INTRODUCTION

Elizabeth Tanfield Cary wrote *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), the first original play by a woman to be published in England.[1] She was also the first English woman writer to be memorialized in a biography, *The Lady Falkland: Her Life,* written by one of her daughters (probably between 1643 and 1650) and included, along with *Mariam,* in the present volume. The manuscript of the *Life,* which is preserved in the Archives of the Département du Nord in Lille, France [MS. A.D.N.xx.(ca. 1655)], remained unpublished until 1861, when a heavily and not always reliably edited version was printed in London.

The author of the *Life* went to some trouble to shroud her identity; she was certainly one of the four of Elizabeth Cary's daughters—Anne, Elizabeth, Lucy, and Mary—who became nuns in the Benedictine Convent at Cambray. Georgiana Fullerton's 1883 biography of Lady Falkland first identified the author of the *Life* as Anne, Elizabeth Cary's fourth child, who was born in 1615 and received into the convent in 1639 under the name of Clementia. Fullerton's biography, however, is often unreliable and offers no grounds for this attribution. Donald Foster nonetheless makes a resourceful case for Anne's authorship on internal grounds, and his research has recently led him to other manuscripts arguably in Anne's hand, including "the most authoritative extant MS of the *Revelation* of Julian of Norwich."[2] Our reading of the available evidence brings us to less certain

conclusions: while Anne indeed seems a likely author, so does her younger sister Lucy, born in 1619 and received into the same convent in 1638 under the name of Magdalena.[3]

Thanks largely to this remarkable biography, which is discussed in more detail in the final section of this introduction, we know more about Elizabeth Cary's life than we do about Shakespeare's. Yet many facts remain obscure, and some aspects of Cary's literary career are simply not mentioned in the *Life.* Even the information it does present cannot always be taken at face value, for the author has both filial and theological investments in the representation of her mother.[4] Clearly designed to stress Cary's trials and triumphs as an "exemplary" subject of Catholic conversion, the *Life* nonetheless presents a rhetorically subtle and sometimes critical account not only of its prime subject but also of her Protestant husband, the author's difficult but by no means wholly unsympathetic father, Sir Henry Cary, viscount of Falkland. The tone of the *Life* is frequently surprising, as when the biographer comments that her mother "always much esteemed and loved order ⟨when she remembered there was such a thing⟩." The acid terminal phrase is marked for deletion, but its irony is by no means uncharacteristic of the narrative. And the author herself becomes a character, albeit a teasingly self-effacing one, in various parts of her narrative, including those episodes that outline the battle between Elizabeth and Henry Cary—and subsequently between Elizabeth and her eldest son, Lucius—for the love and religious faith of several of the younger Cary children.[5] Displaying a "dry intelligence" that leads Donald Stauffer to praise her work as "distinctive and original," the biographer warrants attention as an author in her own right.[6] Our primary focus, however, is on Elizabeth Cary as the author of *The Tragedy of Mariam,* a work not mentioned in the biography.

Our introduction, which begins by summarizing parts of the complex story told by the *Life,* supplements that text by drawing on material from later biographies of Elizabeth Cary and her son Lucius (notably by Kenneth Murdock and Kurt Weber, respectively), on references to Cary and to members of her family in letters[7] and other contemporary documents, and on writings by a number of modern scholars who have, in recent years, begun to notice Cary's texts and reevaluate her place in literary history.

ELIZABETH CARY'S LIFE AND WORKS

She was born, according to the *Life,* in "1585 or 6," the only child of Lawrence Tanfield, a wealthy Oxfordshire lawyer, and his wife, Elizabeth Symondes. Exhibiting a precocious intelligence, Elizabeth Tanfield not only learned to read "very soon and loved it much," but also mastered "without a teacher" French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and Hebrew; as a girl she translated Seneca's *Epistles.* The *Life* also reports that she adroitly proved the innocence of an old woman being tried for witchcraft before Tanfield, who had become a judge. Elizabeth is also said to have read and disputed Calvin's *Institutes* at age twelve, a detail arguably designed to recall Christ's disputations in the temple at the same age.

Her mother was evidently strict: the *Life* describes Elizabeth kneeling to address Lady Tanfield and adds that she was "never kind" to her daughter. Forbidden to read at night, Elizabeth bribed the servants for candles (her debts to the servants were paid at the time of her marriage). The *Dictionary of National Biography* entry on Tanfield says that his wife was accused of taking bribes to influence her husband's cases and cites the complaints of her neighbors in Great Tew that "she saith that we are more worthy to be ground to powder than to have any favour shewed to us" (*DNB* 19:357). It seems likely that she considered herself of higher social standing than her neighbors and her husband; he, as the son of a "younger brother," received nothing when his father died except the means for a legal education, whereas she was the daughter of Giles Symondes, of Clay, Norfolk, by Catherine, daughter of Sir Anthony Lee, Knight of the Garter. The *Life* also indicates social tensions within the Tanfield household: Elizabeth Symondes objected, for instance, to her husband's decision "to provide for himself by following his profession," relying on his "own industry." Tensions stemming from differences in social status were present not only in the marriage of Cary's parents but also in her own, and they may well be refracted in Cary's dramatic representation of Mariam's conflicts with in-laws she considers "lower" than herself.

Although her mother might not have approved of Elizabeth's devotion to books, it was evidently admired—or considered a possible source of patronage—by others. In 1597, Michael Drayton dedicated two of the poems in his *Englands Heroicall Epistles* to Elizabeth and praised her wisdom, reading, and skill in languages. Later, in 1624, Richard Belling would

dedicate to her the sixth book of his continuation of Sidney's *Arcadia.* She herself apparently thought that her great-uncle, Sir Henry Lee, could appreciate her talents, since she dedicated to him, as a "humble presente, the fruites and endeavours" of her "younge and tender yeares," her translation of Abraham Ortelius's *Le Miroir du Monde.*[8] In translating that book about geography (which includes descriptions of China, India, "Turkie," and America), she anticipates the fascination with "other worlds" displayed by such later English women writers as Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle, who published her *Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World,* in 1666, and Aphra Behn, who translated Fontenelle's *Discovery of New Worlds* in 1688, the same year she published her novella *Oroonoko,* based on her youthful visit to South America.

In the fall of 1602, at the age of about seventeen, Elizabeth was married to Sir Henry Cary, who became viscount of Falkland in 1620.[9] Nancy Cotton Pearse underscores the importance of marriage as an avenue of social mobility in the Tudor-Stuart era by remarking that Elizabeth's marriage to Henry "raised Tanfield from the upper middle class into the gentry [he was knighted in 1604 and became Chief Baron of the Exchequer in 1607], and the Tanfield fortune raised Henry Cary from the gentry into the peerage."[10] Thus, through the industry his wife seems to have scorned, Tanfield acquired the fortune that attracted a noble husband for his daughter. The author of the *Life* says that Sir Henry married his wife "only for [her] being an heir, for he had no acquaintance with her (she scarce ever having spoken to him) and she was nothing handsome." Hardly a romantic beginning to a union that was to prove stormy. Possibly unconsummated during its early years, when Henry was often abroad or at court, the marriage eventually produced eleven children "born alive," nine of whom survived to adulthood. It also produced serious conflicts: Elizabeth and Henry lived apart after 1626, fighting bitterly and publicly over religion and money.

Though Elizabeth evidently tried for years to bend her will to her husband's—he being "very absolute," according to the *Life*—she had also, since the early years of her marriage, been following her own will by pursuing her interest in Roman Catholicism. Soon after her marriage, she read Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity,* a "classic defense" of the Anglican Church; but "just as Calvin's logic had failed to convince, so Hooker's

sweet reasonableness did not persuade."[11] She read the early church fathers and was evidently impressed by the favorable remarks of her husband's brother about Catholicism when he returned from a visit to Italy; she refused to attend Anglican services "for weeks at a time."[12] She sought theological advice from Richard Neale, dean of Westminster, and the *Life* reports that at his house she met "many of the learnedest . . . divines." While she was exploring her doubts and seeking to reconcile her "lawful" duty to the Church of England and her Protestant husband with her conviction that "to be in the Roman Church were infinitely better and securer" than to remain an Anglican, her husband was pursuing a courtier's career. Eventually, he became a protégé of the earl of Buckingham, King James's notorious favorite.

During her first year as Sir Henry's wife, Elizabeth apparently lived at home while her husband lived at court and at his parents' home in Hertfordshire. By 1604 he had left England for Holland, where he served as a soldier in the Protestant wars against Spain; in 1605 he was captured and imprisoned for three years while his father was raising ransom money. Though Henry did not, according to the *Life,* "care for his wife," he was sufficiently concerned with her welfare to want her to stay with her own family rather than with his evidently irascible mother, Dame Katherine, Lady Paget. That lady's wishes, however, soon prevailed, and Elizabeth moved to the house of one who "loved much to be humored." Failing to please Lady Paget, Elizabeth was locked in her room and subsequently, when her mother-in-law saw she enjoyed reading, denied books.

Kurt Weber, Lucius Cary's biographer, doubts that Elizabeth was as "caged" as her daughter's narrative suggests; he argues, indeed, that it was during these years of Sir Henry's absence that the still-childless Elizabeth was most likely to have participated in the countess of Pembroke's literary circle and there to have acquired an interest in Senecan drama. Barring the discovery of new evidence, we cannot ascertain the details of Elizabeth's life at this period, but it is clear that sometime between 1603 and 1610 she wrote several literary works. The *Life* mentions a verse life of Tamburlaine, now lost, as a work composed for her "private recreation." The *Life,* however, nowhere mentions *The Tragedy of Mariam,* the play that Cary surely wrote after her marriage and probably before the birth of her first child, Catherine, in 1609.[13] Although *Mariam* was published in 1613 in

a single edition and was never performed onstage, the play had evidently circulated for some years in manuscript: it might have been known to Shakespeare when he wrote *Othello* (1607) and was very likely known to the anonymous author of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy,* licensed by the Stationers' Register on 31 October 1611. The former play's tragic hero resembles Cary's Herod at several key moments, as we shall argue later, and the latter play's tyrannical king not only resembles Cary's portrait of the passionately obsessed King Herod but also alludes explicitly to a literary source for the sentiment: "I once read of a Herod whose affection / pursued a virgin's love, as I did thine," says the king (lines 1856–57).[14]

Cary's play was definitely known to Sir John Davies before 1612.[15] In the dedicatory letter to *The Muses Sacrifice* (1612) Davies, who evidently served as one of Cary's childhood tutors, refers proudly to his erstwhile "Pupill's" plays—specifically, a drama set in Palestine (*Mariam*) and another play set "in Syracuse," now lost. (The dedicatory verses to *Mariam* also refer to this earlier play.) Davies urges not only Cary but also two other noblewomen of letters, Lucy, countess of Bedford, and Mary, countess of Pembroke, to publish their writings so posterity will believe that members of "the weaker Sexe" can write with strength.

Whether or not Davies's poem encouraged Cary to permit the publication of her play, she no doubt shared to some extent a view articulated by Davies and held by many prominent persons in Tudor-Stuart England that the emerging institution of publishing was an unsuitable arena for aristocrats in general and for noble ladies in particular. The "Presse," remarks Davies in the very poem ostensibly urging Cary to publish her plays, is frequented by "abject Rimers" and other "base" types.[16] The *Life* includes a cryptic mention of some early work by Cary being "stolen" for publication but "called in" by the author. Whatever this text was—Elaine Beilin has suggested identifying it with the dedicatory sonnet to *Mariam* that appears in only two known copies of the play—this passage in the biography testifies to the psychological and cultural obstacles that stood between women like Cary and the role of "public" author. English Renaissance women were to be "chaste, silent, and obedient," according to a formula repeated in numerous sermons, conduct books, and treatises on female education. Although *Mariam* explicitly interrogates, even challenges, this image of normative womanhood, Cary's life story dramatizes

the many impediments that even a socially privileged Renaissance wife encountered when she attempted to assume the role of author.

In 1622, through Buckingham's good offices, Falkland received the viceregency of Ireland, a post in which it must have been particularly difficult to have a wife with Catholic sympathies, since a large part of his official duties consisted of enforcing conformity to Anglican ecclesiastical authority. Although he could not have assumed this post without her help—she mortgaged a jointure settled on her by her father so her husband could move to Dublin—he later complained that she had cost him more than he had ever gotten from her.[17] Her charitable expenditures might have particularly irritated him. While her son Patrick was still nursing, she undertook a large project for training Irish children in trades. The project met with various disasters, including fire and water spoilage in her workhouse. She later interpreted these setbacks as punishments from God for her children's attendance at Anglican services, but others "thought it rather that she was better at contriving than executing" (*Life*, 198). In any event, her husband decided that she should return to England in 1625, ostensibly to attend the birth of their first grandchild and possibly to persuade those at court "to give him more than he had been able to get by his letters."[18] The grandchild died, and so did the mother, Lady Home, the latter, according to the *Life*, in Elizabeth Cary's arms.

In April of 1626, within a year of his wife's departure for England, Lord Falkland wrote to a friend, Lord Conway, about her inadequacies as a diplomat: "I conceive women to be no fit solicitors of state affairs."[19] By December of the same year, he was outraged at the news that she had publicly converted to Catholicism (although the conversion became public more through the offices of one of Elizabeth Cary's so-called friends, Lady Denbigh, than through her own decision). Insisting that she must be sent back to her mother, who might yet save her from apostasy, he retrospectively pronounced the marriage a bad one, distancing himself from the politically embarrassing mate, "whom now I may say I have long unhappily called wife."[20] In letters written after the separation, he complained to the king and members of the Privy Council about her many faults (among them a refusal to live "quietly"); she complained, equally bitterly, of the poverty she suffered through Henry's failure to send her money. The *Life* presents Elizabeth Cary as more patient and long-

suffering during this period than do other contemporary documents, including her own letters. The *Life* also suggests a partial reconciliation at the time of Falkland's death in 1633 (Elizabeth attended his sickbed, and their daughter hopefully but probably inaccurately surmises that Elizabeth led him back to Catholicism); but there is no doubt, even for the daughter-biographer, that the Cary-Tanfield union was not a marriage of true minds.

According to Henry, Elizabeth was disinherited by her father because of her conversion, but both her daughter's and Murdock's biographies suggest that Tanfield was perhaps even more irritated by her mortgaging of her jointure for her profligate husband than by her turn to Rome.[21] Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, writes that Sir Henry eventually "wasted a full fortune" in Ireland and at court, where his Irish services were little appreciated.[22] Clarendon also reports that both Sir Henry and his wife were discontented at being passed over in Tanfield's will, which left his money and lands in trust to Lady Tanfield for his eldest grandson, Lucius Cary, who was Clarendon's dear friend and, until recently, much better known than his mother.

Lucius evidently inherited some of her skill at languages (he taught himself Greek as an adult) and her deep interest in theological questions. His two houses near Oxford, stocked with books, became centers for relatively liberal discussions of religion. Among the many regular guests were the Protestant writer William Chillingworth and a number of Catholic divines introduced to Lucius by his mother. An eloquent defender of religious toleration, Lucius leaned toward conversion for some time but eventually resisted his mother's pressure. After Lady Falkland in 1636 boldly executed a plot to kidnap her two youngest sons, Patrick and Henry, from Lucius's house and what she felt to be Chillingworth's noxious influence, Lucius and his mother maintained only distant relations. Clarendon even suggests a causal connection between Elizabeth Cary's "rescue" of her youngest sons and Lucius's composition of treatises arguing, among other things, against the infallibility of the Roman Church. Although the main arguments of these tracts had probably been in Lucius's mind for some time, Clarendon, followed by Lucius's modern biographer, Weber, sees the "theft" of the boys as catalyzing a distinct turn in Lucius's tolerationist views: his "charity" toward Roman Catholics,

Clarendon writes, "was much lessened, and any correspondence with them quite declined, when, by sinister arts, they had corrupted his two younger brothers . . . and transported them beyond seas, and perverted his sisters: upon which occasion he writ two large discourses against the principal positions of that religion."[23] To Clarendon's regret, the two "discourses" in question, *A Discourse of Infallibility* and *The Lord Falklands Reply,* were not published during Lucius's lifetime; but the former, which was printed in five editions during the twenty years after his death, was certainly read in manuscript by Catholics and was answered by one of them, according to Weber, "through the Dowager Lady Falkland's mediation."[24] In his young manhood, Lucius was an avid admirer of Ben Jonson and was immortalized by that poet in his ode *To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of That Noble Pair, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison.* He later became secretary of state for Charles I and died at the age of thirty-four in one of the first battles of the Civil War.[25]

After he came into his handsome fortune upon his grandmother's death in 1629, Lucius attempted to help both of his parents, but his mother took little and lived on less than two hundred pounds a year until her death in 1639. According to her daughter, she gave away much of what she had. Sir Henry too died poor, refusing to take any gifts from a son who had crossed his will as boldly, it turned out, as Elizabeth had: in 1630, Lucius married Lettice, the dowerless sister of his friend Henry Morison. The marriage, virtually an elopement, destroyed Lord Falkland's hope of recouping his fortunes—once again—through the marriage market.[26] Lucius remained a "good son," according to the *Life,* but that sisterly judgment is somewhat qualified by the *Life*'s lengthy demonstration of how and why Lucius's friendship with Chillingworth soured his relations with his mother. Nonetheless, he again attempted to help her when in 1635 she requested that he remove his three youngest sisters from her care because she was too ill and poor to provide for them. The author of the *Life* (almost certainly one of these daughters, quite possibly Anne, who is described in this part of the biography as willfully loving to "go much abroad and to court") evinces considerable chagrin at her mother's having fallen into such a sorry state without her children's knowledge: "having used all means possible for the maintaining of her family" (that is, her household, which was "daily increasing" through

Elizabeth's habit of charity), "she was brought to the last extremity." Her state, however, was "so concealed from her children that they were the last to know it."

Recovering from this illness, with her household "discharged by her son," she proceeded to give "over clean all those entangling businesses in which she had dealt and by which she had always been a loser." The author of the *Life* presents this period as one of gradual withdrawal from "worldly distractions" and implies a parallel between the mother and the four daughters who will soon relinquish the world for a convent in France. Before Elizabeth died, she had seen six of her children safely converted to Catholicism and living in France, "out of the danger living amongst their Protestant friends might have put them into." Among these converts was the author of the *Life,* who was absent from her mother's deathbed but who clearly took comfort from the attending priest's report that she "died without any agony quietly as a child, being wholly spent by her disease ['a cough of the lungs'], the day of October, the year of our Lord 1639, being three- or four-and-fifty year old." During her last months, Elizabeth was working, at a priest's suggestion, on a translation of a "part of Blosius" (the Flemish mystic Louis de Blois) that allowed her to renew "somewhat her Hebrew, and her Latin."

This translation, until recently considered lost, evidently exists in a manuscript (Colwich Abbey MS 36) which Donald Foster has examined and believes to be a copy of Elizabeth's translation in Anne Cary's hand. Foster has also recently discovered a funeral elegy on the duke of Buckingham that seems to have been written by Elizabeth Cary; the first six lines of the fifty-line poem "were widely circulated in seventeenth-century manuscripts," according to Foster, "the least corrupt of which is British Library MS Egerton 2725, fol. 60r ('An Epitaph upon the death of the Duke of Buckingham by the Countesse of Faulkland')."[27] Perhaps the elegy was among the "innumerable slight things in verse" that Elizabeth's Catholic biographer simultaneously points to and effaces. The *Life* also mentions Elizabeth Cary's writing—at an unspecified period—numerous verse biographies of female saints and hymns to the Virgin which are now lost (but which may, of course, resurface through modern scholarly work on women authors).

Many of these devotional works—and some secular ones, too—probably date from the years after Elizabeth's separation from her husband, when she apparently had more opportunity to write, even though during the early part of this period she was preoccupied with efforts to win financial support from her husband and to resist his order that she be "restrained unto the custody of her mother."[28] Refusing to go to her mother's house in the country (and elaborately petitioning the king for support in her rebellious course)[29] she lived in a cottage in London, attended only by one servant, Bessie Poulter, who had converted to Catholicism with her mistress.

In 1630, Elizabeth published a translation of the French Catholic Jacques Davy du Perron's *Réplique à la response du sérénissime roy de la Grand Bretagne* (1620), a polemical response to an attack on his work by King James I. Her translation, *The Reply of the Most Illustrious Cardinall of Perron,* which was printed at Douay and smuggled into England, was suppressed by Archbishop Abbot; only a few copies of the impression escaped burning. Ironically, this translation of a reply to James's attack on Catholic doctrine is dedicated to Henrietta Maria, the troublesomely Catholic wife of James's son Charles. Cary thus characteristically places religious truth (as she sees it) above tactful respect for marital harmony. She praises the queen for being "a woeman, though farr above other woemen, therefore fittest to protect a woeman's worke"; and, in her Epistle to the Reader, she identifies herself "as a Catholic and a Woman: the first serves for mine honor, and the second, for my excuse." Despite the stereotypical apology for the intellectual weakness of her sex ("if the worke be but meanely done, it is noe wonder, for my Sexe can raise noe great expectation of anye thing that shall come from me"), Cary offers readers a remarkably atypical deflation of another convention about normative femininity, and indeed about publication in general: "I will not," she insists, "make use of that worne-out forme of saying I printed it against my will, mooved by the importunitie of Friends; I was mooved to it by my beleefe that it might make those English that understand not French, whereof there are many even in our universities, reade Perron."[30]

With this sly glance at the pretensions of English university education (reserved, of course, for men), Cary comes closer than she does in any other extant text to staking a claim for female intellectual labor. But the

boldness of her claim may well be licensed by the fact that she is appearing here not as an original author but rather as a humble translator serving a male theological authority. Translation itself had been personified as a "female" phenomenon by John Florio in the preface to his English version of Montaigne's *Essays*.

She certainly chose to hide her identity if she wrote or substantially revised either of two texts about Edward II that are now often ascribed to her, albeit by critics who hold widely varying views about the relation between the two quite different versions of the work, both published many years after her death. It remains, in our view, an open question whether she wrote the biographical narrative that is described as follows on the title page of its first edition, published in folio (in London, by J.C. for C. Harper, S. Crouch, and T. Fox) in 1680: *The History of the Life, Reign, and Death of Edward II. King of England, and Lord of Ireland. With the Rise and Fall of his Great Favourites, Gaveston and the Spencers. Written by E. F. in the year 1627, and printed verbatim from the Original.*[31] It is equally difficult to know whether she wrote a substantially shorter version of the narrative published in octavo (London: Playford, 1680)—a version which is often simply conflated with the folio text by modern critics who refer to Cary's authorship of *Edward II.* The title page of the shorter version lacks the initials "E.F.," a prime piece of evidence for those who think Cary wrote the folio version; but the shorter text offers instead a printer's claim, accepted uncritically by many modern scholars, that this text was found among *Henry* Falkland's papers and might therefore have been written by him: *The History of the Most Unfortunate Prince King Edward II. With Choice Political Observations on Him and his Unhappy Favourites, Gaveston & Spencer. Containing some rare passages of those Times, not found in other historians. Found among the papers of, and (supposed to be) Writ by, the Right Honourable Henry Viscount Faulkland, Sometime Lord Deputy of Ireland.*[32]

In 1935, Donald Stauffer argued that Elizabeth Cary was the true author of the folio *Edward,* which had generally been ascribed to Henry Falkland, evidently on the basis of its relation to the octavo version said by its printer to have been found among Falkland's papers; but the folio had also been ascribed (by a nineteenth-century cataloguer at the British Museum) to one "Edward Fannant," of whom no trace exists. Stauffer compares a passage from the folio with its octavo counterpart and con-

cludes that the latter, in prose, reads like a "compression of the [former's] longer scene,"[33] an abridgment probably made by the printer in 1680. Though there exists "no proof positive" that the octavo is not the original text of which the folio is an elaboration, Stauffer thinks this "unlikely";[34] some modern critics have disagreed with this latter opinion. His basic view that Elizabeth Cary wrote the folio version is shared by a number of recent critics, among them Donald Foster, Tina Krontiris, Barbara Lewalski, and Isobel Grundy. These critics, however, hold substantially different views on the relation between the two versions, differences that testify to unresolved problems in the evidence for Elizabeth Cary's authorship of one or both versions of *Edward II.*

Krontiris's feminist reading of *Edward* assumes that Stauffer has "proved" Cary's authorship of the text(s) and follows his view that the octavo "condenses" (and hence presumably postdates) the folio.[35] She refers mainly to the latter text to illustrate her argument that the work displays Cary's sympathies for Edward's Queen Isabel.[36] Krontiris also assumes that there was a single "original manuscript" from which the printers of both the folio and octavo worked—and which neither of the printers read very carefully.[37] Lewalski also follows Stauffer in reading the octavo as an "abridgment" of the folio, but she differs from both Stauffer and Krontiris in seeing the abridgment—the only text directly linked to any of the Falklands—as wholly or partly written long after the Falklands' death with a topical allegory "clearly devised to comment on the Exclusion Crisis (1679–81)," which occurred when critics of King Charles II's Catholic sympathies wished him to set aside his definitively Catholic son, James, from the succession in favor of his illegitimate son, the duke of Monmouth. Lewalski also notes that the preface by the printer, John Playford, underscores the text's "relevance to present occasions."[38] As for the printer's attribution of the octavo to Henry Falkland, Lewalski speculates that it "is probably based on the discovery of the longer version among Falkland's papers."[39] There is, however, no corroborating evidence that the longer version was actually found among Falkland's papers.

Betty Travitsky, in contrast to Stauffer, Krontiris, and Lewalski, believes that the octavo is Cary's original text and the folio is her later poetic elaboration of it.[40] Donald Foster shares Travitsky's view that the octavo is

the earlier text but, unlike Travitsky, he thinks that "the two texts are clearly the work of two individuals, each with a distinctive lexicon and with a unique set of stylistic fingerprints—and the *Unfortunate Prince* was written first."[41]

Although Foster does not spell out his evidence for this conclusion, he usefully complicates critics' assumptions about the precise nature of Cary's "authorship," even of the folio text, by maintaining that she should be considered a "plagiarist"—or, more neutrally, a "redactor"—of a previous text. The continuum from plagiarist to translator to imitator to "original" author was of course tricky to chart in Renaissance literary theory and practice (indeed, it remains so today); and Foster challenges any simple notion of authorship by suggesting that we are dealing here not with two texts but really with three: "First there is the narrative source [the *Unfortunate Prince*], about ninety percent of which resurfaces in Cary's redaction, much of it copied verbatim. Second is Cary's completed text, which is considerably longer." And third, there is an interesting "basket of fragments" consisting of the "*difference* between . . . [the] completed text and the original *Unfortunate Prince.*" It is in this "difference," Foster suggests, that the reader should look for traces of Cary's own interpretation of the story of Edward; his wife, Isabel; and his favorite, Gaveston.

Without mentioning Stauffer's article or subsequent work, mostly by feminist critics, on the *Edward II* texts, D. R. Woolf has argued that neither version of the text was written in the late 1620s and hence neither was written by Henry Falkland. Since he regards the octavo text as merely derivative from the octavo and connection of the octavo with any papers of the Falkland family as spurious, Woolf does not consider the possibility that "E.F." might refer to Falkland's wife. But Woolf does make some interesting arguments for his view that the attribution of the octavo to Falkland was an instance of a common ploy, on the part of an editor or publisher, to "provide the book with an illustrious [i.e., aristocratic] father."[42]

Woolf bases his argument for a 1680 date of composition mainly on the diction of the folio and that text's undeniable relevance—as an oblique "warning" to a monarch about the dangers of relying on "evil favorites"—to English politics at the time of the Popish Plot and the subsequent Exclusion Crisis. Woolf's argument is weakened by assumptions

about univocal reference: why must a phrase like "in the wars of late years" refer only to the era of the Civil War?[43] His arguments are also impaired by his dogmatic rhetoric (the ideology of the *History* "unquestionably" dates from 1680) and by his unargued assertion that the octavo is "simply an abridged and revised rendering" of the folio.[44] We also query his view that the *only* evidence linking the text to the Falklands is from the "revised" (that is, later, and hence less authoritative) octavo. Had he considered the possibility that the folio's title-page "E.F." might refer to Elizabeth Falkland, Woolf would have found it less easy to debunk an early date and a genuine "Falkland connection" for the texts.

Nonetheless, his argument against simply believing printers' claims is surely well taken, especially when we recall that the press in 1680, according to a contemporary observer, "was open for all such books that could make any thing against the then government."[45] Moreover, one of Woolf's arguments against the likelihood of Falkland's authorship seems equally relevant to—though by no means definitively against—the case for Elizabeth Cary's authorship, namely, that both versions of the *Edward* narrative, if they were indeed written in the late 1620s, would have been read as highly critical of the king's favorite, Buckingham. Falkland, as we have noted, was Buckingham's protégé; and Elizabeth Cary was a close friend of Buckingham's duchess. According to Foster, we recall, Elizabeth Cary wrote an elegy on Buckingham, a poem that contains no hint of the critical attitude the *Edward II* texts evince toward Gaveston. Either Henry or Elizabeth might, of course, have harbored critical views of Buckingham that they expressed in a"private" manuscript but did not wish to publish. Indeed, Woolf notes that Sir Francis Hubert had written "a long narrative poem on Edward II and his wicked minions" in 1628 and was dismayed when the poem was published without his permission; he rushed a watered-down version to the press, denying any topical intent.[46]

Woolf doesn't recognize that the Hubert example could support an argument for dating the *Edward* texts from the last years of Buckingham's career, but Woolf's opponents on the critical battlefield have done little to explain Cary's possible motives for criticizing Buckingham. Nor is a consensus emerging, even among the advocates of Cary's authorship, about the historical and bibliographical problems surrounding the fact

that the only versions of the text we have were both published—and perhaps heavily revised, if not written—in 1680.

Perplexed by the multiplicity of inferences we find in the critical literature and lacking an opportunity to study the primary texts in detail, we have chosen to remain agnostic on the question of who wrote either the *History of the Life* or *The Unfortunate Prince.* The initials on the title page of the folio remain, in our view, the best evidence for the attribution and offer a suggestive parallel to the "E.C." on the title page of *Mariam;* as Foster remarks, after 1620 Elizabeth Cary regularly signed herself Elizabeth Falkland. Her husband regularly signed his letters "H. Falkland." Another suggestive piece of evidence in favor of Elizabeth Cary's authorship is "E.F."'s prefatory statement (in the folio version only) that she strives to please "the Truth, not Time; nor fear I censure, since at the worst, 'twas but one Month mis-spended."[47] In the address "To the Reader" prefacing her translation of Perron, Elizabeth Cary writes that she dares "avouch" that the copier spent "fower times as long in transcribing, as it was in translating," and a commendatory poem printed with the translation expresses wonder that "one woman in one Month" should write "so large a Book."[48] Lewalski considers "the analogous claim to have written the work in a month's time" an "incredible coincidence."[49] The coincidence is indeed fascinating, though the specific claim to a month's time for translation of Perron's book is made only in the commendatory poem.

If Cary did write the folio text, there is a fine irony in the publisher's advertisement of this version as a text "printed verbatim from the Original" in "so Masculine a stile" (A2r). The irony increases when one recalls that Edward Clarendon described Elizabeth Cary as "a lady of a most masculine understanding, allayed with the passions and infirmities of her own sex."[50] Reading D. R. Woolf's essay of 1988 encourages the suspicion that ideologies of gender still cloud the question of the authorship of this *History.*

According to the "Author's Preface to the Reader" in the folio version, the text was written when the writer took up a "melancholy Pen" to "out-run those weary hours of a deep and sad Passion" by writing about the "unfortunate" King Edward and his equally unfortunate wife, Isabel. Although critical efforts to read this "passion" in reference to Elizabeth Cary's biographical situation in 1627 should be pursued with caution

(claims of writing for self-consolatory purposes were after all conventional: Samuel Daniel, for instance, in the preface to his *Cleopatra* [1594, discussed below] says he writes to relieve his passion), it is nonetheless tempting to consider "E.F." 's preface in connection with Cary's traumatic separation from her husband in 1626, a separation occasioned, as we have seen, by a conversion to Catholicism that became public (albeit more through Lady Denbigh's officiousness than by her own will). A biographical reading of the preface and the text of *Edward* is further encouraged by the obvious autobiographical dimensions of Cary's *Mariam.* If Cary twice relied on her pen to console herself for troubles engendered by her marriage, in both cases she turned to history for her material or, rather, to a historical narrative that other writers had already worked into various shapes and meanings. Thus she teases us to find her literary "identity" in the shadowy terrain between authorship, translation, and revision.

SUBTEXTS AND CONTEXTS FOR *MARIAM*

Josephus and Jewish materials

The major source for *Mariam* is the Jewish historian Josephus's account of Herod the Great's troubled marriage to the royal-blooded Jewish woman Mariam, or Mariamne. The marriage, which took place in about 42 B.C. following Herod's divorce from his first wife, Doris, strengthened his political alliances among the Jews. Josephus describes this marriage, with different and sometimes conflicting details, both in his *Jewish War* (A.D. 69–79) and in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (ca. A.D. 93). Cary seems to have relied chiefly on the version of the story in book 15 of the *Antiquities,* which describes Herod's slaying of Mariam and Sohemus, the man with whom she had been accused of committing adultery, after Herod's return from a visit to Caesar Augustus in 29 B.C. (In *The Jewish War,* Herod is said to have killed Mariam and a different alleged adulterer, Josephus, in 34 or 35 B.C., after returning from a visit to Mark Antony.) Cary compresses, amplifies, and transposes material from the *Antiquities* in order to observe the dramatic unities, and she alters the characterization of the heroine and other figures in ways that merit study. Among her most significant revisions of the source is her emphasis on different styles of female speech