe thus witnessed the rise of a successful "micronation," one which fundamentally impacted the entire continent. Moreover, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, written between 1596-98, was in part a response to *The Jew of Malta*, a popular play written by Christopher Marlowe during the Order's reign over the island (Panja 72-73). This alone suggests that Shakespeare likely maintained a passing familiarity with the Order and its history.

Shakespeare's analyses of and contributions to the study of nationalism are of particular significance because of the likelihood (as Greenfield suggests) that England began to develop such concepts earlier than most European countries. In any case, proto-nationalist notions were first

propagated by English Protestant authorities at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Concurrently, nationalistic concepts were reflected in references to the “state” and the “people” and became increasingly common in the burgeoning official bureaucracy of England. In addition, England’s abandonment of the supranational authority of Catholicism and a redirection of the loyalty of the people to the monarchy and toward allegiance to the nation itself contributed greatly to the development of British nationalistic concepts. Shakespeare’s participation in England’s development of a nationalistic self-image was enhanced by his role as a writer, actor, and shareholder in an official theatrical company, which placed him in an ideal position to observe these emerging nationalist sentiments firsthand (Greenfield 183).

As previously stated, the current meaning of “nationhood” as defined under international law requires a political entity to possess the essential qualities of “a permanent population; an effective government; a physical territory; the capacity to enter into relations with other States” and the somewhat vague requirement of “legitimacy as an independent State” (Lowe). Anderson offers a more philosophical definition (and one more suited to micronationalist ideology) when he states that, “In an anthropological spirit . . . I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” A nation’s limitations are most graphically illustrated by its physical borders, “beyond which lie other nations.” Anderson posits that the concept of national sovereignty developed “in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical realm.” The sovereignty of the nation, then, replaced the sovereignty of the monarchy. Perhaps one of the most salient of Anderson’s definitions of the nation is its existence primarily as an imagined community, specifically as “a deep, horizontal comradeship.” (Anderson, 5-7.) Such “imaginings” display the ephemeral and ambiguous nature of nationhood and bring into question its tangibility.

As a consequence, and to the extent that Shakespeare may have anticipated micronationalist ideology on some level, modern micronationalists largely maintain that a nation is comprised of agreed upon bonds between its citizens as much as it is upon a designated geographic area. This concept is graphically illustrated by the many diasporic nations throughout human history. Absent a designated territory, such “nations” exist only in the minds of those individuals who claim to be a part of them. Indeed, some modern micronations do *not* lay claim to a specific region. In any case, we may be certain that Shakespeare was familiar with these emerging concepts of nationalism in the Early Modern period and utilized them to incorporate proto-micronationalist themes into such work as *As You Like It*.

CHAPTER THREE

MICRONATIONALIST THEMES IN *AS YOU LIKE IT*

Perhaps the most identifiable micronationalist themes in *As You Like It* involve time and space. While much of the play also concerns themes such as love (as in the case of Silvius the shepherd who pines for Phoebe, although she is already enamored of Ganymede), gender fluidity (Rosalind's decision to disguise herself as a boy for her own safety), and the joy to be found in nature (as exemplified by the Forest of Arden), the consistent theme throughout concerns the contrast between life at court and life in the forest, precisely the contrast made by micronationalist entities between themselves and their traditional, established counterparts. Modern micronationalists run the gamut from mere hobbyists to genuine and determined secessionists but, most make a distinction of some kind between the states they themselves have established and the traditional states with which most of the world's population is familiar. Time and space, therefore, are circumstances which differentiate micronations from their larger, more powerful, and ostensibly more venerable neighbors.

In *As You Like It* events occur in rapid succession at both the beginning and end of the play. During most of the play events occur in a more languid fashion, although the various impersonations and comical romantic situations continue apace. Apart from the play's pace, however, one has the impression that life for the band of exiles and misfits in the forest is much more leisurely than at court. There is a sense that between the conflict and strife which characterizes the beginning of the play and the resolution that comes at its end (signified in part by not one, but four marriages and the restoration of the dukedom to Senior by his contrite brother Frederick) a notable pause takes place which allows the characters to contemplate their situations

without regard for deadlines or urgent matters with which they otherwise would have been preoccupied at court. The “micronation” which develops in the Forest of Arden is primarily the result of Senior’s exile. The deposed duke and his associates constitute a sort of “shadow court” in which Senior continues to exercise the authority he formerly held, although in a greatly diminished capacity.

So it is for the micronationalist, whether mere hobbyist or serious secessionist. One of the attractions of micronationalism is the opportunity to formulate one’s own agenda at one’s own pace irrespective of the demands of traditional nation-states, from which most modern micronations are created. The micronationalist in his sparsely populated state is free to pursue his own goals in his own time, just as the band of characters in the Forest of Arden are freed from the stifling decorum of the court and the pressure to “sweat but for promotion” under the yoke of officialdom (*As You Like it*, II, iii, 61). Rather than be enslaved by courtly demands beyond one’s power to alter, in the Forest of Arden as in the micronation, it is possible to “fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world” (I, i, 112-13). Rather than succumb to the temporal pressures inherent in systems and circumstances not of one’s own making, both the forest dweller and the micronationalist achieve a new appreciation of space, “a space in which to work things out” (Gardner 60). Like most modern micronationalists, Senior exercises his authority within the small forested enclave he claims and in which his own quasi-independent state has been established.

Further, a close reading of this passage confirms that, although Shakespeare was unfamiliar with modern micronationalist ideology, he does acknowledge the tradition of small independent political entities in English history by comparing Senior’s forest enclave with the legendary figure of Robin Hood and his band of outlaws. Of Senior, Charles remarks, “They say he is already in the forest of/Arden, and a many merry men with him; and/ there they live like the old Robin Hood of

England . . .” (I, i, 108-11). Thus, in *As You Like It*, Shakespeare presages the development of modern micronations as grounded in tradition in opposition to larger and more powerful nation-states. In addition, these passages suggest that the legitimacy of a micronationalist entity is not contingent upon the size of its population.

Time and space are complementary elements in both the Forest of Arden and the realm of the micronationalist. Although, as explained earlier, while some micronationalists do not lay claim to a particular geographical area, most do, and those who do not still think of themselves and their nations as distinct from others. In *As You Like It*, the suspension of a sense of urgency among the denizens of the forest and the resultant temporal deceleration is linked to the concept of space or, more specifically, geography. Snyder observes that, “The Forest of Arden is somewhere other, a ‘world elsewhere’: part of the dukedom, presumably, but beyond the courtly sphere of influence” (Snyder). This perspective is often reflected in micronationalist circles. For example, most modern micronations exist within the borders of larger traditional states, much as Senior’s enclave exists within the dukedom now claimed by his brother (Hobbs and Williams 71-74). As is the case in regard to Senior’s quasi-independent forest enclave, most modern micronationalists concede that, while they are geographically situated within their host nations (or as Snyder observes, presumably “part of the dukedom”) they are also outside of those nations’ “courtly sphere of influence” and are, in perception at least, “a world elsewhere” (Snyder).

There are similarities between Senior’s forest enclave and later micronations, especially those established in remote, forested areas. For example, the short-lived Indian Stream Republic (1832-1835) was established in an area along the United States-Canadian border between Quebec and New Hampshire. As is the case in regard to the area Senior claimed following his disputed deposition, the legal status of the Indian Stream region was unresolved at the time, resulting in its residents being subject to taxation by both the American and Canadian governments, an

inequitable situation similar to Senior's having lost his dukedom through illegitimate means. The establishment of the Indian Stream Republic, was a means by which its inhabitants protested the inequity of this double taxation (Showerman 239-240). In the same manner, Duke Senior claimed his "realm" in the Arden Forest to protest his unjust and illegal deposition from his dukedom.

Similarly, *As You Like It*, written in 1599, has been linked to social unrest in England during the 1590s. Chris Fitter specifically posits that this play reflects issues concerning vagrancy, the use and ownership of forested areas, and the widespread imposition of vestry values (which are manifested in a "hardening prosecutorial climate driven by oligarchic vestries.") The poor, in particular, were subject to "a new severity of class-control: an almost adversarial, policing relation to social inferiors, aggressively seeking to enforce . . . 'Puritan' values of industrious abstinence and righteous sobriety." Traditional recreational traditions, involving all classes in society, had fallen into disfavor among the elite. Fitter observes, "The old feastings, ales, and merry-makings had comprised 'shared recreational activity and neighborly identity': in which the poor had their rightful place. But now, in the name of public order, anything perceived as popular disorder . . . was to be extinguished: a project pointedly extending to festal pastime" (Fitter 2).

It is no mere coincidence that Duke Senior, Orlando, Touchstone, Rosalind, and the rest seek sanctuary in the Forest of Arden. Due to the "hardening prosecutorial climate" against the poor, vagrancy in the late 16th century was especially villainized. Acts of Parliament from 1597-98 "even decreed that the wandering destitute be dispatched to the galleys." (Galleys were sixteenth-century warships without sails which were propelled by a complement of oarsmen.) Many of the dispossessed and unemployed "sought forest and commons wastes where they might elude further catastrophes" (Fitter 10.) In *As You Like It*, in spite of the aristocratic backgrounds of some of its characters, all seek refuge in the forest in the same manner as the most impoverished of England's citizens. The play, "with its cast of malnourished cottager, bankrupt gentleman, starving vagrants,

scathing malcontent, and assorted political refugees takes pains to . . . evoke political ills . . . and counter-valuate harsh contemporary attitudes . . . *As You Like It* becomes discernibly a protest play” (Fitter 1).

Herein lies yet another micronationalist theme in *As You Like It*. As demonstrated by the history of the Indian Stream Republic, for example, it is common for new political entities to be created in response to perceived injustices perpetrated by an older traditional state. In the case of the Indian Stream Republic, this injustice involved the double-taxation by the United States and Canada to which its citizens were subjected. Although, the population of the republic did not necessarily consist of exiles, political refugees, vagrants, or insolvent persons, its citizens sought to maintain their independence in a region free from the constrictions of an established political order which, either through neglect or malevolence, failed to recognize their inalienable rights and dignity as human beings. The same may be said for the fictional citizens of the Forest of Arden. Whether impoverished commoner or exiled aristocrat, every member of this sylvan band is the victim of an injustice perpetrated by a more powerful political entity.

Some modern micronations are largely focused on gender and sexual identity issues, a concern also explored in *As You Like It*. One of these is the Gay and Lesbian Kingdom of the Coral Sea located on Cato Island off of the northeast coast of Australia. (Under international law, Cato Island is considered an external overseas Territory of Australia.) It was founded in 2004 in response to the Marriage Amendment Act passed by the Australian Parliament which prohibited same-sex marriage. Over the course of its brief existence, the kingdom declared war on Australia, though no hostilities were ever recorded. The kingdom was dissolved in 2017 after the Parliament of Australia passed a law legalizing same-sex marriage (Lattas, 59-71). Other micronations associated with gender and sexual identity issues include the Principality of Urania and the Ambulatory Free States of Obsidia. Like the micronationalist community, the Forest of Arden “. . .

is a place to test out poses and hypotheses: to take on a different role or position . . . to see how it feels or find out what can be learned from a perspective that is not your habitual one” (Snyder).

Issues similar to those which motivated the founders of the Gay and Lesbian Kingdom of the Coral Sea are also evident in *As You Like It*, which, for example, involves possible inferences of bisexuality concerning the relationship between Celia and Rosalind, in addition to other sexual identity and gender fluidity concerns. In the first act there is discussion between Charles and Oliver in regard to whether or not Rosalind will share in her father’s banishment. Charles dismisses such a possibility, saying, “Oh, no; for the Duke’s daughter her cousin so loves her, being/ever from their cradles bred together . . . and no less beloved of her/uncle than his own daughter; and never two ladies loved as they do” (I, i, Lines 102-7). Whether or not Shakespeare intends to suggest an erotic relationship between the two, the transformation of the two cousins into “brother and sister” as a result of Rosalind’s cross dressing in the forest is certainly a gender-innovative plot twist which suggests that the exploration of gender identity issues is facilitated by the establishment of Senior’s realm in the Forest of Arden.

Indeed, Rosalind’s crossdressing, for the purpose of posing as the shepherd boy Ganymede and the “brother” of Aliena (Celia in disguise), is an aspect of *As You Like It* which most closely aligns with the spirit of modern micronationalism, while at the same time exploring significant gender issues pertaining to patriarchy, homoeroticism, and the social order of 1590s England. In regard to modern micronationalism, the act of posing is one of its greatest appeals. The Declaratory Theory of Statehood notwithstanding, most micronationalists (with the possible exception of those with a genuinely time-honored basis for their claims of sovereignty) acknowledge that they are essentially posturing when they present themselves as royalty, aristocracy, military dictators, or civilian heads of state. Nevertheless, many will assert the validity of such posturing as a means by which to challenge traditional and ambiguous notions of

statehood. Rosalind/Ganymede does the same in *As You Like It*, but her challenges are directed instead at the patriarchal social order of her time.

Rosalind's initial motivation for crossdressing, is presented as a means by which she can protect herself in the forest from possible rape and/or violence. At the same time she elevates herself by assuming the superior role of a male. Medieval and Early Modern European history is replete with examples of women who attempted to increase their status in this way and avail themselves of opportunities which were usually reserved for men only, not necessarily to express gender fluid identities. For example, there is the case of Hildegund von Schönau, "who entered a monastery as the monk Joseph in 1187 and died a year later, after which her disguise was discovered" (Hall 171-172). Schönau's deception entailed considerable and dire consequences had her deception been revealed during her lifetime. Within the confines of Senior's forest enclave, however, such explorations of gender fluidity could be undertaken with relative impunity.

So it is that once the two women arrive in the camp of Senior, Orlando, and the others, Rosalind/Ganymede feels free to maintain her disguise and urges Orlando to woo her as if he was addressing the real Rosalind, with the avowed intention of curing him of his unrequited love. In addition to the relationships involving Rosalind/Ganymede, Ciela/Aliena, and Orlando, identity-based misperceptions involve virtually every character in the play. As was previously noted, the result is that Arden becomes "a place to test our poses and hypotheses." In this instance, such tests are performed primarily to examine gender roles, sexual identity, and social hierarchy.

Micronationalism offers the same opportunities, although sometimes in different ways. In one sense, they are the same: both the micronationalist, and the characters in Arden pose challenges to orthodoxy and highlight the ambiguities of institutional concepts which have been historically thought of as immutable.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAPS, COINS, AND DONNE'S PEDANTIC SUN

Shakespeare's micronationalism stems from his interest in the roles of time, space, and gender within a nation. His contemporary, John Donne, exhibited a similar interest, precipitated in his case, however, by pertinent religious circumstances. At first blush, this might not appear to be the case, quite the opposite in fact, as Donne is known instead for his *internationalist* proclivities. Vander Ploeg notes that "Donne articulates for us the concept of affiliation among humans." He continues, "The phrase 'No man is an island,' from Donne's 'Meditation 17' has become popular to the extent that many know and use these words without awareness of their origin or context" (Vander Ploeg 5). Indeed, this phrase has become synonymous with internationalism and universal brotherhood.

Nevertheless, as we delve deeper into Donne's work and his sentiments, we find that he appears to have been deeply devoted to British nationalism and the legitimation of England as a Protestant state. This is especially true in regard to the 1606 Oath of Allegiance. "King James I's oath had been introduced in response to the 1605 Gunpowder Plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament. It sought to establish the grounds of civil obedience for those in England who acknowledged the spiritual authority of the papacy" (Gallagher 159). The *spiritual* authority of the papacy was not specifically the issue in this case. What James ostensibly demanded was the acknowledgment on the part of all English citizens of the secular authority of the monarch and the Protestant character of the nation, not the forcible conversion of English Catholics to Protestantism, although the Vatican viewed the Oath as such. A former Catholic himself, Donne heartily supported the Oath, primarily as a means of strengthening the nation. For him it was an issue of national unity. The Oath, "Donne proclaimed, 'must worke upon us all; and as it must

draw from the Papists a profession, so it must from us, a Confirmation of our Obedience” (Gallagher 159). In an effort to reassure English Catholics that it was possible to support the nation without betraying their faith, he added “that nothing requir’d in this Oath, violates the Popes spirituall Jurisdiction” (Gallagher 173). This passage illustrates that although much of Donne’s work contains internationalist sentiment, he was certainly a nationalist in regard to this issue and dismisses the notion of Catholicism’s supranational secular authority.

It would not be unreasonable to question Donne’s motives in regard to his support of the Oath of Allegiance. Public expressions of papist sentiments would certainly not have been conducive to the furtherance of his career as a poet or as a clergyman. Additionally, he most assuredly ingratiated himself with James through his publication in 1610 of *Pseudo Martyr* in which he excoriates English Catholics who are reluctant to endorse the Oath. Gallagher observes, “Donne declares that . . . ‘All which they quarrel at in the oath . . . is that anything should be pronounced or any limits set, to which the Popes power might not extend’ . . . and with this shift in orientation Donne signals the tendering of his credentials as a conformist to King James” (Gallagher 173). Donne’s statements might well be interpreted as obsequious toadying, mere propaganda for the Protestant nationalist cause. Whatever the truth of the matter, it is certain that Donne became (at least outwardly) a passionate advocate for English nationalism, in direct conflict with papal claims asserting the universal authority of the Catholic Church.

Having recognized Donne’s adoption of English nationalism as an ideology, there remains the question of how this change manifests itself in his poetry. In this regard, one of Donne’s most common literary devices involves “an extended metaphor known as conceit . . . intelligently utilized by Donne . . . to convince and startle readers with paradoxes, arguments, exacting words and exploratory theme elocution” (Basumatary 4). Additionally, Yeo notes Donne’s focus upon “the early modern interrelationship of microcosm and macrocosm, of person and society” (Yeo

181). It is through Donne's use of conceits and his emphasis upon the contrasts between microcosm and macrocosm that we find suggestions of micronationalist themes within his literature. Yeo provides specific examples of this connection by identifying two objects of great importance to both micronationalism and Donne's poetry. Of Donne's era, he explains, "The rapidly expanding geography of the world, coupled with burgeoning capitalism, particularly affected two objects with symbolic weight that had used religious imagery to underwrite the authority of Catholic nations: maps and coins" (Yeo 183). These two objects which had previously symbolized the supranational authority of the Church were utilized by Donne to compare and contrast the macrocosmic with the microcosmic, universal legitimacy with nationalistic legitimacy.

In regard to maps, it should be borne in mind that, because of the global discoveries made during the colonial era, world maps had changed. The Euro-centric world view had been altered to take into account newly discovered land masses in the Western Hemisphere. These discoveries also emphasized the possibilities concerning emergent nationalistic entities. For Donne himself, the transformation of England from a Catholic to a Protestant nation underscored the transient nature of political and spiritual identities which had long been considered immutable and cast doubt upon the legitimacy of supranational institutions such as the Church of Rome. This, in turn, prompted Donne to consider the sovereign nature of relationships involving personal interaction between individuals (the smallest social unit), particularly lovers. Indeed, one could plausibly assert that Donne considered such relationships representative of the purest form of nationalism. Brita Ragnes illustrates the development of these concepts in Donne's "A Valediction of Weeping" by noting that in the poem, "The globe is nothing but an empty ball until the worker (the artificer or map maker) pastes maps on it (lays copies). But when the workman has laid the maps, or copies, on the ball, it suddenly becomes the whole world: (that which was nothing is made all). Through Donne's conceit "The beloved, or rather the *unity* of two lovers . . . is equaled

with the entire world—and the whole world is as small as the two lovers” (Ragnes 91-92). Jayme Yeo concludes that, “It is not enough that the lovers be unified in a coin; there must also be a world for them to circulate in: ‘On a round ball/ . . . So doth each tear,/Which thee doth wear,/A globe, yea world, by that impression grow’” (Yeo 186).

Cartography itself was undergoing a fundamental transformation during this era leading to a more accurate portrayal of geographic reality, as well as emphasizing the notion that the possibilities for nationalistic expression are rich and varied, if not boundless. “The renowned T-O maps had for centuries depicted the relationship of the world’s continents centered on the holy cities of Rome or Jerusalem . . . By the seventeenth century, however, the settlement of new lands and the consequent imperatives of geographically accurate navigation increasingly made the conceptual cartography of the T-O maps seem outmoded” (Yeo 183). Correspondingly, time-honored concepts concerning political dominance, sovereignty, and national legitimacy were also being widely contested. In such an era, Donne’s preoccupation with the relationship between the microcosmic and macrocosmic appears all the more salient.

Such considerations have historically been fundamental to the development of modern nationalistic concepts. In addition to the function of maps as accurate representations of geographic features, they also serve to legitimize political entities within a given area. In a political sense, the seriousness with which maps are taken is a manifestation of national pride and has also been a consistent source of international hostility. A prime example of both involves the dispute between India and China over a boundary known as the McMahon line, which encompasses an area claimed by India called Arunachal Pradesh. This area was the scene of a brief, but violent military confrontation between the two countries in 2022 (Kumar). When, in 2023, China published an official map which identified Arunachal Pradesh as part of Chinese territory it precipitated a major diplomatic row between the two nations (Shih).

Just as the newly redesigned maps of Donne's time altered Europeans' perceptions about their place in the world, widely distributed maps and nautical charts which include and identify micronations lend to them an air of legitimacy. Such is the case in regard to the Kingdom of Redonda. Located on a Caribbean island which has been featured on maps dating back to Donne's era, it remained unclaimed by any colonial power until 1865 when, as British citizen Matthew Dowdy Shiel recalls in his memoirs, his father "on my fifteenth birthday had me crowned King of Redonda by Dr. Mitchinson, Bishop of Antigua" (Shiel 57). The new king styled himself as King Philippe I and the London Colonial Office officially recognized his kingdom (Fergus 37).

The notion of Redonda as an independent entity lives on among micronationalists (as does its highly contested monarchy), largely because of the cartographic evidence of its reality, the same kind of evidence which lead Donne to rethink his own world and the essential nature of nationalistic entities. In a sense, micronations such as Redonda are the logical end result of the colonial era in which Donne lived. McDougal observes that, "Micronations, as I have argued elsewhere, are inherently postcolonial . . . a thing that erupts out of the 'closure of the map', rebelling against geographical imperialism . . . Nonetheless, the Kingdom of Redonda . . . is unique" (McDougal 249). Indeed, the most unique aspect of Redonda as a micronation is its widespread recognition as a genuine geographic entity as a result of its having been widely depicted on maps.

Donne's utilization of maps in "A Valediction of Weeping, is directly related to his appraisal of the antiquated T-O maps which predated Europe's colonial adventurism. Yeo writes, "Donne's poetry rescues maps and coins from this defunct geographic and economic context, giving them a new artistic framework that ultimately resurrects them as icons of a unified Protestant nationality," which is, after all, Donne's primary purpose in publishing such nationalistic works as *Pseudo Martyr*. For Donne, these objects represent a "mystical union"

which infuses “maps and coins with spiritual meaning. Specifically, maps and coins become metaphors that convey union on a mass scale in order to imagine . . . the communal conversion of a Protestant nation” (Yeo 180). To achieve this, Donne often dispenses with concepts of national unity, preferring instead to symbolically portray this “mystical union” through depictions of the bonds established “between lovers.”

In contrast to maps, Donne employs coins as objects to express such unity because they are likely to bear the image of some beloved, or else highly esteemed person. For example, the coin portrayed in “A Valediction of Weeping” bears the image of Donne’s beloved as reflected in a tear. In this poem, the two lovers are about to take their leave of each other. Grief stricken, Donne cries, “Let me pour forth/My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here,/For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,/And by this mintage they are something worth,/For thus they be/Pregnant of thee;/Fruits of much grief they are, emblems of more . . .” (Donne 112-13). As the lover weeps, the image of his beloved is reflected in his tears, “striking a coin that blends their individual identities into one object. Consequently, the coins of this poem are valued not monetarily but by their ability to bring two people together” (Yeo 183). In like manner, the coins of micronations are often held dear by their citizens by virtue of their “mintage” alone and not because of their intrinsic value.

In regard to micronationalistic themes, it is worth noting that as “Donne’s poetic conceit of loving union struggles to rise above the realities of individuality and separateness” it is also reflective of an economic problem of the 17th century involving the difficulty of establishing the true value of coins as a result of debasement. Due to periods of time during which the amount of gold in these coins steadily decreased, “the value of English money relied intermittently on the power of the monarch to set and enforce it” (Yeo 184) In Donne’s poetry, the intrinsic value of the coin becomes secondary to the reflection of the beloved in the tear which has fallen upon it. This image confers value beyond the coin’s intrinsic status.

Historically, micronationalist coins are of little or no intrinsic value. However, just as the union of the two lovers is symbolized in Donne's poetry by the image of the tear which has fallen upon the coin, the union of citizens in the micronationalist state is affirmed by the coin itself, regardless of its composition or intrinsic value. Such coins are valued by citizens primarily as a tangible and time-honored symbol of national unity, the legitimacy of the state, and their devotion to it, in much the same way as Donne's coin symbolizes the lovers' devotion to each other. The essential difference here is that the micronationalist coins symbolize love of nation, whereas Donne's tear-drenched coin symbolizes love between two individuals. For micronationalists, coins are tangible symbols which bear testament to the existence of their nations with or without recognition. Whether in Donne's poetry or in the history of a micronation, the symbolism described and the emotion which it elicits, is based primarily upon imagery.

The Principality of Seborga, one of the oldest micronations still in existence, has utilized coins to express its sovereignty and its citizens' patriotic devotion to the state since its inception. Located in the Italian Alps and founded by Pope Gregory VII in 1079, the principality continues to assert its independence in spite of the official Italian position to the contrary. In 1666, Seborga began minting coins known as *luigini*. Foreshadowing the tension which would later develop between modern Italy and the tiny principality, the new Seborgan coinage met with the disapproval of the neighboring kingdoms of Sardinia and France. (*Principato di Seborga* official website) For Seborgans, however, the silver and gold *luigini*, as well as those struck from base metals, were a source of pride and devotion to their diminutive nation.

A new series of *luigini* were struck "between 1995 and perhaps 1996, with some unofficial issues struck in 1994" (Numismaster). The most recent coin, struck after the ascent of Princess Nina to the throne is the "one-and-a-half *luigino* coin . . . of Seborga . . . presented on 20 August 2021" (<https://www.principatodiseborga.com>). Businesses within Seborga "accept *luigini*

alongside the euro” often to the chagrin of the Italian government which “has taken a dim view of the fact that Seborga chose to strike distinctly modern coinage designs on coins meant to be used as money,” although the “base metal issues were meant to circulate, while the precious metal content coins were meant strictly for collector consumption” (Numismaster).

This controversy concerning Seborgan currency is possibly the most contentious issue between the principality and the Italian government. It underscores the importance of these coins as a symbol of national unity and love of country. Just as the debased coins in Donne’s “A Valediction of Weeping” are precious to the poem’s two lovers regardless of their intrinsic worth, so the *luigini* are precious to Seborgans whether they are struck from base or precious metals. For its citizens, Seborga is the lover reflected in a tear on the coins in Donne’s poem. It is Seborga’s “stamp they bear,/And by this mintage they are something worth” regardless of what they are made of (Ragnes 95). The coins in Donne’s poem unite two lovers. The Seborgan *luigini* unite a nation, however small it may be.

Donne’s “The Sunne Rising” is an even more graphic example of micronationalistic themes to be found in Early Modern English literature and on an even more diminutive scale. Once again, Donne’s focus on the microcosmic and the macrocosmic is evident. He suggests that the room in which his lover and he are ensconced upon their bed is far more significant than the sun itself. More importantly, he and his lover are portrayed as a realm or nation unto themselves, complete and self-sufficient. Indeed, the poem is representative of the smallest of micronations, consisting of one, two, or at most a handful, of citizens. Such micronationalistic entities contend that their legitimacy is not contingent upon the size of their population. The macrocosmic sun in Donne’s poem is analogous to the macronations by which such tiny micronations are typically surrounded. And like these macronations, the sun is depicted as a cranky, old fussbudget with an inflated sense of his own importance. “Voyeur turned moralist, the sun is a ‘Sawcy pedantique

wretch' chiding tardy 'schoole boyes' and hurrying reluctant 'prentices' to their chores, both groups soon to compose his world's work force" (Kolin 112).

The sun has been personified throughout history in poetry and myth, Helio, Surya, Ra, and Apollo being but a few examples of this phenomenon. In these examples, however, the sun is glorified and praised, particularly as the supreme giver and sustainer of life. In Donne's poem, however, "The personification of the sun in terms of economics and politics—concerns vital to the mercantile world—helps to measure the extent of Donne's worldly wealth in the poem" (Kolin 112). That the sun's personification is related to "economics and politics" is noteworthy in terms of identifying micronationalist themes in this poem. Kolin explains that, "The power of love at first contrasts with and then controls the external world" and that, "The three stanzas of the poem thus take the reader through the stages of love's conquest showing how Donne brings intricate riches into his little room" (Kolin 112).

This analysis alone reveals the micronationalist bent of Donne's poem. Many micronationalists are blithely unconcerned with the overwhelming power of the macronations which surround them. For Donne, it is "love's conquest" that "brings infinite riches into the little room" in which the coupling of the lovers takes place. The awesome power of the sun is inconsequential when compared to the riches which their love affords. The lovers' "little room" is a realm unto itself, unaffected by the might of the sun. Typically, the micronationalist state is analogous to Donne's "little room," just as the vastly more powerful macronations of the world are analogous to the sun. Indeed, the Kingdom of Talossa, one of the most prominent micronations, was founded in the bedroom of its monarch in 1981 (Wedgwood 961). Just as Donne and his lover are disdainful of the power of the sun, consider it irrelevant, and are content to enjoy the bliss of their bedroom world, micronationalist President Kevin Baugh of the Republic of Molossia

proclaims that his country “exists because it exists” and needs no diplomatic recognition from other states to legitimize its status (Baugh).

Elizabeth Pomeroy’s analysis of “The Sunne Rising” illustrates further similarities between micronationalist ideology and the situations described within Donne’s poem. She notes that “In ‘The Sunne Rising’ the conflict of external and internal worlds . . . is resolved by a process of inversion: microcosm becomes the macrocosm, and the metaphorical realm the only valid world in the poem.” (Pomeroy 9) She contends that “The sun’s changing position indicates this inversion.” In like manner, the micronationalist views his state as independent from the powerful international order of which most traditional states are a part. Donne characterizes the sun as pedantic, “a term condemning the external order as over-scrupulous” (Pomeroy 9). This is a complaint often lodged by the micronationalist community against what it perceives as an inflexible and exclusive world order propagated by traditional and powerful political entities. Like the lovers and their “little room” in Donne’s poem, micronationalists typically build an identity around themselves. Thus, their self-created diminutive state “becomes a miniature world, self-sufficient in its own emotional vitality” (Pomeroy 9).

Donne’s disparaging remarks addressed to the sun serve to accentuate the micronationalist themes contained within this poem, especially in regard to the self-sufficiency and affluence of the two lovers within their bedroom realm. In regard to the riches of the outside world, Donne instructs the sun to “Looke and to morrow late, tell mee,/Whether both the India’s of Spice and Myne/Be where thou letfst them, or lie here with me” (Donne, lines 16-18). To illustrate the couple’s sovereignty, Donne dares the sun to “Aske for those Kings whom thou saw’st yesterday,/And thou shalt heare, All here in one bed lay” (18-20). In summation, Donne declares of his lover and himself, “She’is all States, and all Princes I/Nothing else is” (21-22). Such assertions form the basis of modern micronationalist ideology.

In this present age of increasing globalism, the concept of nationalism is sometimes regarded as a quaint, outmoded, and sometimes dangerous relic of humanity's past. As it becomes increasingly easy and increasingly common for millions of people to traverse the globe, routinely communicate with each other over vast distances, and engage in the exchange of goods and services over unprecedented distances, nations as discernible and formally established entities may to seem to be destined for obsolescence. Nevertheless, nationalism persists and so does its subset of micronationalism. And, as has been illustrated here, micronationalism is not an academic subject confined only to the disciplines of political science, history, or sociology. It has deep roots in the discipline of literature. The impulse of human beings to exercise control over their immediate surroundings, whether portrayed by Donne's account of his lover and their bedroom as a sovereign and independent entity or Shakespeare's depiction of the self-governing enclave in the Forest of Arden, is an inherent trait. Whatever the future of nationalistic entities may be, it is certain that the interdisciplinary study of nationalism, including its micronationalist subset, will yield worthwhile insight into the societal inclinations of humanity. If there is to be a brave new world without borders, it will spring from the world of nations and their micronationalist counterparts. And, due in part to micronationalist themes in literature, we may discover that such entities are not as anachronistic as some may have assumed.

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