

MACARIA, THE HARTLIB CIRCLE, AND HUSBANDING CREATION¹

Oana MATEI*

Abstract. This paper attempts to interpret one of the rarely read seventeenth-century atypical utopias, *A Description of the Famous Kingdome of Macaria*. *Macaria* originated inside the Hartlib Circle, was anonymously published and, for a long time, was considered a work by Samuel Hartlib. Classified as an important manifesto destined to direct the energies of the Long Parliament, *Macaria* has been associated with other tracts of the Puritan movement in England. In my paper I will interpret this text in the wider context of the new approach on husbandry developed inside the Hartlib Circle. This new approach reformulates the view on husbandry, combining the classical and Renaissance traditions, adding some interesting alchemical influences and also the Baconian principles of experimentation and benefit of mankind. The first writer of the Hartlib Circle to ever express such an opinion was Gabriel Plattes.

Keywords: Gabriel Plattes, Hartlib Circle, Macaria, husbandry, pansophia

Introduction

An expression of utopian reflection, *Macaria* was first published anonymously in 1641. It is a merely 15 page-long quarto tract. The text has a prefatory address to the Parliament, dated 25 October 1641, showing that the tract belongs to a wider category of manifestoes, petitions and letters, both printed and in manuscript form, intended to be distributed among the members of the Long Parliament, which opened its second session on the 20th of October 1641, and designed to direct the energies of this Long Parliament. Consequently, *Macaria* has been classified as a product of the “Puritan revolution”, together with a large number of similar tracts, petitions, letters, pamphlets, destined to influence the Long Parliament’s attitudes and decisions.²

This short text was issued inside the Hartlib Circle and was addressed to the Parliament by Samuel Hartlib. Even though for a long time it was considered to be a work by Hartlib, its authorship was discussed by Charles Webster, who demonstrated³ that *Macaria* had not been written by Hartlib but by another member of Hartlib’s circle, Gabriel Plattes. Webster has drawn attention to the fact that while Hartlib never claimed to have written the text, no direct reference has been found in Hartlib’s *Ephemerides*, Plattes actually claimed authorship in a later essay (mentioning a little book lately printed which *sheweth how any Kingdome may live in great plenty*; the words used

* “Vasile Goldiș” Western University of Arad, Faculty of Humanistic, Political and Administrative Sciences, 3 Unirii str., Arad, Romania, e-mail: oanamatei@yahoo.com

by Plattes are the same words from *Macaria's* subtitle), published 10 months before his death, and entitled *A Caveat for Alchymists*, an essay signed G.P. and dated Westminster 10 March 1643/4. Its publication was delayed until 1655 when it was included in Hartlib's *Chymical, Medicinal and Chyrurgical Addresses*.⁴

However, unlike the other tracts of the Puritan revolution, *Macaria* is organized – at least on the face of it – as a utopia. Charles Webster has already pointed out this paradox, emphasizing the two major characteristics of this allegedly utopian tract: unlike a classical utopia, it provides practical advice for the transformation of England into a well-governed commonwealth. Plattes used the utopian framework to picture a type of perfect society whose foundation was based on the principles of husbandry and chemical technology. This point of view has been earlier expressed by Plattes in his first two books published in 1639, *A Discovery of Subterraneall Treasure, viz., of all manner of mines and minerals ... and also the art of melting, refining, and assaying of them* and *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure, hidden since the World's Beginning, Whereunto all men, of what degree soever, are friendly invited to be sharers with the Discoverer*. This new approach on husbandry combines the classical (more concerned with economic and political aspects) and Renaissance (concerned with natural magic) traditions of husbandry, inherits the alchemical principle of applying the chemistry to practical problems, and follows the Baconian tradition of experimentation and benefit of mankind. Plattes' intention was to present a program of reformation in connection with his metaphysical view upon the universe and not simply to emphasize a work ethics based on direct participation. The utopian garment served as a suitable manner to present in front of the Parliament Plattes' program of reformation as easy to be put into practice and achieved.⁵ Plattes' desire to see England becoming the richest and happiest country on Earth and the sense of immediacy evident in *Macaria* and in his earlier books shows that he has been, to some degree, affected by the apocalyptic hopes⁶ and millenarian expectations of the mid-seventeenth century, but the Puritan movement acted more as a contextual factor. The Puritan movement and the millenarian expectations, as well as the utopian framework, were used by Plattes as the perfect ground to express his program of husbanding the human soul and the English society. He is the first member of the Hartlib Circle promoting a metaphysical view upon the universe based on an interesting concept of husbanding Creation and technological improvement (both seen as a process of amelioration of the material of Creation). *Macaria* was the perfect expression of such a vision.

Although a part of an important body of literature, so far *Macaria* has not received the amount of attention and thorough study it deserves. Apart from Charles Webster who dedicated a number of studies to *Macaria*,⁷ I could only find passing references and rather short discussions of this text in the larger context of the Hartlib Circle⁸, the seventeenth-century utopian movement⁹ or in more general studies of seventeenth-century English politics and literature.¹⁰ A thorough investigation of *Macaria* in the appropriate context can reveal many interesting and still only partially understood things about the context and content of the husbandry tradition associated with the Hartlib Circle and of the 'Baconianism' of the 1640s. One such interesting feature, able to sustain the argument that the Puritan movement has only been used as needed for expressing Plattes' own idea of reformation, is that, unlike

other writings of the Puritan revolution,¹¹ *Macaria* is organized as a utopia, more precisely, as a Baconian utopia. Its form sets the stage for a paradox: one wonders whether we have a political manifesto disguised as a utopian tract, or a utopian tract rewritten as a manifesto in disguise? My paper will provide, however, just a first step on such an interpretative road. More thorough work is to be done on the subject and it is for this purpose that I have added, as an appendix, the text of *Macaria*, with a minimal amount of notes explaining the context and content of the text.

Macaria had a troubled fate. During the inter-regnum, the book was lost from sight and it re-emerged and became generally accessible through inclusion in the first volume of the Harleian Miscellany, in 1744. First editions are extremely rare.¹² There are no modern editions of *Macaria*, except Webster's edition of 1970 (Webster, C., ed., *Samuel Hartlib and the Advancement of Learning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1970).

Husbandry Creation

At the beginning of the seventeenth century there was a shift in the approach regarding the topic of husbandry, from the classical and the Renaissance views to a new and metaphysical view on husbandry, seen as a process of amelioration of the material of Creation. In the seventeenth century, writers on husbandry started to add new domains of interest (such as minerals, metals, ores) to the traditional science of administering the soil and they proposed a new vision on the subject. They started to use the application of chemistry to practical agricultural problems (a practice inspired from the alchemical tradition) and they consciously attempted to utilize the newly acknowledged knowledge for the betterment of practical processes (a condition entailed in the character of the Baconian natural histories). *The History of Agriculture, Pasturage, Culture of Woods, etc.* held the 115th position in Bacon's *Catalog of Particular Histories*, category of *Histories of Man*, while the *History of Gardening* was listed at the 116th position in the same category.¹³

As for the traditional sources of husbandry, I could identify at least four of them. First, there would be the ancient tradition of *historia naturalis* developed by Theophrastus (following Aristotle) on the two fundamental books: *Historia plantarum* and *De causis plantarum*. This tradition of 'botany' became extremely popular in the Renaissance and influenced numerous natural histories of plants (organized thematically or alphabetically, descriptive works, sometimes massive, sometimes encyclopedic).¹⁴ Secondly, there would be the tradition associated with Pliny's *Natural History*. This tradition is connected to the first one and has been the very source of inspiration and the turning point for all the generations of people interested in plants as well in the sixteenth and in the seventeenth century. The first generation of Renaissance naturalists (identified by Ogilvie as the 1490s-1530s generation)¹⁵ was mainly concerned with identifying the medical plants described by ancient Greek and Roman writers and to reform medical education on the basis of those writers. Another very interesting source is represented by the agricultural writings such as Virgil's, Cato's, Columella's, Paladius' (the *res rustica* tradition). This third tradition is associated, in contrast to the Theophrastus-Aristotle one, to husbandry or the Greek *oekonomis*. This discipline represents a mid-way between politics (the family and its farm being an

economic and political ‘unit’ as well as a place of cultivation) and agriculture. A fourth tradition would be the Renaissance tradition of natural magic associated with the very important figure of Giambattista Della Porta. To these, another one could be added, a half-way between husbandry and literature, identified by Orsi¹⁶ as the tradition of the Italian *Villa* (treatises on farming, good manners, morals, Virgilian echoes, combining Columella and Varro with Pliny; Della Porta’s *Villa*¹⁷ belongs to this tradition). What is also interesting to point here is the utopian character of *Villa*. *Villa* is a place for producing moral, political and economic growth, such as Bacon’s *New Atlantis* and Plattes’ *Macaria*.

It is interesting how members of the Hartlib Circle interpreted and combined these traditions. For sure, their treatises on husbandry are not Aristotelian natural histories. The Hartlibians have not been interested either in classifying species or in cataloguing plants and they strongly criticized former books on husbandry, such as Virgil’s, Cato’s and Columella’s for not being able to provide a rational and experimental basis for their practice.¹⁸ They have been interested in curiosities of nature but, in contrast to Della Porta, their main aim was not to alter and transform nature for the sake of their ingenuity but to deliver remedies for the entire society. Interestingly enough, what they inherited was a moral attitude associated with agricultural labor. Pliny, Varo, Columella shared a moral attitude towards agriculture; they were convinced that there were certain limits one should not exceed in grafting, for instance. By contrast, although remaining confident to the moral pursuit associated with the practice of husbandry, for the members of the Hartlib circle there were no limits in natural knowledge. God, the Original Husbandman, made Paradise a place of plenty and had shared His goodness with His first creature, Adam, commissioning him as Husbandman of Eden. Agriculture was the first ‘divinely ordained’ profession and the husbandman could restore his position in the Great design by the practice of husbandry. By studying nature, man would attempt to restore the condition held prior to Fall and there were no limits attached to this quest. The entire process of husbandry (understood as the process of acquisition of practical knowledge in everything that pertains to the natural world, doubled by the desire to control and improve the material of Creation) has been oriented towards the achievement of a moral pursuit: the rehabilitation of man’s prelapsarian position.

Another factor influencing the new approach on husbandry could be found in the Baconian tradition of experimentation, which places at its very core the study of nature. In a very particular way, the Baconian framework combined the classical tradition of economic and political advancement with the Renaissance tradition of wonder and curiosity, and proposed a specific interpretation of the Fall by adding further moral weight to the idea of the advancement of learning and common usefulness. Emphasizing the practical work and experimentation, Bacon insisted that humanity under God’s benevolent eye take its destiny into its own hands, reconsider nature of that course and start a long process that would carry in itself the great promise of human advancement and peaceful prosperity.¹⁹ Thus, the study of nature gained a new pioneering perspective, aiming to achieve a moral end, namely to restore the human prelapsarian condition.²⁰ Significantly, agricultural labor, while often said to be a consequence of the Fall, was nonetheless represented less as a punishment than

fulfillment. As Bacon often argued,²¹ the Christian farmer would expect God to reward his efforts if he would have followed a methodological course, which allowed him to pray and cultivate his soul while he would have cultivated his land. The improvement of the land was placed in a completely new light from a moral point of view. The word “improvement” has gained a different and ‘improved’ meaning starting with the seventeenth century, drawing together legal, religious, moral and economic implications in order to justify radical processes of change in England.²²

The millenarian context of the mid seventeenth century is another factor that could not be overlooked. Not only could the acquisition of natural knowledge restore the prelapsarian condition, but there was also a providential time in history when God was willing to allow human beings to regain the position Adam had forfeited. A new millennium was about to begin and English people were called to participate in the process of transforming the world. God is willing to allow the ‘healing’ of some parts of the fallen nature and technological improvements are designed to help the amelioration process. By practicing husbandry, man can be in relation to God, the first Husbandman. Using technology we can help, speed up and improve the germination of the seeds and also of the human virtues. Fertilization with manure is regarded as a precautionary process, as a preventive and curative medicine, offering proper nourishment for seeds, soil, and humans.²³

What is also particular for this new approach of husbandry is the fact that it has been addressed to everybody, laics and clerics, rich and poor, rural and urban. Charlotte Otten²⁴ argued Webster’s point²⁵ that the Puritan perspective was ‘ethical’ and ‘religious in motivation but it had the capacity to develop a largely secular expression’, by saying that there was not a secular pursuit with religious motivation, but a world and life view that saw no antithesis between secular and religious simply because secular did not exist in a world created by God. I would say that the new approach on husbandry expressed a metaphysical view upon the universe, not just because the new writers on husbandry shared a moral pursuit, but because they shared a cosmology shaped as a specific vision upon the universe (the material of Creation). This metaphysical cosmology proposes the study of the world by the means of husbandry, combining alchemical elements (see the macrocosm-microcosm unity) with Baconian principles (such as the extensions from one domain - easy to explore; i.e. the natural world - to another - difficult to explore; i.e. the human soul). God, the first husbandman, ordained the treasures of the universe and man has a place in this Godly ordained universe.²⁶ Although man had a privileged position in the Garden of Eden, that was lost in the Fall. Now man has the duty of restoring the betrayed wisdom by studying nature through the means of husbandry (as part of natural philosophy). The new writers on husbandry reformulated the view on husbandry, promoting a new type of ‘integrated science’ able to cultivate the land and the human soul as well. Gabriel Plattes was the first member of the Hartlib Circle writing on the topic of husbandry and expressing such an opinion based on the first-hand experience of current practice. Mixing the alchemical tradition with the Baconian principles, Plattes provided a number of ‘technologies of amelioration’ for the material of Creation (soil, plants, human beings), technologies of salvation. The accent has shifted in this new interpretation of the Genesis from the emphasis of importance of work to

the emphasis of the importance of ‘amelioration’ of the ‘cultivated material’. This is the reason why new husbandry and subsequently, new agriculture need improved technologies, because new, improved technologies could ameliorate the ‘cultivated material’.

Plattes was confident that good methods of husbandry of the land along with technological improvement could solve all problems and bring prosperity and salvation for the whole nation.²⁷ All his work was elaborated under the strict conviction that if his advices were to be followed, England would reach salvation both from an economic and religious point of view. If in his first two books (*A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* and *A Discovery of Subterranean Treasure*, both published in 1639) his interest was focused more on mining, metallurgy and intensive schemes of husbandry, starting with *Macaria*, he became interested in other industries such as the application of chemistry to such diverse operations as the preparation of medicines.²⁸

A Description of the Famous Kingdome of Macaria

Macaria is a very short text, for a long time considered a work by Samuel Hartlib, on the basis of its clear connection with Hartlib’s circle and because Hartlib was the one who brought it out and addressed the Parliament. In the early 1640s, the position and the role of the Parliament became more important than ever before in England. Therefore we are told in *Macaria* that the Long Parliament was “generally bent to make a good reformation”. This kind of statement is easier to understand if we take into account the importance and impact of millenarian ideas in the 1640s: in this intellectual context, the Parliament was seen as the embodiment of an entire generation believing that England was the chosen place for God’s Kingdom on Earth. Such hopes found support in the particular political context: in 1640 the relation between king and Parliament reached a new stage. Due to the fact that Charles I ruled as an absolute monarch and following the disastrous outcome of the Bishops’ War, the Parliament gained political strength and it seemed to be the only governmental institution acting like a magnet of social dreams.²⁹ The Parliament was considered to be not only the governmental institution representing the nation, but also the substitute of the nation, each extension of the power of parliament reflecting the special providential status of the nation.³⁰

Thus, when Charles I convened the Long Parliament in November 1640, there was a shift of authority from the king to the Parliament and the Parliament was called to represent, rather than the king, the people’s safety. The rhetoric of texts addressed to the Parliament, in sermons and other kind of discourses, had changed as well. A large majority of such texts were considering the Parliament as an agent for the future reformation and transformation of the society. It seemed that in this new capacity, the Parliament made itself open to external influences and, for individuals and groups of individuals, the new situation offered a real opportunity to influence changes in policy, doctrine and law. Discourses and words gained an unprecedented power because it was expected for them to have a direct impact and to influence the Parliament’s position toward certain issues in English society. This was the spirit of meliorism, a spirit which created an atmosphere of direct participation to the transformation of the world. This is the reason why so many utopian texts of the

1640s were addressed directly to the Parliament. There was a tacit assumption about the willingness of the Parliament to proceed to a general reformation of the commonwealth. As a result, tracts dedicated to the Parliament used a special language: the language of the amelioration of the nation.

Another important fact that should not be disregarded is *Macaria*'s publication in the context of Comenius' visit to England.³¹ Hartlib's plans were to promote in the Parliament a project for a true Baconian College and *Macaria* seemed to be the perfect manner to draw attention to the project. Comenius, a famous religious reformer and a Baconian, seemed to have been another key element in Hartlib's project.

On the other hand, Comenius wrote *Via Lucis* in 1641 (he visited England on Hartlib's invitation after the Long Parliament had convened, being convinced that the time for reformation had come) and finished it in 1642, so there was a clear connection between the two events. The Parliament seemed so open to ideas of reformation and, as has been pointed out before, words gained increasing power in the context of a change in the political language of and in dialogue with the Parliament. The projects of reforming the society were concerned with topics such as universal education (*Via Lucis* proposed a universal college, universal books, universal schools and a universal language; Comenius made clear that *pansophia* was a plan to spread the light of knowledge to all people), husbandry, the improvement of lands, general wealth – topics very much discussed within the Hartlib circle. And, like other writings of the Hartlib circle, *Macaria* presents a solution which is at hand and not so difficult to put into practice. It only depended on the Parliament, seen as an agent for future reformation, to start and to enhance the reformation. When the Long Parliament opened its sessions on the 25th of October 1641, Hartlib, in an attempt to influence the Parliament's attitude and decision, brought out the practical utopian work *Macaria*.

Plattes was well aware of the fact that if reformation was to be successful, people should be the means and the ends of this project. Enriching the nation as an ideal, could only have been achieved if people became themselves involved and followed the economic principles. And husbandry was placed at the very core of this new foundation. Husbandry, regarded as an experimental science able to ensure abilities in treating plants, was able not just "to heal" the land, but also to ensure "the healing" of the fallen human being. Good measures of husbandry of the land and good measures of husbandry of the soul are able to ameliorate the economic state of the nation and also to restore the human condition held prior to Fall. In describing the way a good society should work, Plattes used the metaphor of the hive. The image of industrious bees working together, resembling of the one used by Bacon in the *Advancement of Learning*, is the image of people working together for the public good.³² People shouldn't work only for the sake of their private interests, but they should work, like the bees, for the community's sake, for the public good.³³ The important thing about Plattes is that, in all his works, besides giving practical advice for husbandry, mining and alchemy, he developed an interesting and elaborate concept of the public good based on social distribution. Plattes seems to be one of the first authors speaking about a project of public works, such as bridges and highways accomplished by individual contributions. From an economic point of view, his ideas

were visionary. Considering husbandry as the firm basis for a strong and well developed economy, he advocated a system of progressive taxation for those who failed to improve their lands. He also considered that emphasizing the importance of husbandry is the most suitable manner to provide employment and to fulfill the wider task of enriching the nation.

Macaria does not have a ‘story’ per se. It is written as a dialogue between a “Schollar” and a “Traveler”, a philosophical dialogue reminding one of Campanella’s *Civitas Solis* (1605). In terms of language, Plattes does not use the direct method of providing advice in the dialogue, but the indirect method of providing images, a kind of “moving picture” as Appelbaum says.³⁴ The moving picture reminds of theatrical performance and may well be a method used by Plattes, as well as by Bacon in *New Atlantis*, for emphasizing the theatrical character of the story. The mystery created in a theatrical play is an important ingredient in the process of telling and revealing the story. Dana Jalobeanu has discussed the relevance of this theatrical character of *New Atlantis*. Jalobeanu argues that Bacon used similar methods in *New Atlantis*, exploiting powerful images but also hinting to the importance of creating illusions.³⁵ Donna Coffey also argued that *New Atlantis* has a number of important elements characteristic for the ‘masks’ in the seventeenth century, i.e. elaborated shows containing elements of the theatre (characters, speeches), dance and costume-balls, music etc. Coffey discusses one of the central episodes of *New Atlantis*, the miraculous Christianization of Bensalem as one such episode of a ‘mask’. The miracle appears as a show to most of the Bensalemians; they watch the miracle ‘as in a theatre’.³⁶

Unlike Bacon’s *New Atlantis*, Plattes’ *Macaria* depicts a kind of societal model that seems to be within the reach of the reformers. Emphasizing the central reform proposals and trying to relate his work to other reformation tracts in circulation at the time, the author made *Macaria* as brief as possible, and literary embellishments were reduced to a minimum. Plattes’ dialogue speaks about an ideal organization which seems more than possible and even relatively easy to achieve. In Plattes’ commonwealth there are no fundamental changes, but a better administration of the government. Plattes emphasizes the importance of economic specialization in governance, and of a new way of disseminating knowledge. The author called for five councils to improve the administration of government: one for husbandry, one for fishing, one for internal trade, one for foreign trade, and one for new colonies.

Apart from his economic solutions, Plattes is also an advocate of universal peace. Plattes is, in fact, one of the first authors who argued for the uselessness of war and the importance of rational husbandry and of a social distribution model as methods for combating poverty and encouraging welfare.³⁷

From a political point of view, *Macaria* is governed by an elite, the “Great Council” like the Parliament in England. Except for matters of warfare, where the king still has an important role to play, the king’s responsibilities are reduced. The Great Council has, in fact, control over government in *Macaria* and over the five sub-councils which are in charge with the prosperity of the kingdom. Plattes proposed permanent parliamentary committees, in what is probably the first project of this kind.

Considering knowledge as the first condition for prosperity and wealth, Plattes imagined a ‘College of Experience’, a research institution, reminiscent of

Solomon's House in *New Atlantis* and the experimental laboratories in *Christianopolis*.³⁸ In the mid seventeenth century, for Hartlib, it was clear that a new system of learning has been required. Hartlib has been deeply convinced of the need for an experimental college and he was closely connected with the Invisible College of London which began meeting in 1640s.³⁹ Influenced in a great deal by Hartlib and by the Baconianism of the Circle, Plattes proposed a college whose major tasks were to gather material for knowledge and to adopt practical solutions. Thus, the College of Experience's first task is to oversee the dissemination of learning and knowledge in the kingdom. The advancement of learning and the development of science have to be parts of an elaborate policy. Science and technology are so important for the progress that government has to elaborate political strategies regarding these matters. It is very possible for *Macaria* to envisage a first attempt of the Hartlib Circle in order to try to establish the Baconian reformation of the state through the means of natural philosophy.

'The College' also supervises the training of parsons who are medical doctors, too, looking after the sanity of both body and spirit, *cura animarum et cura corporum*. This is a very original interpretation of the Baconian project of Solomon's House. For Bacon, the members of Solomon's House are not simply philosophers of nature, their role is also of teachers and doctors as well, diagnosing the illnesses and providing medicines for the intellect.⁴⁰ The main function of Solomon's House is to relate the natural and the divine knowledge, and this function is rediscovered inside the 'College of Experience'. The Paracelsian tradition of medicine could be discovered in the practice of the College. The members of the 'College of Experience' make experiments with new medicines and new treatments and apply them to the inhabitants of *Macaria*, but also cure their souls. Divine medicine⁴¹ is a type of new medicine based on chemical knowledge benefitting, at the same time, from the true understanding of the God's work. Abilities in treating plants are the same abilities needed to heal the body and soul; good measures of husbandry of the land are also capable to provide rules and principles for the husbandry of the soul. He believed that clergymen should take an active part in secular affairs. One of the outstanding aspects of *Macaria* is the author's determination to put responsibility in the hands of the state and the clergy should have provided an excellent basis for a national medical service. The parsons should administer medicine in the course of pastoral duties, in *A Caveat for Alchymists* proposing that the overseer for the poor (the parson) should teach them improved techniques of agriculture. The sanity of the body and soul is very well connected to the idea of the husbandry. Good measures of husbandry of the land will provide cure for the body and soul, thus restoring the conditions prior to Fall.

The citizens of *Macaria* apply the new science and technology for the improvement of the wealth of the nation, under the supervision of the College. Plattes, like Bacon, imagined an establishment with a double function: first, as an institution of the state (emphasizing the importance of knowledge which deserves to be state patronized) and second, as an institution of experimental investigation. "The College of Experience was probably conceived as a counterpart to the Universal College which Comenius hoped to establish according to a plan outlined in *Via Lucis*. Whereas Plattes' college was basically to be concerned with husbandry, technology,

medicine, science, and economic affairs, the Universal College of Comenius was designed to superintend the work of ecclesiastical negotiation, universal peace, the reform of education and universal knowledge, the purification of language, and the compilation of a pansophic system of knowledge.⁴²

Conclusion

Gabriel Plattes proposed a new type of husbandry, a type of new and 'integrated' science able to treat and ameliorate as well plants and human soul. The new husbandry is based on a series of technologies intending to transform nature, to 'mix', to work within Creation. Plattes started to present his schemes of husbandry and technological advancement in *A Discovery of Subterranean Treasure* and in *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*. Remaining confident to his ideas, in *Macaria*, Plattes depicted a type of perfect society able to put into practice the methods earlier expressed. Proper methods of husbandry were considered able not just to 'heal' the land but also the fallen human being. Webster⁴³ claims that Plattes hasn't made any reference to educational reform in *Macaria* but I would suggest that we can credit Plattes for introducing some educational reformation elements. The pansophical pedagogy proposed in *Macaria* involves a new type of learning and a new type of science which can connect alchemical tradition, natural philosophy and divine revelation. The idea of parsons-medical doctors contains in itself the idea of educational reform. Their main function is to cure the body and soul using a special pedagogy based on medical and philosophical remedies. The parsons should administer medicine in the course of pastoral duties, curing them of vices, planting virtues and teaching (using a new pedagogy based on the principles of good husbandry) how to cultivate them. I would say that in *Macaria*, Plattes went beyond his predecessors claiming that state institutions should be actively involved in this mission, being credited to play a crucial role in the pansophical reformation of the individual, the church and the state. *Macaria* was addressed to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament aiming to bring attention to reform projects regarding politics, religion, economic development, and education, projects developed within the Hartlib Circle by people like John Amos Comenius, John Dury and the inventor Gabriel Plattes. In *The Profitable Intelligencer*, he proposed a Council of Husbandry composed of experienced practitioners, while in *A Caveat for Alchymists* he manifested his intention to speak in the front of Parliament about his propositions of establishing a Laboratory where to test his new inventions and methods.

Appendix⁴⁴

A DESCRIPTION⁴⁵ OF THE FAMOUS
KINGDOME OF MACARIA;⁴⁶
SHEWING ITS EXCELLENT GOVERNMENT:
WHEREIN

The Inhabitants live in great
Prosperity, Health, and Happinesse; the
King obeyed, the Nobles honoured; and

all good men respected, Vice punished,
and vertue rewarded.
An Example to other Nations.
In a Dialogue between a Schollar and a Traveller.

LONDON,
Printed for Francis Constable,⁴⁷ Anno 1641.

TO THE HIGH AND HONOURABLE
COURT OF PARLIAMENT.⁴⁸

Whereas I am confident, that this Honourable Court will lay the Corner Stone of the worlds happinesse⁴⁹ before the final recesses thereof, I have adventured to cast in my widowes mite into the Treasurie, not as an Instructor, or Counsellour, to this Honourable Assembly, but have delivered my conceptions in a Fiction, as a more mannerly way, having for my pattern Sir Thomas Moore, and Sir Francis Bacon once Lord Chancellour of England; and humbly desire that this honourable Assembly will be pleased to make use of any thing therein contained, if it may stand with their pleasures, and to laugh at the rest, as a solace to my minde, being enclined to doe good to the publick.⁵⁰ So humbly craving leave, that I may take my leave, I rest this 25. October 1641.⁵¹

A DESCRIPTION OF THE FAMOUS
KINGDOME OF MACARIA.
SHEWING
ITS EXCELLENT GOVERNMENT

Traveller.

Well met sir, your habit professes Scholarship, are you a Graduate?

Schollar.

Yes sir, I am a Master of Arts.

Trav. But what doe you heare in the Exchange;⁵² I conceive you trade in knowledge,⁵³ and here is no place to traffick for it; neither in the book of rates is there any imposition upon such commodities: so that you have no great businesse either here or at the Custome-house. Come let us goe into the fields, I am a Traveller, and can tell you strange newes,⁵⁴ and much knowledge, and I have brought it over the sea without paying any Custome, though it bee worth all the merchandize in the kingdome.⁵⁵

Schol. We Scholars love to heare news, and to learne knowledge, I will wait upon you, goe whither you will.

Trav. Well, we will goe into Moore fields, and take a turne or two, there we shall be out of this noise, and throng of people.⁵⁶

Sch. Agreed, but as we goe, what good newes doe you heare of the Parliament?⁵⁷

Trav. I heare that they are generally bent to make good reformation,⁵⁸ but that they have some stops and hinderances,⁵⁹ so that they cannot make such quick dispatch as

they would; and if any experience which I have learned in my long travels, may stand them in stead, I would willingly impart it for the publick good.⁶⁰

Sch. I like that well, I pray you declare some good experience, that I may say that I have gained some thing by the company of Travellers.⁶¹

Trav. In a Kingdome called *Macaria*, the King and the Governours doe live in great honour and riches, and the people doe live in great plenty, prosperitie, health, peace, and happinesse, and have not halfe so much trouble as they have in these European Countreyes.⁶²

Sch. That seemeth to me impossible:⁶³ you Travellers must take heed of two things principally in your relations; first, that you say nothing that is generally deemed impossible. Secondly, that your relation hath no contradiction in it, or else all men will think that you make use of the Travellers priviledge, to wit, to lie by authority.

Trav. If I could change all the minds in England as easily as I suppose I shall change yours, this Kingdome would be presently like to it: when you heare the manner of their government, you will deeme it to be very possible, and withal very easie.

Sch. I pray you sir declare the manner of their government, for I think long till I heare it.

Trav. As for my brevitie in discourse, I shall answer your desire. They have a Great Councell like to the Parliament in England, but it sitteth once a yeer for a short space,⁶⁴ and they heare no complaints against any but Ministers of State,⁶⁵ Judges, and Officers; those they trounce soundly, if there be cause: Besides, they have five under Councils; to wit,⁶⁶

A Councell of Husbandry.⁶⁷

A Councell of Fishing.

A Councell of Trade by Land.

A Councell of Trade by Sea.

A Councell for new Plantations.⁶⁸

These sit once a yeere for a very short space, and have power to heare and determine, and to punish Malefactors severely, and to reward Benefactors honourable, and to make new lawes, not repugnant to the lawes of the Great Councell; for the whole Kingdome, like as Court Leets, and Corporations have within their owne Precincts and Liberties in England.

Sch. I pray you sir declare some of the principall Lawes made by those under Councils.

Trav. The Councell of Husbandry hath ordered, that the twentieth part of every mans goods that dieth shall be employed about the improving of lands, and making of High-ways faire, bridges over Rivers; by which meanes the whole Kingdome is become like to a fruitfull Garden, the High-ways are paved, and as faire as the streets of a Citie; and as for Bridges over Rivers, they are so high, that none are ever drowned in their travels.⁶⁹

Also they have established a law, that if any man holdeth more land than he is able to improve to the utmost, he shall be admonished, first, of the great hinderance which it doth to the Common-wealth. Secondly, of the prejudice to himselfe; and if hee doe not amend his Husbandry within a yeares space, there is a penalty set upon

him, which is yeerely doubled, till his lands be forfeited, and he banished out of the Kingdome, as an enemy to the common-wealth.⁷⁰

In the Councill of Fishing there are lawes established, whereby immense riches are yearly drawne out of the Ocean.

In the Councill of trade by Land there are established Lawes, so that there are not too many Tradesmen, nor too few, by enjoyning longer or shorter times of Apprentiships.

In the Councill of Trade by Sea there is established a law, that Traffick is lawfull which may enrich the Kingdome.

In the Councill for new Plantations there is established a law, that every yeere a certaine number shall be sent out, strongly fortified, and provided for at the publike charge, till such times as they may subsist by their owne endeavours: and this number is set downe by the said Councill, wherein they take diligent notice of the surplusage of people that may be spared.⁷¹

Sch. But you spoke of peace to be permanent in that Kingdome, how can that be?⁷²

Trav. Very easily; for they have a law, that if any Prince shall attempt any invasion, his kingdome shall be lawfull prize: and the Inhabitants of this happy Countrey are so numerous, strong, and rich, that they have destroyed some without any considerable resistance; and the rest take warning.⁷³

Sch. But you spoke of health, how can that be procured by a better way than wee have here in England?

Trav. Yes very easily; for they have an house, or College of experience,⁷⁴ where they deliver out yeerly such medicines as they find out by experience; and all such as shall be able to demonstrate any experiment for the health or wealth of men, are honourably rewarded at the publike charge, by which their skill in Husbandry, Physick, and Surgerie, is most excellent.

Sch. But this is against Physicians.⁷⁵

Trav. In *Macaria* the Parson of every Parish is a good Physician, and doth execute both functions, to wit, *cura animarum*, & *cura corporum*;⁷⁶ and they think it as absurd for a Divine to be without the skill of Physick, as it is to put new wine into old bottles; and the Physicians being true Naturalists, may as well become good Divines, as the Divines doe become good Physicians.

Sch. But you spoke of great facilitie that these men have in their functions, how can that be?

Trav. Very easily: for the Divines, by reason that the Societie of Experimenters is liable to an action, if they shall deliver out any false receipt,⁷⁷ are not troubled to trie conclusions, or experiments, but onely to consider of the deversitie of natures, complexions and constitutions, which they are to know, for the cure of soules, as well as for bodies.⁷⁸

Sch. I know divers Divines in England that are Physicians, and therefore I hold well with this report, and I would that all were such, for they have great estimation with the people, and can rule them at their pleasure?

Sch. But how cometh the facilitie of becoming good Diviners?

Trav. They are all of approved abilitie in human learning, before they take in hand that function, and then they have such rules, that they need no considerable studie to

accomplish all knowledge fit for Divines, by reason that there are no diversitie of opinions amongst them.⁷⁹

Sch. How can that be?

Trav. Very easily; for they have a law, that if any Divine shall publish a new opinion to the Common people, he shall be accounted a disturber of the publick peace, and shall suffer death for it.⁸⁰

Sch. But that is the way to keep them in error perpetually, if they be once in it.

Trav. You are deceived; for if any one hath conceived a new opinion, he is allowed everie yeere freely to dispute it before the Great Councell;⁸¹ if he overcome his Adversaries, or such as are appointed to be Opponents, then it is generally received for truth, if he be overcome, then it is declared to be false.

Sch. It seemeth that they are Christians by your relation to the Parochiall Ministers, but whether are they Protestants or Papists?⁸²

Trav. Their Religion consists not in taking notice of severall opinions and sects but is made up of infallible tenets, which may be proved by invincible arguments, and such as will abide the grand test of extreme dispute;⁸³ by which meanes none have power to stirre up Schismes and Heresies; neither are any of their opinions ridiculous to those who are of contrarie minds.

Sch. But you spoke of great honour which the Governours have in the Kingdome of *Macaria*.

Trav. They must needs receive great honour of the people, by reason that there is no injustice done, or very seldome, perhaps once in an age.

Sch. But how come they by their great riches which you speak of?

Trav. It is holden a principall policie in State to allow to the ministers of State, Judges, and cheife Officers, great revenues; for that, in case they doe not their dutie, in looking to the Kingdomes safety, for conscience sake, yet they may doe it for feare of loosing their own great Estates.

Sch. But how can the King of *Macaria* be so rich as you speak of?

Trav. He taketh a strict course that all his Crown lands be improved to the utmost, as Forrests, Parkes, Chases, &c. by which meanes his revenues are so great, that hee seldome needeth to put impositions upon his Subjects, by reason hee hath seldome any warres; and if there bee cause, the Subjects are as ready to give, as hee to demand: for they hold it to bee a principall policie in State, to keep the Kings Coffers full, and so full, that it is an astonishment to all Invaders.⁸⁴

Sch. But how cometh the King great honour which you speak of?

Trav. Who can but love and honour such a Prince, which in his tender and parentall care of the publick good of his loving Subjects, useth no pretences for realities, like to some Princes, in their Acts of State, Edicts, and Proclamations.

Sch. But you Travellers must take heed of contradictions in your relations; you have affirmed, that the Governours in *Macaria* have not halfe so much trouble, as they have in these European Kingdomes, and yet by your report they have a Great Councell, like to our Parliament in England, which sit once a yeare: besides that, they have five Under Councels, which sit once a yeare, then how commeth this facility in government?

Trav. The Great Councell heareth no complaints, but against Ministers of State, Judges, and chiefe Officers; these, being sure to bee trounced once a yeare, doe never, or very seldome offend: So that their meeting is rather a festivity, than a trouble. And as for the Judges and chiefe Officers, there is no hope that any man can prevaile in his suit by bribery, favour, or corrupt dealing; so that they have few causes to be troubled withal.

Sch. I have read over Sr. *Thomas Mores Utopia*, and my Lord *Bacons New Atlantis*, which hee called so in imitation of *Plato's* old one, but none of them giveth me satisfaction, how the Kingdome of England may be happy,⁸⁵ so much as this discourse, which is briefe and pithy, and easie to be effected, if all men be willing.⁸⁶

Trav. You Divines have the sway of mens minds, you may as easily perswade them to good as to bad, to truth as well as to falshood.⁸⁷

Sch. Well, in my next Sermon I will make it manifest, that those that are against this honourable designe, are first, enimies to God and goodnesse; secondly, enimies to the Common wealth; thirdly, enimies to themselves, and their posterity.

Trav. And you may put in, that they are enemies to the King, and to his posterity, and so consequently, traitors: for hee that would not have the Kings honour, and riches to be advanced, and his Kingdome to bee permanent to him, and to his heires, is a traitor, or else I know not what treason meaneth.

Sch. Well, I see that the cause is not in God, but in mens fooleries, that the people live in misery in this world, when they may so easily bee relieved: I will joyne my forces with you, and wee will try a conclusion, to make our selves and posterity to bee happy.

Trav. Well, what will you doe towards the worke?

Sch. I have told you before, I will publish it in my next Sermon, and I will use meanes that in all Visitations and meetings of Divines, they may bee exhorted to doe the like.⁸⁸

Trav. This would doe the feat, but that the Divines in England, having not the skill of Physick, are not so highly esteemed, nor beare so great a sway as they doe in *Macaria*.

Sch. Well, what will you doe toward the worke?

Trav. I will propound a book of Husbandry to the high Court of Parliament,⁸⁹ whereby the Kingdome may maintaine double the number of people, which it doth now, and in more plenty and prosperity, than now they enjoy.

Sch. That is excellent: I cannot conceive, but that if a Kingdome may be improved to maintaine twice as many people as it did before, it is as good as the conquest of another Kingdome, as great, if not better.

Trav. Nay, it is certainly better, for when the Townes are thin, and farre distant, and the people scarce and poore, the King cannot raise men and money upon any sudden occasion, without great difficulty.⁹⁰

Sch. Have you a copy of that booke of Husbandry about you, which is to bee propounded to the Parliament?

Trav. Yes, here is a copy, peruse it, whilst I goe about a little businesse, and I will presently returne to you. Well, have you perused my book?

Sch. Yes Sir: and finde that you shew the transmutation of sublunary bodies, in such manner, that any man may be rich that will be industrious;⁹¹ you shew also, how great cities, which formerly devoured the fatnesse of the Kingdome, may yearly make a

considerable retribution without any mans prejudice, and yours demonstrations are infallible; this booke will certainly be highly accepted by the high Court of Parliament.

Trav. Yes, I doubt it not; for I have shewed it to divers Parliament men, who have all promised mee faire, so soone as the seasonable time commeth for such occasions.⁹²

Sch. Were I a Parliament man, I would labour to have this book to bee dispatched, the next thing that is done; for with all my seven Liberall Arts I cannot discover, how any businesse can bee of more weight than this, wherein the publike good is so greatly furthered; which to further, we are all bound by the law of God, and Nature.

Trav. It this conference bee seriously considered of, it is no laughing matter, for you heare of the combustions in France, Spaine, Germanie, and other Christian Countreys; you know that a house divided against it selfe cannot stand: This may give the Turke an advantage, so that England may feare to have him a nearer neighbour than they desire. Why should not all the inhabitants of England joyne with one consent, to make this contrey to bee like to *Macaria*, that is numerous in people, rich in treasure and munition, that so they may bee invincible?

Sch. None but fooles or mad men will be against it: you have changed my minde, according to your former prediction, and I will change as many minds as I can, by the waies formerly mentioned, and I pray you, that for a further means, this Conference may be printed.

Trav. Well, it shall be done forth with.

Sch. But one thing troubleth me, that many Diviners are of opinion, that no such Reformation as we would have, shall come before the day of judgement.⁹³

Trav. Indeed there are many Diviners of that opinion, but I can shew an hundred Texts of Scripture, which doe plainly prove, that such a Reformation shall come before the day of judgement.

Sch. Yes, I have read many plaine Texts of Scipture to that purpose, but when I searched the Expositors, I found that they did generally expound them mystically.⁹⁴

Trav. That is true; but worthy St. *Hierome*,⁹⁵ considering that those places of Scripture would not beare an Allegorical exposition, said thus, *Rossymus ficut&multi alii Omnia bec spiritualiter exponere, sed vereor, ne hujusmodi expositionem, prudentes lectores, nequaquam recipiant.*⁹⁶

Sch. I am of St. *Hierom*'s minde, and therefore with alacrity let us pursue our good intentions, and bee good instruments in this worke of Reformation.⁹⁷

Trav. There be natural cause also to further it; for the Art of Printing will so spread knowledge, that the common people, knowing their own rights and liberties, will not be governed by way of oppression; and so, by little and little, all Kingdomes will be like to *Macaria*.⁹⁸

Sch. That will bee a good change, when as well superiors as inferiors shall bee more happy: Well, I am imparadised in my minde, in thinking that England may bee made happy, with such expedition and facility.⁹⁹

Trav. Well, doe you know any man that hath any secrets, or good experiments? I will give him gold for them, or others as good in exchange; that is all the trade I have driven a long time, those riches are free from Customes and Impositions, and I have travelled through many Kingdomes, and paid neither freight nor Custome for my wards, though I valued them above all the riches in the Kingdome.

Sch. I know a Gentleman that is greatly addicted to try experiments, but how hee hath prospered I am not certaine; I will bring you acquainted with him, perhaps you may doe one another good.¹⁰⁰

Trav. Well, I have appointed a meeting at two of the clock this day; I love to discourse with Scholars, yet wee must part; if you meet mee here the next Munday at the Exchange, I will declare to you some more of the Lawes, Customes, and manners of the inhabitants of *Macaria*.

Sch. I will not faile to meet you for any worldly respect; and if I should bee sicke, I would come in a Sedan: I never received such satisfaction and contentment by any discourse in my life: I doubt not but wee shall obtaine our desires, to make England to bee like to *Macaria*; for which our posterity which are yet unborne, will fare the better: and though our neighbor Countreys are pleased to call the English a dull Nation, yet the major part are sensible of their owne good, and the good of their posterity, and those will sway the rest; so wee and our posterity shall bee all happie.

FINIS

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- ¹⁹ A. Low, *The Georgic Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 142.

²⁰ Bacon also considers that there are no limits in the process of the study of nature. “My next, that in flying from this evil they fall not into the opposite error, which they will surely do if they think that the inquisition of nature is in any part interdicted or forbidden. For it was not that pure and uncorrupted natural knowledge whereby Adam gave names to the creatures according to their propriety, which gave occasion to the Fall.” Bacon, F., *Great Instauration*, Preface, SEH, IV, 20.

²¹ See F. Bacon, the Preface to *Instauratio Magna and Distribution Operis*.

²² A. McRae, ‘Husbandry Manuals and the Language of Agrarian Improvement’, in M. Leslie and T. Raylor, (1992), 35.

²³ For instance when the fertilizing properties of nitre had been discovered, members of Hartlib Circle started to use nitre as a medicine for prolongation of life.

²⁴ Otten, Ch. F., *Environ'd with Eternity: God, Poems, and Plants in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (Kansas: Lawrence, 1985), 37.

²⁵ Webster, Ch., (1975), 506-7.

²⁶ Plattes, G., *A Discovery of Subterranean Treasure* (London, 1639), The Epistle Dedicatory, B1.

²⁷ Plattes, G., *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* (London, 1639), The Epistle Dedicatory, A3, and also p. 28: “And if men should spend their spare time in planting, grafting, and improving their land, which now they loose; judging it as good to play, as to worke for another, it would make an excellent mutation in Husbandry in an age or two, and very profitable for the generall good of the posteritie.”

²⁸ Plattes, G., *A Description of the Famous Kingdome of Macaria* (London, 1641), HP, PAM 07.

²⁹ Appelbaum, R., (2002), 113.

³⁰ Greengrass, M., Leslie, M., Raylor, T., *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation. Studies in intellectual communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 10; Webster, Ch., (1975), 47, 506-7.

³¹ According to HP, *Introduction*, Comenius arrived in London on September, 21, 1641 and he stayed for nine months.

³² Although both Bacon and Plattes use the metaphor of the hive to depict types of industrious societies living in peace and prosperity, their political opinions might be rather different. While Bacon could have not imagined a kingdom without a king in its superior political position, *Macaria* seems to describe a political organization where the king's position is not that powerful. Bacon, F., *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. M. Kiernan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), book II, 56.

³³ See also Plattes, G., *The Profitable Intelligencer*, (London, 1644, HP, PAM 17), sig. A1-v; *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, C2-v2. Hartlib and the members of his Circle saw in the pious industry and good husbandry of the bees a natural analogue for their own public spirited endeavors and in the discipline and full employment of the hive an image of the godly commonwealth they were trying to establish. Samuel Hartlib published in 1655 *The Reformed Common-Wealth of Bees*, Timothy Raylor arguing that the beekeeping scheme represents a clear line of continuity between the Hartlib Circle and the Royal Society, adding further weight to the claims made by Turnbull and Webster for the influence of hartlibian ideals, methods and personnel on the new institution. See T. Raylor, ‘Samuel Hartlib and the Commonwealth of Bees’ in M. Leslie, T. Raylor, (1992), 116; Turnbull, G.H., ‘Samuel Hartlib's influence on the early history of the Royal Society’, *Notes and records of the Royal Society*, 10 (1953): 101-30; Webster, Ch., (1975), 88-99.

³⁴ Appelbaum, R., (2002), 123.

³⁵ Jalobeanu D., Introductory study to Bacon, F., *Nona Atlantida*, trans. D. Jalobeanu (Bucuresti: Nemira, 2007), 13.

³⁶ Coffey, D., 'As in a theatre: scientific spectacle in Bacon's *New Atlantis*', *Science as Culture* 13 (2004), 259-290.

³⁷ More also argued in *Utopia* that, from an economic point of view, war is not a good instrument and that maintaining an active army wastes money. See More, Th., *Utopia*, ed. G. M. Logan, R.M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 [1989; 2002]), 16-17. There might be also a very interesting allusion to Grotius's theory about the law of nature and war (*De iure belli ac pacis* was published in 1625), an idea earlier expressed in *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, B2.

³⁸ The utopian framework has been used by Andreae as to point to the importance of introducing chemical philosophy into the traditional curriculum. In *Christianopolis* Andreae deplores the decay of learning and religion and suggests that a proper community of scholars be formed, able to derive their knowledge directly from the book of nature. Andreae, J.V., *Christianopolis, An Ideal State of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. with an historical introduction by F. E. Held (New York: Oxford University Press, 1916).

³⁹ See also the Chelsea College project.

⁴⁰ Less explored, the Baconian image of the philosopher-doctor, providing medicine for the diseased human mind in the process of restoration, is developed in *Novum Organum*. See *The Instauration Magna Part II: Novum Organum and related texts*, ed. G. Rees and M. Wakley (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2000. For the Baconian philosopher doctor of the soul see Jalobeanu, D., 'Experimental philosophers and doctors of the mind: the appropriation of a philosophical tradition', in *Naturel et surnaturel en XVIIeme siècle*, ed. V Alexandrescu, R. Theis (Hildesheim, Zurich, New York: Olms, 2010), 45; Giglioni, G., "The Material Foundations of Francis Bacon's Utopia", *Studii de Știință și Cultură* 23 (2010): 9-17.

⁴¹ Debus considers that the College of Experience in *Macaria* points out the divine nature of medicine as a connection to the Paracelsian tradition of alchemy. Debus, A.G., *The Chemical Philosophy. Paracelsian Science and Medicine in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Science History Publications, a division of Neale Watson Academic Publications, 1977), 388-9.

⁴² Webster, Ch., (1079a), 31-32.

⁴³ Webster, Ch., (1974): 36.

⁴⁴ The text has been transcribed as accurately as possible, eccentricities of spelling having been left intact.

⁴⁵ The title is inspired by the former utopias of More, *De optimo republicae statu deque nova insula Utopia* (London, 1518), Andreae, *Respublicae Christianopolitanae Descriptio* (Strasbourg, 1619), George Abott, *A brief description of the whole world*, (London, 1599).

⁴⁶ In Greek μαχαρία, perhaps the Blessed Isles of Greek myth. More also talks about *macarians*, a people who, in spite of the *achorians*, lives near the *utopians* and lives in peace and happiness due to their wise form of governance. See More, Th., *Utopia*, ed. G.M. Logan, R.M. Adams (2003), 34.

⁴⁷ One of the printers registered that time in London. Dickson considers that "Hartlib probably gave the work its patina of traditional literary utopianism, while the practical ideas are very similar to Plattes' other writings. When Plattes died in 1644, Hartlib lost his main expert on technology and, consequently, the hopes for a utopian 'College of Experience' were dashed". See Dickson, D.R., (1998), 168.

⁴⁸ The Long Parliament convened in October 1641 (Charles I had to re-convene the parliament in the context of the Irish Rebellion after an episode when his party was defeated). There was general hope that the Parliament was willing to reform things in England. Samuel Hartlib, by directly addressing *Macaria* to the Parliament, was aiming, in fact, to bring into attention other reform projects regarding politics and religion, projects developed within a group of numerous intellectuals. Among other names associated with that group, John Dury, Jan Amos Comenius

can be recalled, but also inventors like Gabriel Plattes. See Webster, Ch., (1979a); Dickson, D.R., (1998); Trevor Roper, H., (1984).

⁴⁹ The utopian ethos, to show others the meaning and the purposes of a happy life and also to make them understand how such a life can be achieved. See Appelbaum, R., (2002), 120.

⁵⁰ The acknowledgment means that Plattes is aware of the privileged position of the Parliament as a direct agent in the process of the reformation of the world. In *A Caveat for Alchemists* he expresses his intention to speak in front of the Parliament, pointing again to the idea of privileged and key position owned by this institution in the process of reformation (p. 81, 83, 87). Also, Appelbaum considers that “one cannot simply tell Parliament what to do, but had to provide a model, a kind of moving picture.” See Appelbaum, R., (2002), 123. Webster considers that the utopian framework was perfectly suitable for promoting practical advices in the context of millenarian expectation of the New Kingdome of God on earth and Plattes used it as a tool for expressing policies designed ‘to doe good to the publick.’ See Webster, Ch., (1979a), 4; (1975), 8, 15, 27, 30, 50-1, 359, 384. The utopian texts written during the mid-seventeenth century look more like well-developed programs of social and political action than fictional stories, emphasizing the material aspect of the future prosperity, proposing certain measures of ameliorating the nation and considering labor and industry the solution for the social, political and moral issues facing the English society. A Boesky classifies this new fictional form as ‘utopia of industry’, *Macaria* belonging to this type of literature. See Boesky, A., *Founding Fictions: Utopias in Early Modern England* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 89-91.

⁵¹ The date is important because it is exactly the same date when the Parliament was re-convened, which is to say that *Macaria* was either written or published in a certain political context, with the expectation that it would receive a specific answer (as was the case with other tracts and reforming projects written in the Hartlib circle).

⁵² The Royal Exchange was an important meeting place for diverse figures. It was a place for making business and also for learning interesting news.

⁵³ The Traveler is a merchant of light, his business is ‘light’ or knowledge. The merchants of lights are characters in Bacon’s *New Atlantis*, but contrary to the Baconian knowledge trade, this trade is made here for free, pointing to the open nature of the transmission of knowledge.

⁵⁴ “The new science” is very interested in curious and strange things (pointing to the Renaissance tradition of natural magic). In *Sylva Sylvarum* Bacon puts together various experiments, among which alchemical and transmutation experiments. Plattes himself in *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* seems to be concerned with curious experiments. Debus considers that Plattes’ methodological principles has been expressed in accordance with Bacon’s experimental philosophy, conducting experimental studies in refining metals and proposing theories to explain geological phenomena (see A.G. Debus, ‘Gabriel Plattes and his Chemical Theory for the Formation of the Earth’s Crust’, *Ambix*, IX (1961):162-5). In fact, transmutation, mining, metallurgy, and chemistry were regarded as subsidiary long term objectives while the immediate objective was to elaborate proper methods of ameliorating the nation.

⁵⁵ The importance of knowledge which seems to deserve all the treasures in the kingdom. The fact that the merchants of lights do not have to pay any tax “upon such a commodities”, and “the book of rates” does not contain any “imposition”, can also point to the importance of the reformation of knowledge as state policy. State patronage is mandatory, emphasizing again the idea in accordance to which knowledge can be made accessible to everyone only by direct implication of the state in the process of supervision and dissemination of the results of knowledge. See also Webster, Ch., (1975), 48.

⁵⁶ The process of transmitting knowledge can be successfully pursued in open spaces. E.g. the Akademos garden, the space outside the city of Athens in Plato's *Republic*. Moorefields place symbolizes nature's silence and peace in contrast to the Royal Exchange agglomeration and noise.

⁵⁷ During 1641, a series of reforms were carried out to abolish the courts of the Star Chamber and High Commission and other institutions that had allowed King Charles to circumvent the common law and to rule without calling a Parliament. The Triennial Act was passed in January 1641 to ensure that Parliament would be called at least once every three years.

⁵⁸ Again, the author suggests the importance of the Parliament as a direct agent of the reformation. The Parliament was intent to make a good reformation, a prelude to the Judgment Day and to the new kingdom of God. Both Greengrass and Webster pointed to the key position of the Parliament as a reflection of the providential status of the nation. See Greengrass, M., Leslie, M. Raylor, T., (1994), 10; Webster, Ch., (1975), 47, 506-7.

⁵⁹ "The Grand Remonstrance" art. 181, „the Bishops and recusant lords are so numerous and prevalent that they are able to cross and interrupt our best endeavours for reformation”, quoted by Webster, Ch., in Webster, Ch., (1979a), note 2.17.

⁶⁰ The notion of the 'public good' was in need of a clear definition. The idea that Parliament was the embodiment of the nation and the agent of reformation gave it authority to produce and initiate fundamental changes. Also, according to the meliorist doctrine, even if the Parliament had a privileged position, every man and woman had an important and active part in the reformation of the world. *Macaria* creates a specific type of ethics of direct participation in the transformation of the world, seeking to restore the qualities lost in the Fall by direct and active participation in this restorative (transformative) process. The ethics developed in *Macaria* and other 'utopian' writings of the mid seventeenth century is a response to the 'Baconian quest for knowledge', placing at its very core the diffusion of knowledge to the widest public and advocating direct participation in the transformation of the world by rationalized labor and perpetual endeavor in order to achieve salvation of the soul and of the nation as well (by bringing undreamed of prosperity). See Webster, Ch.,(1975), 8, 335, 474; (1974), 384; Appelbaum, R., (2002), 119; Matei, O., "Macaria and the ethics of direct participation in the transformation of the world", *Societate și Politică (Society and Politics)* 10(2011): 51-65; People could expect that their words would have an impact on Parliament and throughout the nation as well. *Macaria* was written to present to the Parliament a basis of a rationalized model of a good society.

⁶¹ The traveler is associated with other merchants of light.

⁶² The model proposed by Plattes, which can be so easily achieved in England, too. The language used is, deliberately, brief and axiomatic because it wants to insist on the author's seriousness of purpose. What could be related in hundreds of pages is argued as a theorem: there can be a kingdom where people can live in peace, prosperity, health and happiness. In other words, it is possible for a kingdom of that kind to exist. Plattes proposes a model of moderate reforms, easy to be accomplished.

⁶³ The process of wondering has a specific significance. After *curiosity*, *wonder* is the second level in the process of discovering nature. In the *Advancement of Learning* (2000, 8) Bacon had called wonder a kind of 'broken knowledge', whereas in *Sylva Sylvarum* he described the passion of wonder as a form of unilateral, unproductive focus, 'the fixing of the mind upon one object of cogitation.' (SEH, II, 385, 335, 337). For more details see Jalobeanu, D., (2007), 59 and Giglioni, G., "Mastering the Appetites of Matter Francis Bacon 's *Sylva Sylvarum*" in *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, The Body as Object and Instrument of Knowledge. Embodied empiricism in Early Modern Science*, ed. Ch. T. Wolfe, O. Gal (Dodrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer, 2010), 149-167.

⁶⁴ In December 1640, the Parliament decided to enact legislation depriving Charles I of the powers that he had assumed since his accession. The reforms were designed to negate the possibility of Charles ruling absolutely again. The Triennial Act of 1641, also known as the Dissolution Act, was passed, requiring that no more than three years should elapse between sessions of Parliament. Also, the Parliament had to assemble every year. See Webster, Ch., (1979a) note 3.17.

⁶⁵ Plattes points to the case of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. He was a leading advisor to the king, attempting to strengthen the royal position against Parliament. When Parliament condemned him to death, in May 1641, Charles signed the death warrant and Wentworth was executed.

⁶⁶ This seems to be the first project regarding permanent parliamentary committees.

⁶⁷ Husbandry, regarded as an experimental science able to ensure abilities in treating plants was able not just “to heal” the land, but also to ensure “the healing” of the fallen human being. Good measures of husbandry of the land and good measures of husbandry of the soul are able to ameliorate the economic state of the nation and also to restore the human condition held prior to Fall. Plattes was the first writer of the Hartlib Circle expression his opinion regarding husbandry as a means to a metaphysical view upon the universe. He combined the classical and the Renaissance tradition on husbandry with alchemical elements (see the application of chemistry to particular problems such as medicine, pedagogy, as expressed here) and with Baconian principles (the vision upon the unity of the universe, the usage of the same technologies for plants and for the human soul, which points to the extensions allowed by *experientia literata*). Although husbandry, scientific agriculture and more general economic policies were increasingly framed with reference to a collection of data and, thus, to the new science, Plattes and other members of the Hartlib Circle (Hartlib himself, Peter Smith, Sir Cheney Culpeper, John Beale, John Evelyn, John Dury and others) never undermined the intentions of economic and social amelioration. Hartlib wrote that husbandry was “the most profitable Industry unto Humane Society; wherein the providence, the Power, the Wisdom and the Goodness of God, appears unto man more eminently then in any other way of Industry” (Hartlib, S., *The Reformed Husband-Man* (London, 1651), sig. A2v). The subject includes agriculture, mining, metallurgy, but also the relations of landlord and tenant. Other works written by Plattes on husbandry: *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure* (1639); *The Profitable Intelligencer* (1644).

⁶⁸ The topic here is about a method of efficient exploitation of the colonies. The English Parliament would establish such a council for new plantations in colonies. See Webster, Ch., (1979a). Plattes also recommended emigration of the surplus of the population to the new colonies. See Dickson, D.R., (1998), 169.

⁶⁹ Plattes seems to be the first author speaking about this kind of taxation.

⁷⁰ For Plattes, Hartlib and their group of reformers, agriculture is the prime source of welfare. From this point of view, the cultivation of the land is one of the governance’s first priorities, and inefficiency in agriculture is the reason why a citizen can be considered an enemy of the state. The central thesis of *Macaria* is that the transfer of ownership from a feudal to an individualistic style can solve the economic, social, political, moral problems of the country and can bring salvation in a religious manner, making the country’s inhabitants all wealthy, contented and virtuous. See A. Low, A., (1992), 66-7. See also J.C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writings 1516-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 175-182. There were other similar projects of transforming agriculture into a governance priority, that time. E.g. Walter Blight, *The English Improver Improved* (London, 1652).

⁷¹ ‘The Councill for New Plantations’ has not only economic qualities but also military qualities. Plattes considers that new colonies are perfect destinations for the excess of the population (England was already facing serious problems regarding overpopulation).

⁷² During 1641, Europe was a place of warfare, in England, the Civil War was about to break out, so the question is completely legitimate; that time, peace seemed an impossible dream.

⁷³ Plattes, like More, is convinced about the inutility of war. War can only diminish the budget and an active army can only reduce, not increase the state income. More shares the same opinion in *Utopia*. From his point of view, war is an unnecessary instrument. Only peace and good methods of husbandry can increase welfare. See More, Th., *Utopia*, 16-25. Plattes expressed his desire to double the number of inhabitants by arguing for the uselessness of war and the importance of rational husbandry and of a social distribution model as methods for combating poverty and encouraging welfare also in his earlier work *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, C-C1.

⁷⁴ ‘The College of Experience’ oversees the discoveries and the dissemination of knowledge in the kingdom. Plattes’s College is very similar to Bacon’s Solomon’s House and Andreae’s experimental laboratories. The main function of Solomon’s House is to relate the natural and the divine knowledge, and this function is rediscovered inside the ‘College of Experience’, Plattes translating the general medical aspects of Solomon’s House into more practical terms. Plattes and Hartlib also advocated the founding of an agricultural college, aiming to advocate (by proper methods of cultivation and husbandry of the human mind) a new type of learning and a new type of science which can connect natural philosophy and divine revelation.

⁷⁵ The medical profession is established in seventeenth-century England with severe restrictions. Only doctors registered in the College of Physicians (latter called the Royal College of Physicians) have the right to practice medicine. The idea of certificating and using any kind of medicine and cure “for the health” is, in this context, new and very bold. See Clark, G., *A History of the Royal College of Physicians* (London: Clarendon Press, 1966).

⁷⁶ The cure of the body and soul. Plattes points to the ancient Galenic and Platonic ideal of a person being both a physician and a philosopher, an ideal developed also by the utopian literature. More, for instance, considers that physicians are responsible also for the cure of the soul, as well as for the body, and Medicine to be a part of Philosophy. The Baconian Governor of the Strangers’ House is equally responsible for his people’s bodies and souls. Also, there is an evident connection with the Paracelsian tradition of medicine. Plattes’ idea is to propose a type of medicine able to deliver remedies as results of experimentation and to cure both the body and soul. Medicine is a type of husbandry of the body and soul and, connected with the idea of pansophical pedagogy advocated by Plattes in the following passages, there is no surprise that he has supported this view. A number of works were devoted in early modern England to this topic and there existed a number of well-known parsons with medical degrees (or vice-versa). See Burton, R., the *Anatomy of Melancholy* (London, 1621); Gowland, A., *The Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy: Robert Burton in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 246-266.

⁷⁷ ‘The Society of Experimenters’ is responsible for new medicines and new cures, not individual practitioners. The Society is a professional association and also a state institution controlling licenses (the Society registers, verifies and allows new inventions). Individual practitioners must know all these new tested and approved inventions. This is a very good example of the collective organization of knowledge inspired by the Baconian Solomon’s House.

⁷⁸ The medical example is the Galenic model: health is directly related with the balance of the four body humors and ambient factors or the particular disposition of the patient. But I would say that Plattes has drawn more than one tradition here. One can also depict elements related

to the Paracelsian tradition of 'the cure of body and soul'. The ideal person both being a physician and a divine must know in detail the patient's disposition of body and soul in order to select a proper cure. What is also new is Plattes' strong conviction that the same cure is able to 'heal' both the fallen body and soul of individual and society. He mixed several influences (the Baconian tradition of experimental science, the Comenian idea of a pansophic system of learning, the Andreae perspective upon the purposes and use of laboratory, the Paracelsian tradition of curing the body and soul) but added some personal contributions such as the perspective on medicine seen as a "husbandry" of the body and of the soul, and his determination to make the state responsible for the health and the wealth of the nation.

⁷⁹ The divergence of opinions in religious matters is the essence of all bad things in the world. The text points to this kind of situation. Comenius' pansophic project also advocates ecclesiastical peace and a universal religion. The "College of Experience", under the supervision of the "Great Council", oversees the development and dissemination of religious doctrine.

⁸⁰ Plattes and Hartlib are not so different from their contemporaries but they go further than More and Bacon. Even if modern utopias encourage and call for uniformity in opinions, in More's, Bacon's and Campanella's works we can find the possibility of a variety of religions in a state, under the strict condition of a common doctrinaire spirit embraced by everybody. The best example is the case of the Jew Joabin in *New Atlantis*. He is not a Christian and he is not forced to Christianize himself but he respects some of the Christian principles.

⁸¹ The Hartlib Circle gave a great deal of importance to the use of logical analysis in theological disputes regarding the interpretation of the Bible. See Webster, Ch., (1979a).

⁸² The reformation does not include the Catholics. Anti-Catholic attitude was the motive for the radicalization of the English society, from leaders of the Parliament such as Pym to common people, and forced the Parliament to adopt increasingly radical policies. See Manning, B., *The English People and the English Revolution* (London: Heinemann, 1976); Webster, Ch., (1975), 1.

⁸³ Webster suggests that here we can see a Cartesian influence: a religion founded upon articulated and distinct principles. Webster, Ch., (1979a). Descartes' works were well known inside Hartlib's circle. John Dury is one of the first theologians debating with Descartes on the matter of articulated and distinct truth and of certitude. On the other hand, the ideal of a rational religion, founded upon infallible principles, was in place before Cartesianism. It was associated with the German mystics, with the efforts for reforming the Lutheranism of the early seventeenth century, with utopian writers such as J.C. Andreae and with Hartlib's friend and collaborator, Jan Amos Comenius.

⁸⁴ One of the reasons causing the break of the Civil War in England was the King's taxation policy and impositions upon lands. Plattes suggests an economic policy of improving the lands and efficient husbandry. The king is restricted like any other citizen in deriving his normal income from the improvement of his legitimate estates. Interesting here is also the emphasis on the idea that war cannot be a reason for increasing taxes. This idea is related to the idea that war is not an instrument for increasing the state income.

⁸⁵ In order to give clarity to the reforms proposed in *Macaria*, the author made it as brief as possible, reducing its literary value, in contrast to *Utopia* and *New Atlantis*. *Macaria* is an emendation of the utopian project so that it looks more like a project of social and political reformation than a literary work. Because he was aiming to address his words to a wide audience, Plattes' works are simple and direct and the language he uses is brief and axiomatic. Also, Webster considers that Plattes' systematic and intelligible approach was dictated by a general ethical standpoint which placed considerable emphasis on the efficient dissemination of information to the widest public, while the attitude of the monopolists of knowledge was

strongly criticized. See Webster, Ch., (1975), 474. See also Greengrass, M., Leslie, M., Raylor, T., (1994), 10-11. For Plattes' attitude toward the common use of knowledge see *A Discovery of Subterranean Treasure*, The Epistle Dedicatory, B2: "And to Divulge my knowledge, and experience in these affaires for the common profit."; *The Profitable Intelligencer*, (London, 1644, HP, PAM 17), sig.A1-v: "...for knowledge that concerneth the public good, ought not to be concealed in the breasts of a few"; "all which reserved Knowledge in particular Breasts is against the Wealth of the Publik, and therefore ought to be made common to all or else this Designe cannot prosper, nor the Kingdom flourish according to my desire"; *A Caveat for Alchymists*, HP, PAM 54, 52: "is a fundamental point in my Religion to do good to all men, as well enemies as friends".

⁸⁶ This is the idea of reformation. As the Kingdom of God is within you, so the reformation that belongs to it is an inward Reformation. So, the subject of reformation is also the object of reformation, the means are also the ends of reformation. They have an influence in shaping the ends toward which the effects of providential opportunity might be directed. Thus, the solution is in our hands and it is easy to put in practice, as long as the solution is already in our hands. See Appelbaum, R., (2002), 115, 124.

⁸⁷ This idea points to the Comenian doctrine of ecclesiastical peace, a doctrine of salvation and religious-political solidarity and prosperity, which, in this context, seems to be possible.

⁸⁸ The process of learning described by Plattes is inspired by Bacon's model of learning: 'seducing' somebody's mind by spreading new opinions using writing and teaching/sermons. The Traveler answers pointing out the limitations of such a Baconian project: scholars do not have enough authority on the human mind because they are not also Physicians (they cannot cure the body and soul at the same time). This is the reason why a Baconian project of learning based on seduction has less success than an administrative project implementing a policy from top to bottom.

⁸⁹ In *The Profitable Intelligencer*, he proposed a Council of Husbandry composed of experienced practitioners, while in *A Caveat for Alchymists* he manifested his intention to speak in the front of Parliament about his propositions of establishing a Laboratory where to test his new inventions and methods.

⁹⁰ Again, Plattes argues against warfare insisting on economic arguments regarding the impossibility of enhancing public incomes by imposing taxes on distant territories. See also *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, C-C1.

⁹¹ *A Discovery of Subterranean Treasure* (on agriculture and mining) was a popular book, frequently read and quoted, approaching alchemical experiments and transmutation experiments. Also, we can rediscover there the idea that husbandry (including mining, metallurgy) and industry can bring prosperity and solve the economic problems.

⁹² Such an occasion never showed up. The Parliament, so willing to implement reformation, had to confront the Irish Rebellion and the Civil War.

⁹³ The discussion is influenced by the millenarian context of the time. The Judgment Day and the New Kingdom of God on earth were expected to come. Hence the idea that another reform is neither desirable nor possible before the Judgment Day, simply because such a reformation is not included in the Divine Plan.

⁹⁴ Protestants and especially Puritans used to interpret the Scriptures literally. Mystic interpretation is unsuitable and excluded. See Harrison, P., *The Bible, Protestantism and the Rise of Science* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001).

⁹⁵ Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, known as St. Jerome, produced a number of commentaries on Scripture, often explaining his translation choices. His patristic commentaries are closely aligned with the Jewish tradition, and he indulges in allegorical and mystical subtleties after the manner of Philo and the Alexandrian school. He showed more zeal and

interest in the ascetic ideal than in abstract speculation. It was this strict asceticism that made Martin Luther judge him so severely. In fact, Protestant readers are not generally inclined to accept his writings as authoritative. The tendency to recognize a superior comes out in his correspondence with Augustine. For more details, see Williams, M.H., *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006).

⁹⁶ “Rossimus, like many others, interprets all these in a mystic way but I am afraid that the knowledgeable persons do not admit such an interpretation at all.” (my translation).

⁹⁷ Plattes points to the idea that people are instruments of reformation and they have to work for the reformation.

⁹⁸ The reformation project crossed the English border. According to the millenarian idea, England was the proper place to start the Work of God and to spread it all over the world.

⁹⁹ The reformation is already in our hands and it only depends on us to make it happen and to make things work.

¹⁰⁰ The practice of exchanging secrets and experimental philosophical findings were very important subjects in Hartlib’s circle. The topic of the ‘merchant of light’, approached at the end of the text, is not incidental. What Plattes tries to highlight here is the fact that the Traveler as well as the Scholar belong to a special brotherhood of natural researchers interested in the reformation of knowledge. They are not merely individuals, philosophers or writers, but members of the Baconian brotherhood of light, engaged in ‘trading knowledge’.