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Making Waves: Bacon, Manley, and the Shifting Rhetorics of Opulent At(A)Lantis

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MAKING WAVES: BACON, MANLEY, AND THE
SHIFTING RHETORICS OF OPULENT AT(A)LANTIS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree

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ABSTRACT

In the modern critical environment, there has been a renewed interest in the role that proto-feminist and feminist satires have played in the development of cultural commentary and the modern novel. Lesser-studied works have seen several new approaches applied by critics such as Rachel Carnell, Rebecca Bullard, and Ruth Herman, who have focused on the role of the genre of “secret history” in the popular growth of the novel as a form for political dissent. Secret history, which can offer revelatory glimpses into the contemporary scandals and governance of the female authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is a field that, properly contextualized, can provide a new focus for previously under-appreciated works, themes, and literary strategies.

In this study, these critics’ contributions are applied to an interpretation of the works of Delarivier Manley (c. 1663 – 1724), and specifically to the proto-novel *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes. From the New Atalantis, vols. 1 and 2* (1709) as a turning point in the development of modern tropes and the utilization of utopian and dystopian spaces, especially those based upon or resembling the mythical lost nation of Atlantis. Extending Manley’s semi-biographical secret history from the elements of cultural and political satire present in Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516) and Sir Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* (1624), the study aims to demonstrate that Manley’s text has dramatically influenced the modern interpretation of Atlantis specifically, and dystopias generally, in diverse cultural media including film, literature, comic books, and mythology.

Examining the cataclysmic motifs of Atlantean utopias, anti-utopias, and dystopias, the study attempts to note the ways in which Manley’s *The New Atalantis* has permanently revised the accepted causes and motivations for the destruction of the Atlantean continent and the rhetorical commentary that these cataclysmic representations provide the modern reader as well as the creators of modern media.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In her 2009 monograph, *The Politics of Disclosure, 1674-1725: Secret History Narratives*, Rebecca Bullard explores the secret history, a genre now undergoing renewed academic study, and the connections between several authors of secret histories, which she describes as “[undermining] received or official accounts of the recent political past by exposing the seamy side of public life” while creating “a range of rhetorical effects out of raw material provided by secret history’s revelatory narratives” in order to register political dissent through the presentation of adaptations and re-imaginings of the contemporary culture (1-3). Specific to the act of conveying secret history in Bullard’s estimation is the creation of a sultry sense of “titillation,” where the author provides unprecedented access, through the author’s either known or supposed information, into the boudoir and drawing rooms of individual members of society’s rich, powerful, or influential castes. “This act of disclosure demonstrates that secrets are narratives,” Bullard argues, “created by rearranging sequences of events in such a way as to obscure the truth.” This act of obfuscation actually serves to reinforce audience belief despite its unbelievability, because “revelation encourages [readers] to consider the ways in which narratives of the past are constructed out of a selected and therefore contingent set of events” (5). Secret history, then, reduced to its most basic elements, is a genre in which the specific, personal dalliances of the empowered elite are divested of the power and security of their own privacy.

Few authors of the secret history leveraged this act of revelation quite so effectively as editor, journalist, and satirist Delarivier Manley, whose contributions to the genre are credited by many critics as bringing about the eventual popularization of the novel as a literary form.¹ Manley's most critically and financially successful full-length work, *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes, From The New Atalantis* (hereafter referred to by its abbreviated title, *The New Atalantis*), may well represent the high-water mark of eighteenth century secret histories, but also should be noted for the novel ways in which it leveraged other literary traditions, including those of utopian and dystopian fiction, travelogues, and morality plays, in order to provide audiences with familiar themes while re-envisioning and permanently restructuring popular understanding of one of literature's most established fictional settings: the lost island of Atlantis.

If the study of the genre of secret history is in many ways a study of the personal, private, and specific made public through satire or fictive political context, contextualizing Atlantis often requires the study of the public made private, the social made deeply personal—in short, the purest expression of the Body Politic made character. While in its originating narrative Plato presents only the public, giving us no heroes, no kings, only navies and armies and great cities and gardens, almost all narratives after the eighteenth century focus instead on an outlying individual or group of individuals, or on occasion political or intellectual factions, who have survived or averted (or presaged and departed prior to) an Atlantean cataclysmic event, and have done so by implicitly rejecting corruption, debauchery, or avarice inherent to Atlantean society in its last, great days.²

1 See Rachel Carnell's *A Political Biography of Delarivier Manley* (2008) and Rosalind Ballaster's introduction to the NYU edition of Manley's *The New Atalantis* (1992) for discussion of the text's relation to the field of novel studies.

2 I have taken to calling this character trope the "Exile from Opulence," an extension of the trope of self-exile which indicates a movement from a debauched, wicked, or sinful space into an ascetic, moderate, or nomadic existence as a direct rejection of the political intricacies, human rights violations, or loss of values or direction associated with the former. Whether discussing Moses electing to abdicate a position of influence in order to exile himself to the desert due to the iniquity and anti-Semitism of the Pharaoh's palace or Dick Grayson choosing to abandon Wayne Manor out of disagreement with Batman, only to return as the prodigal hero Nightwing of his own right, the story of this exile exists as a statement of moral character and as a plot device in the development of leadership and personal growth throughout the history of monomythic narratives. For more information on this trope's applications regarding Atlantis and other origin stories, see

This concept of escapable or inescapable corruption, however, is not nascent in the Atlantis mythos, but rather a supplemental interpretation included only after a major rhetorical shift in Atlantean narrative traditions, one which may be traced to a very peculiar, singular, and specific literary movement and moment. Only after the Enlightenment does the narrative frame, and the political implications that accompany it, become evident in literature; furthermore, only after the arrival of Delarivier Manley's *The New Atalantis* does this frame become the *de facto* assumed historical and cultural narrative of Atlantean and other dystopian cataclysms.

In order to fully contextualize these changes to the Atlantean mythology in Manley's work, one must first consider the political and cultural utopias that precede her own, and which her work builds upon and subverts. Current criticism surrounding Sir Francis Bacon's 1628 work, *New Atlantis*, tends towards two separate forms of analysis, one interested in Bacon's role as a forefather of scientific empiricism and another analyzing the work as an extension of the idealistic social models set forth by Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*. However, these two critical approaches often tend to misapprehend each other's forms, modes of discourse, and purposes, as demonstrated by Soňa Nováková's explanation of Bacon's work as positing an "idea of disinterestedness" in her comparison of his utopian text and the later anti-utopian satire of *New Atalantis* by Delarivier Manley. Manley's depiction of the Atlantean mythos and continent, published in two volumes over six months in 1709, is juxtaposed against Bacon in this criticism as being an interpretation of the myth engaged with a "reality of self-interest and cupidity," a reality described by Nováková as "a dystopia beside Bacon's utopian *New Atlantis*" (123). There can be no question that Bacon is a tremendously influential mind of the pre- and early-Enlightenment era, and his works and philosophical views permeated throughout English literature for a century to follow. This essay aims in part to demonstrate that, contrary to several scholarly claims, there can be little doubt that Bacon's *New Atlantis* had a profound influence upon

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Manley's derivative "dystopian" *New Atalantis*, as Nováková argues. In making overarching simplifications of the arguments and imagery inherent to Bacon's work (as well as Manley's) as being fully empirical or fully idealistic, modern critics of Bacon may well be committing an error that prevents further nuanced inspections of the interplay of these two texts across gender, politics, and a century of social changes in England. Perhaps more significantly, this rudimentary categorization of the philosophical elements of both Bacon and More's narratives in comparison to Manley's later work fails to provide a crucial context that may inform our more complete understanding of the rhetorical powers of utopian and Atlantean narratives. Atlantis, either as myth and symbol or as history and fact, has resided in the cultural and literary consciousness for twenty-four centuries. The longevity of this setting reveals the capability of myth and mystery to penetrate all times and all cultures. Utopia, similarly, is eternally appealing to authors for its capability to foment audiences' aspirations towards legally just and perfect societies. More's *Utopia* provides a narrative and philosophical structure which has inspired five hundred years of genre fiction. Bacon's *New Atlantis* leverages this structure in order to capture an intellectual inclination through a near-perfect synthesis of utopian and Atlantean commentaries. Manley's *New Atalantis*, by contrast, in some ways inverts and in other ways reclaims two millennia of Atlantean interpretations of art, culture, mythology, morality, and social purpose through her careful and powerful repositioning of More and Bacon's texts as overly-optimistic precursors to her own intervention into the genre.

The scholarly presumption placed upon the utopian narrative as genre-standard is of special interest in that it is both widespread and utterly counterintuitive, depending greatly as it does upon an assumption that utopian and anti-utopian literature serve opposite political and literary purposes. Critical statements regarding Bacon's influence upon the *New Atlantis* are terse and exclusively factual - and yet unsupported by anything more than supposition without evidence and a note upon the similarities of title, setting, and form. What is it about the nature of Bacon's work that makes parody and critical reference to his

New Atlantis a presumed fact of Manley scholarship instead of a point of express interest in the contextualization of the secret history? By entering new textual and biographical associations between Bacon and Manley into the current scholarship we may not only recontextualize Manley's *New Atalantis*, but also begin to decontextualize Bacon's *New Atlantis* as utopia and reposition its Atlantean theme as an indicator of similarly subversive social commentary. The interplay of these two texts can be understood not only as a suggestion of their relationships to each other, but as a response to Atlantean narratives of the past and as a sign of their influence over three centuries of Atlantean social commentary that follows.

CHAPTER II

ATLANTIS AS ENDURING THEME

For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:5-7).

With this in mind, the more germane question than what separates and differentiates these two works is what thematic and genre-oriented features unite them in apparent purpose, characterization, and setting. Obviously, most apparent is the shared Atlantean motif as a dominant expression of otherworldliness. Atlantis exists in the literary consciousness as secondary perhaps only to More's Utopia as a setting facilitating hypothetical social commentary and reforms. It is no great wonder; the image of Atlantis as something more than myth—a hyper-real and yet purely fictional rhetorical space representing societies' greatest aspirations and darkest fears—has appealed to authors' social sensibilities for twenty-five centuries.

Even in its earliest Platonic representation in the fourth century BC, Atlantis is the domain of social contrast as threat to preexisting power structures. In Plato's *Kritias*, the character of Timaeus relates Greece's ancient conflict with the Atlantean navy (a far superior power in numbers and organization to Athens' own seafaring forces) to Athens' own contemporary political environment, and uses contrast between these two nations to comment not only on Grecian society, but also on its moral, military, and political capability (108e-121c). Of particular interest to Timaeus and *Kritias* in Plato's dialogues, however, is

the positioning not of Atlantis but of ancient Greece itself as a mythical land of pure moral and social righteousness. It was this righteousness that allowed Greece to lead a resistance against the enslaving navies of Atlantis and demonstrated the Hellenic destiny to be military and cultural leaders of the Mediterranean.¹

This conceptualization of Atlantis as oppressive threat or moral opposite to the nations it opposes would continue through several more centuries. As the Atlantis mythology evolved in the early modern period, its themes became more separated from the original representation of Atlantis-as-threat and moved into a more positivist view of Atlantis as lost cultural and intellectual bastion. This portrayal of the mythological space persists into even today's representations of the lost continent, with twentieth-century superheroes and protagonists of mystery often hailing from Atlantis as a symbol of their service to greater ideals (and their abdication of a position of power or influence from a society victim to its own corruptive social condition.)² This origin has the added narrative benefit in modern fiction of explaining away these characters' superhuman characteristics, providing for plot devices based upon advanced magics and technologies, and allowing for heroic moral codes based in traditional Enlightenment ideals of justice, fairness, and civic duty—ideals that are reflected in modern expectations of virtue based upon their role in the founding of Western democracies, especially in the philosophies of the American Revolution and the early American republic.³ These narratives have come to be an assumed

1 For additional examples of Atlantis as oppositional to the ideal state, see Richard Ellis' *Imagining Atlantis*, pp. 203-223. Early Christian historians seemed to have a particular desire to color Atlantis as a once-great kingdom which mirrored disaster narratives of the biblical region, especially those relating to the flood mythos.

2 The association between More's New World Utopia, Bacon and Manley's representations, and Atlantean concepts is pervasive in the modern representation of Atlantis as a source of social responsibility and intellectual development. This association was especially pronounced during the American Golden and Silver Ages of Comic Books, which gave rise to Atlantis-associated heroes and villains such as Aquaman, the Mer-people of the Superman Comics series, and (perhaps most telling) Wonder Woman's nemesis Queen Clea. For a brief history of these characters and their origins, reference Mike Benton's *Superhero Comics of the Golden Age: The Illustrated History* (1992).

In light of Wonder Woman's Hellenic origins as daughter of Hippolyta, her finding opposition in an Atlantean demigoddess returns to the classical Atlantean tradition of opposition to Greek philosophies and culture, while maintaining Atlantis' new role as an expression of technological, magical, and military superiority.

3 With the discovery of the New World, representations of the mythic island turned to the idealistic

element within the modern interpretation of the Atlantean setting or origin, and yet the study of thematic shifts regarding Atlantis from the classical era through the Enlightenment and beyond has remained largely unstudied. For this reason, it is the intent of this essay to re-situate depictions of Atlantean corruption and decadence at the forefront of our modern understanding of this setting; in rejecting the initial critical assumptions regarding this rhetorical space, we can better understand how Atlantis reflects (and reflects upon) the political and social realities of the periods of literature that engage with it. By reinterpreting these aspects of Atlantean narrative in the pre-Enlightenment era, we may better understand where the role of Atlantis maintains, and where it subverts, these expectations today.

This rhetorical shift in purpose throughout the Enlightenment is especially pronounced in the motivations (or lack thereof) for the destruction of the Atlantean continent in fiction. In *Kritias*, Plato describes the Atlantean culture at the end of its history as “βίον ὀρᾶν τότε δὴ μάλιστα πάγκαλοι μακάριοι τε ἐδοξάζοντο εἶναι, πλεονεξίας ἀδίκου καὶ δυνάμεως ἐμπιπλάμενοι” (121b). I emphasize the original Greek specifically in this section to demonstrate a difficulty with the interpretation of the Atlantean cataclysm – translational suppositions exist in the current culture influenced specifically by the Enlightenment rhetorics of Atlantis being studied. This provides particular challenges in sections recounting the disaster ending the Atlantean culture, a direct translation of this passage being akin to “it was in this time⁴ that they seemed most fair and radiant, having

– claims became common in both fiction and the histories of “Atlanteologists” that Mayan culture and other American native groups were descendants of a great diaspora from the doomed continent. The association between More’s New World Utopia and Atlantean concepts is pervasive in the modern representation of Atlantis as a source of social responsibility and intellectual development.

The 1516 publication of More’s *Utopia* did much to associate Atlantean themes specifically with the promise of the New World. His *Utopia* was heavily inspired by both Plato’s dialogues and reports from early expeditions into the American continent. This re-casting of Atlantean culture as an overwhelmingly positive influence over the known world, as well as his representation of the loss of Atlantis as a tragic disaster in a similar vein to the burning of the Library of Alexandria, has led to much of the modern representations of Atlantis as a great lost hope of the modern world – a hyper-advanced, seemingly god-like culture centuries or even millennia ahead of the rest of human society. For a seminal example of this narrative transition, reference Ignatius Donnelly’s *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World* (1882).

4 This passage, appearing immediately prior to a truncated section implying the end of Atlantis, seems to be specifically discussing the conditions of Atlantis immediately preceding the cataclysm.

been overtaken⁵ with an unfettered⁶ desire for power.⁷”

Of particular concern is the phrasing of “πλεονεξίας ἀδίκου καὶ δυνάμεως,” which has been read variously by translators and scholars as meaning “unjust and avaricious,” “lawless and desirous of power,” “arrogant and unrighteous,” and, quite often, simply “greedy.” The principal element of these translational shifts for most translations appears to be the use of “πλεονεξία,” or *pleonexia*, with its varied meanings heavily dependent upon context. *Pleonexia* may be interpreted to indicate an interest in social advantage or advancement, aggressiveness, assumption, arrogance, or *avarice*.⁸ However, it is difficult to argue that these translations maintain the intent of the original passage. Although it is not the intent of this essay to delve into specific manuscript studies of Plato’s *Dialogues*, it is of note that these writings are not extant from the original Greek, but rather extrapolated from various collections and codices assembled over the eighth to fifteenth centuries.⁹

Considering a more literal and direct translation from the oldest extant texts that rejects the modern translational standard of avarice and opulence has an added benefit – it brings the narratives of *Kritias* into harmony with the claims and summary provided in *Timaeus*. In the *Timaeus* passages relating the destruction of Atlantis to Plato as a historical fact first recorded in approximately 9500 BC, discussion of the moral and political status of the lost continent is tied not to its avaricious, covetous, or opulent expressions

5 “filled”

6 “lawless,” “unrighteous,” or “overfull”

7 Alternatively, “influence,” “might,” or “political power.”

8 For English translations of the *Kritias* including these interpretations, reference John Alexander Stewart, Thomas Taylor, and R.G. Bury. W.R.M. Lamb’s widely-accepted 1925 translation interprets the phrase as “filled as they were with lawless ambition and power;” though this translation inverts a minor syntactic structure in order to maintain an intended grammatical separation between ambition and power, I believe it to be the most productive and essentially accurate translation of the specific intent of Plato’s dialogue, especially in comparing the text of *Kritias* 121b with Atlantean passages in *Timaeus*.

9 Additional information on the textual issues relating to Plato’s *Dialogues* is available from Benjamin Jowett’s translational notes presented in his *The Dialogues of Plato* (1871.) In addressing the issues relating to modern assumptions regarding Plato’s philosophy, writings, and narrative, it is of note that the author demonstrates that, while Plato is often considered to be a consistent philosophical force for the last two millennia, Plato’s work largely disappeared from Western literary consciousness from the sixth through the fifteenth century AD. Tetralogy VIII, which includes *Kritias* and *Timaeus*, was not fully studied until the discovery of Codex Parisinus graecus A (1807), which is the first complete collection of the final two tetralogies (see Alice Swift Riginos’ *Platonica: The Anecdotes concerning the Life and Writings of Plato*, 1976.)

of immorality, but rather to its similarity to the Arcadian, pastoral nature of Greece itself. In *Timaeus*, prehistorical Greece and pseudohistorical Atlantis are presented as economic, cultural, religious, agricultural, and artistic equals, whose only differences lay in Atlantis' desires for military supremacy over the Mediterranean region. This makes the downfall of Atlantis especially interesting for the fact that it is not attributed to its moral failings, but to the events as described in the following passage:

And when the rest fell off from [Solon], being compelled to stand alone, after having undergone the very extremity of danger, she defeated and triumphed over the [Atlantean] invaders, and preserved from slavery those who were not yet subjugated, and generously liberated all the rest of us who dwell within the pillars.¹⁰ But afterwards there occurred violent earthquakes and floods; and in a single day and night of misfortune all your [Grecian and Atlantean] warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea
(Plato's *Dialogues*, *Timaeus* 2).

wherein we see a portrayal of Atlantis as a nation destroyed by a calamity incidental to the greatness of its nation and at best correlative to its failure to enslave the Hellenic people.

This image of a nation victim to a generalized disaster is especially interesting for its relationship to several other points of data – the translation concerns of the previous passage from *Kriteas*, the reflection of Atlantean themes in historical reports of other island cultures of the Mediterranean suffering cataclysmic disasters—such as the lost islands of the Maltese chain, or Ogygia and Scheria, often considered as well to be possible sites of the Atlantean continent—and (perhaps most interesting) the representation in *Kriteas* of a Greece similarly advanced in its prehistoric period beyond the state of Plato's current day:

The land [Hellenic Greece] was the best in the world, and was therefore able in those days to support a vast army, raised from the surrounding people. Even the remnant of Attica

¹⁰ “Within the pillars” indicates in this passage the besieged cultures of the Mediterranean interior, as opposed to Atlantis existing in the open sea passages west of the Strait of Gibraltar. For more information on the mythological significance of this passage, the navigability of this passage, and the association of the difficulty of this passage and the dangers of the open waters beyond being directly tied to the sinking of Atlantis, see *Timaeus* 24e-92c.

Of note is that the Pillars of Heracles are featured prominently as an image of enlightenment in his *Novum Organum* as well as in his *New Atlantis*, where a pillar-portal is featured prominently as the entry into the House of Salomon. An included illustration of the Pillars is featured in the *Great Renewal* with the inscription “*multi pertransibunt et augebitur scientia*” – “many shall travel through and knowledge shall increase.” [Appendix, Fig 1.]

which now exists may compare with any region in the world for the variety and excellence of its fruits and the suitableness of its pastures to every sort of animal, which proves what I am saying; but in those days the country was fair as now and yielded far more abundant produce (Plato's *Dialogues*, *Timaeus* 2).

This representation of an idyllic Athenian paradise closely mirroring Atlantis' own descriptions may be intriguing and at times confusing to readers with a modern interpretation of Atlantean tropes in literature and culture. Modern expressions of these tropes present an expectation of Atlantis as "other," including a status as socially discrete from its opposing nations.

Such representations of an idyllic Greece naturally excite questions of what differentiates these two utopian states, and what distinguishes them after Plato's narrative. In preliminary attempts to understand these representations, what is revealed is a natural progression from Atlantis-as-equal to Atlantis-as-fallen or Atlantis-as-reprobate. The origins of this transition appears to be found in the pseudo-historical study of Plato's Atlantis in the Jewish and Christian histories of the first through the sixth centuries AD, during which time the Atlantis myth grew from rhetorical and argumentative space into a moral case study to "historically" parallel biblical mythologies of judgment and destruction, such as those of the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis, the righteous fall of Jericho in its opposition of the Israelite armies of the Book of Joshua, or the reclamation of Canaan and the verdant Jordanian region and the fall of Gaza, Ammon, Ekron, Ashkelon in the Book of Zephaniah (Jordan, 1999).¹¹ The role of Atlantis as it relates to these cities both as historical and archaeological realities and as mythological representations of God's wrath against unrighteous states (and states opposed to righteous rule) is interesting in

11 See Genesis 19 for the narrative relating to Sodom and Gomorrah. The two cities' fates were intertwined in Genesis with three other lesser known cities, Zeboiim, Zoar, and Admah. Zeboiim and Admah were similarly eradicated in the cataclysm that claimed Sodom and Gomorrah, though Zoar was spared because its sins against the Abrahamic god and the Israelite people had "not yet reached [their] full measure" (Genesis 15:12-16). This narrative is reflected in the destruction of the cities of Canaan in Zephaniah 2:1-15.

Zephaniah reports upon the desolation of four cities of the Philistine Pentapolis, and the sparing of Gath for its alliance with David, though it is still recognized for its wickedness. This representation of righteous destruction is similarly reflected in the Book of Isaiah and the destruction of the five cities of Egypt in Isaiah 19. For an in-depth analysis of the implications of disaster narratives in Isaiah, see Joseph Blenkinsopp's commentaries in his translation, *Isaiah 1-39* (2000), and Brevard S. Childs' *Isaiah: A Commentary* (2000).

both its convolution and its elegance. In Philo's *Treatise on the Incorruptibility of the World*, the historian/philosopher associates the "important business" of historical analysis with the invocation of God, and states that the world is complete only through the perfection of God. Utilizing this argument, Philo describes the destruction of cities and city-states as a natural extension of their imperfection, their additive position atop an already perfected space designed and crafted by a perfect deity. "The term 'corruption' is used," argues Philo in prefacing his catalogue of lost cities, "to signify a change for the worse; it is also used to signify the destruction of that which exists, a destruction so complete as to have no existence at all" (I.1-II.6). An *incorruptible* world, then, is one which is inexorably tied to a just god, one which is capable of eliminating corruption through destruction, and one which is eternal and imperishable.

So it is that Philo introduces his conceptualization of corruption as inherent to the destruction of unjust societies, naturally extending from Plato's fictive nation which the historian describes as "in one day and night [...] overwhelmed beneath the sea in consequence of an extraordinary earthquake and inundation [...] becoming sea, not indeed navigable, but full of gulfs and eddies" (XXVI.142). What is most interesting is that he leverages fictive Atlantis as parallel evidence of the flooding of the Sicilian straight based upon the writings of Virgil and Theophrastus, stating that "the search for truth [must] be the chief object of rational desire," and advising the reader/scholar to "look rather at the contrary effects [to new landmasses appearing]: consider how many districts of the mainland, not only such as were near the coast, but even such as were completely in-land, have been swallowed up by the waters" (XXVI.138). This cataclysm, Philo argues, should provide sufficient evidence to prevent the "diminution" of the power of the seas as a tool shaping and re-shaping God's demesne.

This narrative is continued and confirmed in later Judeo-Christian histories, literature, and philosophical writings such as the works of Pope Clement, Florus, and Ammianus Marcellinus. Atlantis stands in the record for several centuries after Philo as

evidence of God's power not to judge, but to eliminate "corruption," to perfect the world through reshaping of its physical form, a variation upon the multi-versioned destructive acts chronicled in the Old Testament. Because of the lack of historical copies of Plato's original text, the transcriptions and translations of the original lost dialogues surviving today are largely a product of the period from the first century to the medieval period. Because these texts were the only extant versions of Plato accessible to most scholars during the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries, these interpretations and addenda moved throughout Atlantean discourses and narratives with relatively the same frequency as the original text.¹²

This state of textual evidence remained the case until the publication of Benjamin Jowett's complete Plato in 1871. Jowett himself outright rejected the historicity of Plato's Atlantis, stating in his introduction to *Kriteas* that the historical foreshadowing of the Atlantean myth was

intended to represent the ideal state engaged in patriotic conflict. This mythical conflict is prophetic or symbolical of the struggle of Athens and Persia, perhaps in some degree also of the wars of the Greeks and Carthaginians [...] hence we may safely conclude that the entire narrative is due to the imagination of Plato, who has used the name of Solon and introduced the Egyptian priests to give verisimilitude to his story. To a Greek such a tale [...] would have seemed perfectly accordant with the character of his mythology [...] he might have been deceived into believing it (1871).

Jowett goes on to argue against what he views as a bizarre and unfruitful obsession with a historical Atlantis, arguing that "it appears strange that later ages should have been imposed upon by the fiction [...] without a suspicion that the whole narrative is a fabrication, interpreters have looked for the spot in every part of the globe."

Jowett is right to note the strange obsession by scholars of his time with Atlantean

12 For more on the difficulties present in the incomplete textual record of this period, see David King's *Finding Atlantis: A True Story of Genius, Madness, and an Extraordinary Quest for a Lost World* (2005), which chronicles the difficulties of Olof Rudbeck. Rudbeck was a Swedish historical-linguist who, through various etymological errors based upon these derivative texts, managed to formulate a theory in 1702 placing Atlantis in prehistorical Sweden, which he claimed to be the cradle of human civilization.

Utilizing evidence from texts describing Atlantis, Rubeck argued for evidence that a form of Swedish provided the ur-language from which all other human speech derived. For both his views on language and his theories regarding the lost continent, Rubeck was ostracized, mocked, and held as an example of faulty scholarship. Diderot and Kempe both wrote treatises against this form of scholarship – a form which would become increasingly popular over the next two centuries, presaging an internet-connected world of modern Atlantean scholarship based primarily upon presuppositions and selective use and misrepresentation of evidence.

history as evidential fact. The discovery of the new world in the fifteenth century sparked a feverish interest in renewed Atlantean studies. With the publication of Thomas More's *Utopia* in 1516, associations between utopian ideals, the apparent mystery of the cultural and technological advancement in Mayan and other indigenous cultures, and the origins of the Atlantean continent reigned supreme in the conspiracy and occult writings of the time.¹³ However, it was the publication of Sir Francis Bacon's widely-read *New Atlantis* in 1627 that incited the public's most fervent interests in the Atlantean myth as social commentary and utopian exemplar, and it was the 1709 edition of Delarivier Manley's *New Atalantis* which was largely responsible for an apparent rhetorical shift in the understanding of Atlantean imagery as secret commentary on the moral degradation and corruption of Atlantologists' most active era.

It is, then, critical to understand that Manley and Bacon did not select Atlantis as a setting whimsically but that these works are instead directly communicating with a culture that valued credulity, conspiracy, intrigue, hobbyist archaeology, and mystical traditions relating to the lost continent.

13 This fact alone makes real, formative scholarship on Atlantean rhetoric very difficult to trace from the Renaissance era on into the current day. Atlantis became a favored topic of the rogue scholar, the spurned or amateur scientist, and fringe theorists who gave credence to the questionable evidences of the past based upon their status as "historical" texts and antiquities. The vast publications available on this topic beginning in the mid-sixteenth century have led to a market flooded with scholarship of dubious quality. Amateur Atlantologists often cite works difficult to locate and utilize these sources as "support" for arguments and historical claims made in their own works. These texts, when (or if) located, often prove to be nonsensical, spiritualist, or even at points symptomatic of grandiose thinking or delusion, including references to non-corporeal visitations upon the author from Atlantean gods and citizens.

For an example of a work very frequently cited which is of such dubious nature, see J. Ben Leslie's 1911 *Submerged Atlantis Restored*, which is often cited without its imposing subtitle of "*Or, Riñ-gä'-se ñud' Si-i-keļze (Links and Cycles)*." Leslie believed that, guided in a fugue state by Atlantean spirits, he had deciphered the language, arts, origins, and scientific nature of Atlantis, and wrote a 560-page collection of essays which he described as a "short treatise on the Over Spirit as the Cycle Supreme [and] on the Continent of Atlantis, including its mountains [...] submergence [...] ethnographic and ethnologic conditions, languages, alphabets, figures [...] punctuation marks [...] six Flags of the Nation [...] tone poets and musicians, painters and paintings, sculptors and sculpture [including] various illustrations accompanying the above-named subjects." Clearly, this work is an impressive, if emblematic, example of this questionable and conspiratorial scholarship, and it begs the question of the origins of Leslie's evidence, which is (quite understandably) completely unourced. For a rendering of his full textual description, see Appendix, Figure 2.

CHAPTER III

CULTURAL COMMENTARY AND SOCIAL TURNS

Oh great Jupiter! who hast thus Richly endow'd Nature, the Off-spring of thy Power, so suited it for Admiration and for Use, so worthy of its Divine Original! to what a Race hast thou deliver'd these Enjoyments? How Corrupt, how unworthy of Benefits so Sweet, and of Possessions so Ravishing? (Manley 4).

Marvels are only marvelous because they have yet to be revealed (Cowan 414).

Bacon's and Manley's political commentaries may be seen as participating in a dialogue across the century originating the European Enlightenment – Bacon commenting upon the cultural pessimism and utilization of political satire which he views as inherently opposed to scientific and intellectual progress, and Manley, directly confronting Baconian ideologies, arguing against an over-simplification of the social realities which constitute popular politics and culture in Stuart-era England.

Without question Bacon is responding to the utopian models of Sir Thomas More, and Bacon acknowledges many elements of More's social proposal in his narrative and allusive choices. However, it is worth noting within the context of Atlantean rhetorics that the first recorded literature proposing an ideal society is not More's titular *Utopia*, but rather the immensely influential *The Republic*, crafted by Atlantis' architect, Plato. *The Republic's* dialogues are either source or target of many of More's most fundamental claims regarding the nature of justice, virtue, property, civic duty, social equality, knowledge, and artistic expression.¹ Also of note is that while it is remarkably affirmative of human value and

1 For a book-by-book comparison of Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia*, see Weisgerber's "Two

ingenuity, More's work is most certainly a political satire in form, though one frequently misapprehended, as is argued by Charles A. Weisgerber:

Many, however, who admit the satiric character of the *Utopia* go far astray in interpreting its positive aspect, that is the structure of the Utopian state with all its laws and customs. They take it for granted that these institutions have St. Thomas More's approval and are exact indications of his opinions on matters of state, social life, and religion. But, as a consequence of this supposition, they have the whole course of his life and all his controversial writings to explain, for they cannot deny that he held very different opinions later in life and acted upon them with decision (6).

This argument presents an intriguing point of entry into the relationship between More, Manley, and Bacon, for one could certainly argue that More's *Utopia* contains many of the trappings of a secret historical record. More creates cultural commentary reminiscent to the modern scholar of secret history when he proposes means for divorce in cases of abuse or adultery without social consequence or judgment for the injured party, but maintains guilt for the transgressor, proffering a system in which: "the Senate dissolves the marriage, and grants the injured person leave to marry again; but the guilty [...] are never allowed the privilege of a second marriage" (II.7, 8). *Utopia's* policies include interdictions against premarital intercourse, but mandate that engaged parties be legally required to view each other naked before marriage in order to assure equity and informed consent. These, in addition to other interdictions, restrictions, and political views on marriage seem to make direct commentary on the marital intrigues of the court, including Henry VII's petitions to Pope Julius II for permission to marry off his brother's widow as well as his political interests in remarriage to Joan, Queen of Naples after the death of Elizabeth of York in 1503.² His

Utopias: A comparison of the Republic of Plato at St. Thomas More's Utopia" (1940). At most points a study of the reasons for More's departure from certain faith-based positions in favor of Plato's egalitarianism and communism, Weisgerber studies the relationships between Plato and More as evidence that More's work is not original, but rather originates directly from the forms of the *Republic* dialogues. However, this work presents special difficulties due to its time of publication and origins in religious studies; real, lasting fears on the part of the author that More's interest in communist ideals would be seen as heretical resulted in his endeavoring to place More's narrative choices not in a discourse with Plato but rather in a context relating to ecumenical approaches to Christian grace and philosophy. The frequent, unsignaled variation between these two views can be jarring to a reader expecting a purely literary criticism.

2 For information on More's courtly role and oppositions to the policies of Henry VII, see Thomas Penn's *Winter King: Henry VII and the Dawn of Tudor England*, which investigates More's actions in parliament to oppose various federal aid bills, funding requests, and courtly petitions. More was both well-regarded in parliament for his moral positions on legislation, and disliked by the King, who had been opposed by both More and his father, Sir John More, who sat on King's Bench and was also often castigated by the king for

affirmative proposals often act as prophylactic responses to the scandals of More's time, especially those revolving around the personal and moral transgressions of Henry VII, who he opposed in the House of Commons for the king's proposal for a subsidy to marry off his daughter Margaret, and of Henry VIII, whose early reign coincided with More's time on the bench during which he refused to sit on unjust cases from the court. Influences from More's self-sequestration in his courtly duties are especially pronounced in *Utopia's* character of Hythlodæus, who argues for the separation of moral philosophers from the actions of the court.

This method of utopian commentary on the separation of morality from the courtly obligations of intellectuals is carried over into the arguments presented by the King in defense of the mission of Solomon's House, a center of knowledge and scientific inquiry in Bacon's *New Atlantis*. Similarly, this depiction of the court as contrary to the interests of knowledge is posited by Manley in her *New Atalantis*, wherein the allegorical narrators, and especially Lady Intelligence, argue for a voyeuristic intellect that observes courtly offense rather than engaging it directly. As Nováková argues, this method of separation allows the women of Manley's narrative to "use their own marginality in political life to serve their interests and disseminate their secret intelligence to a public audience, silently transforming themselves into active participants in state affairs" (122.) This element of secret history, what the critic describes as "the private/personal intrigue [substituted] for the public/political intrigue" is present as well in Bacon's scientific approaches and More's proposal for a court which separates the court from the just citizenry of his Utopia – allowing for all three texts to serve their own political agency through what Nováková describes as "an awareness of how power is actually created" (122-23) and a choice to separate better societies from this power structure through what Herman argues amounts to narratives "easily decipherable as posing serious questions" (12) of those in power while avoiding direct engagement with such topics as would distract from a proposed social solution,

refusing to hear unjust cases.

either in the form of Bacon's utopian or Manley's anti-utopian positioning. Herman and Nováková further complicate this positioning by investigating the gendering and sexual inversions Manley enacts in order to further separate power and courtly concerns, as well as separate the court from itself. This separation is achieved by what Herman describes as "the curious and complex manipulation of gender and sexuality in *New Atalantis*," which the critic praises "for the boldness with which Manley transforms the actively heterosexual James II into the female Princess Ormia, and describes an aristocratic lesbian cabal" (75), an act which the critic argues both divides power structures and informs audiences that they must "immediately recognize that satirical allegory was at the basis of [*New Atalantis*]" (75-6). While Herman and Nováková's positions certainly have merit in understanding the moral arguments and rhetorical strategies of Manley, they also understate the degree to which both More and Bacon have also manipulated sexuality in their own social treatises in order to re-contextualize power. Both More and Bacon, drawing upon proto-Enlightenment philosophies of egalitarianism *equalize* gender in order to remove patriarchal influence from their own allegorical satires, while Manley instead *inverts* the expectations of patriarchy as an oppositional act. Whether through More's equalization of the roles of and protections for both genders in marriage, religion, and government or through Bacon's egalitarian philosophy of non-gendered intellectualism as the driving force of Bensalemese culture, it is the *rejection* of gender concerns that drives More and Bacon, and it is this equalization that is rejected by Manley as unrealistic in her choice to instead invert and subvert gender expectations in her own text. These authors are all three keenly aware of the gender and sexual disparities of the court, and the sexual scandals and intrigue that drive courtly politics cause offense to characters in all three of their works.

That said, Manley serves as a fulcrum in a transition to a cynical view of Atlantis as representing the worst elements of a courtly culture, while Bacon and More vigorously embrace the best elements of the court by separating them from culture in order to allow them to better express the most benevolent versions of their natures. This approach once

again demonstrates the inherent Epicureanism and Christian Humanist origins of *Utopia* and *New Atlantis* – these two works serve specifically as travelogues to lands capable of egalitarian equity and enlightened, rationally-based thought because of the power of the travelogue to demonstrate not only otherness, but the real possibility of reform. To exist in a magical or fantastic space is to implicitly provide magical or fantastic solutions to real social issues, but the travelogue, popularized over the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century by reports from the New World, permits fictional spaces to purport rational and real solutions.³ Manley's work exists in clear contrast to these modes of discourse. Her *New Atalantis* does not purport to travel within mortal spaces, but rather engages with beings of pure philosophy and godlike natures, and this fantastical element of narration demonstrates both the *unreality* of utopian solutions, and the general corruptive nature of man, who is to be judged by the voyeuristic Astrea and her companions from a distant and metaphysical vantage.

There is understandably little scholarship engaging with all three of these texts, as each work seems to communicate with a very different social hierarchy, very dissimilar set of readers, and entirely different field of study within the modern academy. Bacon's roles as champion of the early Enlightenment and as precursor to the Romantic movement often tend to lead to a characterization of the author not as a great mind of his own right, but rather as a driving force of influence over the thinkers he has preceded, such as Locke, Voltaire, Hobbes, and Descartes.⁴ This position as driver of the Enlightenment is only

3 The role of travel to imaginary or utopian commonwealths, as well as a public desire for fictive travelogues, is a field ripe for further study in its implications in secret history. Consideration might be given to works of fiction that fall outside of the typical genre restraints of utopia, such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Cavendish's *The Blazing World*, Campanella's *City of the Sun*, and similar texts in response to the tropes designed within these works.

Of special note may be Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which features a very utopian argument by Gonzalo in Act II, Sc. 1. Gonzalo argues for his own vision of Prospero's island, one where all is provided equally for all men and society eschews unnecessary labor, violence, and hatred: "no kind of traffic would I admit / No kind of magistrate. / Letters should not be known. Riches, poverty, / and use of service – none." Gonzalo's role as new arrival may allow us to view his monologue as a specific and powerful precursor to later utopian arguments in travelogues. Additional consideration might be given to purely theoretical states provided in philosophical discourses by authors such as Walden, Rousseau, Engel, and De Tocqueville.

4 On the influence of Bacon over later Enlightenment writings and thinkers, see the introduction to Stephen Gaukroger's *Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Early-Modern Philosophy* (2001). Many have

further intensified by his status as the first scientist to ever be knighted under the English crown. However, to position Bacon purely as a scientific mind, politically and socially disinterested, does a grave disservice not only to his works, but his biography. Much like More before him, Bacon was undeniably as much a political figure as a philosophical or scientific one in his time – a parliamentarian, attorney general, and solicitor general under James I, Bacon’s support and service to the crown eventually yielded him temporary status as the Regent of England, followed by Chancellorship in 1618 (Peltonen, 2007).

It was through fifteen years of careful and considered political maneuvering that Bacon was knighted as Baron Verulam and later Viscount St. Alban, peerages created specifically for Bacon’s elevation in the court. Bacon’s depiction as detached or disinterested by Nováková and other scholars studying Late Stuart-era authors influenced by Bacon is especially surprising in light of his publications in the fields of law and social theory and his reputation as a liberal social and legal reformist.⁵

With this political status in mind, it seems beneficial to consider the possibility that there is much more that unites the works of Bacon and Manley than divides them. Both authors were keenly aware of scandal, political intrigue, and the relationship between their own writings and the politics of the court. Similarly, both authors utilize the Atlantean theme in order to position a political statement in opposition to the current party-based political environment of their time. For Ruth Herman, Manley’s *New Atalantis* makes the form of “satirical allegory” something immediately recognizable to her audiences: “even

studied Bacon’s influences specifically relating to the *New Atlantis*. For a study of how alterity and the New World were expressed by later scholars regarding the *New Atlantis*, see J.L. Cowan’s “Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* and the Alterity of the New World” (2011).

5 Though considerably well-placed and very politically shrewd, Bacon was plagued by personal debts throughout most of his political career. These debts led to his eventual internment in debtor’s prison and were also the pretense for his rival, Sir Edward Coke, to levy charges of corruption against Bacon in 1621 during his tenure as Lord Chancellor. Bacon’s career ended in disgrace, and he died in the spring of 1626 still some £25,000 in debt. His disgrace, however, led to his most prolific period of composition and resulted in some two dozen works published in the following four years as well as another thirty works published posthumously, beginning with his *New Atlantis* in 1627. The vast majority of his works following his political service dealt specifically with topics of scientific policy, natural laws, and the wisdom of pious enlightenment. For more information on the thematic changes in Bacon’s post-political writings, reference Daphne de Maurier’s *The Winding Stair: Bacon, His Rise and Fall* (1976).

the title was ironic,” she argues, “a direct reference to Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis*,” which framed in “Tory discontent with the Whig Britain of 1709 makes the allusion to Bacon’s famous work unmistakably quizzical” (76). Is this allegory, however, actually critically surprising? While Herman argues that this allusion to Bacon’s work is oppositional, her claim belies a more basic assumption regarding the role of the older text as philosophically dissimilar to the point of their cross-reference being curious or odd. This notion of contrast as commentary is as unfounded as it is overly-simplified.

If it is to be argued that Manley utilizes Bacon specifically to invert Atlantean rhetoric in order to leverage decadence, opulence and imagery of avarice and lustfulness, we must consider the fact that these two texts are much more alike than different, and must reject both Nováková and Herman’s implication that the relationship between these two authors is little more than titular and passingly satirical. Manley begins her associations with Bacon in her text almost immediately, describing a version of Enlightenment England in the very introduction of Astrea’s mission in observing Atalantis: “the European World being the most Fam’d above [in the spiritual/philosophical realm] for Sciences, she resolv’d her first Visit should be there,” and yet it is most decidedly *not* (4). Though Manley places Atalantis within the Mediterranean interior, there is little European about its representation, aside from its propensity for scandal, much as Rome, Paris, and London are “places renown’d [...] for Hypocrisy, Politicks, Politeness, and Vanity.” Descriptions of Manley’s Atalantis reflect not European economic and political realities, but the pastoral perfections first described in Plato’s initial depictions, a beautiful, verdant, fertile, idle Arcadian landscape capable of providing for all possible needs of a just people. However, it is the *intent* of Astrea to alight not upon Atalantis but the mainland, were it not for “too strong a Propension of one of the Winds that bore her” (5). Through this apparently minor navigational fact, Manley expertly calls her text back to the introductions of both More and Bacon, whose diplomats and sailors are brought to their utopian experiences through the happenstances of travel and the capriciousness of the sea-winds. It is also important to note that Astrea’s arrival

at the Atlantean nation is the product of fate or chance, as this characteristic is reflected as well in later texts, and a surprising development, to say the least, for a supernatural being. Manley is keenly aware of the power of the travelogue, and carefully utilizes its most basic introductory elements to design a narrative clearly deviating from expected tropes of the genre itself. Manley's commentaries extend, however, far beyond the genre's mere forms. In addition to the navigational origins of Astrea's observation of the failings of Atlantean culture, Manley is careful as well to match scenes from Bacon and More depicting egalitarian frugality, restraint, intellectualism, and moderation with portrayals of a debauched court and populace, and to utilize these portrayals to reflect the impossibility of the most basic tenets of Bacon's philosophy. For example, both More and Bacon's works are explicitly Christian, as are their cultures. The works both carefully balance the pagan origins of their works and the classical influences that inform their structure against Christian dogma and doctrines, and both authors similarly are careful to overtly state the methods through which Christianity came to the foreign, separated lands of their respective utopias. This approach allows both men not only to reshape their fictions and their fictional societies, but also to tend to the reshaping of English society itself through the framework of Humanistic Christianity interested in ascetic values, community-centric organization, and moderated uniformity. Manley's Atalanteans, by stark contrast, are defined as a "People void of Religion, open Debauchees, Blasphemers of Great Jupiter, and all the Gods" (13), and any form of moderation or asceticism is treated as scandalous by the denizens of Atalantis, who instead value

Beauties very much admir'd, nam'd Artifice and Flattery. [...] they have the Lares and Household-Gods [...] the Favourite is the God of Riches, set upon a shining Altar within an Alcove, but she lets none have the Key of it but her self; there are found kneeling upon the Steps three Figures, inscrib'd Corruption, Bribery, and Just Rewards... (74)

This passage is particularly interesting for its reflection upon the admiration of the "Riches of Salomon's House" in Bensalem, "several employments and offices of our fellows." Bensalem's most treasured riches are named, numbered, and worshipped specifically - twelve envoys to seek out foreign books and experiments (three to each of the cardinal directions of travel),

three that collect the contents of those works, three that collect mechanical devices and analyze them, three that pioneer new sciences, three that tabulate and compile, three that perform peer review - this list continues through thirty three men of science, each in a triumvirate dedicated to a specific cause of asceticism and a specific pursuit of knowledge (43-47). Again, we see an interesting parallel between knowledge, asceticism, religion, and the imagery of worship. It is certainly no coincidence that both Manley and Bacon separate their figures of worship into trinities, and both acknowledge their number and grouping in specific passages of worship and adoration. Similarly, it is unlikely that Bacon's text, keenly aware of its mathematical statements, does not notice that he has amassed the holy number of thirty-three envoys and purveyors of sacred knowledge, one for each year that Christ walked the Earth and David ruled in Jerusalem, for each miracle Christ performed, and for each child of Jacob.⁶ While it would be impossible to demonstrate with certainty that these choices are intentional, or that Manley was directly referencing Bacon's passage, the similarities of language and parallels with the earlier passage are quite astounding if coincidental.

Bacon's vision of men as the true riches of a culture is similarly not original, but derivative of Humanist claims in More's *Utopia*, which similarly derives such arguments from Plato's *Republic*. Similarly, all four works carefully address the condition of the courts in their various utopias and anti-utopias. Plato demands an impartial court that will not observe wealth, nor influence, nor position in its judgments. More proposes a system of justice that eschews lawyers, kings, and judges in preference to the fair and equitable judgments of the populace. Bacon, who describes the King of Bensalem as a man "desiring

6 See 1 Chronicles 3, Leviticus 12, and Genesis 46. For more information on the significance of holy numbers and their influence on utopian and especially Atlantean studies, see L. Sprague de Camp's *Lost Continents: The Atlantis Theme in History, Science, and Literature*. De Camp carefully associates numerology and counting systems to the Atlantology movement with the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries - for instance, New World explorer and crypto-archaeologist Diego de Landa famously utilized Mayan counting systems in the 1560's to demonstrate that the Inca, Maya, and other Amerinds were descendants of Atlantis and the tribes of Israel due to similarities in their sacred numbers and counting systems, and due to coincidences of numerical records between both groups (31-34). De Camp notes that "it was even suggested that the Amerinds should return to Palestine, but luckily for the peace of the world they showed no interest in the idea."

to join humanity and policy together” (22) posits a society wherein the court carefully arbitrates “if any of the family be distressed or decayed” and insures that “order is taken for their relief and competent means to live. There, if any be subject to vice, or take ill courses, they are reprov'd and censur'd” (26). The court is keenly aware not only of its own laws, but of the laws of foreign cultures (both China and England earn mention) and the Laws of Nature. Compare, then, Manley’s sense of justice in her *New Atalantis* as Lady Intelligence describes to Astrea “two people (eminent for Dignity and Fortune) contending [...] for an estate [...] when, in truth, the lawful heir dies a prisoner; though under the specious pretence of assisting him, till both parties [...] conclude the peace, by dividing the estate between themselves” (212). Manley ties her Atalantean culture to a “perfection of justice” that is “influenc'd by Prejudice, Revenge, Avarice, Love, Ambition,” and the various and sundry scandals and passions that overwhelm Astrea’s sense of human dignity (213). As is recognized by both Herman and Nováková, Delarivier Manley’s secret history is aware of iniquities, scandals, and public discourses that make Bacon’s utopian approach to justice essentially impossible, heavily dependent as it is on the pure moral righteousness of men and a single-minded pursuit of intellectual perfection rather than self-advancement. Manley’s *New Atalantis* may be more fantastical, but it is also more realistic.

CHAPTER IV

SPOKEN AND UNSPOKEN

Continually we met with many things, right worthy of Observation, and Relation: as indeed, if there be a Mirror in the World, worthy to hold Men's Eyes, it is that Country [...] a most Natural, Pious, and Reverend Costume it is, showing that Nation to be compounded of all Goodness (Bacon, 26).

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All is nothing but Oaths, Drunkenness, burning Lust, Riots, Avarice, Cruelty, and Disorder; they have got the better of a bad Reputation, and do not so much as care to dissemble a good (Manley 8).

For Delarivier Manley, Atlantis provides a mirror that reflects the worst of her countrymen's endeavors, politics, and character. However, Manley herself has provided an additional mirror through which we as readers and modern critics must view ourselves, for the Atlantis modern culture chooses to recall today is hers, and not Bacon's. Political satire and secret history do nothing if they do not force the reader to appreciate the nature of what is spoken and what remains unspoken in a given time and place, and it is telling that in a world where the fringes of society remain obsessed with the location and reclamation of lost Atlantis, we lend preference to the narratives developed by Manley, narratives that color our greatest hopes, the past version of ourselves to which we may all aspire, as tainted and corrupted by its most base desires. Even as we consider Atlantis in the fictions of our own modern culture, our most basic assumptions are those that are laid out in the *New Atalantis*. For her reduction of several thematic challenges, Ruth Herman still notes that when it comes to these two texts, "the parallels run deeper" than mere contrasting images

of family and public life: “in borrowing her title,” the critic notes, Manley was no doubt also mindful that Bacon had himself been a statesman.” Herman perceives that “the island of New Atalantis, as depicted by Manley, reflects not Bacon’s idealistic society where men holding state office disdain extra payment, but the *realities* of the corrupt public life that existed less than a hundred years after Bacon’s death” (76). She may fall short, however, by not noting also that this is not necessarily a deviation from, but rather a possible subversion of, the original text.¹

Bacon’s *New Atlantis* is not so definitively empirical as Herman’s argument requires it to be, but is rather a narrative struggling with questions of Christianity, Judaism, divine right, and citizenship. Similarly, Manley’s *New Atlantis* is not so definitively gruesome. While Bacon’s utopia is a land of peace (and indeed, Bensalem literally translates to “Peaceful Son” or “Son of Peace”)² it is also a land with various houses at odds with each other in a strategy to assume and express power through ‘piety and humanity’ (10). Bacon was as fearful of the dark corners of men’s souls as Manley was aware of them, and it is the choice he made to propose a utopian society that reveals Bacon as a hopeful and liberal philosopher. Manley’s contrasting conservative cynicism reveals not the vogue but rather the inevitable sensibility of a later age that has seen too much corruption to believe fully in the purest mission of continued European enlightenment.

These variations in the utopian/dystopian theme may reveal a more basic misunderstanding of the nature of utopias themselves and the roles they have traditionally

1 Although Herman also does not completely address the way in which this titling convention continues from Bacon, through Manley, and into later works that respond to her political satire, such as John Oldmixon’s 1714 satire, *The Court of New Atlantis*, her study of Oldmixon’s tract as a work which the plainly reimagines the New Atalantean space to provide an ordered response to Tory accusations of Whig corruption is a fascinating interpretation of Manley’s influence. This utilization by Oldmixon and versions of Atlantean political satire that follow may go far in demonstrating the long-lasting impact of Manley’s leveraging of the corruptive nature of Atalantean/Atlantean politics in literature. For more information on the nature of Oldmixon’s history of critical response to Manley both in fiction and periodical publications, see Herman’s *The Business of a Woman*, pages 133 and 233.

2 Also noteworthy is the translation of the title of More’s own *Utopia*, which may be translated through either the form of ou-topos (literally: “no place”) or the form eu-topos (literally: “perfect/happy place”). While More responds to this translational concern by publicly stating an intent and preference for the latter interpretation, the modern etymological preference leans towards the prior. For more on More’s position, see More’s *Utopia: The English Translation thereof* by Raphe Robynson, 2nd ed., 1556.

played in literature. To the base and debauched, Bensalem is a dystopian nightmare. To the hedonist and bon vivant, Atalantis could become a utopian paradise. Utopia is not a nation, but an expectation. Dystopia is not a place, but a rejection of hope. With this in mind, special consideration should be given to the nature of Utopia and Atlantis evolving together from their inception through the Enlightenment, for it must be noted that utopian literature has (since long before the time of More) tended towards expressions of political opposition and reform, and it is a differentiation between optimistic/expectant civic approaches and pessimistic/essentialist social responses that divides utopias and dystopias, not their content. To posit utopia and dystopia as opposite is to assume that they serve opposite ends, or opposing masters. Manley and Bacon both serve a purpose of political opposition and reform in their At(a)lantean narratives, and both authors were keenly aware of the risks of opposition. What these two authors share (with an enormous history and context from which they derived their works) is far greater than any narrative differences that divide them.

What we must always be mindful of is this reality – Atlantis is, at its core and from its original depiction by Plato, a rhetorical tool, and one that can be used in myriad ways. In order to understand the ways in which Manley's Atalantis deviates from Bacon's Bensalem, we must contextualize the significance of many discrete elements of this rhetorical space – travel and travelogues, public spaces and statements of religious faith, social equality and notions of justice – and realize that Atlantis is a timeless setting. The mysterious island has maintained its allure for twenty-five centuries specifically because it is a universal form that can contain our greatest joys and concerns regarding our own culture, will reveal those fears in cultures past, and may presage the consequences of our choices through a cataclysmic judgment of our shortcomings. No matter how many more centuries we may search for it, we have already found Atlantis – it exists precisely in the place where it was first created: within the worst of us, and within the best of us.

CHAPTER V

CODA - PSEUDOUTOPIA

But movies have some advantages over us. They can fly through the air. We must travel by land. They exist in space. We live and die in time. So why should I be generous? [...] If we can appreciate documentaries for their dramatic qualities, perhaps we can appreciate fiction films for their documentary revelations. [...] *Chinatown* set a pattern. Films about Los Angeles would be period films, set in the past or in the future. They would replace a public history with a secret history (Anderson, 2003).

It is difficult not to see more of Manley than Plato in the modern interpretation of the dystopian/utopian rhetorical device, particularly in late twentieth and early twenty-first century popular culture. The prevalence of the pure utopia has continued to wane, and the emergence of Manley-esque “dystopian utopias” and anti-utopias as first seen in the eighteenth century has definitively redesigned society’s understanding of the fictional state towards the wholly pessimistic. Even when the modern culture presents a “utopia” as the setting of moralistic or political lesson, it is almost universally either corrupt or corruptive, a façade of perfection hung over dystopian realities. The ways in which these interpretations have shifted in description and design to address novel challenges foreseeable by neither Manley nor Plato—such as digital technology, global commerce, global climate change, or the construction of weapons of mass destruction—may also force us to reconsider the ways in which utopias and the cultural satire provided by mythological spaces provide new points of access into the political and public discourse of the current day. Through the framework of Enlightenment-era utopian and dystopian thought, we can see that the representations of dystopian fiction today is in many ways an extension not of tropes from

Bacon, More, or Plato, but rather the lesser known and largely unstudied influence of Manley's subversion of the form. Even our utopias are dystopian. The work in studying this connection between Manley and current satirical culture continues from this point into the observation of these influences as they appear to express themselves in the current day within the comic book industry, film industry, and literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Works such as *Demolition Man*, *Chinatown*, *Gattaca*, or *L.A. Confidential*, characters such as Wonder Woman, Namor, Thor, and Alex DeLarge, and spaces such as the cities of Metropolis, Gotham City, and the fictive filmic Los Angeles of past, present, and future may offer novel points of access into public discourse relating to Western culture, politics, and policy throughout the current multimedia canon¹. These works, even at their most utopian, are inherently pessimistic commentaries on unspeakable issues throughout the last century.

Extrapolating from the genre of Secret Histories of the eighteenth century, it may become possible to recontextualize this study of the subversive and secret contexts of comic book and pulp fiction through the lens of character origin stories specifically. In the study of origin stories in comics, the Atlantean birth (and at times, exile) of Namor and Aquaman may inform a new understanding of the popular anxieties of American isolationist politics during early World War II. Thor's Asgardian narrative may, much like the short fiction of Updike or the poetry of Gertrude Stein, reveal Cold War anxieties specific to the producers of American literature. In examining these topics, we likewise examine the specific role that secret narratives play in our cultural understandings of Western superpowers' values, fears, and aspirations.

Quite simply, the way we apprehend Atlantis is a quintessentially modern invention: necessarily crafted in opposition to previous politics by More and Bacon, but cemented by Manley. It could be nothing else—the Platonic notion of Atlantis as pure cultural and naval analogue would not suffice for the nuanced political commentary of the Enlightenment

¹ See Appendix, Figure 3 for an example of *Chinatown* as a possible contribution to the modern representation of secret history in American cinema.

and post-Enlightenment age. cursory readings of this modern expression of the Atlantean cataclysmic trope may include an expectation of Atlantis as “other,” but in many ways this may be a misreading of the Atlantean mythos, which actually trades and engages not in *otherness*, but rather in modern cultural *similarity*.

Our understanding of pre-Enlightenment Atlantis simply cannot parse with almost any of the expressions we see throughout the remainder of literary history. What Atlantis has become is less lost or corrupted beacon or bastion, and more a judgment of the very consumers of Atlantis-oriented media. In a way, this presents the possibility that Manley herself has created a novel character in Astrea – in many ways one of the first truly modern superheroes, a transitional step between Gilgamesh or Heracles and Superman or Wonder Woman. In the same way that Philo’s *Treatise on the Incorruptibility of the World* establishes the need for a just god, Manley provides an Atlantean narrative which inhabits the world with godlike actors who are in many ways as contentious and corruptible as their “subjects,” both heroic and villainous. It is the realm of the superhero to attempt to stand as a just god in an unjust and corruptible world, corruptible in the self as well. Considering the function of the superhero to be to stand against corruption while risking one’s own corruption through that act of opposition, Astrea’s apprehension regarding her own potential weakness and possible corruption by those acts she witnesses in Atlantean society is all the more fascinating. She is fearful in her lack of understanding, even in moments where she is under the tutelage of Intelligence Herself. In superhero mythology, gods can fight, die, and be defeated as equals to mortal heroes and villains, and exist fully within the space of corruptibility and imperfection; our heroes thus exist within the realm of the gods themselves. Their position as kings, heirs, or champions to lost and fallen civilizations, be it Atlantis or Krypton, is essential to understanding the representative concern of the Atlantean space today (one recreated almost entirely by Manley) as elementally political and critical of the society in which the hero does his daily business of judging, crimefighting, and world-saving.² The fact

2 Where Manley’s Astrea may seem at first glance to express a wholly godlike nature, it is noteworthy that it is in her choice to mingle, to experience corruption and let it in many ways taint and afflict her, that

that Astrea serves as observer and narrator—but also actively as character when it comes to her emotionally-driven disdain and judgment of the corruptive acts she witnesses—elevates the audience’s own fears of the corruptibility of the world, when even deities within allegorical roles of inspiration and virtue lose power over their own society, as is the case with Virtue, Intelligence, and Astrea as goddess of Justice.

At the end, readers and scholars of Atlantean narratives must be mindful of a specific interpretive challenge—Atlantis is not important as a setting upon itself, but rather as a reflection of other settings. There is little difference between the Astrea of Manley’s *Atalantis* and the Rick Deckard of Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner*, just as there is no great difference between Manley’s *Atalantis* and Scott’s darkling portrayal of Los Angeles in 2019. In a narrative that spans a setting with dozens of off-world colonies in multiple star systems, with untold and myriad races to behold, *Blade Runner*, like Philip K. Dick’s originating *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* engages only with the Angeleno, because it is primarily the acutely Californian aspects of culture that the text intends to explore and satirize. Aliens would teach us little of our own weaknesses, while killer androids who somehow manage to maintain more humanity and compassion than their own victims (and masters and creators) might teach us much more. It would be difficult to watch the ending of *Blade Runner*, where Deckard exiles himself from the city to pursue the truth of his own nature, and not believe that this is an inherently Atlantean tale, and one taken directly from Astrea’s own choices and the cultural frame of Manley’s representation.

Only through a more complete understanding of how *New Atalantis* shaped the public conceptualization of Atlantis-as-dystopia can we begin to truly contextualize

she is most reflective of the characters that follow her, and not those that come before. Because Kryptonians are strong, morally certain, upright, and yet corrupt, humanity is by contrast weak, morally flexible, and yet noble in this weakness. Superman fights for the best of humanity because it would be unrecognizable to the average son of Krypton. Only the *Last Son* of Krypton could see the inherent beauty of the political and moral contrast. Only a god could sit in judgment of society with the ability to destroy it if he finds it wanting. Likewise, because Atlanteans are old gods, untrusting and prone to subterfuge and regicide, Prince Namor fights in exile to protect the trusting, moral, and mortal Americans, returning prodigally to the underwater kingdom only to resolve political strife and end civil wars plaguing its uncivil monarchy. He has yielded his aquatic regency to fight for more definitively (and distinctively) American values.

the role that secret history plays in satirical and utopian/dystopian representations in the modern to contemporary periods. The study of utopia and dystopia without secret history is the study of satire without function. The study of secret history without an understanding of dystopia and utopia is the study of narrative without an appreciation of setting. Secret history is more than mere substitute characters; it is the substitution of setting, of state, of system, an opposition to the real through the reconfiguration of the fictional. The genre's influence is undeniable upon study, and yet in many ways still remains inexplicable and inscrutable within the complex narrative spaces to be found in past, present, and future texts of social criticism.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A, Figure 1: The Pillars of Hercules mark the passageway to knowledge in Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Note the inscription: "Multi pertransibunt et augebitur scientia." The insinuation of the absent Atlantean continent is ever-present in Bacon's scientific and philosophical writings, and reveals the author's association of scientific progress with the narrative space of a utopian Atlantis focused on development and discovery.



Appendix A, Figure 2: The frontispiece to *Submerged Atlantis Restored*, by J. Ben Leslie. This work demonstrates one of the primary difficulties in Atlantean scholarship – this text, frequently cited by many “Atlantologists,” is not only remarkably difficult to locate, but of extremely questionable quality. However, due to the nature of Atlantean scholarship’s relationship with standards of evidence, works such as this are quite frequently utilized, cited, and presented as authoritative, evidential studies of Atlantean narratives, rhetoric, history, archaeology, and anthropology. Such difficult sourcing makes Atlantean studies a practical scholarly impossibility.

Submerged Atlantis Restored

OR

RĪN-GĀ'-SĒ NŪD SĪ-Ī-KĒL'ZĒ

(LINKS AND CYCLES)

A short treatise on the Over Spirit as the Cycle Supreme; the Over Soul as the Epicycle Supreme; Spirit, Soul and Matter as Links Supreme, and Time, Space and Life as Trinity Epicycles operating on the deferent of the Over Soul by Impulse from the Over Spirit in creative process, through the activity of Animation, Extension, Expression and Duration, as the source of all individualized form manifestation throughout the Universe.

Also an elaborate treatise on the Continent of Atlantis, including its Mountain Ranges, Valleys, Seas, Lakes, Bays, Rivers, Sections or States, Cities, Convulsions, Submergence, Geographic, Geologic, Ethnographic and Ethnologic conditions, Languages, Alphabets, Figures, Cardinal and Ordinal Numbers, Punctuation Marks, Calendar, Money, the six Flags of the Nation, Religion, Mummifying of Bodies, Enterprises, Air-Ships, Government, Temples, Monuments, Architects and Architecture; Botanic, Zoologic and Ornithologic conditions; Poets and Poetry, Authors and Prose; Tone Poets and Musicians, Painters and Paintings, Sculptors and Sculpture.

Various Illustrations accompanying the above-named subjects.

Other great features, such as the Pre-historic Convulsions and the periods of time when they occurred, that have established the present contour of the Continents and Islands of the Earth, and that have established the various bodies of water and deserts now in existence; the re-establishment and influence of the above-named subjects in Pre-historic ages, subsequent to the submergence of Atlantis, by remnant and migratory conditions; re-conceived and re-embodied ideas, through natural, material and spiritual influences, their continuation and development, or degeneration, as leading up to the Ancient, Modern-Ancient, and Modern periods of time, thus establishing the Pre-historic and Historic sections of the great Cycles of Life, from the period of Atlantean greatness, to that of the Twentieth Century A. D.

BY

J. BEN LESLIE

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

AUSTIN PUBLISHING COMPANY

1911

Appendix A, Figure 3: A still from Roman Polansky's *Chinatown* (1974). As with many previous secret histories, the narrative setting of Polansky's tale of corruption and water politics in Los Angeles is significantly altered. Inspired in part by the California Water Wars of the early 1920s, the piece is set in 1937 and yet reflects concerns regarding police and political corruption regarding public office and resource management in the early 1970s, including local politics stemming from the international crude oil shortages of early 1973 (Anderson).

This still portrays a hearing on the fictional Alto Vallejo Dam and Reservoir (replete with portrait of President Roosevelt), which parallels the construction and funding intrigue surrounding the City of Los Angeles' St. Francis Dam project, which failed in part due to faulty construction and inferior materials during the Coolidge Administration, killing at least 450 residents (Office of Historic Preservation). The scene's focus on locating these politics within the interbellum period in California history (at which point regional water rights had already been largely negotiated) permits the director and script to address concerns regarding these issues independent of the modern political systems of southern California.

Films such as *Chinatown* provide a unique opportunity to investigate the role that the secret history may play in our modern understanding of local, state, and national politics in literature, fine art, and the American cinema.

