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# A Comparative Analysis of National Identity Construction and Rhetorization in William Shakespeare's King Henry V and Aphra Behn' Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave

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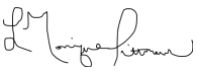
Primary Advisor Signature: 

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**Abstract**

Positioned at the climax of both William Shakespeare's *King Henry V* (1600) and Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* (1688) are dynamic calls for battle. While King Henry rallies his forces against the French, Oroonoko—an enslaved African prince—ignites a slave revolt against English colonial masters. This comparative analysis of the speeches' rhetoric identifies three sets of similar appeals: to martial masculinity, honor as a moral code, and collective political identities. From Behn's application of Shakespeare's canonical rhetoric derives commentary on each rhetor's ability to construct and rhetorize his national identity. Importantly, analysis reveals the impact of racialized difference on the rhetors' access to structures of political mobilization.

**Introduction, Theoretical Frame, and Literature Review**

In *King Henry V* (1600), the last of a series of Shakespearean historical dramas commonly referred to as the Henriad, William Shakespeare commemorates the action of England's King Henry of Monmouth in the Hundred Years' War against France, a conflict stretching throughout the reigns of five English kings. After a few decades of relative peace between England and France, Henry of Monmouth reignited English interest in conquering the French throne. With a final victory at the decisive Battle of Agincourt—the result of which was his marriage to the French princess Catherine of Valois, as well as his recognition as regent and heir apparent to the French throne—England celebrated Henry V as one of its most distinguished warrior kings. In his play, Shakespeare presents a semi-fictionalized account of this formidable moment in English history; of Shakespeare's most notable additions is the "St. Crispin's Day" speech, Henry's address to his soldiers prior to battle. In an impassioned display of his royal glory and political zeal, Henry V speaks to his soldiers as a "band of brothers," proclaiming that "From this day until the ending of the world / But we in it shall be remembered" (4.3.60, 58-59). Today, this speech remains one of the most memorable moments in the Shakespearean œuvre.

Eighty-eight years after Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the English author and playwright Aphra Behn published *Oroonoko: or, The Royal Slave* (1688), a novella which recounts the story of an African prince who was captured and sold to English colonists in former British Suriname. Behn—the first English woman to earn her living as a writer—grew to prolific popularity throughout her lifetime, and is claimed by some to be the second most prominent Restoration English author, after only John Dryden (Hutner 2). Although in her very first paragraph Behn promises her readers that her account of Oroonoko's life is entirely true—an account which she recites "without the Addition of Invention" and either witnessed or "receiv'd from the Mouth of…the *Hero* himself" (8)—literary scholarship largely considers Behn as having invented the character of Oroonoko and/or much of

the account of his life. At the climax of Behn's novella is a slave revolt which Oroonoko incites: an attempt by an assemblage of slaves, under Oroonoko's leadership, to overthrow their overseers and masters. As does Henry V in Shakespeare's 1600 play, Oroonoko provokes his body of troops to action, appealing to their similitude in identity to demand their collective participation in rebellion.

Though these two texts may not immediately appear related to each other, a closer analysis of Henry V's St. Crispin's Day speech and Oroonoko's pre-revolt oration reveals that both Shakespeare's and Behn's heroes use many similar appeals to provoke their respective audiences to action. In Shakespeare's play, King Henry acclaims his soldiers' martial masculinity, the fraternal bonds forged by their service together, and rallies his troops with appeals to their honor and the ennobling quality of their valor in battle. Importantly, he seeks to unite his army—a rag-tag assembly of English, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish militiamen, largely outnumbered by the French—by convincing them of their common "Englishness," directing their attention to collective cultural memory and rhetorizing an English national identity as inspiration for battle. By rhetorizing, I refer to the construction of nationhood and the establishment of mutual political bonds through specific language, motifs, and recurring themes; in the context of these orations, I also consider the rhetorization of nationhood as persuasion to political action. Comparatively, Oroonoko's rhetorization of collective identity echoes Shakespearean themes and characterizations: Like King Henry, Oroonoko delineates separate spaces for the enslaved men and women, each with gendered roles in (or, out of) battle; appeals to the honor of the slaves—specifically, the violation of their honor through their enslavement—to incite his rebellion; and, as King Henry creates and demarcates an English national identity for his audience, Oroonoko reminds the slaves of their collective suffering by the hands of white slaveowners, rhetorizing a racialized political identity to unite the slaves in battle.

As such, given the comparability of the political and literary contexts in which King Henry V and Oroonoko's speeches are situated, this thesis project aims to examine the intersecting rhetorical appeals of Shakespeare's and Behn's protagonists in their respective orations. As a comparative analysis of the two speeches illuminates the discursive function of each author's text, my analysis of *King Henry V* and *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* will explore the following research questions:

1. What similar rhetorical appeals do the rhetors utilize to provoke their respective audiences to action? How do the appeals differ based on context and race?
2. How do the 1600 and 1688 historical contexts of each text's publication contribute to uncertainty regarding the nature of "Englishness" in the two texts? What are the implications of studying appeals to collective identity in a pairing of these particular texts?
3. How does racial difference impact political subjectivity in Behn's *Oroonoko*? How does Behn employ Shakespeare to highlight the complicating role of race in political subjectivity?

To examine these research questions, I precede my comparative analysis of Henry V's and Oroonoko's rhetorical appeals with a theoretical clarification of English nationhood and colonial political subjectivity, a contextual review of two Early Modern English rhetoric manuals, and a study of Shakespeare's authorial presence in both the English Restoration-era arts and Behn's writings. Furthermore, I organize the content of my analysis, a close reading of King Henry and Oroonoko's respective orations, in three sections, each identifying a similar set of rhetorical appeals utilized by the orators in their conceptualization and rhetorization of a collective identity. The three analytical subsections follow as are listed earlier: (1) The gendered imperative of each rhetor's collective identity, in contrasting the soldiers' martial masculinity from a feminine, non-participative alternative; (2) the imposition of a moral code centered on the acquisition and/or preservation of

one's honor; and (3) appeals to collective memory, such as cultural tradition or mutual suffering, as justification of one's claim to the collective identity. However, given the racialized difference of the orators and their respective audiences, this paper emphasizes the manner in which Behn employs Shakespeare's canonical rhetoric to underscore the disparity between the two rhetors' access to structures of political mobilization. It is this disparity—self-evident in both Elizabethan and Restoration England, and persistent in contemporary political contexts—to which this thesis project responds, in asking its readers to reconsider their self-identification with collective political identities: What are the underlying implications of this political belonging? Who is engaged in the process of collective definition—and who is ultimately excluded?

With 1600 and 1688 publication dates, *Henry V* and *Oroonoko* were printed at moments of heightened political instability in English history. Shakespeare's *Henry V* was first performed near the end of Queen Elizabeth I's reign, a point at which England reckoned with the childlessness of its virgin queen and the legitimacy of any monarchal heirs—both threats to the relative peace, national security, and economic prosperity fostered by Elizabeth's reign. Behn's novella was published in an even more tempestuous political context: the year of Prince William and Mary of Orange's Glorious Revolution, during which they and Parliament deposed the last Catholic king of England, James II, tethering the English monarchy to greater parliamentary oversight and a new constitution. Hence, throughout the seventeenth century, and especially during these chapters of its history, England's "Englishness" was prodded, stretched, and unremittingly questioned; as such, the apparent politicization of both Henry V and Oroonoko's rhetoric—especially given both rhetors' efforts towards collective unity—reflect England's wavering certitude in its identity.

Today, centuries after Shakespeare and Behn, nations and other political groups across the world continue to reconceptualize and define what it means to share a collective identity. For example, as a reaction to the supranational authority of the European Union, the United Kingdom's

2016 Brexit referendum exemplifies the nation's efforts to again renegotiate the boundaries of its national identity. Similarly, the unprecedented success of far-right, populist parties in the May 2019 European Parliament elections—and even, across the Atlantic, the election of Donald Trump in 2016 as President of the United States—reflects anxieties of national being and belonging. Thus, as England, Europe, and the United States perpetuate racial inequalities and are divided by the immigration of and presence of non-white communities, Shakespeare and Behn trace the manner in which national identities are conceptualized and rhetorized in our contemporary contexts.

**Theoretical Frame: English Nationhood and Colonial Political Subjectivity**

This thesis project continues academic scholarship on the development of English nationhood, in particular as narrated by William Shakespeare and other Early Modern English writers and playwrights, and references discussions of colonial political subjectivity in the New World. As Elizabethan and Restoration England negotiated its presence both in Europe and as a growing empire, and as colonial subjects—mostly slaves—were harnessed by the ever-growing appetite of mercantilist economies, collective identities were forged, fragmented and fractured, thus repeatedly redefining the nation. This concept of "nation," a political body fashioned by its collective identity, is the primary theoretical touchpoint of this project; analyses which follow consider how the national collective body is conceptualized and rhetorized. However, with the expansion of empire, the imperial expropriation of land, liberty, and a common identity, the colonial subject confronted a reconsideration of personal and political self. To whom—master or enslaved political body—did the slave belong? Upon which ground could the colonized individual, uprooted from a recent past, be planted in the present? In response to these questions, this paper considers the situation of the colonial body politic, of nationless peoples. And, given my comparison of *Henry V* and *Oroonoko*, in noting Behn's referential adaptation of Shakespearean nation-building rhetoric,

this project positions the narratives of colonizer and colonized against each other to comprehend their respective efficacy. Ultimately, I approach the following central question: How is the political collective constructed and legitimized, both in English conquest and the colonial subject's self-definition; what barriers stand between rhetoric and political mobilization?

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983) provides a definition for the "nation" which informs this investigation: that of the nation as "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). Identifying the nation as a collective abstraction, conceived first in the minds of a particular people group and then supported by the presence of its institutions, social demographics, and other concrete signifiers, Anderson provides for the reconceptualization of the nation in contrast to theories which introduce the nation first or only in reference to such concrete signifiers—for example, the presence of a common linguistic and/or religious identity. As an "imagined political community," the nation exists as a "comradeship" (7) of its members—those who, as Anderson writes, "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (6). Anderson's characterization of the nation as "limited" and "sovereign" is also crucial to its definition; the nation is "limited" because it has "finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations," and is "sovereign" because of its "dream of being free, and if under God, directly so" (7). As such, Anderson's nation, in addition to the national identities facilitated by its characterization, is defined not only by its concrete representations—the homogenization of its cultural identity or its political manifestation in a governmental regime—but by the collective participation of the nation's members in an act of imagination which provides a bounded community of persons answerable to none but themselves.

Numerous literary scholars trace the presence of nation-building rhetoric in the Shakespearean histories and various other Early Modern English texts, noting the manner in which

Shakespeare and his contemporaries use their literature to chronicle, construct and/or critique narratives of England's self-conceptualization and definition. In his *Forms of Nationhood* (1992), Richard Helgerson declares English writers' obsessive preoccupation with "England—its land, its people, its institutions, and its history" (1). With the monarchal ascension of Queen Elizabeth I, Helgerson notes, England began an important period of self-meditation on its collective identity. "A half century earlier the sufficiency or insufficiency of the English language and of English cultural institutions generally would not have mattered so much," Helgerson writes. "To men born in the 1550s and 1560s, things English came to matter with a special intensity both because England itself mattered more than it had and because of other sources of identity and cultural authority mattered less" (3). Thus, whether in response to the military threat of Catholic Spain or the childless virginity of the English queen, Shakespeare and other distinguished Elizabethan writers—Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, and so forth—were inspired by and committed to the discursive production of the English nation. Helgerson writes: "The discursive forms of nationhood and the nation's political forms were mutually self-constituting. Each made the other" (11). Thus, in producing plays, transcribing accounts, and composing allegories, Elizabethan wordsmiths meditated on the English collective. Their writings not only recount competing narratives of English national identity, but reinforce or challenge these narratives under analysis. *Henry V* and the other plays of the Henriad, together serving as Shakespeare's account of King Henry of Monmouth's life from young prince to victorious king, serves both as a biography of the monarch's life and a spectacle of English nation-building. With his St. Crispin's Day speech, King Henry defines who and what is definitively English; the playtext manifests England's perpetual self-definition.

Positioning his *Between Nations* (1997) as a response to *Forms of Nationhood*, and writing that "Helgerson needs to be reminded that traditions are invented and communities imagined" (16), David J. Baker devotes the first chapter of his text to an analysis of collective identity in *Henry V*.

Noting that King Henry's soldiers were not only English but Scottish, Irish, and Welsh, the chapter serves as an analysis of the competing national identities delegitimized or erased by King Henry's collectivizing rhetoric, and thus as a confirmation of the play's apparent interest in English national identity.[1] Baker reminds his readers that England was itself engaged throughout the Elizabethan era in a process of imperial conquest in the British Isles, and as such asserts that *Henry V* functions as a critique of English political consolidation. Notably, Baker observes that "until recently Henry V was read, almost invariably, as an unequivocal testament to Anglopatriotism" (20); however, as Baker recounts, contemporary readers recognize Shakespeare's invocation of English national pride while also discerning its underpinning imagination. Here, Baker quotes Annabel Patterson: "More than almost any other play of Shakespeare's…*Henry V* has generated accounts of itself that agree, broadly speaking, on the play's thematics—popular monarchy, national unity, militarist expansionism—but fall simply, even crudely, on either side of the line that divides belief from skepticism, idealism from cynicism" (Patterson 72). While Baker is most concerned in placing *Henry V* in historical context, analyzing England's relations with Scotland, Ireland, and Wales both before and after the play's production, his chapter thoroughly considers Shakespeare's critique of Elizabethan England's self-imagination and self-definition. As Baker asserts, King Henry's rhetorical exclusion of the subordinate British identities represents Shakespeare's interest in an "'imaginary community' of Britishness" (24) which ultimately disrupts the claims of King Henry's unifying rhetoric. With this

[1] In "Gallivanting Round the Globe: Translating National Identities in *Henry V*" (2012), Vicent Montalt, Pilar Ezpelete, and Miguel Teruel provide a similar analysis of King Henry's rhetorical erasure of Scottish, Irish, and Welsh national identities to promote his troops' common "Englishness" as motivation for battle. Studying in particular the character of MacMorris (the Irish captain) in Act 3, Scene 2 of *King Henry V*, the authors identify MacMorris' explicit questioning of his personal claim to a national identity— "What Ish My Nation?" (3.2.124)—as Shakespeare's invocation of Elizabethan discourse on English national identity. Montalt et. al. write that Shakespeare's histories, including *King Henry V*, "are an account of the history and politics of the English monarchy, and represent an extended dramatized ideological construction of the origins of the political situation in which their Elizabethan spectators found themselves," including concerns over "the construction of national unity" (115). Most importantly, connecting their analysis to the rhetorical exchange of competing Castilian Spanish and Catalonian national identities, given the groups' respective interest in either supporting or preventing Iberian Catalonia's independence from Spain, the authors emphasize the play's relevance to contemporary political contexts.

analysis, Baker gestures to the instability of English inclusivity when applied to the nation's imperial project—one which would extend to the New World (with the 1607 founding of Jamestown) in a matter of only seven years.

By 1688, the publication year of Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, the British Empire[2] included some forty-one[3] territories, colonies, or possessions[4] and was wholly invested in economies of mercantilist triangular trade. During the time at which Behn was writing *Oroonoko*, British West Indian sugar plantations had imported several thousand slaves annually from West Africa for almost five decades—although many English citizens were ignorant as to the realities of chattel slavery and plantation life (Gallagher 393). In *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500-1677* (2016), Imtiaz Habib provides a meticulous record of the British slave trade's development, evidencing the existence of black populations in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, just as were maintained in its many territorial possessions. From archival analysis, Habib reports that English traders chartered a hundred voyages to Guinea between 1600 and 1650 alone; further research by Joseph Inikori, cited by Habib, suggests that between 1662 and 1671, the British enslaved an annual average of 10,000 Africans to serve on their plantations (126). Here, readers should note that Guinea was only one of multiple African ports frequented by English slave traders. However, given the various forms of

2 Although Britain did not officially refer to itself as "Great Britain" until 1707, historians generally use the term "British Empire" to signify the period from the creation of England's first colony (other than Ireland and early English settlement of Newfoundland), as well as "Great Britain" or "Britain" as the country at the head of the British Empire (Smith).

3 As compiled by Michael S. Smith, British territories, colonies, or possessions in the year 1688 include the following, with date of acquisition listed in parentheses: Anguilla (1650), Antigua (1632), Bahamas (1629), Barbados (1625), Belize or British Honduras (1638), Bencoolen (1685), Bengal (1681), Bermuda (1609), Bombay (1661), British Guiana (1620), British Virgin Islands (1666), Cayman Islands (1670), Fort James/Gambia (1661), Gold Coast (present-day Ghana, 1621), Grenada (1609), Ireland (1169), Jamaica (1655), Madras (1640), Montserrat (1632), Mosquito Coast (1655), Nevis (1628), Newfoundland (1497), Northwest Territories (1670), Rupert's Land (1670), St. Helena (approximately 1658), St. Kitts (1623), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1627), Surat (1612), Turks and Caicos Islands (1678), and eleven American colonies: Carolina (1629), Connecticut (1636), Delaware (1664), Maine (1607), Maryland (1632), Massachusetts (1629), New Hampshire (1629), New Jersey (1664), New York (1664), Pennsylvania (1664), Rhode Island (1636), and Virginia (1607). This list does not include territories, colonies, or possessions previously yet no longer acquired by Great Britain in 1688, such as Surinam, exchanged to the Dutch in 1668 for New Amsterdam (Smith).

4 Given the various forms of imperial acquisition in the seventeenth century, "British possessions" includes "all forms of imperial rule, whether settlements, royal colonies, dominions, or protectorates" (Smith).

British acquisition and occupation in 1688—charter colonies, proprietary colonies, chartered company possessions (such as that of the East India Company), and protectorates—Britain's proto-colonial systems must be distinguished from its later manifestations, as Britain had yet to fully systematize its imperial presence around the world (Gallagher 401). Such early structures set in place by the British to harness their colonies' growing slave populations and to maximize the production of exports for trade would eventually develop into the largest empire in the world. This rapid imperial expansion, and in particular proto-colonial differentiations of "colonized" and "colonizer," would function at the expense of African slaves on colonial plantations. Wrested from their homelands, Africans were subsumed in violent systems of displacement, depersonalization, and the disenfranchisement of their basic human rights. Thus, at present, scholars of this period address such systems' impact on the colonial subjects' individual and collective self-imagination.

Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), a foremost example of postcolonial literary criticism, provides an integral analysis of the colonizer's mind, in particular its justification of racial superiority and imperial domination. Prior to his analysis, Said provides pertinent definitions for imperialism and colonialism; here, he writes: "'Imperialism' means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory; 'colonialism,' which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (9). Importantly, Said asserts, neither imperialism nor colonialism—such as the settlement of English colonies throughout the Americas—is "a simple act of accumulation and acquisition,"; instead, it is "supported and perhaps impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination" (9). This "struggle over geography" between the imperial and imperialized worlds, Said writes, "is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings" (7). As such, according to Said, the project of imperialist imagination required "decent

men and women to accept the notion that distant terrorities and their native peoples *should* be subjugated, and…that these decent people could think of the *imperium* as a protracted, almost metaphysical obligation to rule subordinate, inferior, or less advanced peoples" (10). Thus, while Said writes *Culture and Imperialism* as a critique of the manner in which major English cultural texts identify, contribute to, and advance processes of imperialist ideological formation (such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Rudyard Kipling's fictions), his postcolonial literary criticism discerns the self-fashioning of the imperial mind. To justify both early forays into the slave trade and the overall expansive development of the British empire, English colonizers assumed ideologies of English dominance—a dominance at the expense of colonial subjugation.

Furthermore, Said's theory discovers a space in postcolonial literary scholarship for the colonized and imperialized subject's response to oppressive imperialist ideologies. Relying upon Basil Davidson's *Africa in Modern History*, Said writes: "After the period of 'primary resistance,' literally fighting against outside intrusion, there comes the period of secondary, that is, ideological resistance, when efforts are made to reconstitute a 'shattered community, to save or restore the sense and fact of community against all the pressures of the colonial system'" (209). This ideological resistance involves an appeal to a "nationalist" unity against colonialism, of cultural groups unrelated to each other prior to colonialism—"a wider unity than any known before" (210). Thus, as Said states, in response to their subjugation and suffering, colonized peoples became aware of themselves as belonging to "a subject people," a people whose collectivity was a product of their racialization by white colonists and their systems of oppression. This collective imagination of the nonwhite racialized self, in contrast to the white perpetrator of their enslavement and exploitation, would legitimize appeals for collective political mobilization against colonial masters.

**Archival Study of Early Modern English Rhetoric Manual**

As Wayne A. Rebhorn writes in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric* (2000), "perhaps it would be best to speak of the Renaissance not in traditional terms as the rebirth of antiquity or the age of exploration, but as the age of rhetoric" (2). After the rediscovery of Greek and Roman treatises on oration—Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Cicero's *De Oratore*, for example—Renaissance thinkers and writers were consumed with an interest in rhetoric. "Renaissance writers churned out books dealing with different kinds and aspects of rhetoric, books on preaching and letter writing…" Reborn writes. "There were countless commentaries on classical rhetoric texts and on rhetoric texts written by contemporaries; books of exercises and collections of model speeches; and letters, orations, essays, and dialogues about the subject" (1-2). And, as with the rest of Renaissance Europe, England was preoccupied with rhetoric. In the sixteenth century, English scholars began to write rhetoric manuals themselves; recounting histories of rhetoric, instructing appropriate uses of persuasive language, and inculcating readers in the art (or science) or public eloquence, such rhetoric manuals—many written in the vernacular—would claim a foundational role in English scholarship (2). Thus, given their educative emphasis and inherent political value, scholars today consider English Renaissance-era rhetoric manuals as significant historical documents, both detailing the development of oratory in England and linking Early Modern English rhetoric to its role in constructing and politicizing English nationhood. In particular, two rhetoric manuals, Thomas Wilson's *The arte of rhetorique* (1553) and George Puttenham's *The arte of English Poesie* (1589), serve as foremost English treatises on rhetoric's utilization and instruction. Most notably, the prefatory epistles and introductions of these texts are valuable given their delineation of not only what rhetoric is, but who is eligible to study and utilize oratory in their pursuit of political authority and consolidation of national vision. Such themes, foundational to Elizabethan English thought, would inform the noble rhetoric of Shakespeare's King Henry and thus further influence its application by Behn's Oroonoko.

The academic study and political application of rhetoric itself in England began as a nation-building project, inspired by the writings of Ancient Roman leaders on the cultivation of spoken eloquence. Thomas Wilson's *The arte of rhetorique* (1553) is the first English treatise on rhetoric and oration to duplicate the Ciceronian model[5] (Rebhorn 173); thus, given its relative importance and emphasis on rhetoric's sociopolitical value, my study of rhetoric manuals begins with the prefatory material of Wilson's text. As is common of such Early Modern English monographs, Wilson's text opens with a statement of dedication to a noble benefactor or dedicatee—notably, in Wilson's case, the "right honorable Lorde, John Dudley, Lorde Lisle, Earle of Warwick" (A.i.r). Wilson's statement of dedication precedes an epistle to Dudley and the text's preface. Wilson begins his epistle with a historical account of nonviolent persuasion: that of a man named Cineas, who served under Pyrrhus, the Hellenistic King of Epirotes (or Epirus, given modern orthography); as Wilson recounts, in negotiation with Roman opponents prior to battle, Cineas was able to secure "divers stronge Castels and Fortresses" to be "peaceablye geven [given] into the hands of Pirrhus, whyche he shoulde have founde verye harde and tedious to wynne by the sworde" (A.i.r). As Wilson argues, it is the "eloquence of his tongue" (A.i.r) which allows Cineas to overcome the Romans, not the threat of military prowess. "If profite may perswade," Wilson writes, "what greater gayne can we have, then without bloodshed to achive [achieve] a conquest[?]" (A.i.v). Given this line of rhetorical questioning, Wilson implores Lord Dudley to become a scholar in the "Arte of Rhetorique" (A.ii.r) and to "joyne the perfection of Eloquente utteraunce [utterance]…to the gyfte of good reason and understandynge wherewith we see you notably endued" (A.i.v). Furthermore, Wilson asserts not

[5] Early Modern English scholars prioritized the writings of the Roman statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (commonly, Cicero), given his role in developing the Latin language and literary arts (Rebhorn 1). Among Cicero's writings is *De Oratore (On the Orator)*, a series of three books on rhetoric. In following the Ciceronian model, Thomas Wilson's *The arte of rhetorique* deliberates on the five elements of rhetoric outlined in Cicero's *De Oratore*: invention, disposition, elocution, memory, and delivery (Rebhorn 173).

only the political value of rhetoric but of its inherent significance to the leaders of the English nation. As Wilson details, after the Fall of Man the knowledge of humanity "was muche darkened, and by corruption of this oure fleshe, mans [man's] reason and entendement [intendment ("intendment, n.")] were bothe overwhelmed" (A.iv.r); however, God gave his "appoynted ministers" the "gift of utteraunce, that they myghte with ease wynne folke at their will, and frame theim by reason to all good order" (A.iv.v). These divinely-appointed ministers—a class of which Wilson suggests Lord Dudley is a member—are naturally predisposed to rhetoric, in order to decide and establish for English society "what was good, what was bade, and what was gainefull for mankynde" (A.iv.v). Thus, according to Wilson, rhetoric is not only responsible for English social order, but is a divine tool provided to the English ruling class to justify and sustain power. And, as this ruling class advanced its political and religious agenda, rhetoric could serve as the tool with which English nobles could advance dictates and notions of English identity and belonging.

However, most notable of *The art of rhetorique* is Wilson's choice of dedicatee: Lord Dudley, Viscount Lisle, Earl of Warwick. Lord Dudley, or John Dudley, is the second Earl of Warwick, having directly followed his father (also Lord Dudley) in receiving his title (Guy 61-2).[6] In both serving Edward, both the senior and junior Dudleys aligned themselves with Edward VI's Protestant faith both before and after the monarch's death. The son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, Edward VI was the first theologically Protestant English king, having transformed the Church of England during his reign into a recognizably Protestant and anti-Catholic body. Whereas Henry VIII refused

6 As Lord (John) Dudley, Viscount Lisle, Earl of Warwick, are the names and titles of both the first and second Earls of Warwick, father and son, a potential for confusion exists as to which Lord Dudley Thomas Wilson dedicates his monograph. However, given the text's 1553 publication, as well as the senior Lord Dudley's elevation of title to "Duke of Northumberland" in 1551, the failure of Wilson to address the senior Lord Dudley without his proper post-1551 title would constitute a grave error on Wilson's part. Thus, given historical precedence of the junior Lord Dudley's interest in the arts and sciences, the dedication of several books by eminent scholars to the junior Lord Dudley both during his lifetime and posthumously, and the senior Lord Dudley's elevation in 1551, (Guy 61), it is more likely that Wilson dedicated *The art of rhetorique* to the second Lord Dudley than the first. However, as both father and son Dudleys were supporters of Edward VI and Lady Jane Grey, both constitute commanding figures of Protestant faith and militance in English cultural memory.

to renunciate Catholic doctrine or ceremony, only severing English ties to the papacy in Rome, Edward VI advanced a series of religious reforms, including the abolition of clerical celibacy and Mass, as well as a dictate that religious services were to be held in English instead of Latin (Guy 65). After Edward VI's death, Lady Jane Grey, Edward VI's cousin and chosen heir, sought to protect English Protestantism against the threat of Edward VI's Catholic half-sister, "Bloody" Mary Tudor, the daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. Thus, in leading a campaign in support of Lady Jane Grey which would end in their arrest, imprisonment in the Tower of London, and consequently the senior Lord Dudley's execution, the Dudleys exemplified a brand of Protestant militarism, a feature of Englishness heightened by Edward VI's reign (Guy 66-8). This being said, that Wilson dedicates *The arte of rhetorique* to the second Lord Dudley at a time in which senior and junior Lord Dudleys were leading protectors of English Protestantism is significant, demonstrating Wilson's intentions for rhetoric's Protestant political alignment. And, as the dedicatees of scholarly texts were sometimes unaware of dedications, as could certainly be the case with Wilson's appeal to Lord Dudley, Wilson's intention to provide rhetoric as a tool of English Protestantism is clear: when first introduced to the English vernacular, rhetoric is utilized to advance specific notions of a differentiated English identity.

George Puttenham's *The arte of English Poesie* (1589) functions similarly to Wilson's treatise in asserting the validity of the English identity, language, and arts. While dedicated to Sir William Cecill Knight, Lord of Burghley and Lord High Treasurer of England, in the first sentence of his text's preface Puttenham states that his manual was "by the Authour intended to our Soveraigne Lady the Queene [Elizabeth I], and for her recreation and service chiefly devised" (A.B.ii.r). Thus, being comprised of three books, together detailing the elements of English-language poetry's development and/or a manner of its practical application, *The arte of English Poesie* links English-language oratory with English nationhood, English cultural heritage, monarchy, and the overall development of the

English language. In particular, in his fourth chapter, "How the Poets were the first Philosophers, the first Astronomers and Historiographers and Oratours and Musittens [Musicians[7]] of the world," Puttenham discusses the rhetorical imperative of language. Puttenham writes: "Utterance also and language is given by nature to man for perswasion of others, and aide of them selves, I meane the first ability to speak" (5). About poetic language in particular, Puttenham asserts, "it is a beside a maner of utterance more eloquent and rethoricall [rhetorical] then the ordinarie prose, which we use in our daily talke," emphasizing the value of poetic language to persuade. He concludes: "So as the Poets were also from the beginning the best perswaders and their eloquence the first Rethoricke of the world" (6). Hence, according to Puttenham, the value of poetic expression is the rhetorical efficacy of its aesthetic ethos; in pleasing his or her audience with rhyme and rhythm, the poet is the most effective rhetor, arousing an emotional response from the audience and provoking the reader to action. As such, *The arte of English Poesie* is not only a guide to English poetics, but a manifesto on effective rhetoric.

However, while Puttenham appeals to English poetic expression for its rhetorical value, he also defends the value of the English language and English arts alongside those of Greek and Latin: the languages utilized by nobles, scholars, and the powerful figures of both Puttenham's past and present. He writes: "If againe Art be but a certaine order of rules prescribed by reason, and gathered by experience, why should not Poesie be a vulgar Art with us as well as with the Greeks and Latines, our language admitting no fewer rules and nice diversities than theirs?" (7). This defense of the English language and of the English-language arts is crucial in understanding the extent of Puttenham's argumentation: Accordingly, that a nation such as England can produce literature

7 While the title of Puttenham's fourth chapter features the word "musittens," Puttenham employs an alternative spelling of the word, "musiciens" (5), in similar syntactic contexts elsewhere in the chapter. As such, with respect to their orthographic difference, one may conclude that Puttenham is utilizing both words to convey the same semantic meaning.

which rivals literature written in Latin and Greek is to assert the exceptionalism of English thought. Latin was not only the language of Roman Catholicism but of the former Roman Empire, continuing to be utilized for centuries after the empire's fall as the primary language of religious and scholastic instruction. Greek was the language of the Ancient Greek and Hellenistic empires which preceded that of the Romans, and the history of Western language arts and thought could be traced to Greek-language texts: the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, Homer's epic poetry, etc. Thus, Puttenham's assertion that the English language arts should be recognized as a "vulgar" [or common ("vulgar, adj.")] Art" and be furthermore considered as comparable to the Latin and Greek language arts is, by extension, to claim that England and its empire are similar in significance to the chronicle and development of Western civilization. Notably, however, this declaration has religious implications: To declare the importance of the English language while the Church of England defended its use of the English vernacular in religious services is to validate the legitimacy of English Protestantism, inextricably intertwined during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (who followed the violent reign of her Catholic half-sister, Mary Tudor) with English identity at large. Hence, Puttenham's text, in addition to Wilson's, demonstrates the inseparability of English discourses on rhetoric from attempts to define and defend English national identity.

Given the precedence of these two Early Modern English rhetoric manuals, England's first discussions of oration, "eloquent utterance," and poetic expression were, concurrently, debates on how English nationhood would be conceptualized and championed by both political elites and the common Englishman. What is doubly reinforced by both Wilson and Puttenham is the assertion that rhetoric begins with figures of power: noblemen, patrons of the arts, the educated and eloquent fashioners of English collective identity. It is they who establish notions of what it means to think, speak, and be English; they must use rhetoric to convince the rest. Given the rhetoric utilized by both King Henry and Oroonoko, an English king and former African prince, both Shakespeare and

Behn demonstrate an understanding of rhetoric's history and development in England. The similitude in their application of English rhetoric, of appeals and strategies, warrants their comparative analysis.

**Tracing Authorial Presence from Shakespeare to Behn**

While the content of King Henry and Oroonoko's rhetorical appeals suggests Behn's familiarity with and interest in Shakespearean rhetoric, scholars may contest the linkage between the two authors, in particular the connection of Oroonoko's rhetoric to King Henry's. An analysis of *King Henry V*'s production history, as well as of scholarship which connects the themes and content of Behn's writing to Shakespeare, may assuage these concerns.

The *Shakespeare in Production* series, edited by Emma Smith, records the play's first production at the Globe Theatre in 1599.[8] According to Emma Smith, although popular for approximately a year, *King Henry V* fell out of the theatrical repertoire after a single revival in 1605 (10). Records indicate informal reprisals and/or adaptations of *King Henry V* in 1664 and 1668, including a rhymed verse drama by Robert Boyle, Earl of Orrery (10), but no historical records conclusively identify productions of *King Henry V* during Behn's lifetime. Thus, as Aphra Behn lived from 1640 until 1689, it is not likely that any productions of *King Henry V* were staged during Behn's lifetime, especially given the prohibition of theatrical Shakespeare during the English Interregnum (1649-1660).

However, due to immediate post-Interregnum interest in Shakespeare, English literary scholars widely accept that Aphra Behn and many of her Restoration-era authorial counterparts were knowledgeable of and greatly influenced by Shakespearean storylines, themes, and language.

[8] While the first performance of Shakespeare's *King Henry V* is recorded in 1599, a Quarto playtext was not published until 1600.

Scholarship identifies Shakespeare's influence on a number of Behn's works, including her 1677 play *The Rover* and *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave*. In tracing Shakespeare's authorial presence in *Oroonoko*, scholars most commonly compare the novella's protagonist to Othello, the namesake of Shakespeare's 1603 tragedy play. One such critique, Margaret Ferguson's "Transmuting Othello: Aphra Behn's Oroonoko," notes the manner in which the dark-skinned protagonists, as figures of former or rising nobility, threaten the inherent whiteness of their English audience's eminent sociopolitical structures (24). Ferguson makes significant claims as to the similarity of the two texts: first, that Behn positioned herself in her writings as an "ideological reproduction of Shakespeare," emphasizing both authors' roles as "popular dramatists" (16); and second, that Aphra Behn, a white woman whose career as a writer was from its outset scandalized by her womanhood, opened her novella with claims of knowing Oroonoko to thematically exploit the scandal of Othello's marriage to a white woman, Desdemona (22). As such, Ferguson's analysis demonstrates not only Behn's knowledge of Shakespeare but also her interest in employing any connection with Shakespeare to heighten the popularity of her texts.

## Comparative Rhetorical Analysis

### Defining Martial Masculinity

In rhetorizing collective identities as motivation for political action, both King Henry and Oroonoko immediately consider questions of membership: Who is included in the project of collective imagination? Are certain individuals or groups naturally entitled to membership; if so, what defining features separate those who are included from those who are not? King Henry and Oroonoko respond to these questions with rhetorical appeals to martial masculinity, the specific embodiment of masculinity presented by the loyal soldier in battle. These appeals are not only rooted in the explicit manhood of the rhetors' armies—the fact that both King Henry and Oroonoko speak to audiences of men—but uphold martial masculinity as the expression of certain behaviors and values, those which grant the men exclusive access to their shared identity. King Henry and Oroonoko appeal to this community as a brotherhood to emphasize its innate masculinity; the brothers' responsibility to each other requires their collective action in battle.

Bruce Smith's *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (2000) facilitates scholarship on Shakespeare's inscription of gender throughout his works, given recent theoretical understandings of gender as a natural product of performance. Smith presents his monograph as an application of Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990); citing Butler, Smith writes: "In Judith Butler's formation, gender is a matter of *performance*: 'there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender…identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results'" (2). Importantly, Smith identifies Shakespeare's awareness of gender's performativity—the fact that it presents itself not in the presence of male and female reproductive origins, or any other biological differences—but that gender is tied to discourses of its representation: in the case of Shakespeare's male characters, the manner in which they, as men, should generally be, think, and act. Analyzing the manner in which

Shakespeare's characters emphasize certain sociocultural references for standard masculine behavior, Smith writes: "Masculinity in all these instances is a matter of contingency, of circumstances, of performance. Shakespeare is not alone in having recognized this state of affairs" (4). And, importantly, as Smith asserts, the context of theater as itself constituted by actors' performances of scripted characters heightens the medium's performativity of gender: "Because theater is a matter of performance, plays provide a perfect means of investigating cultural and historical differences with respect to gender identity" (2). As such, Smith's analysis facilitates readings of masculinity in Shakespeare's plays, including *King Henry V*; King Henry's St. Crispin's Day speech functions as one such moment of meditation on masculinity. In particular, the play addresses this appeal to masculinity in considering the broader context of English national identity.

Between King Henry's arrival in France and the Battle of Agincourt, Henry's army has suffered a crucial loss at the city of Harfleur, and one final battle stands between the English and absolute defeat. Thus, prior to battle at Agincourt, recognizing the gravitas of this pivotal moment in English history, King Henry seeks to motivate his soldiers to fight as hard as they can, to work their best as a consolidated force. Consequently, Henry acclaims the masculine bravado of his soldiers, rhetorizing a martial masculine community characterized by this trait as motivation for battle. The first line of King Henry's speech is a response to the Earl of Westmorland, who bemoans the dwindling size of the English army. Complaining of the men still in England, at home from work for St. Crispin's Day, Westmorland cries: "O that we now had here / But one ten thousand of those men in England / That do no work today! (4.3.17-18). Thus, distinguishing his army from the men still comfortably at home, King Henry praises the action of his soldiers as the fulfillment of their masculine duty: "And gentlemen in England now abed / Shall think themselves accursed they were not here, / And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks / That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's Day" (4.3.64-67). That the soldiers have joined King Henry in battle, and are not at home,

reflect the specific features of martial masculinity that Henry seeks to celebrate; their unflappability and unwavering loyalty in battle is what sets them apart from "men in England" still at home, and only they meet the standards of Henry's prescriptive masculinity.[9]

Throughout his St. Crispin's Day speech, Henry V addresses the martial fraternity of his rhetoric in both explicit language and content. As Henry V's audience is uniquely male, it comes as no surprise that Henry directly references his soldiers' manhood, referring to them as "men of England" in speech. However, as familial ties are a product of genetics and are attached to bloodlines, Henry affixes an additional requirement as evidence of their mutual brotherhood: his soldiers' willingness to shed their blood in battle. At a crucial moment in his speech, King Henry delivers some of Shakespeare's most memorable lines, proclaiming:

> From this day to the ending of the world
>
> But we in it shall be remembered,
>
> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.
>
> For he today that sheds his blood with me
>
> Shall be my brother (4.3.58-62).

[9] Anne McClintock's *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (1995) declares the inherent sexualization of the imperial project, noting the manner in which the colonizer's predation of lands and people reflects their subjugation of the colonized, with colonizers in a dominant masculine role and the colonized as a submissive, conquered feminine. McClintock opens the introduction to her text with an illustration of fictional African Kukuanaland from Henry Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, noting that Haggard's treasure map is explicitly sexualized, revealing a woman's body in the various landmarks of Kukuanaland. Continuing, McClintock analyses Haggard's map as commentary on imperial conquest as embodied in the power of male sexual conquest, writing: "Haggard's map thereby hints at a hidden order underlying industrial modernity: the conquest of the sexual and labor power of colonial women" (3). Importantly, King Henry's war in France is not exempt from this reading; not only have Henry and his forces "entered" France, but Henry's prize in victory is marriage to the French princess Catherine of Valois, who is presumably forcibly betrothed off-stage to King Henry at the end the play. As such, King Henry's appeal to a martial brotherhood signals the action of sexual conquest; as brothers, the men are equally engaged in growing their national family—a sexual role inextricably tied to their masculinity.

Here, Henry introduces the conception of familial ties among the men, those which Henry claims are forged by his soldiers' participation in battle and extend beyond their victorious return home. Thus, expecting his soldiers to sacrifice themselves in battle for his royal conquest of the French throne, Henry emphasizes their collective participation in battle as the defining feature of their conceptual brotherhood.

Earlier in the speech, King Henry offers his soldiers spoken permission to withdraw from battle, stating: "That he which hath no stomach to this fight / Let him depart; his passport shall be made / And crowns for convoy put into his purse" (4.3.35-37). However, what is later revealed in this language is that membership to community is contingent on one's sacrifice for his cause—or at least one's willingness to sacrifice his life. Importantly, while King Henry provides the English soldiers with permission to depart, the option serves to unite his troops rather than serve as a legitimate course of action. After being compared to the unmanly still at home in England, to depart from one's duty in battle would be a public declaration of one's cowardice, of one's disrespect for the king. Furthermore, should one of Henry's troops choose to abandon his brigade, how would he return to England? Once spotted by the French on their soil, wouldn't he be killed? With spoken permission to depart, Henry's troops may at least believe that they have made a conscious decision to fight in battle. In actuality, the option was never theirs. Notably, also attached to Henry's claim of communal brotherhood is the underlying presumption of familial equality which extends beyond social status, an equality which encompasses not only the most noble men but also the most abjectly poor. Also, by including himself in this rhetorical martial fraternity, Henry seems to eliminate the many structures of English society which divided the men from each other: wealth, social status, royal blood, a claim or lack thereof to the English throne. With this argument, Henry advances what is perhaps his greatest lie: the rhetorical elimination of difference to emphasize the men's uniform similarity as brothers.

Like King Henry, Oroonoko tailors his oration for an exclusively male audience, appealing to the enslaved men's duty to uphold their inherent masculinity as motivation for battle. In general, Oroonoko's rhetoric models King Henry's, celebrating one's loyalty in self-sacrifice as the defining feature of martial manhood. While upholding the virtues of "Compassion, Charity, Love, Justice and Reason," Oroonoko asserts that "no Man wou'd pretend to that…that he did not Design, when he led them to Freedom, and Glorious Liberty, that they shou'd leave that better part of themselves to Perish by the Hand of the Tyrant's Whip" (53).[10] In this matter, the slaves' participation in collective identity is contingent on their loyalty and courage in battle, two qualities tied by both King Henry and Oroonoko to martial masculinity. However, Oroonoko's treatment of masculinity differs from King Henry's in two important ways: (1) Given the presence of women on colonial plantations, Oroonoko explicitly excludes the enslaved women from his audience; and, (2) Oroonoko rhetorizes the slaves' loss of masculinity through enslavement as collective inspiration to his revolt.

Prior to his speech, as Behn details,[11] Oroonoko "singl'd out these Men from the Women and Children," addressing only the enslaved men with his rhetoric. As women and children were present among men on colonial plantations, Oroonoko's choice enforces a significant barrier to access, excluding women from his project of collective imagination. Notably, throughout *Oroonoko;*

[10] I reference both Catherine Gallagher's Bedford Cultural Edition and Joanna Lipking's Norton Critical Edition of Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* in this paper. However, I exclusively cite Lipking's edition in performing a comparative rhetorical analysis of King Henry and Oroonoko's language. This decision was influenced by my reading of Elizabeth Kraft's "Aphra Behn's 'Oroonoko' in the Classroom: A Review of Texts," as Kraft notes that Lipking's Norton Critical Edition "takes the most conservative approach" (81) to Behn's 1688 text, retaining the capitalization, italicized passages, and elisions of the original text. In her analysis, Kraft directs her readers to Lipking's introduction: "the faults and difficulties of the 1688 text, as well as its conversational style,…recreate the sense of a tale-teller's circle, the heavy pronunciation marking her speech pauses, the ambiguous pronouns, shifting tenses, and unshapely sentences conveying her eager forward motion, her concentration on the immediacy of what she has to tell" (xv, qtd. in Kraft 81).

[11] Throughout *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave*, Behn presents her account of Oroonoko's life from a third-person point of view. However, also throughout the text, she quotes Oroonoko profusely, presumably without the intervention of her narration or of paraphrase. Oroonoko's address to the slaves prior to his revolt is largely unmediated, presented as Oroonoko's exact language to the slaves; this speech constitutes one of longest moments of unmediated speech in the novella. However, moments of Oroonoko's address remain mediated by Behn's narration, including the moments cited from Behn's text in this paragraph.

*or, The Royal Slave*, women are present among men in battle scenes, both in Africa and on the colonial plantation, and this feature of the text does not change during the slave insurrection. When Oronooko stands before his opponents, as Behn details, he "put himself in a Posture of Defense, placing all the Women and Children in the rear; and himself…promising to Dye or Conquer"; however, as Oroonoko and the other slaves are outnumbered by colonists, "the Women and Children, seeing their Husbands so treated…they all run in amongst their Husbands and Fathers, and hung about 'em" (55). As such, enslaved women and children—together with their husbands, sons, and fathers—were always going to be present at and at least adjacent to battle. However, Oroonoko's choice to separate the enslaved men from the women, establishing the enslaved men as his exclusive rhetorical audience, reinforces Oroonoko's appeal to martial masculinity. Thus, Oroonoko advances a sexist, exclusively masculine vision of agential humankind.

Additionally, while King Henry celebrates the martial masculinity defined and mutualized by their collective participation in battle, Oroonoko upholds martial masculinity as a vision for the enslaved men, a virtue they have lost in enslavement and now must reclaim. Oroonoko bemoans the loss of the slaves' manhood; this again emphasizes the performativity of masculinity as, according to Oroonoko, one's manliness is a quality to be attained by men, rather than one biologically predetermined in them. Denouncing the men's treatment in slavery, Oroonoko states: "They suffer'd not like Men who might find a Glory, and Fortitude in Oppression; but like Dogs that lov'd the Whip and Bell, and fawn'd the more they were beaten: That they had lost the Divine Quality of Men, and were become insensible Asses" (52). Here, Oroonoko makes a distinctive comment as to the slaves' betrayal of their manhood: rather than rebelling against their colonial masters, defending themselves and their families from further suffering, the men have become like pets to their masters and comfortable with their suffering. In stating that the men had "lost the Divine Quality of Men," Oroonoko recognizes that their loss of manhood represented a further loss of personhood; these

two elements of identity, fused together by Oroonoko's rhetoric, are signified by the men's submissive demasculinization and lack of resistant action. However, according to Oroonoko, what the men have lost may once again be found: as Oroonoko proclaims, the men's defense of themselves and their families in battle can redeem both their masculinity and humanity.

Notably, throughout *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave*, Behn depicts the character of Oroonoko as, borrowing contemporary language, the "model" black man. She writes: "I have often seen and convers'd with this great Man, and been a Witness to many of his mighty Actions; and do assure the Reader, the most Illustrious Courts court not have produc'd a braver man, both for the Greatness of Courage and Mind, a Judgment more solid, a Wit more quick, and a Conversation more sweet and diverting" (13). Her treatment of Oroonoko throughout the text corroborates this depiction. For example, when Oroonoko is purchased by Mr. Trefry, the man recognizes Oroonoko's nobility and renames him Caesar (36)—a title which upholds him to the grandeur of Roman Antiquity, oppositional to his status in actuality as a slave. Also, when Oroonoko arrives on the plantation, the other slaves "cast themselves at his Feet, crying out, in their Language, Live, O King! Long Live, O King!" (37). These details contextualize Oroonoko as a noble figure and legitimize his rhetoric as a nation-building tool. However, they also complicate analyses of *Oroonoko; or The Royal Slave* as a critique of slavery and colonialism. While Behn bemoans the slaves' suffering on colonial English plantations, she recognizes Oroonoko's participation in the slave trade: "he was that Prince who had, at several times, sold most of 'em [the slaves] to these Parts" (37); treats Oroonoko as an exception to the character and behavior of other African slaves; and, through Oroonoko's rhetoric, quoted in this paragraph, criticizes the slaves' lack of bravery, their compliance with their masters' rules. These critiques only further denote the commitment of Behn, a loyal English Royalist, to oppressive systems and hierarchizing structures in both England and its colonies.

**Imposing Moral Codes**

As Thomas Wilson and George Puttenham pronounce in their rhetoric manuals, rhetoric is a divine tool given to nobility for the purpose of moral instruction. Wilson's declaration of rhetoric as God's "gift of utteraunce" to his "appointed ministers," "that they myghte with ease wynne folke at their will, and frame theim by reason to all good order" (A.iv.v) best summarizes this directive. As noted previously, both manuals contextualize their vision for rhetoric in the development and advancement of English Protestantism, given decades of violent conflict over England's religious identity between Henry VIII's 1534 Act of Supremacy and until Queen Elizabeth's reign. Thus, as Wilson and Puttenham signal, nobles were to use rhetoric not only as a means of political consolidation, but as a means of religious education and conversion, to redirect the audiences of their rhetoric to paths of virtue and religious devotion. Comparatively, in their speeches, Henry V and Oroonoko do not appeal to English Protestantism; note that during the reign of Henry V, England was still a Catholic nation, with ties to the papacy in Rome. However, both Henry V and Oroonoko's speeches function as manifestos of moral instruction. Imposing their own moral code upon their respective rhetorical audiences, Henry V and Oroonoko appeal to honor, won or defended in battle, as inspiration for collective political action. This claim expands upon both rhetors' championing of martial masculinity; as their rhetoric asserts, those men whose primary motivation is the pursuit or preservation of honor have no choice but to join the orators in battle.

Prior to the Battle of Agincourt, Henry V appeals to honor in the very first sentence of his St. Crispin's speech: "If we are marked to die, we are enough / To do our country loss, and if to live, / The fewer men, the greater share of honour" (4.3.20-22). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, there two relevant definitions of "honor/honour" existed in Elizabethan English vernacular, including "great respect, esteem…glory, renown, fame; reputation, good name" ("honor/honour," def. 1a), and "a fine sense of, and strict adherence to, what is considered to be

morally right or just" ("honor/honour," def. 2a). Both definitions of honor are crucial to the logic of King Henry's appeal. First, King Henry appeals to honor as a prize to be won in battle, claiming: "I am not covetous for gold… / But if it be a sin to covet honour / I am the most offending soul alive"[12] (4.3.24,28-29). Here, King Henry seeks to redirect his soldiers' desires from material wealth to the honor won in battle (notably, however, as a king, Henry already has plenty of gold in his coffers). As the men return home from France as victors, King Henry claims:

> He that outlives this day and comes safe home
>
> Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named
>
> And rouse him at the name of Crispian…
>
> Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
>
> And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
>
> (4.3.41-43, 47-48)

According to King Henry, upon their return home the men will be regarded by their communities with honor; their reputation as victors in France will follow them for the remainder of their lives. Any wounds they sustain will serve as evidence of their victory, a demand for remembrance and respect. This language constitutes the first of Henry's arguments on honor, supplanting the pursuit of earthly wealth with the honor provided by victory in battle.

However, King Henry's first appeal to honor idealizes the situation of the English at Agincourt; as Westmorland vocalizes (4.3.17-18), the English are aware that they are outnumbered

12 In Shakespeare's 1600 original publication edition of *King Henry V*, entitled *The Cronicle History of Henry the fift*, King Henry's statement about the pursuit of honor also reads: "Gods will, I would not loose [sic] the honour / One man would share from me / Not for my Kingdome" (E2v). While the *Arden Shakespeare* edition cited throughout this paper emphasizes Henry's salient choice to characterize himself negatively with the words "sin," "covet," and "offending," (those which deviate from standard language for the divine and always-correct behavior of kings, and thus are more likely intended to foster empathic bonds between King Henry and his troops), the language of the 1600 edition carries a differing emphasis. As is quoted from the earlier edition of the playtext, Henry declares that honor is more important to him than even his right to his kingdom. Of course, whether the character of Henry V actually believes this rhetoric is questionable; extending Henry's logic, any one of Henry's troops with honor would have a possession more valuable than the kingdom of England itself.

by the French, and prior to Agincourt their feelings of hopelessness regarding Henry's conquest of France have only intensified. In response, King Henry appeals to honor earned in sacrifice of one's life for king and country, proclaiming honor as better to achieve in death than foregone whilst alive. King Henry's claim that "gentlemen in England now abed / Shall think themselves accursed they were not here" (4.3.64-65) speaks directly to this appeal; as Henry asserts, those who have refused the risk of death in battle abroad and remain at home in peaceful England will regret their decision for as long as they live. Thus, what King Henry instructs "morally right or just" is the sacrifice of oneself for the manifestation of his will—a sacrifice only made willingly given the provision of honor. As such, Henry rhetorizes as a moral imperative, a guiding principle for his soldiers to follow at any cost; failure to pursue honour disqualifies any daring soldier from not only Henry's respect, but from a claim to the England of Henry's imagination.

In attempting to rally together his slaves in a rebellion against their colonial masters, Oroonoko similarly relies upon appeals to the pursuit and preservation of honor, "the first Principle in Nature, that was to be Obey'd," as man's moral imperative. Lamenting the slaves' subservience on colonial plantations, Oroonoko cries:

> And why…my dear Friends and Fellow-suffers, shou'd we be Slaves to an unknown People? Have they vanquished us nobly in Fight? Have they Won us in Honourable Battel? And are we, by the Chance of War become their Slaves? This wou'd not anger a Noble Heart, this wou'd not animate a Souldiers Soul; no, but we are Bought and Sold like Apes, or Monkeys, to be the Sport of Women, Fools and Cowards; and the Support of Rogues, Runagades, that have abandon'd their own Countries, for Rapin, Murders, Thefts and Villanies. (Behn 52)

Here, Oroonoko is clear to establish a difference between prisoners-of-war won honorably in battle, an African custom Behn explains in the first half of her novella, and the slaves on English colonial

plantations, stolen from across the world and forced to submit themselves to colonial masters. Laura Brown's "The Romance of Empire" addresses Oroonoko's circumscribed critique of slavery; situating her comments in a generic analysis of *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave*, Brown writes: "The attack on slavery is voiced in part through the codes of heroic romance: the trade of slaves is unjust only if and when slaves are not honorably conquered in battle" (239). However, his enslavement and the enslavement of others by English colonists constitutes, as Oroonoko presents, an absolute transgression of the laws or traditions which stratify human power, in Africa or colonial British Suriname. Emphasizing that the slaves have been kidnapped, sold and forced into labor without the chance to fight for themselves and/or their families, Oroonoko legitimizes his revolt as a defense of their honor.

This violation of the slaves' honor, as Oroonoko describes, is greater than a refusal of their political agency; Oroonoko recounts the manner in which slaves are "Bought and Sold like Apes, or Monkeys" (52), recording their collective dehumanization, their mistreatment in the service of dishonorable masters. In his *Discourse on Colonialism* (1972), Aimé Césaire provides vocabulary to epitomize the inherent dehumanization of both the colonizer and colonized by systems of colonial exploitation; writing from a postcolonial perspective, Césaire exhaustively details the degradation of humanity by systems and structures of colonization, ultimately concluding that "colonization = thingification" (177). As Césaire asserts, this thingification is manifested in the reduction of personhood through economic exchange, through the means of enforcing the domination of the colonizer over the colonized. Césaire writes: "Between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance, self-complacency, swinishness, brainless elites, degraded masses" (177). As Oroonoko describes, the double-edged sword of colonization reduced the Africans to animals in making them slaves, and simultaneously reflected the dishonor of the English colonists.

Thus, on one hand, Oroonoko bemoans the deterioration of traditional African sociocultural hierarchies: the manner in which he, a former prince, as well as the other African slaves, have been stripped of their honor, forced into labor without a fight. On the other hand, however, the loss of the slaves' honor reflects a deeper loss of personhood; given their treatment like animals, only the collective upheaval of colonial power can redress their dehumanization.

**Contextualizing a Collective Political Identity**

After outlining the ontological parameters and guiding moral principles of their collective political identities, King Henry and Oroonoko connect their appeals to the context of an imagined community, concretized with rhetoric specific to the situation of their respective audiences. Recognizing their troops' affiliation with each other—bonds already forged by the men's alignment with the rhetors' construction of martial masculinity and their advancement of honor as principal to moral instruction—King Henry and Oroonoko unite the men with this third set of appeals, emphasizing the shared experience, either positive or negative, of those with individual claims to their collective political identities. Thus, while the orators appeal to cultural tradition and collective memory, they situate their rhetoric with appeals to the national identity of—or in Oroonoko's case, the nationless identity[13] of—their respective audiences: Henry with appeals to English national identity, and Oroonoko in recalling the collective mistreatment of African slaves by colonial masters. Again, King Henry and Oroonoko seek to translate the similitude of their audiences to political action; each orator's rhetorizes the collective political identity as motivation for battle.

13 While King Henry and Oroonoko's contextualization of their rhetoric with a specific political group reflects the formation of national identity, as Benedict Anderson defines in his *Imagined Communities*, I hesitate to utilize the terms "nation" or "national identity" equally throughout this analytical subsection, recognizing the nationless status of enslaved peoples. While Oroonoko appeals to his audience as an "imagined political community" (Anderson 6), the term "collective political identity" supplants the term "national identity" as a more precise evaluation of the slaves' nationless status. "Collective political identity" is thus uniformly applicable to both King Henry and Oroonoko's respective historical contexts.

Throughout his St. Crispin's Day speech, King Henry relies upon collective pronouns—ten in total—to emphasize his army's collective unity; furthermore, Henry intertwines his aforementioned appeals with the explicit reference of "England," and "Englishmen," as well as other more general references to his army's Englishness: "No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England (4.3.30) and "gentlemen in England now abed / Shall think themselves accursed they were not here" (4.3.64). First, Henry's use of collective pronouns—for example, "If we are marked to die, we are enough" (4.3.20) and "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers" (4.3.60) concretize Henry's appeal to collective identity in explicit language, a demonstration of Henry's rhetorized identification with his troops. Also, Henry's mention of England—three times throughout the speech, not including specific mention of English territories—invokes his army's connection to the English nation—regardless of whether or not its members are Englishmen.[14] Importantly, however, Henry's logic emphasizes his army's unique relationship with their nation: the men still in England, themselves "at home in England" (4.3.17), are more ideologically distant from the English nation than those who are with Henry in France. It is those who have chosen to commit themselves to Henry's war, to the advancement of English (read: Henry's) power in France, who Henry asserts are more representative and mutually formative of English identity.

As Alison Chapman notes in "Whose Saint Crispin's Day Is It?" (2001), Shakespeare reinforces King Henry's rhetorical appeal to English cultural memory with the context of the Battle of Agincourt on St. Crispin's Day. Contemporary readers of *King Henry V* deduce from Westmorland's complaints that St. Crispin's Day was a holiday celebrated by the English during the

[14] One of Shakespeare's most notable critiques of Henry's collectivizing rhetoric in *King Henry V* is his inclusion of soldiers from throughout the British Isles in King Henry's army, those who are not only English but Scottish, Irish, and Welsh. In Act 3, Scene 2, four men from across Henry's empire—distinctive from each other by their reference of cultural stereotypes and accents—gather together, debating the value of Henry's presence in France. Scholarship often cites this moment of resistance to the play's otherwise celebratory depiction of English victory as evidence of Shakespeare's interest in interrogating consolidating narratives of English national identity (Recall David Baker's *Between Nations* and Montalt et. al.'s "Gallivanting Round the Globe: Translating National Identities in *Henry V*").

time of Henry V's reign; however, for the Elizabethan audiences of Shakespeare's original productions, St. Crispin's Day registered a deeper and double meaning. As Chapman details, St. Crispin's Day was, at surface level, a holiday celebrating St. Crispin, the patron saint of shoemakers. However, shoemakers signified another reference in medieval English culture: a symbolic place in English traditions as calendar-makers, characters who disrupted social and religious order to create and celebrate their own holidays. As such, according to Chapman, Shakespeare thoughtfully paired King Henry's rhetoric with the holiday of St. Crispin's Day as commentary on the king's seizure and reinterpretation of English national memory. Chapman writes:

> Although Henry does not create Saint Crispin's Day in the sense of inventing it, his speech imaginatively recreates it: instead of commemorating the patron saint of shoemakers, Saint Crispin's Day will primarily celebrate Henry and his army's triumph over the French. The Saint Crispin's Day speech in Henry V shows the shoemaker's holiday-making prerogatives being displaced onto the royal person of Henry himself, and thus the play depicts the nation's king—not its shoemakers—as the lawful shaper of England's liturgical and commemorative practice.
>
> (Chapman 1468)

Thus, when King Henry proclaims "And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by / From this day to the ending of the world / But we in it shall be remembered" (4.3.57-59), he—like the shoemakers in English tradition—reinscribes the cultural meaning of St. Crispin's Day in English cultural memory. No longer is the holiday a celebration of St. Crispin, the patron saint of trouble-making shoemakers, but a day of remembrance for the men who fought with Henry in battle: those who sacrificed themselves for Henry's conquest of the French throne (in the name of England, no less), and those who survive to tell the tale of victory at Agincourt.

As King Henry rewrites English cultural memory, he asserts himself—and as an extension of his rhetoric, the members of his martial brotherhood—as the authors of the English national narrative and of its memory. Together, they define what it means to be English: both in the concrete sense of the term, referred to by Henry as Englishmen, but also in the England of their collective imagination. As Graham Holderness writes, "The English patriot doesn't see his emotional conviction rooted in the actuality of the nation that surrounds him…this patriotic emotion searches past and future for a habitable space, nostalgically embracing the glamour of backwardness, and optimistically extrapolating a projected landscape of hope" (220). Thus, inscribing the Battle of Agincourt into English culture, King Henry recognizes his rhetoric's capacity to rewrite the memory of past, invoke the action of present, and direct the course of England's future. King Henry's appeal to English national identity is the extension of his imagined England, the conceptualization of English heritage, physicality, and fate which together serve as motivation for political action.

Comparatively, rhetorizing the imaginative imperative of a collective political community, Oroonoko replaces King Henry's discourse of English national identity with an appeal to the collective memory of African slaves on colonial plantations. Having been subjected to their masters' oppressive authority on the basis of cultural differences, and—more importantly—due to the darker color of their skin, Oroonoko declares the suffering endured by the slaves as a product of their racialization as reason for revolt. Oroonoko's accounts of this suffering are unwavering, sparing no gory detail; he reminds the slaves that "they promiscuously, the Innocent with the Guilty, suffer'd the infamous Whip, the sordid Stripes…till their Blood trickled from all Parts of their Body; Blood, whose every drop out to be Reveng'd with a Life of some of those Tyrants, that impose it (52). Here, in recounting the painful agony endured by the slaves, Oroonoko's argumentation follows not from the reimaging of a national holiday, nor of the othering of a national body via projected ontological differences, but from an appeal to the collective experience of suffering as recounted in

narrative form. As such, his appeal is direct: the slaves must revenge the spilling of their blood on colonial plantations with the spilt blood of their masters.

In his 1882 lecture entitled "Qu'est-ce qu'une Nation?" ("What is a Nation?"), the French theorist and historian Ernest Renan describes collective suffering as a uniting political force. He argues: "Suffering in common unifies more than joy does. Where national memories are concerned, grief are of more value than triumphs" (53). According to Renan, who studied the birth of nationalism throughout the world, Oroonoko's appeals foster ties formerly nonexistent between those who have memories of suffering in common. While the slaves belonged to various tribal groups, warring against each other in Africa (again consider that, according to Behn's narration on page 37, Oroonoko had, in reference to the other slaves among him, sold "most of 'em to these Parts"), their collective suffering could possess the unique power to unite them as a cohesive political group.

While he does not directly mention or write back to Renan, the critical race theorist Ramesh Mallipeddi extends Renan's theory on suffering, reinforcing the collectivizing power of suffering when uniformly applied to a racial or ethnic group. In the presence of this collective suffering, Mallipeddi asserts, the shared experience produces an "affiliative identity, a kinship that is rooted not only in race and ethnicity, but in a history of shared oppression" (944).[15] The suffering that Oroonoko and other slaves have endured together, and more concisely endured because of white

[15] Importantly, Steven Grosby defines the nation as not only "a territorial relation of collective self-consciousness of actual and imagined duration" (12), but also "a community of kinship, specifically a bounded, territorially exclusive, temporally deep community of nativity" (14). While Grosby's first definition of the nation (12) could easily be re-written as Anderson's "imagined political community" (6), his second definition emphasizes a nation of quasi-familial bonds bound to abstracted place. Grosby continues: "the term 'community' refers to a level of self-consciousness of the individual such that one recognizes oneself to be necessarily and continually related to others, as occurs, for example, through birth"—the "obvious example" of which "is the family, where one is always related to other members of the family, irrespective of birth" (14). This language directly invokes "kinship" as described by Mallipeddi, a familial body constituted by their shared trauma. Thus, Grosby's interpretation of the nation addresses the slaves' situation of political subjugation: brought together by their collective suffering, the slaves constitute a "nationless" nation—a kinship without a land to call their own.

colonial masters' conceptualization of them as a subordinate race, prompts their self-imagination as a united, affiliative group. As such, what Oroonoko seeks to accomplish in his slave revolt is, according to Mallipeddi, a projection of "nationalist and diasporic, ethnic and exilic, territorial and transnational allegiances not as mutually exclusive but rather as profoundly constitutive of each other" (944). The political bonds forged by the slaves' mutual suffering are thus more profound as a product of colonialism's racialization of their identities. The slaves with Oroonoko in British Suriname may have come from warring tribes in Africa, and may have been sworn enemies in conflicts in the recent past; however, Oroonoko recognizes the colonists' collective identification of the slaves with a racialized identity and appeals to this identity to advance political unity against their colonial masters.

Furthermore, while not explicit in his rhetoric, Oroonoko's incitement of the slaves to violent revolt highlights operations of colonial oppression; in particular, that the suffering the slaves have endured, even their seizure from Africa, occurred not only because of the profitability presented to the English by colonial plantation economies, but also because the colonists justified their violence towards the slaves by identifying them as both nonwhite and black. This denotes a process of "racialization," defined by Michael Omi and Howard Winant in their Racial Formation in the United States (1986/1994: an "ideological process," the "extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group" (64). Oroonoko details the "Miseries and Ignominies of Slavery" (52) as further evidence for the slaves' political collectivity; this suffering, when hierarchized vis-à-vis the English's inexplicit "whiteness," references the racialization of the slaves' identities, a phenomenon of not only past but present.

Having spent years in psychiatric practice on the French colony of Martinique, the doctor and political philosopher Franz Fanon describes the effects of colonialism on the psyche of the colonial subject, the manner in which the colonial subject's imagination of identity is disrupted and

reconfigured by his or her contact with the colonizer. Fanon writes: "The settler and the native are old acquaintances. In fact, the settler is right when he speaks of knowing 'them' well. For it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence." (30). As such, it is the colonized's relationship with the colonizer which forces a reconceptualization of the political community; the colonial subject must approach political subjectivity differently, now monetized, subsumed in a system of violent oppression. Thus, according to Fanon, violence finally presents the colonial subject a course of action, a channel to express the trauma of his or her experience:

> But it so happens that for the colonized people this violence, because it constitutes their only work, invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. This practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler's violence in the beginning. The groups recognize each other and the future nature is already indivisible. The armed struggle mobilises the people; that is to say, it throws them in one way and in one direction. (Fanon 73).

Additionally, Fanon explains: "The mobilisation of the masses, when it arises out of the war of liberation, introduces into each man's consciousness the ideas of a common cause, of a national destiny and of a collective history" (73). Oroonoko's appeal to the slaves' collective suffering recognizes the violence they have endured, labels this violence, and supplies a violent response as legitimate political action. Stripped from their individual personhood and tribal communities, and treated as a subhuman class because of the color of their skin, the slaves have been dehumanized as one, together. Thus, Oroonoko's appeal acknowledges this newfound, racialized unity, providing the slaves "direction" (73) through their pain. Recognizing violence as a collectivizing force for change, Oroonoko's call for revolt unites the slaves in retributive action.

## Conclusion

While William Shakespeare's *King Henry V* and Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* were first published eighty-eight years apart from each other, the two texts reveal significant similarities to each other: the texts' titular characters are two noble men—an English king and an enslaved African prince; battles instigated by the men mark the climax of the texts, testing their respective ability to provoke military action; and, the characters rhetorize collective political identities to catalyze this political mobilization. Thus, in its rhetorical analysis of two seventeenth-century texts, this paper makes three conclusive claims. First, attention to the orators' rhetoric enhances understandings of the manner in which national identities are conceptualized and rhetorized; this applies not only to a catalog of the specific rhetorical appeals utilized—delineation of in-group membership, imposition of a moral code, and contextualization of collective identity—but also their relation to the imagined project of political self-formation. Second, this project's study of King Henry and Oroonoko's appeals vis-à-vis Renaissance English rhetoric manuals confirms the sustained role of rhetoric in Early Modern England's self-imagination, as well as later throughout the emergent British Empire. And, third, while contextual and emphatic differences distinguish the rhetoric of both orators, the thematic similarity of their appeals evidences Shakespeare's authorial influence on Behn's literary themes and content.

Notably, the fact that both King Henry and Oroonoko appeal to their armies with the same or similar arguments and language yet meet disparate outcomes highlights another crucial difference between the royal rhetors: their racialized difference as promulgated by English and English colonial society. While King Henry and his troops are outnumbered against the French, the English forces claim victory at the Battle of Agincourt, and in the last scene of the play Henry is betrothed to the French princess Catherine of Valois. However, while the slaves in British Suriname outnumber their overseers and masters, their revolt ultimately fails, and at the end of the Behn's text Oroonoko

suffers an exceedingly violent death: as a final display of his rebellion, Oroonoko cuts a piece of his throat, disembowels himself, and is later quartered and dismembered by the English. While Shakespeare and Behn's texts are historical fictions, semi-fictionalized accounts of English history and English colonial history (or, in Behn's case, potentially a complete fiction, as noted in the introduction), the rhetor's happily-ever-after or lack thereof denotes a crucial distinction between the access of white imperialists and their nonwhite racialized subjects to structures of political mobilization. As such, Oroonoko's recirculation of Shakespearean rhetoric highlights the struggle of colonial subjects to full political subjectivity within the expanding British empire. Although Behn is complicit in colonialism's structural racism, institutional violence, and its inherent processes of dehumanization her novella demonstrates the failure of Oroonoko and the slaves, as exemplary of enslaved and disempowered subjects throughout the British empire, to realize effective political change.

However, centuries after Shakespeare and Behn, we continue to reconceptualize and define what it means to share a collective identity—as well as determine who is entitled to or excluded from our own. Racialized peoples, subject to racist systems of routine oppression, continue to confront disparities of access to methods of political self-imagination. Given this continued marginalization of nonwhite races, this analysis carries pertinent implications in contemporary political contexts. Consider, for example, the United Kingdom's 2016 Brexit referendum, exemplifying the country's efforts to again renegotiate the boundaries of its national identity. While Brexit was in part a call for the economic sovereignty of the English private sector, popular opinion in favor of the "Leave" vote was largely influenced by xenophobic and anti-immigrant public sentiment fostered by conservatives in British government. Leonardo Scuira's "Brexit Beyond Borders" traces this phenomenon: "Taking advantage of people's nationalist propensity, government representatives and eurosceptic plutocrats from private entities sought to nurture a xenophobic

sentiment in the population by saying that foreigners were stealing their jobs" (115). As Britain's decision to join the European Union opened its borders to immigration from throughout the European economic bloc, especially many Eastern Europeans, the Brexiteers claimed that they were inundated with people who were "violating British cultural values" (Scuira 114). This importance of cultural values as defining English personhood—delineating one collective identity from another—echoes King Henry and Oroonoko's rhetorical appeals.

Another such contemporary political context is the success of far-right nationalist party leaders in recent European presidential and parliamentary elections, as well as in the May 2019 European Parliament elections; exemplary of their political orientation, such parties' premier politicians proclaim the "death" of the European Union.[16] This phenomenon crucially represents continental Europe's increasing resistance to globalization and the resulting immigration/migration of nonwhite peoples, many of whom are refugees. Recent successes of far-right candidates and parties include the victory of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán of the nationalist Fidesz party in 2018, as well as of Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz of the Freedom Party, the youngest head of government in the world, in 2018 and 2020 ("Europe and Right-wing Nationalism: A country-by-country guide"). Similarly, in the May 2019 European Parliament elections, "Eurosceptic/Euroskeptic"[17] candidates, many tied to European far-right political parties, won 192 Member of European Parliament (MEP) seats, a relative gain of approximately sixty seats from the

[16] Rejoicing the May 2019 European Parliament election results, Marine Le Pen of France's far-right National Rally party (formerly National Front) proclaimed: "The European Union is dead. Long live Europe!" (Adler). After unsuccessful campaign to become President of France in 2012, Le Pen again ran for President of France in 2017, conceding to the current President of France Emmanuel Macron after receiving approximately 34.2% of the French national vote (Présidentielle 2017: Revivez L'Élection D'Emmanuel Macron, Nouveau Président de la République). In 2016, *Politico* ranked Le Pen the second most important Member of European Parliament, after only President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz (Heath).

[17] "Eurosceptic/Euroskeptic" denotes an anti-European Union political stance. Eurosceptic/Euroskeptic parties and their candidates seek to limit the power of the European Union as a supranational legislative and bureaucratic agency; many such parties and candidates have called for their countries to leave or "exit" the European Union. "Euroskeptic" is the Americanized spelling of the word.

total of 751 MEP seats—or twenty-five percent of the total seats after an increase of approximately eight percent[18] ("European Elections 2019: Live Results"). In "Brexit Beyond Borders," Scuira writes: "Populism and separatist movements [are] gaining strength from country to country…European nationalists, greatly inspired by Britain, are calling for referendums on EU membership" (118). However, political analysts largely attribute the growth of such far-right nationalist parties—including Hungary's Fidesz, Austria's Freedom Party, Switzerland's Swiss People's Party, Denmark's Danish People's Party, Sweden's Sweden Democrats, Italy's The League, Spain's Vox, France's National Rally, The Netherlands' Freedom Party, and Germany's Alternative for Germany (ranked in order of percent of votes won by the party in recent national elections, many which platform candidates as MEPs)—to their anti-Islam and anti-immigrant positions (Adler). While Britain's difficulty leaving the European Union since the 2016 referendum has "revealed the high cost and daunting complexity of an EU exit" (Adler) the continued popularity of the parties reveals their white nationalist underbelly. Lobbying for anti-migrant/anti-migration policies, employing anti-Muslim rhetoric, and having formed pan-European nationalist coalitions in the past few years as a response to Brexit's slow burn to completion (Bieber),[19] the parties appeal to limited conceptualizations of national identity—not only rooted in histories of shared culture but a narrow, racialized definition of who exactly their collective political identity includes.

And, across the Atlantic, the 2016 election of Donald Trump as President of the United States reflects national anxieties of who is and can become an American. At a campaign rally in

[18] I calculated the total increase of MEP seats by Eurosceptic candidates by adding the MEP seats won by the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy, European Conservatives and Reformists, and Non-Inscrit European Parliament groups, all identified by *Financial Times* as ideologically eurosceptic. The relative gain of MEP seats was calculated from "net change in seats" statistics for European Parliament groups as provided by *Financial Times*.

[19] As Florian Bieber notes, far-right parties throughout Europe have been working together to consolidate their anti-Muslim and anti-migrant rhetoric since 2016. Increasing appeals to white Christianity, for example, unify the parties' supporters against "Turks" and other Muslim peoples, even if the ethnic groups to be excluded are not of Turkish descent. Bieber's article also notes that Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Freedom Party of Austria have cultivated relationships with extreme nationalist parties in Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia (Bieber).

Tampa, Florida, Trump was famously quoted advancing his plan to stymie immigration of Mexican nationals to the United States, saying: "I would build a great wall, and nobody builds walls better than me, believe me…I will build a great great wall on our southern border and I'll have Mexico pay for that wall" (Valverde); within days, rally attendees' shouts of "Build that wall!" transformed into a slogan of Trump's presidential campaign (Johnson). On January 27, 2017, Trump signed an Executive Order banning foreign nationals from seven predominantly Muslim countries from visiting the country for 90 days, suspended entry to the country of all Syrian refugees indefinitely, and prohibited any other refugees from coming into the country for 120 days ("Timeline of the Muslim Ban"). After reactionary lawsuits, a series of injunctions to action by federal and state courts, and numerous appeals, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a third version of the ban set forth by the Trump administration in 2018. And, while the United States reels from the global COVID-19 pandemic,[20] on April 20, 2020, Trump announced a moratorium on legal immigration to the United States to "protect the jobs…of GREAT American citizens"[21] (Bennett). The Trump administration has itself welcomed far-right opinion and leading proponents of white nationalism and supremacy, including former Trump administration Chief Strategist Steve Bannon[22] ("Steve Bannon: Five

[20] The World Health Organization announced COVID-19 as the name of the novel coronavirus disease of late 2019 and 2020 on February 11, 2020. The SARS-CoV-2 virus is the cause of COVID-19 disease. The World Health Organization declared the coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic on March 11, 2020 ("Naming the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the virus that causes it").

[21] Donald Trump's tweet, posted on April 20, 2020, reads: "In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens, I will be signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States!" (@realDonaldTrump).

[22] The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) verifies Steve Bannon's enthusiasm for the alt-right, those who, according to the ADL, "promote a loose network of individuals and groups that promote white identity and reject mainstream conservatism in favor of politics that embrace implicit or explicit racism, anti-Semitism and white supremacy" and "oppose multiculturalism and immigration." The ADL records that in March 2018, after meeting with European leaders from Germany, Italy, and France, Bannon told the *New York Times* that he wanted to "build a vast network of European populists to demolish the Continent's political establishment." The ADL details: "That same month, Bannon spoke at a meeting of the far-right National Front in France, where he reportedly told attendees, 'Let them call you racists. Let them call you xenophobes. Let them call you nativists. Wear it as a badge of honor'" ("Steve Bannon: Five Things to Know").

Things to Know") and senior Trump advisor Stephen Miller[23] (Holpuch), the latter who has advocated internally for the reduction of and bans on immigration (Bennett). Given the context of the upcoming November 2020 presidential election, political analysts identify this most recent policy as the Trump administration's reiteration of its "tough stance on immigration," a strategy intended to "rekindle some of that energy" (Bennett) among supporters prior to November. As with the 2016 Brexit referendum and the increasing popularity of far-right nationalist parties in Europe, the language and policies of Trump and his administration advance a discriminatory conceptualization of American identity defined by racial whiteness and cultural egomania.

While these contextual connections exemplify discriminatory and racist imaginations of the political community, the construction and rhetorization of national identity are not inherently exclusive of other peoples. For example, the language of "American values," a term which resonates throughout American culture, denotes to many the importance of democratic political representation and multicultural diversity. While these values are not exclusive to American politics, they have motivated American domestic and foreign policy throughout the United States' short history as a nation, including often-flawed but genuine efforts to introduce the world to democracy and expand legal protections of human rights around the world. As inherently political beings, we wish to belong to a collective identity with those who are like us, who share our cultural values, traditions, experience, and history; as long as humans form relationships with each other, we will appeal to our collective similarities to attain effective political mobilization. However, as King Henry

[23] In her "Stephen Miller: Why is Trump's White Nationalist Aide Untouchable?" Amanda Holpuch traces Steven Miller's influence on policy in the Trump administration, in particular as the architect of many Trump administration immigration policies. As Holpuch evidences, Miller has a powerful influence in the Department of Homeland Security and was a key proponent of Trump's Muslim ban. As evidence for Miller's white nationalist ideologies, Holpuch cites Nov. 2019 article in *The Guardian* by Jason Wilson, reporting the content of Miller's emails released by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) this week. The emails, part of a correspondence with Katie McHugh, then a writer for the far-right media site *Breitbart*, "promoted racist fears of demographic replacement of white people by non-whites [and] disseminated conspiracy theories positing a United Nations-inspired plan to colonize America" (Wilson). Quoting the SPLC, Wilson notes that "eighty percent of the emails in their 900-email correspondence were tightly focused on issues of race and immigration" (Wilson).

and Oroonoko's rhetoric demonstrate, the rhetoric of national identity, the messages of political leaders and of popular culture about who we are and what defines who we are can be exaggerated, untruthful, or altogether arbitrary. As such, through their seventeenth-century textual examples, Shakespeare and Behn provoke our critical self-examination of the manner in which national identities are conceptualized and rhetorized in our own lives. From this analysis, we can learn from the examples of past to more thoughtfully consider our present and imagine a better collective future.

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