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SEXUALIZING THE BODY POLITIC: NARRATING THE FEMALE BODY AND
THE GENDER DIVIDE IN SECRET HISTORY

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We hereby approve this Thesis

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SEXUALIZING THE BODY POLITIC: NARRATING THE FEMALE BODY AND THE GENDER DIVIDE IN SECRET HISTORY

EILEEN A. HORANSKY

ABSTRACT

Recent studies of eighteenth-century women writers have focused on the role of women as developers and proponents of the secret history. The secret history, recently defined by scholars such as Rebecca Bullard, Melinda Alliker Rabb, Ros Ballaster, Marta Kvande, and Rachel Carnell, among others, occupies space within several genres, including political satire and historiography. The genre's secretive nature and reliance on gossip and anecdotal evidence creates a new space for women writers that allows them to enter political discourse and offer a distinctly gendered social commentary. As public became private and private became secret, secret historians sought to expose the private lives of individuals in power. In this paper, I examine the role of women writers and secret historians, particularly Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood, and what I read as their response to male counterparts as they established and developed a gendered response both to the political climate of the early to mid-eighteenth century and the divergence of male and female social roles within the domestic sphere. In examining the narratorial structure and narratological techniques of both male and female secret historians over a period stretching from 1674 to 1736, I trace the development of female gender roles and attitudes towards women within the genre of the secret history, revealing through these works a narration of male and female attitudes towards women in the public and private spheres.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries produced an abundance of texts labeled “secret history.” In his dedication to William, Lord Russel, the author of the secret history *The Perplex'd Prince* laments the popularity of the secret history:

The present times being Pestered with nothing but Invective Pamphlets and Scurilous Libels, most of which are cunningly designed either to invalidate the Truth of a real Plot, or to insinuate and prove a fictitious one, and the Bookseller Shelves, especially their counters, being filled with nothing else but *Intelligencies, Addresses, Absolom* and *Achitophels, Medals, Prologues, Epilogues*, with innumerable more of the like Tendency...

While the author of this secret history attempts to garner attention and establish credibility for his own work, this passage illustrates several characteristics of and the problems occasioned by the secret history. The author mourns the secret history's undeserved popularity based on “Scurilous Libels” that pervade society while simultaneously attempting to establish the truth of his own secret history, playing off the secret history's reputation as a genre built on gossip and pretensions to truth, protected by a certain level of authorial anonymity within a counter-narrative structure designed to undermine political authority.

The extreme popularity that secret history enjoyed and publishers' freedom in applying the term to a variety of texts renders the genre difficult to delineate, whether from an eighteenth-century or a twenty-first century perspective. Primarily concerned with exposing the private lives and sexual intrigues that dominated court gossip, writers of secret histories sought to undermine the prevailing political and social narrative by revealing the private lives and intrigues of men and women in positions of power and influence. As a form of counterhistory, which can also be considered revisionist historiography, secret history utilizes less reliable sources, such as court gossip and intrigue, in secret historians' pretensions to forming the basis of a historical record that contradicts the dominant social, cultural, and political narratives. The secret historian is not necessarily concerned with providing truth rather than influencing the general audience's perception of truth. In the case of secret history, the truth is arbitrary and depends greatly on authorial intent. The secret historian to a large extent determines through narratorial choices how the audience will interpret the events of the secret history, effectually turning gossip into fact. The political nature of the genre also allows history to be revised according to partisan politics, both in support of and opposition to arbitrary government. In exposing sexual intrigues and private actions, secret historians invite their readers behind closed doors, creating and perpetuating a culture of intrigue.

In addition to its historiographical function, as a method of satire secret history provides an opportunity in its expository nature to reveal the shortcomings and sordid details of political life. The rise of the domestic sphere brought new delineations between private and public. As the domestic sphere became more and more private, secret historians sought to bring the private into the public, which precipitated a new fascination

with the lives of the wealthy and powerful behind closed doors. Private life becomes public spectacle—breaking down the barriers between public and private space creates a somewhat protected forum for political and social discourse. The secretive nature of the genre allowed authors to distance themselves from their narratives, which offered protection against charges of slander and libel while simultaneously undermining authority and offering a mode of resistance to the monarchy and government in general. This characterization of the genre also provided a space for women to publish under cover of anonymity. To this end, secret histories were often published with a separate key, identifying the major figures of the work and their fictional counterparts.¹

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, secret histories focused on a wide variety of topics and subjects, including royal mistresses, the Stuart monarchy and the succession crisis, and later, individual ministers and aristocrats. The earliest published secret history, a seventeenth-century translation of Procopius of Caesaria's *The Secret History of the Court of the Emperor Justinian* which appeared in English in 1674, provided a secondary narrative to Procopius's famous *History of the Wars* while also offering a convenient historical corroboration for the excesses of the court of Charles II and his scandal-filled life at court with his many mistresses, most famously Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland. Later secret histories, including Joseph Browne's *Queen Zarah and the Zarazians* (1705, originally attributed to Delarivier Manley, an author of secret histories herself) and Eliza Haywood's *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736), target individual politicians and ministers: in these particular examples Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough and Robert Walpole, respectively.

¹ See Appendix A for illustration of Edmund Curll's key to the 1725 edition of Delarivier Manley's *The Adventures of Rivella*

² See also Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University

Scholars in recent years have identified and explicated many of these texts labeled as secret history, tracing both the political and social implications of the genre. The secret history morphed into what Rebecca Bullard calls a “revisionist mode of historiography...along partisan lines” (1). Bullard points out that “eighteenth century authors create a range of rhetorical effects out of raw material provided by secret history’s revelatory narratives,” effects which among various narratives can be read as political statements (3). Likewise, Melinda Alliker Rabb claims that between 1650 and 1750, secret history rose as a “new category of historiography” that “permit[ted] special license” and “re[wrote] the past with hearsay, gossip, and slander,” often based on sexual proclivities and tendencies utilized as evidence against certain persons (68). The secret history thus becomes a sort of popular history—it cannot necessarily be proven or disproven, but becomes truth itself. Secret history’s “performative function,” Rabb continues, “anticipates Judith Butler’s notion of injurious ‘excitable’ language...their seductions and promises have the effect of undermining the certainty of authority, and of constructing new identities” (71). Similarly, Eve Tavor Bannet notes that secret histories were originally “narratives about corruption” that eventually evolved to “reflect shifts in the perceived centers of power” and treated topics ranging from narratives of political corruption to “powerful secret clubs” to individual affairs (369).

This connection between the revelatory nature of secret history and political commentary can also be read in terms of the rise of domestic culture in the eighteenth century, and more particularly of the division of gender and sexuality into the realms of public and private. As secret history provided a new avenue for political criticism, it also afforded women a new space to record and expose men and the culture in many ways

fixated on the sexual domination of women. According to Tim Hitchcock, over the course of the eighteenth century “discourses around sex in general...focused on a more thoroughly interiorized self” and became “more widely distributed, more explicit, and more modern,” a phenomenon that can be attributed to, among other factors, a rise in print culture and new definitions of traditional social roles, especially for women (824-5). Similarly, Michael McKeon claims that recent scholarship suggests that “the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries experienced a fundamental reorientation in attitudes towards sexuality” with the redefinition of gender roles and the new understanding that men and women were fundamentally and functionally different from each other, especially in terms of sexual desire and practice (270-1).² This new understanding of “modern” sexuality, especially masculine and feminine roles in the new sexual dichotomy, was essential to the development of dominant social gender constructs reflected in secret histories.

Similarly, Ros Ballaster examines secret history through the lens of amatory fiction: “by dehistoricizing and mythologizing the public sphere, the romantic fiction writer provides the female reader with a sense of feminine power and agency in a world usually closed to her participation” (34-5). However, women’s sexuality also had a secondary function as a metaphor for women’s place in the political and public spheres: “it is tempting to suggest,” Ballaster argues, “that the battle for control over sexual representation acts as an analogy for women’s search for political ‘representation’ or agency” (40). This battle is reflected in the rhetorical strategies of female writers that emphasized women’s sexuality as a tool of political commentary.

² See also Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the juxtaposition of masculine and feminine in the political and social spheres was reflected in the development of the secret history. Gallagher notes that in the earlier days of the secret history during Queen Anne's reign, "there occurred a peculiar chiasm, or intersection, of antithetical terms that distinguishes this moment of women's authorship from those that preceded and followed it: femininity became useful in political discourse by virtue of a new set of terms, overtly employed to exclude women from politics" (*Nobody's Story* 91). She attributes this shift in women's writing to three "realignments" of thought: "a redefinition of politics as public, indeed published, debate...the growth of what historians have called civil humanism, an ideology that conferred a high value on personality traits cultivated both in commerce and in social intercourse between the sexes...[and] the reciprocal stimulation of the national debt and the growth of speculative finance capital" (*Nobody's Story* 91).

Secret history is as much a gendered genre as it is a political genre following partisan political lines. Secret histories were often divided along political lines, with both Whig and Tory proponents advancing their opposing ideologies. However, in addition to the political divide, secret historians also revealed the gender divide between men and women. While male secret historians often focused on royal mistresses and the dangers these women posed to government as a measure of a monarch's character, female secret historians emphasized how men in power treated women as a measure of male political capability. Few scholars have as yet examined the distinctions between male and female secret historians in terms of narration and rhetorical strategy. In early male-authored secret histories, women were often characterized as seductresses and temptresses who

exercised control and influence over men, particularly wealthy, powerful men. For women like Eliza Haywood and Delarivier Manley who were involved in the political sphere, it became necessary to reframe the rhetoric of political satire not as male-centric, but female-centric, thereby breaking down the gender barriers that prevented women from leading independent and indeed public lives. Women writers like Manley and Haywood crafted a space in male-dominated rhetoric of political satire for the female voice.

First, secret history allowed female secret historians to illustrate the problems that developed in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century male-dominated politics. Second, secret history allowed women to create a space for the female voice within the oppositional political rhetoric by illustrating the dangers and pitfalls of a political system increasingly dominated by highly partisan politics. Women writers' entrance into this discussion provided the opportunity to attain a level of influence in political discourse not traditionally afforded to women of any class or social sphere. Secret history's cross-gender appeal led to massive rise in its popularity although, as Rabb observes, male authors sought to discredit their female counterparts "as inappropriately erotic, artificial, and European," while claiming a "new, masculine, realistic, elevated, and 'pure' English novel" (81). Although their narratives may have been defamed as "erotic" and "artificial," women enjoyed wild success in print, and their popularity and influence carried quite far into the public sphere.

Gallagher describes the emergence of the secret history "an extraordinary moment in the history of English women's writing, a moment when party politics, fiction, the literary marketplace, and feminine sexuality became intricately entangled" (*Nobody's*

Story 504). In this vein, female secret historians thus provided a response to their male counterparts. Male secret historians focused their criticism on warnings against the dangers of female influence and political participation, whereas female secret historians focused on personal injuries and revealing the failures and shortcomings of men as a function of their behavior towards and treatment of women. Women writers responded in a way that emphasized their femininity and, using similar narratological techniques male secret historians used to depict women, applied the same judgments of character in their scrutiny of men's conduct towards women, thus revealing the male sexualized self. In this way, women responded to the villainous depictions of their sex by male secret historians by blaming the fall of female virtue on seemingly inherent male indiscretion and lack of self-control.

CHAPTER II

PROCOPIUS OF CAESARIA AND THE *ANEKDOTA*

The earliest text to be labeled as a secret history was a “rediscovered” sixth century Byzantine text written by Procopius, official historian of the Emperor Justinian. Originally titled *Anekdotia*, it first appeared in print as a Greek text with parallel Latin (1623), and was later translated into French (1669) before its release in 1674 in English under the title *The Secret History of the Court of the Emperor Justinian*.³ The term *Anekdotia* originally referred to “anecdotes” or small pieces of news or gossip that were consolidated into one work, an important trait of the secret history. Procopius’s work sparked the trend of the secret history and paved the way for the development of the genre in England during the seventeenth century. Although Procopius is most famous for his extensive *History of the Wars* chronicling the military campaigns of Emperor Justinian and his general Bellisarius, his status as a respected historian only contributed to the popularity of *The Secret History* when it was published in the seventeenth century. Procopius’s *Anekdotia* was first circulated secretly among his friends and provided small pieces of news and gossip (from which the name *Anekdotia* is derived), which were

³ See Rebecca Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure, 1674-1725: Secret History Narratives*, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009.

defining characteristics of what would later become the secret history. From his position as the official historian for Justinian's court, Procopius created a "counterhistory" that offered a new perspective into the private lives of Justinian and Theodora.

As a male historian, Procopius' accounts focused heavily on the role of women in what he interprets as the downfall of the empire. Although the work was discreetly circulated during his lifetime, it was only published for a public audience posthumously for fear of political repercussions in his opposition to Justinian. The publication of the translation in the seventeenth century came at a time when distrust of Charles II and his monarchy was at a high. The end of the Third Dutch War brought with it growing concerns about Charles' relationship with France and the influence of absolute monarchy on the Stuart reign, concerns which echoed the story of Justinian in the *Anekdotia*.⁴ The significance of focusing on Justinian and Theodora, especially given Justinian's reputation as a defender of Christianity, would not be lost on a seventeenth-century audience as the fate of Protestantism in England hung in question during the reigns of Charles II and James II.

The *Secret History* comprises semi-historical anecdotal evidence that provides an alternative reading of Justinian and Theodora's rise to power and eventual reign. As an outside observer, Procopius frames his history around the emperor and empress's "unnatural" sexual activities and proclivities, especially given Theodora's history as an actress and prostitute. Procopius's particular fixation on Theodora's sexuality and her physical freedom translates into a greater questioning of her capabilities as empress. If she is unable, or unwilling, to respect herself and her body, then she cannot be trusted to care for those of her subjects. As Procopius notes in the opening pages: "Nothing excited

⁴ See Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure*.

me so strongly to this work, as that such persons who are desirous to govern in an Arbitrary way, might discover, by the misfortune of those whom I mention, the destiny that attends them, and the just recompense they are to expect from their crimes” (2). The opposition to arbitrary government, which could also in a sense be equated to an opposition to Catholicism, continued as a theme throughout later iterations of the secret history into the eighteenth century.

The work as a whole hinges on Procopius’s reputation as a historian, and is based on Procopius’s own eyewitness account as well as gossip and rumor in the emperor’s court. The narratorial framework focuses first on Antonina, wife of General Bellisarius, and then moves towards a depiction of Theodora, wife of Justinian. Procopius the narrator extensively details the sexual freedom both women availed themselves of, yet interestingly, although he faults both Bellisarius and Justinian, he attempts to redeem both men. Their faults are the result of their relationship with their wives; the women are the men’s undoing. Theodora and Antonina, according to the narrator, are incapable of controlling their sexual desires and urges, eventually leading to morally dissolute cuckolded husbands and the near destruction of the empire.

Procopius begins the *Secret History* by establishing his purpose and the political climate in which he composed the work and reveals his intent to expose the private lives and expose the corruption of Justinian and Theodora’s reign. He places himself as the author and the narrator within the text, never denying his role within the narrative, thus revealing a narrative interiority that, coupled with his position as a respected historian and firsthand witness to many of the events he describes in the secret history and his other histories, allows Procopius as the narrator to offer both scandalous anecdotes and

commentary on those pieces of news or gossip. Procopius undermines his authority as a historian in writing the *Anekdotia*, which gives him the opportunity to build credibility for the *Anekdotia*:

When I writ my first Histories, I thought it not expedient to be too particular, by reason the main Agents were then living; and I could not long have concealed, or secured my self against some exemplary punishment, if my Book should have been published; and I judged it very dangerous, to commit such a secret to any Friend whatsoever: So that in my first History of all, I was obliged to omit the Motives and Causes of such Actions and Events as I related there. (1-2)

Procopius's reservations about publicizing his history provide some evidence at least as to the weight of his accusations, if not necessarily their truth. This introduction establishes the anecdotal nature of the work while attesting to its veracity by revealing and emphasizing his reluctance to publish the material. The spread of such inflammatory accusations would have no doubt resulted in certain ruin for Procopius, a circumstance which, especially if his accounts of Justinian and Theodora's cruelty were true, would certainly encourage sympathy and understanding from the audience, thus further advancing the thesis of Procopius's narrative. Taken as a whole, this introduction creates a rhetorical space within the narratorial framework of the secret history for Procopius as author and narrator to dominate the narrative, particularly through his parenthetical asides and his characterization of women like Antonina and Theodora as ruthless, power-hungry, and dissolute. The narrator presumes a certain level of knowledge in surmising individual's thoughts and ideas and establishes narratorial authority by continually referencing the events of the *History of the Wars*, a well-known work that only lent further credibility to the narrative.

The narrator begins his history of Justinian and Theodora with the history of Bellisarius, Justinian's most trusted general and advisor, under whom Procopius himself

served as a household member. Renowned as a great general in his own right and responsible for many great military victories, Bellisarius held an important place in court. He eventually married Antonina, a widow and close friend of the Empress Theodora. Although Procopius celebrates Bellisarius' military prowess in *History of the Wars*, in the secret history he exposes Bellisarius' faults, which are traced back to his wife. The narrator attacks Bellisarius' masculinity through illustrations of his relationship with his wife and portrays Bellisarius as helpless and servile to Antonina's needs and demands.

In his criticism of Justinian and Bellisarius, the narrator sketches the character of each man in relation to his wife—each man's faults are highlighted in terms of his wife's faults. Bellisarius is so enchanted by his wife Antonina that he fails to recognize her many indiscretions and political maneuverings as the right hand of the Empress Theodora. However, Bellisarius is not held responsible for his passion—Antonina is instead portrayed as a debauched woman, who “began to lead her life with more dissoluteness and liberty and to transgress publicly without any shame or regret” (2). The narrator paints both Antonina and Theodora as destructive women who aided in the humiliation of their husbands and the state, focusing especially on their private sexual lives and drawing parallels between their sexual behavior and their actions as leaders of the state. This narrative sketch of Justinian's court invites comparison to the court of Charles II, infamous for its libertinism and sexual intrigue.

The narrator describes the shame and mockery Antonina faces at the hands of her fellow women for her behavior towards her adopted son Theodosius. Although she and her husband adopt Theodosius following every custom of religion and the law so that he becomes for all intents and purposes their biological son, Antonina develops an

uncontrollable sexual desire for Theodosius once he comes of age. The narrator accuses her of carrying on an incestuous affair with Theodosius at the expense and embarrassment of her husband:

At first, indeed, she was bashful in her debaucheries, and all her assignations were with great caution and secrecie, but by degrees she began to commit them in publick, and before her women servants, not apprehending any opposition against her wantonness, after the vehemence of her love, transported her to caress him before all people. (3)

Antonina throws off all decorum in her behavior, ignoring both her duties and responsibilities as a wife and as a mother. The incestuous overtones of this anecdote coupled with the narrative descriptions of the violence of her affection and her complete lack of self-control also help to contextualize her behavior in terms of her relationship to Theodora. In her affair with Theodosius, Antonina violates the sacredness of her marriage and position as a wife and the sacredness of her position as a mother in both of the eyes of God and of the law, much in the same way Theodora rises from obscurity and vice to become empress, rendering her impure and defiling her position. At Theodosius' suggestion, Antonina conspires against her biological son Photius in order to advance Theodosius' position in society. The narrator reveals Antonina's motivations and her cunning deception of both her husband and adopted son: "Antonina understanding what Theodosius required, fell immediately upon conspiracy against her son, and her plots were so well laid, and so artificially managed, That Photius finding there was no safety where he was, was forced to protect himself against her perpetual ambushments" (7).

Bellisarius also fails in his duty to protect his son. He is a cuckolded husband, but his deep love for Antonina to the point of distraction allows him to reject rumors about his wife and disregard the evidence he saw with his own eyes. Procopius passes

judgment on Antonina's indiscretions and Bellisarius' willful ignorance, his accounts of which are both in direct conflict to his original history: "When he [Bellisarius] brake his engagements with *Photius*, and the rest of his friends, he was easily pardoned, because it was not thought so much the charms of his Wife, as the fear of the Empress, that made him violate his oaths" (29-30). Bellisarius is assaulted from both ends, both by his wife and the empress, and forced into action out of a fear of the women.

Although Bellisarius is blamed for his blind affection for his wife, Antonina does not escape scrutiny. Antonina, according to Procopius's account, conspired with Theodora in certain political maneuverings, leaving her responsible for the death of John of Cappadocia and her own daughter, "notwithstanding millions of oaths and imprecations to the contrary" (11). Theodora rewarded Antonina for her services "for she loved *Antonina* exceedingly, upon account of the service which she had done her in the destruction of *John of Cappadocia*" (21). The narrator does not mention this specific service until his discussion of Theodora, which suggests that although the narrator does not approve of Antonina's conduct, Theodora is the worse off for the whole affair.

The anecdotes of Antonina and Bellisarius set the stage, in a sense, for the narrator's account of Justinian and Theodora. Beginning with the shocking narrative of Justinian's trusted general and Theodora's particular favorite gives the audience a hint as to the extent of travesties of Justinian and Theodora's court. The narrator affords Justinian little sympathy, either in his rule or in his choice of wife. Justinian, according to the narrator, "brought more and greater evils upon the Empire, then were ever mentioned in all the Histories of former times" (34). While Bellisarius is a weak leader deceived by his villainous wife, their destructive relationship pales in comparison to the deviance and

moral failings of Justinian and Theodora. Justinian “was inconstant to his friends, and inexorable to his Enemies: He was equally greedy of Blood and of Money: He was easily persuaded when any mischief was to be done, but obstinate and unmovable to any action that was good: He was excellent at inventing new crimes, but the name of virtue he abhorred” (45). Justinian is almost impish—he delights in creating mayhem and intrigue and cares little for propriety or maintaining his power as emperor.

However, once the narrator has dispensed with his description of Justinian, he does little else to malign his character. The narrator even leaves some hope of reform for Justinian, in spite of his faults: “There is no doubt, but if he had used his faculties to do good, the very parts wherewith Nature had endued him would have raised the Empire to the highest degree of grandeur and felicity” (73). The narrator victimizes Justinian, blaming Theodora for her influence over him. Justinian had “condescended” to marry Theodora, “when it was in his power to have chosen for himself out of the whole *Roman* Territory, a person of the highest quality, the best education, eminent for modesty, illustrious for beauty, an immaculate Virgin, and in brief, one that had been accomplished in the highest perfection” (52-3).

Although Procopius’s narrator makes clear Justinian’s disregard for his position and his subjects, these faults pale in comparison to his choice of a wife. Procopius equates Justinian’s identity with his choice of a wife, of whom the narrator sketches a careful character. For all of Justinian’s faults, the narrator situates Justinian’s greatest misdeeds in terms of Theodora, “the most famous of all Women that were debauched” (49). As a product of the theater, the narrator draws attention to Theodora’s sexuality and sexual freedom and alludes to her base talents. She is outwardly beautiful, but her

profession and lack of dignity overshadows her physical attractions: “When she came to maturity, and her beauty began to be celebrated, her Mother devoted her to the Theater, and a while after she took her place among the *Courtisans*, which the Antients called the *Barefeet* (for she played not upon the Flute, or any other instrument, nor sung, but prostituted her self indifferently to all people that she met)” (47). The narrator here asserts Theodora’s disrespect towards her profession and her body. Theodora’s body and physical presence remains a focus throughout the narrative, from her subjects’ access to her to her use of her body to further her political agenda. Her lack of access in terms of political favors and her great access in terms of prostitution allow the narrator to repeatedly malign her character. The narrator describes Theodora as a symbol of evil, rejected of men and women alike:

She was naturally very pleasant, and spoke things very well, so that in a short time she drew the Eyes of the whole World upon her, and especially, because having no shame, nor vertue, she acted any part, how unhandsome soever...when civil or vertuous people met her in the Palace or the Streets, they turned another way to avoid her, least approaching her, or by accident touching but her cloaths, they should have participated of her debaucheries; and they who encountered her in the morning, looking upon it as an ill Omen, and expected no good the following day. (48)

The narrator characterizes Theodora’s baseness and dissoluteness as a sign of an evil that permeates every part of her person, focusing less on Theodora’s physical beauty, which disguises her true character, than on her influence on others around her. Her profession is like a disease—the virtuous avoid her in order to escape her influence. Theodora is rejected by society and thus can only sink deeper in to her own disgrace, bringing Justinian down with her. Her infamy is known throughout the empire: “the Devil so wrought with her,” the narrator notes, “that there was not a place in the whole Empire where *Theodora* has not left the marks of her immodesty” (48).

As Empress, Theodora creates a space around her with limited access and to which individuals are allowed only on her terms, in contrast with Justinian's easy accessibility and relative openness with his person. The narrator continually maligns her character, introducing new faults, while Justinian's behavior is explained as the product of his continued relationship with Theodora. The narrator blames Theodora for the moral downfall of all the women in the empire:

Under the Reign of this cruel Princess, there was scarce a Woman which did not lie under some scandal, and indeed most of them were as bad as they were reported, having all possible liberty to transgress against their husbands, and come off always unpunished as oft as they were prosecuted for adultery: Their way was to apply to the Empress, who would be sure to take care their sentence should be quite contrary to what it ought. (90)

Theodora condones and promotes licentious behavior, but her actions upset the patriarchal system, allowing women to triumph over their husbands, essentially making them fools in the eyes of the law.

As the narrative moves through the terrors of Justinian and Theodora's reign, the narrator continues to tear down Theodora's character. The narrator notes that Justinian "chose rather to take upon himself the common infamy of all Men, as not being ashamed, nor making any scruple to admit to his Bed a Woman, who besides other crimes, was guilty of the death of so many Children by her artificial Miscarriages and Abortions. I suppose there wants nothing in my description of *Justinian*" (53). In another anecdote, the narrator recounts Theodora's adulterous affair and her failure to destroy the resultant pregnancy. Her paramour rescues her infant son, who eventually comes of age and confronts his mother. The narrator then asserts that Theodora murdered him to cover the evidence of her infidelity. Like Antonina, Theodora ignores and rejects the duties of

motherhood, further demonstrating the lengths she will go in order to preserve her position as empress.

Theodora is a sexualized character; she is identified in terms of her body and her profession as a prostitute. The narrator notes: “She had not so much care of her body, as of her pleasure; and through her wanton mind, practiced it with a tired appetite, when it was unnecessary” (77). She languishes and performs her duty as empress on her own whim. Theodora’s crimes are since of the flesh—she does not respect her body, and if she cannot respect her body, the narrator implies, she cannot respect her own people. She holds no bond sacred; Theodora is ready to dispatch her own son, with little if any qualms, in search of power. While Justinian does not by any means escape the narrator’s critique, Theodora is offered up as a scapegoat for many of the political and social issues the empire faced. This strategy as employed by Procopius the author provides Procopius the narrator with an opportunity to advance a counter-historical narrative contrary to the official, published record, saving face for the emperor and husband at the expense of his empress and wife.

CHAPTER III
SÉBASTIAN DE BRÉMOND AND *HATTIGÉ*, OR THE AMOURS OF THE KING
OF TAMARAN

Nine centuries later, the excesses of Justinian's court illustrated in Procopius's *Anekdotia* provided a convenient parallel to the excesses of Charles II's court. His many affairs, including those with Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland and Arabella Churchill, sister of John Churchill, provided ample materials for secret historians. Palmer was also the lover of John Churchill, a Tory politician who was later created Duke of Marlborough by Queen Anne in 1702. Churchill reached the height of his power and military fame during the reign of William and later Queen Anne. His wife Sarah was the confidant of Queen Anne for many years of her reign, and because of this confidence later became herself a target for secret historians. Charles II was a well-known libertine, and his many mistresses and affairs were relatively open secrets.

However, the Charles II's court was plagued by conspiracy and religious strife as much as it was by libertinism and sexual freedom. In 1678, the discovery of the Popish Plot, an alleged conspiracy against Charles II, resulted in the manhunt and execution of alleged Catholics in the panic that followed. The plot was found to be a fraud, but the fear

of Catholics sparked by the Popish Plot reverberated over the following years in the midst of what became known as the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-1681, during which Whig politicians sought exclude the king's brother and heir James from the line of succession on the grounds of his Catholicism. Charles paid little attention to the rumors of the plot against his life, which led secret historians to represent "the Stuart monarchs not only as potential victims of conspiracy...but also as its perpetrators" (Bullard 3). English politicians feared the reign of an absolutist monarch and distrusted Charles' relationship with the French. Absolutism was aligned with Catholic sentiment, an idea perpetuated to a certain extent in Andrew Marvell's *An Account of the Growth of Popery*. Whig secret historians focused on Charles' relationship with France and the anti-Catholic fear in the wake of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis and illustrated the moral dissoluteness of his court as evidence of Charles' inability to govern.

In his secret history *Hattigé, or the Amours of the King of Tamaran* (published in English in 1680), Sébastien de Brémond, a Frenchman living and writing in England, approached the court of Charles II using narrative techniques similar to those utilized by Procopius in the *Anekdota*. As an opposition writer, Brémond was sponsored by Richard Bentley, an exclusionist publisher and an outsider himself both as a foreigner and through his lack of position in court. Thus, Brémond as narrator focuses criticism on the role of women and the king's relationship with his mistresses (Carnell "Slipping" 4). Various Whig secret historians illustrated Charles II's relationships with his mistresses as evidence of his inability to rule; in the case of *Hattigé*, the focus remains on the Duchess of Cleveland. As the long-standing mistress of Charles II who bore him several children, the Duchess of Cleveland eventually also became the lover of John Churchill, the later

Duke of Marlborough. Churchill, a brilliant military commander whose victories during the Monmouth Rebellion in 1685 helped secure James II the throne, eventually turned on James to support William of Orange in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Whig secret historians were primarily concerned with delegitimizing the monarchy in order to avoid a Catholic king on the throne and thus ensure the continuation of the Protestant royal line. In secret histories such as *The Perplex'd Prince* and *Hattigé, or the Amours of the King of Tamaran*, Charles II takes the form of the king in an exotic, faraway land. In both works, he is also a man so besotted with his mistress that he fails to see both her inconstancy and the fault in his behavior, a character fault which in turn provides secret historians an avenue through which to satirize the king.

Particularly in *Hattigé*, the king's behavior exposes him to a relentless assault on his character. After the 1674 English publication of Procopius's *Anekdotia*, as several critics have noted, secret history developed into a new kind of historiography that dealt even more directly in court gossip and political intrigue. Secret histories that directly echoed Charles II dealt directly with his mistresses and his private sexual life. This shift becomes even more evident in Brémond's early secret history *Hattigé, or the Amours of the King of Tamaran*. The figure of Hattigé is based on Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland and mistress of Charles II. Palmer, who also figures as a primary character in several later secret histories, was infamous for her longstanding affair and illegitimate children with Charles II, and she remained unpopular among politicians for her perceived influence over the king. In a court already infamous for its excesses as well as its scandals and sexual escapades, the relationship between Charles and the Duchess (which lasted for nearly fourteen years) provided much material for gossip. In exposing the

sexual liaisons between Charles II and his many mistresses, Brémond advances an oppositional rhetoric that illustrates Charles II as the corrupted physical representation of the body politic. As Rabb notes, “scandalous amours often focus on women’s role in secret sexual acts,” which is particularly evident in Brémond’s narrative through the character of Razy⁵, who takes it upon herself to reveal Hattigé’s history to the Knight of Malta as well as her own personal part in Hattigé’s affairs, sparing no sordid details (77). Hattigé is portrayed throughout the narration as both a saint and a sinner; her sexual freedom and struggle to preserve her place within the power structure are described at length and in depth, with many aside comments by the narrator. Like Procopius’s secret history, Brémond’s narrative hinges on “eyewitness” (i.e. Razy’s) testimony and firsthand experience. The narrators of both the frame narrative and the internal narrative pass judgment on Hattigé, blaming her for negatively influencing the political climate in Tamaran.

In the preface to *Hattigé*, like many other secret histories, the narrator offers both an explanation and apology for the narrative. The translator traces the history of the work in its native language, and apologizes for the flaws in translation, which provide another layer of separation between the author and the narrative: “I think I have said enough, and desire the Reader to excuse me, and pardon all the Errors that are committed in the following Discourse” (2). The translator’s preface and apology gives the author a space between himself and the contents of the narrative. By separating the author from the translator and the narrative, the author distances himself from the political dangers of transmitting false information and gossip. Although the translator exists on the outside of

⁵ Brémond varies the spelling of “Razy” throughout the narrative. Variations include “Razie” and “Razi.” I have standardized the spelling for the purposes of this paper.

the narrative and only relates the information from a third-party exterior perspective, the translator also controls the narrative the audience receives. This forces the reader to adopt a particular position in relation to the narrative: with so many influences on how the audience perceives the narrative, the reader must then make the conscious choice to trust first the translator and then the narrator.

Brémond's narrative is structured as a "story within a story" and creates a dual framework for exposition while also distancing the narrator from the narrative. The narrator gives the reader a voyeuristic glimpse into the private life of the King of Tamaran from a sidelong yet authoritative position. The framework narrator acts as an outside observer, relating the narrative as it is told through the secondary narrator Razy. As the narrator of Hattigé's actual life, Razy begins her story with a description of the court of Tamaran, which bears striking resemblance to the court of Charles II. Because Razy is a female narrator, her insinuations about Hattigé reveal deeper implications about the female role in court, as evidenced in her portrayal of the Kingdom of Tamaran, defined by its overt sexuality. Tamaran is

a Kingdom where Love at this day reigns more absolute, than ever he did at *Cyprus* or *Granada*: Gallantry is become so much in use there, 'tis almost as natural to be a Gallant, as to live, they are wholly given up to Love, and the young people, encourag'd by their Fathers Examples, get themselves Mistresses before they get rid of the Rod of their School-Master...In a word from the age of fifteen to sixty, from the King to the Plowman, everyone enjoys his natural liberty: whether it proceed from the nature of the Clymat, or temper of the people, I cannot resolve you; I rather think Subjects are such as their Kings make them. (18-9)

The narrator's final comment establishes the first links in the narrative between the sexual freedoms and the dissolute morals of the monarch with the overall moral decline of the kingdom. Hattigé and her power over the King of Tamaran reflect the relationship

between Barbara Palmer and Charles II. In spite of incontrovertible evidence that supports Hattigé's infidelity and her repeated cuckolding, the King of Tamaran continues his relationship with her, much to the dismay of his advisors, who repeatedly encourage him to break off the relationship. Hattigé is a sexualized character; as such, her relationship with the king and the king's near obsession with her reveal a great weakness in Tamaran's leadership. Razy implies that Hattigé is only performing her duty as a mistress to the king; however, below this distinction the narrator lays the blame for Hattigé's actions on the king's own overly sexualized nature. The underlying accusation of this secret history implicates Hattigé's continued infidelity and the king's willingness to forgive her as evidence of the king's weak nature and his inability to govern.

The narrative is framed around the adventures of the Knight of Malta and Gourdan, a privateer, who ply the Barbary Coast. Hattigé and her companions are captured by the duo while on pilgrimage to Mecca. The Knight, a person of quality, hears tales of Hattigé's beauty from her servant Razy, and desires to know the whole story: "The Knight, who knew persons of that Quality did not without great reason perform acts of so extraordinary devotion, asked her merrily, whether she knew the cause her Mistress became so extremely Pious...not doubting but the account of the devotion of a woman of that Character must needs contain more than ordinary adventures" (17-18). The Knight assumes that Hattigé made her voyage out of piety, but Razy reveals the details of her mistress' conduct that belie more of a pretended piety than any actual feelings of remorse, which is revealed over the course of the narrative. The narrator begins to reveal the hidden story of Hattigé's journey and offers a secondary narrative to Hattigé's history.

Razy is both a member of Hattigé's household and an outside observer; she exists in those so-called private places and reveals "off-limits" spaces, exposing the failings of the king while relating her mistress's narrative. Razy is Hattigé's servant, taken captive alongside her. Wooed by the Knight of Malta into revealing Hattigé's history, Razy recounts her mistress's narrative up until their capture. She acknowledges Hattigé's great sexual passion; in her account of Hattigé's affair with Rajep, Razy declares that Hattigé "found it too hard a task not to transgress a little, and being in search of one worthy her condescension, she cast her eyes upon *Rajep*, the Master Gardiners Nephew" (26). Hattigé's sexuality overwhelms her at the expense of harmony within the kingdom, especially between the king and his officials; she becomes infamous for her sexual adventures, which in turn reflect negatively on the King of Tamaran, much like the narrator of the *Anekdotas* used Theodora's personal history to reflect Justinian's capabilities as emperor.

The narrator describes and defines Hattigé in terms of her sexuality as well as her position within the dominant social hierarchy: she "was married to a person of quality, who had a competent Estate, sufficient to make her happy, had not her ambition prefer'd the Title of Mistress to a King, before private Felicities" (19-20). In this passage, the narrator insinuates that Hattigé's refusal to be content with what is generally expected of most women and her desire to define herself outside of her social role is indicative of a deeper moral delinquency on the part of ambitious women. Razy focuses on Hattigé's ambition and how she uses her sexuality to achieve power and influence. The narrator also insinuates the extent of Hattigé's moral failings in the descriptions of her conduct during her various affairs. In her first meeting with Rajep, Hattigé invents a story of a

“missing brother” for her maid, in which she equates her desire for Rajep with her desire for her long-lost brother: “I have, by a strange sympathy, the same inclination for him I had for my Brother, and the sight of this man hath not only forc’d Tears from my Eyes, but sighs from my heart: what wouldst thou have me say more, I find my self so unhappy, that ‘tis my ill fortune not to love any, but whom I cannot or ought not to love” (35, italics reversed). This strong undercurrent of incest, which harkens back to Antonina, perhaps connotes the debauchery of the court of Charles II. The crime of incest goes beyond normal lasciviousness, revealing the true depths which Hattigé/Barbara Palmer were willing to go to in order to win affection and power. Hattigé admits that she should not love him, but also admits that she is incapable of behaving otherwise.

For Brémond, the King of Tamaran, like Hattigé, is not without fault. He chooses to turn a blind eye to her infidelities and reveals his weakness as a kind. Like Justinian, the King of Tamaran is ruled by his mistress at the expense of his kingdom and his reputation. Like General Bellisarius, the king repeatedly ignores Hattigé’s obvious flirtations and presumes that her languishment is a sign of her love for him: “Do not I see how she uses all the World, and that there is not a more ambitious woman living: Certainly she loves me. Yet I am perswaded she would love me more, were I greater than I am, for nothing by greatness can satisfie that proud soul of hers” (54-5, italics reversed). The King of Tamaran acknowledges and accepts Hattigé’s faults, yet resolves to continue in his relationship with Hattigé, in spite of his counselor’s advice. He is haughty in his speech, convinced so much of his own greatness that he sees nothing beyond that. The king is even remarkably aware of so-called woman’s inconstancy; speaking of Hattigé, he remarks that “women are now-a-days so treacherous, there is no trusting their Caresses,”

yet there is a particular irony in his failure to recognize that same treachery in his mistress (52, italics reversed).

The king's obsession with Hattigé and his naïveté cause a great many political rifts between himself and his counselors, leading to a weakened government. The king's minister Osman, in spite of his best efforts to entrap Hattigé into producing direct written evidence of her unfaithfulness in her own hand, realizes that the king is entirely in the power of his mistress after he confronts Hattigé and the king: "He might have made more stir by producing the *Moor*, but after usage so hard and unjust, he would not be at pains, but chose rather to be thought to be in fault, and at distance from a Master so easie to be seduc'd by the flatteries of a Woman, than to justifie himself for undeceiving him" (43).

In spite of Osman's best efforts, Hattigé is eventually displaced from the king's affections. Hattigé's fall from influence is evidence of shifting political tides. Following Charles II's death and the accession of his Catholic brother James II to the throne in 1685, political tensions between Whigs and Tories continued. These tensions reached a fever pitch when James' second wife, the Catholic Mary of Modena, gave birth to a baby boy in 1688, making the possibility of a Catholic succession a real threat. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 deposed James in favor of the Protestant William of Orange, husband of James' daughter Mary from his first marriage. The subsequent Acts of Settlement in 1689 and 1701 ensured the continuation of a Protestant monarchy, which eventually resulted in the accession of the German Protestant George I after the death of Queen Anne in 1714. According to Allison Conway, the "displacement...of the royal mistress...anticipate[s] George I's accession," implying that the fate of the royal mistress correlates to actual monarchical power (82). Therefore, in order to replace the monarch,

his consort much also be replaced. Women were not accepted contributors to the public discourse, and thus the idea that a female, especially a mere courtesan, could wield so much influence over a monarch implies male weakness and an inability to govern.

Conway also notes: “Courtiers wanting to influence Restoration policy soon discovered the way to the king’s policy was through his genitals: ‘What all the Arts of the most refin’d Politicks and Rhetorick could never have been able to bring about...was done with ease and diligence by a Woman’s Tongue and Tail” (88). Hattigé maintains control in spite of the plots against her and maintains a strong influence over the king, much to the chagrin of his advisors. Although Hattigé “hath not been admir’d for her wit, but that defect is supply’d by the obligeingness of her carriage, and womens Little Arts, which she makes use of so much to the purpose of gaining the Monarchs heart” (20-21). She is powerful and influential, which makes her all the more dangerous.

However, Hattigé is eventually displaced in the king’s affections—her own lies and cover-ups become her eventual undoing. She relies too much on her charms and her sexual prowess in maintaining her hold over the king and is eventually cast off, left but to pretend piety and attempt to redeem herself in the eyes of the people. Her pilgrimage to Mecca, the narrator notes, is but a cover to disguise her rejection by the king. The Duchess of Cleveland was herself eventually rejected by Charles in favor of younger mistresses. She somewhat questionably converted to Roman Catholicism, left her post as Lady of the Bedchamber (and mistress to the king) in Charles II’s court to avoid religious persecution, and fled to France after the Test Act of 1663 forbade Roman Catholics from holding public office. In drawing this parallel, the narrator also draws the Duchess’ faith and character into question, particularly her religious convictions, perhaps encouraging

the conclusion that she was merely attempting to save face after being cast off for a younger, prettier mistress. Although the narrator attempts to excuse Hattigé's behavior, the narrator displays a certain abhorrence towards her conduct with little attempt to conceal it. Hattigé's faults as described by the narrator preclude any sympathy the audience may feel for her; the narrator's attempts to excuse her behavior seem more an exercise in polite consideration of both sides of the arrangement rather than any real empathy for Hattigé herself.

Brémond's act of narration reveals a certain level of sympathy for Hattigé with its focus on the private sexual relationship between monarch and mistress, which stands as an example of the relationship between monarch and subjects. A similar theme in Procopius, as noted by Eve Tavor Bannet, is also apparent in Brémond's narrative: "A king who cannot penetrate an amatory intrigue that transpires under his nose, and who allows himself to be so easily duped; a king who needs a favorite to set everything up for him, to explain what should be obvious...such a king is clearly not capable of penetrating the political intrigues of evil and designing men...or of managing international politics on his own" (Bannet 383). The King of Tamaran remains oblivious, in spite of the obvious evidence of Hattigé's infidelities. As a Whig secret history, this is evidence of the dangers of a monarchy, especially one in which the monarch is unable or unwilling to observe what happens in front of himself and his court. Hattigé, as the king's mistress, represents the failure of the king. Male authors of secret histories, such as Procopius and Brémond, used the female figure to exemplify the threats occasioned by the whims of women, a danger to which the king is vulnerable, and to illustrate the immorality of the Stuart court as evidence of Charles' inability to rule. Charles' mistresses and his brother

James' Catholic wife Mary of Modena solidified the hostility many felt towards the monarchy in the latter years of the seventeenth century. This open opposition to arbitrary government is characteristic of Whig secret histories—as Rebecca Bullard notes, Whig secret historians often mirrored or imitated each other's style in order to demonstrate inclusion in a similar tradition (27).

CHAPTER IV

DELARIVIER MANLEY AND *THE ADVENTURES OF RIVELLA*

Following the Exclusion Crisis and the Glorious Revolution of 1688, in which the Protestant William of Orange supplanted the Catholic James II, the focus of secret history again shifted. Whereas earlier secret histories specifically targeted Charles II and the succession crisis, “the secret histories of the 1690s...were frequently designed to bolster the legitimacy of William III by publicizing Stuart tyranny and immorality and reminding the public of what England had been fortunate enough to escape; and the secret histories of ministries under Queen Anne were often aimed at bringing down or justifying the minister in power” (Bannet 377). Likewise, as Annabel Patterson argues, after the Revolution of 1688 the secret history “became recognizably a Whig genre, and hence spawned some Tory repartee in the first decades of the eighteenth century” but without fulfilling the original “protocols” that evolved from Procopius’s rationale for the *Anekdotia*, such as “the structural and ideological connection made between ‘secret history’ as that which reveals what official history would prefer to keep secret and the actual course of early modern political culture” (185).

William of Orange's reign began with a vote of Parliament declaring that James II had abandoned his post and thus forfeited his right to rule. The reign of the Protestant William ensured the immediate security of the monarchy and resulted in a tenuous truce between Tory and Whig factions, which continued with the succession of Queen Anne after the death of William in 1702. Like her father Charles II, Anne was also targeted for supposedly allowing herself to fall under the influence of her favorites, particularly Sarah Churchill, wife of John Churchill, one of the men most responsible for bringing William of Orange to the throne. Anne and Sarah's relationship was the center of court gossip for many years of Anne's reign, at least until Sarah's cousin Abigail Masham supplanted her in the Queen's affections. Later secret historians like Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood criticized and critiqued the role Sarah and other individual favorites and ministers played in the government, in some ways inviting comparisons to earlier secret historian's critiques of female consorts.

Delarivier Manley advanced a strong Tory rhetoric while also creating a space for the female voice in the political sphere, in contrast to her contemporary Eliza Haywood who later advanced a more complex, oppositional Whig rhetoric in her secret history *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736). Manley's most famous published work, *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of both Sexes, From The New Atalantis* (1709), reflects the Whig ministry and the political climate preceding the Revolution of 1688. Rather than targeting Charles II directly, Rachel Carnell argues, Manley "mocks John Churchill...for his taking as a lover Charles II's mistress Barbara...the anecdote about the young John Churchill, disloyal to the monarch for sharing his mistress, anticipates other more significant scenes of disloyalty, including Churchill's desertion of

James II for William of Orange in 1688” (“*Rivella* as Secret History” 2). *The New Atalantis* is framed by the commentary of Astrea, the goddess of justice, her daughter Virtue, and the Lady Intelligence. These women are outside observers revealing a glimpse into the private lives of the subjects of narratorial examination, yet function differently as narrators from their predecessors: they reveal the sexual exploits of those they seek to satirize, but the fact that they exist as female narrators opens a new level of narratorial authority. The narrators’ foundation in classical principles implies a certain level of authority within the narrative not normally afforded to women.

The situation of Manley’s autobiographical narrative during a time of political upheaval allowed her to critique several political figures while also covering up several details of her own personal life, including her bigamous marriage to her cousin, which appears only through passing comments in *Rivella*. Manley frames her critique of these political figures in terms of their relationship to Rivella—Rivella is often poorly used and taken for money in these intrigues, with little help or attention to her or her situation. While male secret historians used the female form as a trap for male politicians, female secret historians used female sexuality to illustrate the plight of women in the public and political spheres.

Rivella is narrated by the baronet Sir Charles Lovemore to his friend the Chevalier D’Aumont. Manley’s choice of male narrators creates a secondary level of discourse as the narrative traces Rivella’s history from her privileged childhood through her various amours in adulthood. Lovemore styles himself as Rivella’s only true lover from the time of her youth and outlines the various injuries done to her throughout her life as a result of her character and station in life. *The Adventures of Rivella* went through

several editions, although a key was only added after Manley's death by the printer Edmund Curll in the 1725 edition of the text titled *Mrs. Manley's history of her life and times, published from her original manuscript*. Like *Hattigé* and later *The Adventures of Eovaai, Rivella* is billed as a translation from the original French. The original manuscript, according to the translator, is a reconstruction of a conversation between Lovemore and D'Aumont, written down at the request of the latter. The translator also notes that the papers containing Rivella's story were not made public until D'Aumont's untimely death, thus further removing the narrative from the context of its source.

Manley creates an observational narrator that exists outside the space of the novel, a narratological strategy found in both Procopius and Brémond. However, her narrators are of a different caste: while Procopius styles himself as a lowly court historian and a poor female slave narrates the story of *Hattigé*, *Rivella* features two gentlemanly male narrators. Lovemore and D'Aumont offer different perspective than the previous narrators—they occupy the space the narrative focuses on, and their testimony to the events throughout the narrative is both more reliable in this sense, yet also more colored by bias and personal interpretation from both a political and a social standpoint. In contrast to the classical purity of the female narrators of *The New Atalantis*, the amorousness of Manley's male narrators in *Rivella* reveal a sexualized image of the female body which forms the basis of the masculine image of women.

The introduction to *Rivella* opens with a discourse and meditation between Lovemore and D'Aumont on the qualities of women in an intellectual society. Beauty, they argue, is a secondary quality to wit and intelligence. A sharp mind and intelligence when unencumbered by beauty, Lovemore admits, "should never raise my thoughts

higher than if I were discoursing with a person of my own sex, great and extraordinary in his way” (44). Using the initial example of Madam Dacier, a “woman without either youth or beauty, yet who makes a thousand conquests,” the narrators frame the ideal woman, although in the case of Madame Dacier, Lovemore doubts his heart “would have been in any danger” because her “qualifications are of the sort that strike the mind, in which sense love can have little part” (43). This interlude immediately establishes the frank ridiculousness of the male attitude toward female wit and learning—according to the narrators, a woman cannot have both beauty and intelligence as the two are mutually exclusive. As an author, Manley also establishes that she is aware of her limitations in terms of outward beauty, and by establishing herself as less physically attractive, she is allowed to express more and greater intelligence. By accepting this limitation as well as Lovemore and D’Aumont’s attitudes towards women and female wits, Manley creates a rhetorical and narratological space for herself as an author and for her contemporary female authors in which she can establish herself not simply as a sexual object, but as a woman of intelligence and learning, while also mocking masculine ideals of feminine beauty and revealing the double standards to which women were forced to hold themselves.

Lovemore and the D’Aumont frame the narrative with their commentary and personal connection to Rivella: her life is “narrated in a conversation between two men...whose main interest in Rivella is sexual and whose depiction of her conflicts with her political self-representation” (Kvande “Public Women” 162). Lovemore is interested in Rivella as a former lover, and D’Aumont’s interest in her comes from his friend’s descriptions. However, Lovemore characterizes Rivella in opposition to masculine ideals

and identity, styling himself as the protector of her person and interests and claiming he is driven by love of her to do what he can to guard her from infamy. Lovemore even offers to marry her to save her from poverty. Rivella refuses; instead, she is consistently drawn in by the charms of rakes and men seeking only diversion and entertainment, although she remains relative immune from scandal.

In his recounting of Rivella's history to D'Aumont, Lovemore analyzes Rivella both physically and mentally. He breaks her down into parts, examining her character and worth as a woman in light of perfections of mind and body. As Kvande notes, by framing Rivella "in sexualized terms," Lovemore and D'Aumont "seek to enforce the norms of the bourgeois public sphere and thereby enclose Rivella in the private sphere, erasing her political authority" ("Public Women" 163). However, by rendering Rivella down merely to her individual components, the narrator is able to then build her up to a greater sum than her parts. Lovemore and D'Aumont do sexualize Rivella, although their recollections of Rivella's responses show a conscious effort on her part to separate herself from her sexuality. For example, throughout his narrative, Lovemore blames Rivella for her failure to follow his advice and yet, more interestingly, faults her misfortunes on the nature of her sex as well as those who would try to take advantage of her: "Her virtues are her own, her vices occasioned by her misfortunes; and yet as I have often heard her say, if she had been a man, she had been without fault. But the charter of that sex being much more confined than ours, what is not a crime in men is scandalous and unpardonable in woman" (47). Sir Charles Lovemore and the Chevalier D'Aumont base their commentary on their own perceived notions of female propriety and discourse. In many instances, as in *The New Atalantis*, Lovemore and D'Aumont insert their own

observations into the narrative and offer commentary in passing. However, these narrators place their own constraints of feminine identity on the narrator, which Rivella then dispels through her own actions. Her ultimate rejection of Lovemore is a rejection of his social and political identity. As Kvande argues: “Manley uses these male narrators to show how the concept of the bourgeois public sphere limits women’s agency” (“Public Women” 163). Within the limits of this public sphere, women were bound by the social traditions and codes of etiquette established by the dominant male patriarchy, through which Rivella is able to maneuver.

Lovemore and D’Aumont express typical male attitudes towards women and the female presence in the public sphere. As D’Aumont states: “There is no being pleased in their conversation without a mixture of the sex which will still be mingling it self in all we say” (44). His attempts to separate intelligence from physical beauty reveal a hypocrisy in male attitudes towards women. For instance, D’Aumont states that he is resolved “to be in love with Rivella...I easily forgive want of beauty in her face, to the charms you tell me are in her person. I hope there are no hideous vices in her mind, to deform the fair idea you have given me of fine hands and arms, a beautiful neck and breast, pretty feet, and, I take for granted, limbs that make up the symmetry of the whole” (49). Manley’s choice of male narrators allows her to ironize the narrative, and her choice of narrating through two male aristocratic narrators allows her to ironize the narrative and the social standards to which women are held.

The narrator downplays Rivella’s physical beauty almost from his first descriptions of her, building her up instead to be his own sort of private entertainment or discovery. In this description, Rivella is implicitly likened to the queen Homais of

Manley's secret history *The Rival Princesses: or, the Colchian Court*, who likewise charmed and attracted many men in spite of her lack of physical beauty. Lovemore further pushes Rivella into the domestic sphere in acknowledging that "[f]ew, who have only beheld her in publick, could be brought to like her; whereas none that became acquainted with her, could refrain from loving her" (47). Rivella, in Lovemore's description, exists most perfectly in the private sphere where she is unencumbered by the pressures of female conformity in polite society. He praises her as a writer, although that too is kept private:

Her knowledge is universal; she discourses well, and agreeably upon all subjects, bating a little affection, which nevertheless becomes her admirably well; yet this thing is to be commended in her, that she rarely speaks of her own writings...that one might discourse seven years together with Rivella, and never find out from her self, that she was a *wit*, or an *author*. (48-9)

Of course, this does not necessarily hold true throughout the narrative—Lovemore has perhaps slightly more respect for Rivella in particular, noting that she has had many admirers and men in love with her, himself included, although it is interesting to note that these men, at least in Lovemore's description, were drawn first by her wit, her words, or her actions, and secondly by her physical attractions. Although Lovemore claims that he is an impartial historian and that his love for Rivella does not distract him from his purpose, he finds one major fault in her, although this both humanizes and idealizes her: Rivella "loves *truth*, and has too often given her self the liberty to *speak*, as well as *write* it" (50). Lovemore's narration of what he perceives as Rivella's imperfections is ironic in the sense that a love of truth and a devotion to revealing the truth are what often make women valuable. It is in her revelations of the truth that Rivella is no longer part of the private sphere, but instead enters into public discourse.

Rivella's first encounter with Hilaria, glossed as the Duchess of Cleveland in Curll's key, is her one of her first experiences in private domestic sphere, the interior of the home in the company of women of fashion, as a companion for a woman of fortune. Although this experience provides Rivella a welcome distraction from her personal woes, she approaches Hilaria with a newfound resolve and sense of propriety. The narrator exposes the domestic world of women, revealing through Hilaria a pervasive love of gambling and intrigue. Rivella takes the place of Hilaria's former favorite, an act which made the cast-aside woman "so inveterate an enemy to Rivella, that the first great blow struck against her reputation, proceeded from that woman's malicious tongue" (62).

The narrator continually emphasizes the effect of Rivella's childhood and misfortunes throughout her various encounters in the novel, although she escapes relatively unscathed from several compromising situations with remarkable dexterity and resilience. In her first encounter with Hilaria (the Duchess of Cleveland, with whom Manley actually lived with for several months in 1694), Rivella is in recovery from her sham marriage to her cousin. This marriage, Lovemore notes, is the beginning of Rivella's "real misfortunes" and "it would be well for her," he continues, "that I could say here she died with honour, as did her father. I must refer you to her own story, under the name of Delia, in the *Atalantis*, for the next four miserable years of her life" (60). The exclusion of the details of this period in Rivella's life allow Manley to tie the narrative of Rivella with the narrative of *The New Atalantis*, an already famous and highly popular as well as scandalous work, yet also helps the narrator maintain an idealized image of Rivella. The unsavory details are kept separate from the character of Rivella, allowing the narrator to maintain his image of Rivella as a woman above reproach.

As recounted in the story of Delia in the *New Atalantis*, Manley was herself married to her cousin, who, unbeknownst to her, was already married to another woman. This scandal and the charges of bigamy left her destitute with the added expense of a child to care for. Lovemore does not mention her child nor her husband, who appears as the character Oswald, until much later in Rivella's narrative and even then only in passing. Rivella appears removed from the constraints of the maternal and marriage duty—although she is bound by both, neither affects her or her social standing, unless she uses those to her advantage, such as she does in her subsequent affair with Cleander (the printer John Tilly, with whom Manley also lived for several years). Although whisperings of her marriage and an affair with Cleander follow Rivella throughout the narrative, the narrator blames her youth and inexperience on the persistence of the rumors rather than a lapse in judgment or an otherwise moral incongruity.

Throughout the narrative, Lovemore places Rivella in opposition to various men, such as her husband, who would try to take advantage of her. Even though Rivella is often placed in compromising situations, she is not victimized; she is able to rise above these situations on the strength of her character, as illustrated in her part in a scheme involving Sir Peter Vainlove. Lovemore digresses from the narrative of Rivella's life after her encounter with Sir Peter Vainlove, leading to a return to her stay with Hilaria and her introduction to Lord Crafty, glossed as the Duke of Montague in Curll's key, the orchestrator of several plots. The narrator uses Rivella's time with Hilaria as a sort of jumping off point into a revelation of events. Interestingly, before this digression, Lovemore reiterates his position in the narrative:

Valuing my self as I do upon the reputation of an impartial historian, neither blind to Rivella's weaknesses and misfortunes, as being once her love, nor angry and

severe as remembering I could never be beloved; I have joined together the just, and the tender, not expatiated with malice upon her faults, nor yet blindly overlooking them. (74)

In spite of Lovemore's insistence that Rivella's misfortunes are her fault for not following his advice and his reliance on his position as an "impartial historian," the alleged faults he exposes in Rivella are those of being too kind and too willing to assist a fellow man or woman in distress. Rivella is also called upon by Calista to assist Cleander in an affair perpetrated by Lord Crafty and Tim Double. The revelation of their conduct, as well as Oswald's part in the affair, reveal the meanness of men with power and wealth. Rivella's part in the intrigue was merely to aid a man she respected, yet she was still double-crossed and cheated out of a large sum of money.

Lovemore ends his narrative by recounting the journey through Rivella's history. He speaks of Rivella's life using the metaphor of a garden in summer, conjuring amorous images of D'Aumont and Rivella in a peaceful repose:

I have brought you to her table, well furnished and well served...from thence carried you...within the nymph's alcove, to a bed nicely sheeted and strowed with *roses, jessamins, or orange-flowers*...and there have given you leave to fancy your self the happy man, with whom she chose to repose herself...in a state of sweetness and tranquility. (113)

The imagery of the garden represents youth and lust. Lovemore paints a sexualized image of Rivella—his narrative of her life is equated with a kind of intimacy that Lovemore has given himself the authority to bestow upon D'Aumont. At the very last, Rivella has lost any agency as an independent woman and female character that she may have gained through Lovemore's narrative of her life, and her experience is reduced to a knowingly innocent Augustan landscape of pleasure and amusement more aligned with the conceits of aristocratic romance. For all the relative freedom Rivella experienced throughout the

narrative, she becomes a figure for male entertainment. D'Aumont, rather unsurprisingly, is desperate to meet Rivella after Lovemore finishes his tale: "Let us not lose a moment before we are acquainted with the only person of her sex who knows how to *live*, and of whom we may say, in relation to love, since she has so particular a genius for, and has made such noble discoveries in that passion, that it would have been a *fault in her, not to have been faulty*" (114). Her faults, such as her lack of beauty (as well as implicitly her bigamous marriage and adulterous relationship with Cleander), according to D'Aumont, more than make up for her character and her intelligence, and her lack of feminine characteristics are excusable in light of her more masculine qualities.

Manley's approach to the secret history in *The Adventures of Rivella* focuses on the somewhat difficult position of women in eighteenth-century society. She illustrates, through the ironic voices of the male narrators, both her own struggles in a society prejudiced towards women and the male social and political climate that allows such events to take place. The male narrators and the narrative framework reveal a sexualized attitude towards women that influences the perception of the events in the novel while also lampooning male attitudes toward women as hypocritical and revealing male standards for female behavior and conduct that, the narrative illustrates, condemn women in one way or another.

CHAPTER V

ELIZA HAYWOOD AND *THE ADVENTURES OF EOVAAI*

The publication of Delarivier Manley's semi-autobiographical novel *The Adventures of Rivella* and the death of Queen Anne in 1714 signaled that the Tories "were anticipating a change to a Whig ministry with the arrival of the House of Hanover" (Carnell "*Rivella* as Secret History" 3). Several political and economic disasters, including a Jacobite uprising against George I in 1715 that attempted to place Queen Anne's Catholic half-brother James Francis Edward Stuart on the throne and the economic disaster occasioned by the collapse of the South Sea Bubble in 1720, created an environment of political and social turmoil in the early decades of the eighteenth century that predicated the rise of Whig minister Robert Walpole, often considered the first de facto prime minister. Walpole first garnered support during the reign of George I by uncovering the Jacobite plot to dispose the king, which further injured the Tory party and cemented Walpole's popularity. However, during the reign of George II, Walpole began to lose some of his popularity as he began to consolidate power in Parliament.

Eliza Haywood was one of many writers to satirize Walpole and his reign. Although scholars and critics have often attempted to situate Haywood politically and

socially within the landscape of the mid-eighteenth century, analyses of her published works provide few answers and raise more questions. As Kathryn King notes in her political biography of Haywood, little is known of Haywood's early life. She was widowed by the 1720s, a marriage which left her with two young children, and died 25 February 1756 (xi). More detailed biographical information has been lost to history and as such, this constitutes the extent of what we know about Haywood's life.

The legacy of Eliza Haywood's published works of drama and prose, however, is much more extensive and provides much more information on her private and public life. In a 1750 trial for sedition, Haywood claimed she "never wrote any thing in a political way," although this could not be further from the truth (King 1). Published in 1719, her first novel *Love in Excess*, a scandalous tale of unrequited love and lost innocence, was a runaway bestseller. She published pamphlets, novels, and magazines for women that offered political commentary under the guise of secret history and fantastic narratives. Her political leanings have thus been subject to critics' debates. Although many scholars have labeled Haywood as a predominantly Tory writer, her actual political leanings appear to have shifted for contingent reasons across her career, and her underlying political principles are thus difficult to pin down. Kathryn King, for example, acknowledges that although Haywood was a Jacobite in "the loosest (and least useful) sense of the word;" she found in the "idiom, codes, values, and affects" of Jacobitism a "language of protest" that many other authors did as well (177).

Although many of her works espouse strong Tory ideals, particularly the ideals of honesty, loyalty, and filial piety, there remain many questions about whether Haywood's political beliefs were truly so cut and dry. For example, King takes a mitigating approach

to Haywood's works, such as *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to Utopia* (1725-6) and *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736), from several different political angles and examines in particular the political context surrounding the events her secret histories are intended to reflect. However, King is flexible in her distinctions between Haywood's amatory fiction of the 1720s and her more political works. Although she notes that there are connecting themes through both genres, Haywood's amatory fiction "is not meant to imply indifference to themes of power, domination, and control that are at their core political" (9). Indeed, in *The Adventures of Eovaai* Haywood situates her main character in terms of her sexuality and her political position—Eovaai's sexuality is a central element in her struggle to regain her throne. She must overcome, or at least come to terms with, her feminine weakness, which makes her a target for Ochihatou in his attempts to usurp her power, in order to reassert her position within the political sphere.

In contrast, Ros Ballaster compares Eliza Haywood's works to earlier women writers, including Aphra Behn and Delarivier Manley, and examines Haywood's works in the genre of what she terms "scandal fiction" that functions as "both a shrewd critique of gendered cultural and political poetics of the 1720s and 1730s and an attempt to 'configure' a rival aesthetics" that imagines "agency for women as writers" and political activists (144). Haywood's contemporaries, such as Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, mark this novelization as a decline in culture and the rejection of classical rhetoric that is intended merely for financial gain and profit (145). However, Ballaster argues, scandal fiction, particularly Haywood's *The Adventures of Eovaai*, actually represents a new kind of political secret history that focuses on the creation of a space for political discussion that allows Haywood to enter the political debate through a gendered lens in terms of the

female body and particularly in relation to the anti-Walpole movement, which refutes the accusations of several critics who claim that the sexuality of Haywood's scandal fiction was merely a ploy to increase her popularity and sales.

Marta Kvande dismisses this interpretation as "social...myth" (625), arguing that reading Haywood's novels in a political context does reveal a political attack on the corruption of those in power based on

the presentation of the novels' narrators as political figures, and...the novels' persistent identification of the private with the political...Haywood's narrators identify themselves as political actors by taking up the position of outsiders whose apparently disinterested position endows them with virtue and makes them uniquely qualified to offer criticism. The criticisms these narrators offer, in turn, consistently argue that behavior excused by politicians as merely private is, in fact, political behavior that affects the public sphere. ("Outside Narrator" 625-6)

Likewise, Rachel Carnell argues that Haywood utilizes two narratological strategies of the secret historian: both "the tendency to reveal the secrets of public figures while concealing the author's own political position and the tendency to muse self-reflectively about the author's own role as a writer of history" in comparison to other historians ("Narratological Tropes" 103). The result in Haywood's secret histories is a narrator who has both an interior and exterior vision of the events exposed within the narrative and exists outside of the "established hierarchy" (Kvande "Outside Narrator" 628). In light of these various scholarly interpretations, I argue that female secret historians, especially Haywood, use gender roles in a play for power that allows for female writers and their narratives outside of the "established hierarchy" in a way that responds to earlier male secret historians who used gender to further entrench women within the dominant hierarchy.

In contrast to Manley, a staunch Tory, Haywood advances an oppositional Whig agenda that condemns Walpole while also garnering favor with fellow opposition Whigs. The preface to the novel, which dedicates the text to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who was at the front of the anti-Walpole movement, signals a truce in Haywood's attack on Whig politicians, which perhaps, as Rebecca Bullard points out, Haywood hoped to use to garner favor and political position (162). Sarah Churchill was infamous for her personal friendship and relationship with Queen Anne, and was often accused of exerting undue influence over the Queen. Once Haywood's great political enemy, she satirized the Duchess in her 1725-6 secret history *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*, although the two women united in their opposition to Walpole. Haywood praises the Duke of Marlborough and his military victories, yet also warns that "when, perhaps, some ambitious, or avaritious Favourite, void of Abilities as of Morals, shall have spread a general Corruption thro' the Land...how difficult will it be for that degenerate Race, to believe what they find themselves so little able to imitate" (45).

Although there are certainly elements of scandal fiction inherent to the secret history, such as secret historians' fixation on revealing private life, one of the secret history's defining traits is its focus "on abuses of power: on corrupt princes, competing parties, successful troublemakers, and worthy persons in disgrace" (Rabb 70). First published in 1736, *The Adventures of Eovaai* is no exception to this definition. However, like her female predecessors, Haywood achieves two aims: while satirizing Robert Walpole in the character of Ochihatou, she also responds to earlier male secret historians who scapegoated women as the cause of many political problems due to their sexual charms and feminine wiles. Ochihatou/Walpole (hereafter referred to simply as

Ochihatou) is placed in opposition to several women throughout the novel, all of whom he ruined because of his desire for control of others and his own lack of self-control. The narrator uses these women to illustrate the depths to which Ochihatou will sink in order to advance his own agenda, revealing their stories in their conversations with Eovaai throughout her journey. These stories, including the story of Eovaai herself, allow the narrator to focus on the injury done to women and its repercussions in the sociopolitical sphere as much as it allows for Ochihatou's true character to be exposed.

Haywood's narrator couches the validity of the events for the audience by presupposing any opposition to the legitimacy of the narrative: "I cannot help thinking it necessary to stop the mouth of Censure, by answering before-hand, all the Cavils that, with any show of Reason, can be made against it" (48). The narrator vouches for the truth of the narrative, and hopes "the Reader, therefore, wou'd be either instructed or diverted by this Book," and invites the audience to examine the truth of the story for itself by seeking out its original sources, which places the burden of proof on the audience (48). In forcing the audience to seek out the truth of the narrative, the narrator is exempted from claims to libel and essentially forces the audience to place names on the characters within the secret history: with "this particular kind of narrative authority, Haywood claimed a role in public discourse. Though her narrators position themselves as outsiders, they do not seek to place themselves outside the sphere of public and political activity" (Kvande "Outside Narrator" 626). Kvande also points to two main features that "demonstrate...their political assault: first, the presentation of the novels' narrators as political figures, and second, the novels' persistent identification of the private with the

political” (“Outside Narrator” 626). Throughout *Eovaai*, the narrator works to situate each character within the public and private spheres.

While the preface to *Eovaai* establishes the context of the narrative, the translator/narrator clearly implies the narrative’s relativity to the contemporaneous political situation, addressing two distinct audiences. In the prefaces to earlier secret histories, oftentimes the translator offers an apology for the content of the narrative, usually for its salacious content. This apology allegedly absolves the author of the content of the narrative and lends the author and the narrative credibility. By constructing the translator as an outsider in the narrative, Haywood further removes herself from any possible charges of libel. In the preface to *Eovaai*, the translator does not apologize, but rather encourages the reading audience to take note of the truths promulgated in the narrative:

In the mean time, some Reflections on the extensive Faculties of the former Possessors of this Earth, methinks, wou’d not be amiss, to humble the Pride of our modern Travellers, who look down, with a kind of scorn, on their less curious, or less happy Fellow-Creatures...but as this might not seem too presuming, among a People who, if I judge rightly, are not fond of Remonstrances; and besides, is not at all material to testify the Truth of the succeeding Narrative, where no Description is attempted of any other World than the sublunary one; I shall only desire...every Reader will so far mortify his own Vanity, as to believe them not less real, because he is unable to comprehend them. (49, italics reversed)

The translator addresses political figures in power, claiming that their ancestors will visit punishment on them for failing to hold themselves to the task of creating a just and right government. The narrator does not exist within the novel itself; rather, the translator addresses the audience directly with assurances of the narrative’s truth, emphasizing the translator’s third party disconnect from the events of the narrative. However, as in *Hattigé* and the *Anekdotá*, the translator controls the narrative the audience receives,

which also gives the translator license to expose or withhold information as necessary. The translator makes his presence known throughout the narrative in footnotes throughout the text, which clarify or reveal additional information.

The “original” author’s footnotes to the text perform a similar narratological function: they reiterate the fact that the translator is outside of the narrative and functions only to relay the text to the audience. This reinforces the author’s disconnect from the narrative and mitigates the discourse in order to prevent the narrative from becoming too closely tied to the actual persons it targets. The translator and the narrator are both in this sense able to move within the narrative itself to reveal “facts” that would not otherwise be revealed. The fascination with the private life and scenes “behind closed doors” continues throughout the narrative. The footnotes and asides from the translator emphasize the translator’s existence outside of the text, which gives the audience a glimpse into the interior of the political workings of a fictional world. Kvande brings Haywood’s politics into her reading of the narrator, claiming that Haywood used Toryism “in a new way to claim a public voice for her narrators...her narrators identify themselves as political outsiders, those who deserve political power but are excluded from it by corrupt politicians. These narrators use Tory and opposition rhetoric to establish their authority as exemplars of public virtue” (“Outside Narrator” 626).

However, I argue that in rejecting the patriarchal hierarchy, Eovaai turns towards a masculine identity that enables her to become a leader for her people and accept responsibility and her place in the political sphere. Haywood critiques “cultures of masculinity, arousing readers’ erotic interests, and creating for them a space of voyeuristic fantasy” (Lubey 309). Although Eovaai receives her education from her

father, she must, as a woman, prove herself capable of providing leadership. Eovaai is in a sense still subject to the social definition of the female role, both in public and in private, although that definition shifts throughout the narrative: in Haywood's works, "the predominantly female protagonists are bound by the interchangeable codes of gender and genre to realize their subject status" (London 101). Eovaai's status as queen is never questioned based on her gender; it is not until she loses a jewel given to her by her father, which is the heart and a symbol of her power and birthright, and thus losing the blessing of the gods that her rule begins to crumble. She must use her feminine charms and masculine intellect in order to realize, as London calls it, her subject status.

Although Eovaai possesses qualities of both intellect and beauty beyond what is typically expected of women, especially women in power, she also possesses the virtues of "masculine" intelligence and a sense of wisdom endowed by her father, like Manley's Rivella. She embraces her sexuality when she is initially enticed by Ochihatou, although she eventually rejects him when his true nature is revealed. The narrator does not fault Eovaai for her sexual interest in Ochihatou; rather, Ochihatou is blamed for the falseness of his suit. This relationship, Lubey notes, exemplifies "Haywood's strategies for engaging her readers [that] refuse to posit a contest between illicit pleasure and morality" (310). Eovaai is not blamed for her initial relationship with Ochihatou; rather, the narrator blames the early death of her father for her shortcomings: "the only Excuse can be made for her Conduct after his Decease, is, that she became Mistress of herself too soon" (55). Eovaai's moral failings are not the result of her lack of control as a woman, but rather the circumstances that did not allow her to fully develop as a leader.

I would also add to this commentary that the often violent sexual encounters between Eovaai and Ochihatou are representative of early-eighteenth century male attitudes towards women, or at least the female interpretation of male attitudes towards women. The sexual discourse of secret history as a genre is not necessarily equated with truth, but has “the effect of undermining certainty of authority, and of constructing new identities” (Bullard 71). Eovaai’s situation and her position as a monarch is constantly trivialized by men such as Ochihatou and even to some extent the Republican—even though she was deigned by right of birth as the rightful ruler of Ijaveo, her agency as a ruler is in many ways negated by her interactions with the various other men in the narrative. She must be protected from nearly all whose paths she crosses; it is not until she strikes out on her own and decides to retake her throne and reclaim her agency and own her own sexuality that she can rightfully reclaim her throne.

However, even though Ochihatou abducts Eovaai, she is not entirely immune to the ideas of love that her would-be paramour introduces her to. Eovaai’s first dalliance with Ochihatou is overtly sexual, nearly playful in some moments. She enjoys the attentions of Ochihatou and does not acknowledge the potential consequences of her flirtations. Thoughts are awakened within her that she had never previously experience: “As she was one day sitting alone in her Garden...Emotions, to which hitherto she had been a Stranger, began to diffuse themselves throughout her Mind” (57). Once Eovaai is introduced to Ochihatou, he entices and seduces her into accepting his entreaties. Eovaai nearly gives into these false beliefs, developing her own philosophy based on her faith in Ochihatou: “To live without Restraint, is to live indeed...and I no longer wonder, that the free Minds find it so difficult to yield to those Fetters, Priests and Philosophers would

bind it in, and which were never forged by, nor are consistent with Reason” (77). In contrast to the female temptresses of Brémond and Procopius, Ochihatou is Eovaai’s tempter. As Theodora and Hattigé both seduced monarchs, which eventually contributed to their ruin, Ochihatou does the same to Eovaai, with even more violent and disastrous results. Ochihatou is at the mercy of Eovaai, although she does not realize her power over him until it is nearly too late. When she is abducted by Ochihatou for the second time, he threatens her with rape and worse: “If you [do] not resign yourself willingly to my Embraces,” he tells her, “I shall forgo all the Respect my foolish Passion has hitherto made me observe, and seize my Joy; which done, I shall despise and hate—give all my Soul up to revenge” (150). Ochihatou’s revenge is unbridled; he is driven by emotion without regard to the subjects he is supposed to protect.

Beginning with Eovaai's father's lectures and perhaps ending with Ochihatou's final confrontation with Eovaai, “substantial sections of the book are dissertations on and dramatizations of forms of government” (Backscheider 91). However, these narratorial digressions are not simply educational, but rather draw focus to the female rulers of each country and illustrate the widespread mistreatment of women by men in an attempt to seize power. Throughout the novel, Eovaai observes these through the examples of other nations in her exposure to various forms of government. Eovaai begins the novel as a queen, sure of her education and her political stance. However, over the course of the novel through various conversations and observations, Eovaai is exposed to a variety of political theories and styles, most obviously the tyranny of ineffectual government led by a male leader. Eovaai shifts political stance throughout the novel, much as Haywood did. Apart from a narratorial digression on the government of Ginksy, Eovaai observes

firsthand her home, Ijaveo, the first “perfect” nation of the novel, where peace and prosperity reign until Eovaai loses her birthright. From there, the novel moves through the governments of Hypotofa, ruled by the villainous Ochihatou. When she reaches Hypotofa “not all the Principles of Religion and Morality, given her by *Eojaeu*, not a long Habitude of Virtue, nor the natural modesty of her Sex, had power to stem the Torrent of Libertinism, that now o’erwhelm’d her Soul” (77). It is only by the divine grace of the gods that Eovaai sees Ochihatou for what he is and is eventually rescued and carried to Oozoff, where even the magic of Ochihatou has no effect. Upon her arrival in Oozoff, Eovaai meets the Republican, which represents a different turn in the novel. Whereas previously Eovaai merely was an observer in the court of Ochihatou, the Republican engages in direct discourse with Eovaai and seeks to correct her ideas of government.

Although Eovaai eventually reaches some semblance of an awareness of the ideal balance of political power, both aware of her responsibilities and the limitations of her rule, her full return to her rightful place is not complete without her marriage to Adelhu. This turn of events seems strange to modern readers, especially since throughout the narrative Eovaai must avoid the seductions of men who seek to usurp her power and her throne. This standard courtship plot ending refers the audience back to the idea of an idealized monarchy, calling to mind the necessity of a strong leader felt most keenly in the absence of one. Eovaai becomes in this sense representative of the body politic—however, the person who possesses her body, also possesses political power. Kathryn King attributes this to Haywood’s “political romance, the image of monarchical paternalism—the idea that the ideal king is a virtuous father of his people—is replaced by

a heterosexual conjugal model” (75). *Eovaai* returns to an autonomous body politic that cannot be seized by one man. The social contract is again revised, in which one man does not hold supreme power, but rather in which two individuals jointly hold power, reminiscent perhaps of the general relief upon the ascension of William and Mary following the Glorious Revolution.

After she leaves the safety of Oozoff, *Eovaai* is again recaptured by *Ochihatou* and is threatened with rape on multiple occasions. This symbolic “rape” of the body politic becomes a metaphor for the usurpation of monarchical power by *Walpole*. *Eovaai* becomes something to be seized or claimed, not someone worthy of the respect due to monarchs who reign by divine right. *Eovaai* is often fickle in her struggle to reclaim her agency and return to her home. *Ochihatou* continually takes advantage of *Eovaai*’s inexperience, and *Eovaai*’s escapes are continually thwarted by his schemes. It is not until she strikes out on her own (with the help of the handsome and equally wronged *Adelhu*) and decides to retake her own throne that she can rightfully reclaim her position and right to govern. The eventual marriage of *Eovaai* and *Adelhu* and their conjugal relationship replaces the ideal of a patriarchal monarchy: it is only once the two are united that peace can return to their kingdoms. With their marriage “we are left,” as *King* notes, “with an ‘androgynized’ rather than a masculine image of monarchy” (93). Their marriage is one in which the rightful heads of both countries have been restored. This also means something else for women—since the monarch is a female, a newly gendered space within the political and social rhetoric of the 1730s is created. When *Eovaai* marries *Adelhu*, both take on the new role of the social contract, allowing both man and woman to rule jointly as equals, as *William and Mary* did.

If early male-authored secret histories espouse early enlightenment principles such as social contract theory, later female-authored secret histories also reflect and further this contract. Whereas Procopius and Brémond illustrate the dangers women present in terms of government and upsetting the balance of power, Manley and Haywood illustrate how men accomplished that task on their own in terms of women's place in society and government. Women insert themselves into the political landscape. In Haywood, political theories change—constitutional government began to take over, leading to the rise of the Whig party (as a product of the Enlightenment) and the rise of ministers like Walpole. Haywood in this sense espouses traditional Tory values, including the idea of a strong monarchy. By creating a strong female monarch who recognizes her sexuality yet chooses to guard it rather than give in to her tempter, Haywood illustrates a sort of moral superiority in women, which tyrannical male rulers, as illustrated by Ochihatou in the narrative, do not possess.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

As the popularity of the secret history grew over the course of the eighteenth century, it began to lose some of its import, as publishers liberally applied the term to various texts as a near guarantee of a successful publishing run. The subtitle “secret history” was attached to works that did not necessarily adhere to the characteristics of the original secret history genre that developed in the seventeenth century. The genre eventually fell out of favor in the latter years of the eighteenth century, although works with the secret history tagline were still published and sold fairly well. The genre as a whole shaped much of the political discourse over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; for women especially, the secret history provided an avenue to participate in political discourse as well as to ironize and satirize male attitudes towards the opposite sex.

There were many factors that contributed to changes in social and political rhetoric in the early eighteenth century, from the influence of Enlightenment philosophy to the oppositional rhetoric that emerged with the rise of partisan politics and the development of male and female social roles. A shift towards changing social views of

sexuality and interior and exterior spaces in the early eighteenth century helped give rise to a new genre that created new rhetorical spaces for groups such as women writers who were previously categorically excluded from the public debate. The narratorial structure of the secret history as employed by both male and female secret historians created a space for oppositional political critique and commentary that defined a great portion of the literary landscape in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, the narratorial differences between male and female secret historians also illustrated a greater gender divide that echoed throughout the multiple phases of the secret history. The narratology of early male secret historians, like Procopius and Sébastien de Brémond, painted portraits of women as temptresses, driven by lust and ambition to sabotage kings and government officials.

Female secret historians, in answer to their male counterparts, created of a space for female writers to express their political views was essential to reframing women's social role in the early eighteenth century. In illustrating the plight of women in society in terms of the political landscape and male politicians, female secret historians like Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood responded to and challenged the masculine ideal of government and politics. Many of the characteristics that defined Manley and Haywood's narratological strategies in secret histories, from secrecy, to exterior narrators, to strong female characters, are echoed in many other secret histories as the genre became more and more popular in the mid-eighteenth century. Secret history offered an alternative narrative to the public discourse, and by appropriating this genre, women writers like Manley and Haywood were able not only to enter the realm of

politics, but also to redirect its course with startling efficacy and an unrivalled popularity that ensured them a place in the annals of secret history and political discourse.

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APPENDICES

A KEY to the Adventures of
RIVELLA.

R IVELLA,	<i>M^{rs} de la Riviere, Manley</i>
Sir Charles Lovemore,	Author of the <i>Atalantis</i> .
5 Mr. G.	Lieuten. Gen. Tidcomb.
13 Mr. S---le,	Mr. Calvert, Son to the Lord Baltimore.
19 <i>Lysander</i> ,	Mr. Steele.
30 <i>Hilaria</i> ,	Mr. Carlisle.
31 A Lady next Door to the poor Recluse,	Late Dutchess of <i>Cleveland</i> .
33 Count <i>Fortunatus</i> ,	Nominal Mrs. Rider, Sir Ri- chard <i>Fanshawe's</i> Daughter, Sister to Mrs. <i>Blount</i> , House- keeper to the Lord <i>Somers</i>
— Kitchen-Maid married to her Master,	Duke of <i>M---gh</i> . <i>Sharlborough</i>
34 Her Patroness's Eldest Son,	Pretended Madam <i>Beauclair</i> .
— Young Lady of little or no Fortune,	Duke of <i>C---nd</i> and <i>S---ton</i> . <i>Cleveland</i> <i>Southampton</i>
35 The Man <i>Hilaria</i> was in Love with,	Late Lady <i>Poultney's</i> Daughter, Dutchess to <i>Ditto</i> .
— He kept a Mistress in the next Street,	Mr. Goodman, the Player.
37 The First Dutchess in England,	Mrs. <i>Wilson</i> of the <i>Pope's-Head</i> Tavern in <i>Cornhill</i> .
45 Sir <i>Peter Vainlove</i> ,	Late Dutchess of <i>Norfolk</i> .
48 Mrs. <i>Settee</i> ,	Sir <i>Thomas Skipwith</i> .
	Mrs. <i>Pym</i> . She has 4 Daugh- ters.

Lord

Pag.		<i>Montague</i>
53	Lord Crafty,	Late Duke of <i>M^{ontague}</i> .
57	Merchant Double,	Late Duke of <i>A^{lbermarle}</i> .
—	Baron Meanwell,	Late Earl of Bath.
59	Old Double,	General Monk.
—	Two Prelates of the Church of England,	i. e. Two Peers.
60	Bought the Merchant's Widow of her Two Women,	The Two Mrs. Wrights, in Bloomsbury-Square.
61	Tim. Double,	Christopher Monk, Son to Colonel Monk.
62	Petty-pan Merchant,	Mr. Hungerford, a Pastry-Cook in Limestreet.
64	Calista,	Mrs. Trother. <i>afterwards Mrs. Coekburn</i>
—	Cleander,	Mr. Tilly.
—	Oswald,	The late John Manley, Esq; Member of Parliament, and Surveyor-General.
79	The Chief Seat of the Doubles,	<i>New-Hall</i> in Essex.
86	Bella,	Kitty Baker, an Actress.
87	Flippanta,	Servant to Rivella.
92	Old Simon,	Mr. Simpson, Retainer to the Duke of <i>M^{ontague}</i> .
105	A Rich Young Widow,	Mr. Geo. Smith's Widow of Doctors-Commons; now Mrs. Tilly.
113	Secretary, who examin'd Rivella,	John Hopkins, Esq;
118	The Person, who publicly and gravely ask'd Rivella's Pardon,	Richard Steele, Esq;

F I N I S.