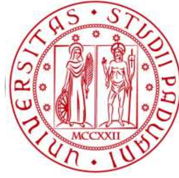

Sede Amministrativa: Università degli Studi di Padova

Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari

SCUOLA DI DOTTORATO DI RICERCA IN
SCIENZE LINGUISTICHE, FILOLOGICHE E LETTERARIE

INDIRIZZO: ANGLISTICA
CICLO XXVIII

"When she hath spacious ground to walk upon, Why on the ridge should she desire to go?": The influence of the Herod-Mariamme myth on Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*

Direttore della Scuola: Ch.ma Prof.ssa Rosanna Benacchio

Coordinatore d'indirizzo: Ch.ma Prof.ssa Annalisa Oboe

Supervisore: Ch.ma Prof.ssa Alessandra Petrina

Dottorando: Katarzyna Kacka

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Abstract

La prima età moderna in Inghilterra fu caratterizzata da una riscoperta della scrittura femminile; le donne inglesi si avvicinarono ad essa, ognuna con motivi ed intenti differenti, conseguendo risultati assai disparati. Alcune di esse espressero problematiche tipicamente femminili, altre trattarono temi del loro tempo, sul versante della religione, della politica e della cultura. La mia tesi ha lo scopo di rafforzare l'inclusione di Elizabeth Cary nel canone letterario inglese delle prime donne drammaturghe, attraverso l'analisi delle nuove possibili connessioni con altri testi del periodo che avrebbero potuto influenzare il suo tentativo di riscrittura di un fatto storico, ovvero l'unione di Erode il Grande alla sua seconda moglie, nel dramma *The Tragedy of Mariam*, pubblicato nel 1613.

La mia tesi si sviluppa in due parti. Il primo inquadramento teorico si configura in due capitoli. Il primo capitolo della tesi è una rassegna critica degli studi relativi alla storia e ricezione della tragedia di Elizabeth Cary, con lo scopo di comprendere al meglio le modalità con le quali gli studiosi hanno analizzato, interpretato e raccontato la tragedia negli ultimi cento anni. Partendo dalle informazioni sulla vita privata e professionale dell'autrice stessa, riportate in gran parte nella sua biografia, cerco di confrontare le ricostruzioni ed i giudizi degli studiosi moderni e contemporanei sulla storia ed il significato della tragedia, anche in occasione dell'uscita delle varie edizioni del testo e degli spettacoli teatrali degli ultimi vent'anni; questi ultimi alquanto inaspettati dato che si tratta di un 'closet drama'. Nella sintesi degli studi sul testo di Cary, dopo averne verificato la natura e gli scopi delle varie critiche, traggo le conclusioni che la tragedia è stata sottoposta a varie e ripetute letture, secondo ritmi e tempi che dipendono dalla situazione storica in cui gli studiosi hanno concepito la propria analisi, ovvero sono intervenuti a rettificare, precisare, o anche cambiare la lettura di *Mariam*. Nel secondo capitolo, invece, mi interrogo sulle capacità letterarie della scrittrice, provando a capire le problematicità e le dinamiche del suo possibile percorso di apprendimento nella prima età moderna in Inghilterra, e quindi anche sulla possibilità di acceso alle potenziali fonti della tragedia. Questo capitolo, infatti, include anche un resoconto di

studi fatti finora sulle fonti della sua tragedia, di particolare rilievo per concentrare la mia attenzione nella seconda parte della tesi, che è uno studio esclusivamente comparativo su alcune delle fonti primarie dell'opera, sia quelle accertate, ovvero *Antichità giudaiche* di Flavio Giuseppe, scritta nel 93-94 A.D. circa, e *Guerra giudaica*, scritta tra il 69 ed il 79 A.D., oggetto dell'analisi nel terzo capitolo, che quelle meno esplorate, quali la Bibbia e i drammi medievali inglesi; entrambi le fonti sono oggetto dell'analisi nel quarto capitolo.

Infatti, una volta approntato l'apparato storico-teorico-critico, entro nel vivo della fase di analisi del testo ed il confronto diretto con le suddette fonti. La tragedia di Cary, a quanto pare, non è solo un documento storico e socio-politico, che stabilisce l'affiliazione di Cary alle convenzioni letterarie del periodo; può anche essere considerata un testo che dimostra le capacità letterarie di Cary nel rielaborare le importanti fonti storiche sul secondo matrimonio di Erode il Grande, oltre che integrare numerosi elementi nella messa in scena early modern di Erode dalle fonti bibliche e testi teatrali inglesi medievali, di cui Erode fu un indiscusso protagonista. Ogni rivisitazione del mito deve essere considerata come esempio a se stante, specie quando le dinamiche della trama differiscono a volte dal punto di partenza; per questo motivo l'analisi del terzo capitolo serve a ricordare in prima battuta quanto la trama della tragedia di Cary sia relativamente simile al racconto originale di Flavio Giuseppe, per ora considerato l'unica fonte primaria certa di *Mariam*. Questo studio costituisce la base per un'analisi più approfondita della figura di Erode, in particolare, nel quarto capitolo, in quanto risulta essere l'unico protagonista caratterizzato da una massiccia presenza in molteplici testi, scritti prima di *Mariam*. Sembrerebbe, infatti, che i vari Herod-protagonisti dei racconti biblici abbiano potuto ulteriormente rafforzare il modo di mettere in scena il personaggio di Cary. Inoltre, nel Quattrocento e Cinquecento inglese, numerosi testi teatrali a sfondo biblico si occuparono della figura di Erode, ed il successo che riscossero, resero questo personaggio un autentico punto di riferimento nella storia della letteratura inglese. Dietro il mito di Erode ci fu l'evoluzione di un archetipo; cambiarono gli eventi storici, si modificarono i modi di metterlo in scena, riproponendo tuttavia la sua leggenda; questa considerazione mi ha quindi spinta

ad interrogarmi su quanto questo fenomeno avrebbe potuto influenzare la messa in scena di Erode da parte di Cary. Lo scopo della mia analisi è infatti dimostrare che Cary, a quanto pare, fece ampio uso di svariati testi su Erode; l'autrice riorganizzò e reinventò il materiale disponibile su Erode. Il re divenne così per Cary un personaggio che raccoglie in sé determinate caratteristiche da diverse fonti, ovvero quelle che alla scrittrice sembrarono essere degne di potenziamento, come il rancore, la rabbia, la feroce volontà di vendicarsi, ma anche il suo amore senza confini verso Mariamme, che prima di svolgere una qualsiasi funzione sociale, in quanto elementi di una metafora letteraria, servirono sostanzialmente a ricordare il mito stesso.

Acknowledgements

I cannot imagine a better place to undertake a research degree than Università degli Studi di Padova. I am indebted to all the university staff for their time, experience and camaraderie.

First of all, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to all my professors, who guided me through the three-year research and earlier, helping me to find and establish my opinion amongst an overwhelming critical background; their support has been extensive, motivating and vital. I would like to thank Professor Paola Bottalla, who first instilled in me a love of the English Renaissance, and women writers in particular, and encouraged my desire to learn more, as well as professors Maria Maddalena Parlati, Rocco Coronato and Annalisa Oboe, who have willingly offered helpful suggestions to improve this dissertation; for their time and their examples of professionalism, I am most grateful. Yearly meetings with the Senior and Junior scholars of the IASEMS - Italian Association of Shakespearean and Early Modern Studies have further helped to shape my thinking on the subject of my research.

I have been fortunate in the excellent service I have experienced in the libraries: Biblioteca di Lingue e Letterature Anglo-Germaniche e Slave and Biblioteca di Storia as well as Biblioteca Universitaria of the University of Padova; many thanks to the librarians, especially Licia Cavalet and Carla Trivellato, for their advice above and beyond the call of duty, as well as a wealth of resources and reading to make my research prolific. I would also like to thank all the staff of Dipartimento di Lingue Anglo-Germaniche of the University of Padua, and in particular, Paolo Altezza and Roberto Brighenti, for kindly providing me with administrative, technical and moral support.

I must make special note of my closest friends and loyal companions in this adventure, Elisa Calgaro and Sara Pahor, and all other colleagues-researchers, whom I have known during the period of my research, especially Elisa Pastorello, Alice Equestri, Beatrice Mameli, Federica Ditadi,

Andrei Ionescu, Allison Lindsay Steenson, Giulia D'Agostini and Sara Trevisan. Each has, in her or his own way and sometimes indirectly and unawares, influenced my thinking and development.

Thank you also to my workmates and dear friends from AISPAL in Padova, UAV in Vigonza, CPIA in Padova and UPC in Camponogara, for their consideration and great understanding.

My family has ultimately made this possible through their sacrifice and faith in me, I would like to thank them from the bottom of my heart for their unconditional love and their eternal encouragement.

Foreword

The scholarly studies on *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), the first original five-act closet drama written in English by a woman, Elizabeth Cary, still raise questions about the author's inspirational impetus for her revised version on the Herod-Mariamme myth. Cary appears to have heavily borrowed from Flavius Josephus's works, *The Antiquities*, completed circa 93-94 A.D., and perhaps also *The Jewish War*, completed earlier, between 69 and 79 A.D., for the plot of *Mariam*, but a number of differences in the action development as well as the characterization of some protagonists between the primary sources for the play and Cary's version has led scholars to suppose that she might have been inspired by other works. This thesis, in fact, argues for a recognition of the significance of a larger use of the biblical and early English dramatic sources, till now little explored, that appear to be at the heart of many exiting details added by Cary to the account of the Jewish historian on Herod the Great and his second marriage.

The first chapter offers a survey of the critical studies on the tragedy which, starting from its first modern 1914 Malone Society edition by Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg and through a growing number of books and essays with various approaches to the text throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, seeks to emphasise a scholarly growing interest in the subject matter and the structure of the text, the circumstances in which Cary composed and published her play, as well as the meaning and the importance of this literary work for contemporary readers and spectators.

The second chapter constitutes a study of Cary's educational background, mostly reconstructed on the information about her family life and works, included in her biography, which while presenting Cary as a young omnivorous reader of the time, able and encouraged to think critically, explores the historical and literary contexts of the play. The chapter concludes with an updated review of the present state of scholarship on the possible influential material on *Mariam*, preparing the ground for the literary analysis, respectively, in the third chapter, of the main source

of *Mariam*, and in the fourth chapter, of probable sources for the tragedy, including the Bible and the early English dramas about Herod.

The third chapter examines Cary's use and manipulation of the most probable and already quite well-explored historical sources by Flavius Josephus. It focuses upon the ways in which Cary selected the historical events and personalized them as well as the characterisation of some protagonists, constructing her own version of the story of Herod's marriage to Mariamme. This chapter, while discussing Cary's creativity in retelling the Herod-Mariamme myth, highlights her apparently strong alignment with the literary and social conventions of the period.

The last chapter is an examination of evidence I have used to support my hypothesis that Cary might have blended more contents and characterizations to enliven the comparatively stark figures of the historical sources, and therefore, their actions. In this section, in fact, I explain in what ways the writer appears to go beyond the historical accounts, pointing to the similarity between Cary's dramatization of Herod, in particular, to different biblical Herods as well as the model of the biblical angry and paranoid stage villain built in early English dramas, and thus, emphasising that *Mariam* may be considered a compelling example of emerging literally experimentation on the Herod-Mariamme myth.

CHAPTER ONE: A Survey of Criticism

Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam* (1613), the first original five-act closet drama written in English by a woman, for centuries attracted little scholarly attention. The 1914 Malone Society edition by Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg,[1] however, paved the way for numerous critical studies providing fertile ground for questions about Cary's authorship of the play, the date of its composition, its first publication, the 1613 quarto and its surviving early modern copies, its genre, its theatrical dimension, its sources and the subject matter and approaches to reading the tragedy. Literary criticism has approached the text from historical, formalist, sociological, biographical, psychological, gender, deconstructionist and reader-response perspectives, if necessary combined, to demonstrate Cary's participation in contemporary literary dialogue, as a young, well-read and highly-intellectual author of a mature work of literary depth and historical importance.

This chapter offers an overview of the critical readings of the tragedy over the past one hundred years and aims to guide the reader in comparing the phases and multiple layers in the process of developing a critical awareness of *Mariam* and its author that has been the fruit of different skills in analysing the text and its plot, making interpretations using inductive or deductive reasoning and making decisions or solving problems. Interestingly, it seems that historical and socio-cultural context has been a necessary and useful but not a sufficient condition for enabling critical analysis on the tragedy, as scholars have shown different propensity to critical thinking about *Mariam* in relation to the historical period; recent studies, above all, have provided several examples in support of scholars' great open-mindedness, flexibility, imagination, curiosity, respect for modernity and willingness to entertain not only the specialist but also the non-specialist readership.

[1] Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg, eds, *The Tragedy Of Mariam, 1613*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914.

Critical responses to *Mariam* have reflected the concerns that have been of crucial importance to the study of early modern women generally. Concerning the text's little popularity, scholarship has been mainly devoted to the dissemination and expansion of historical and textual knowledge about Elizabeth Cary and the tragedy; at the same time, critics have been working to illuminate the significant issues represented in the play. Consequently, studies on Cary's tragedy can be found nowadays in several editions of *Mariam* or books and essays discussing early modern women writers.

1.1. Elizabeth Cary's authorship of the play

Nowadays, critics agree on the fact that the author's initials, "E.C.," mentioned in the title, do refer to Elizabeth Tanfield Cary, the only child of Sir Lawrence Tanfield, a wealthy Oxfordshire lawyer, and his wife, Elizabeth Symondes, and wife of Sir Henry Cary, who became Viscount Falkland in 1620. Barbara K. Lewalski, for example, states that Cary's authorship of *Mariam* can be easily identifiable from the play's title page, which introduces its author as "that learned, virtuous, and truly noble Ladie, E.C."[2] Given that the initial letters themselves can hardly afford any strong evidence of authorship, and thus, should be interpreted with caution, criticism has looked for further proofs of it over the past one hundred years.

[2] Barbara K. Lewalski, "Elizabeth Lady Falkland and the Authorship," in Barbara K. Lewalski, ed., *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 318.

THE

TRAGEDIE

OF MARIAM,

THE FAIRE

Queene of Iewry.

VVritten by that learned,

vertuous, and truly noble Ladie,

E. C.

LONDON.

Printed by Thomas Creede, for Richard

Hawkins, and are to be solde at his shoppe

in Chancery Lane, neere vnto

Sargeants Inne.

1613.

Title-page of *The Tragedy of Mariam*[3]

[3] Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedie of Mariam, the Faire Queene of Iewry. VVritten by that learned, vertuous, and truly noble Ladie, E.C.*, London: Printed by Thomas Creede, 1613, STC 4613, p. 1.

Dunstan and Greg, for example, in their 1914 edition of the play, claim that the 1612 *Muse's Sacrifice or Divine Meditations* by John Davies of Hereford, addressed to "The most noble, and no lesse deseruedly-renowned Ladyes, as well Darlings, as Patronesses, of the Muses; Lucy, Countesse of Bedford; Mary, Countesse –Dowager of Pembrooke; and Elizabeth, Lady Cary, (wife of Sr. Henry Cary:) Glories of Women,"[4] could be satisfactory evidence, perhaps the most reliable one, of Cary's authorship of *Mariam*.[5] Cary is here celebrated as the learned author of the drama set in Palestine;[6] and moreover, the poem provides the readers with a crucial detail on Elizabeth Cary's marriage to Sir Henry Cary:[7]

Cary (of whom Minerua stands in feare,
lest she, from her, should get Arts Regencie)
Of Art so moues the great-all-mouing Spheare,
that eu'ry Orbe of Science moues thereby.

Thou mak'st Melpomen proud, and my Heart great
of such a Pupill, who, in Buskin fine,
With Feete of State, dost make thy Muse to mete
the Scenes of Syracuse and Palestine.

Art, Language ; yea ; abstruse and holy Tongues,
thy Wit and Grace acquired thy Fame to raise;
And still to fill thine owne, and others Songs;
thine, with thy Parts, and others, with thy praise.

Such neruy Limbs of Art, and Straines of Wit
Times past ne'er knew the weaker Sexe to haue;
And Times to come, will hardly credit it,
if thus thou giue thy Workes both Birth and Graue.[8]

An extra proof might be an enigmatic insertion, a dedication by the author to a "worthy sister, Mistress Elizabeth Cary," which Dunstan and Greg found in one of the surviving copies of the play, the Huth copy (now in the Houghton Library at Harvard University). According to Dunstan and Greg's studies of Elizabeth Cary's genealogical tree, this dedication refers to the wife of Cary's husband's brother, Philip Cary, named Elizabeth (Bland Cary), who might have used the

[4] John Davies, *The Muses Sacrifice*, London: Printed by T.S., 1612, STC 6338, p. 1.
[5] Dunstan and Greg (1914), pp. XVI-XVII.
[6] Davies, p. 4.
[7] It must be noted that quite a few women named Lady Elizabeth Cary, possibly spelled in three different ways: 'Carye,' 'Carew' or 'Carey,' were alive in early seventeenth-century England, but it seems that only one of them was married to Sir Henry Cary, whose name and surname were also widespread in that period. Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VIII.
[8] Davies, p. 4.

title of 'Mistress' at the time of the composition of *Mariam*.[9] This speculation has been brought into question by Marta Straznicky, who embraces the possibility of attributing the dedication to Henry Cary's sister, also named Elizabeth, even though it seems that she married Sir John Saville on 20 November 1586.[10] Straznicky states, however, that Cary's biography relates Elizabeth Cary's deep friendship to her husband's sister, especially when he was in the military, and therefore, permits us to speculate about Cary's husband's sister as a potential addressee of the dedication.[11] If it were not for Cary's husband's sister's marriage to John Saville in 1586, the last lines of the first stanza of the dedication: "So your fair brother is to me the sun, / And you, his sister, as my moon appear" (To Diana's Earthly Deputess, 6-7) might be interpreted in the way Straznicky does; but it seems that this theory has no solid basis. On the contrary, Wray believes that in the above mentioned two lines, Elizabeth Cary, the writer, addresses Henry Cary and his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Bland Cary. Wray finds this theory, originated by Dunstan and Greg, more persuasive, considering that the Cary family lived with the Bland Cary family until 1612.[12] Karen Britland cites G. E. Cokayne, who confirms that Elizabeth Cary, the author, used to spend much time with her Bland Cary in-laws, while living all together in Hertfordshire until 1612, when, as baptism records show, the Bland Carys moved to St Olave's in London.[13] The second stanza of the dedication provides us with further evidence of the author's profound friendship with the dedicatee: "You are my next belov'd, my second friend [after my husband], / For when my Phoebus' absence makes it night, / Whilst to th'antipodes his beams do bend, / From you, my Phoebe, shines my second light," but it does not

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[9] The date of Philip's marriage to Elizabeth Bland of Carleton, Yorks (Elizabeth Bland Cary) is unknown, but Dunstan and Greg believe that Philips's eldest child's baptism, in 1610, might imply that Philip Cary and Elizabeth Bland Cary had not been married for long before that date. Dunstan and Greg (1914), pp. VIII-IX, XVIII. This observation, however, must be taken with caution; Elizabeth Cary, the author of *Mariam*, for example, did not have children for seven years after her marriage to Henry. Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. XIX.

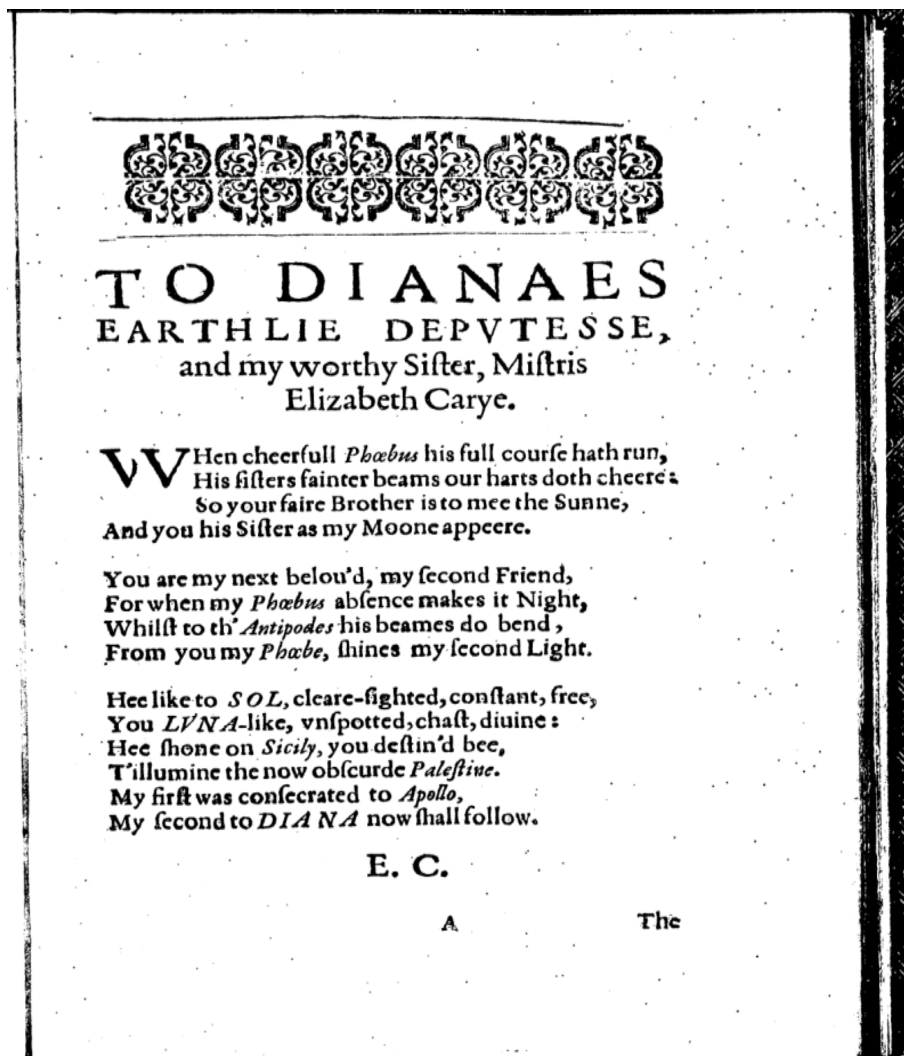
[10] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VIII.

[11] Marta Straznicky, "'Profane Stoical Paradoxes': *The Tragedie of Mariam* and Sidneian Closet Drama," in Karen Raber, ed., *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700: Volume 6: Elizabeth Cary*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, p. 143.

[12] Ramona Wray, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland Her Life*, London: Methuen, 2012, p. 72.

[13] Karen Britland, ed., *Elizabeth Cary's The Tragedy of Mariam*, London: A&C Black, 2010, p. X. For further information on the Bland family and their connection with Elizabeth Cary, see G. E. Cokayne, "Bland, of Carleton, co. York," *The Genealogist* 23, 1907, pp. 201-2.

help us draw any other conclusions. In any case, given that both above mentioned ladies, Henry Cary's sister and Henry Cary's sister-in-law, were closely related to the author, other modern critics, such as Karen Raber, Donald W. Foster and Elaine Beilin, agree that the dedicatory poem to a "worthy sister, Mistress Elizabeth Cary" gives strong and satisfactory evidence of Cary's authorship of *Mariam*.[14]



TO DIANAES
EARTHLIE DEPVTESSE,
and my worthy Siſter, Miſtris
Elizabeth Carye.

WHen cheerfull *Phœbus* his full courſe hath run,
His ſiſters fainter beams our harts doth cheere:
So your faire Brother is to mee the Sunne,
And you his Siſter as my Moone appeere.

You are my next belou'd, my ſecond Friend,
For when my *Phœbus* abſence makes it Night,
Whilſt to th'*Antipodes* his beames do bend,
From you my *Phœbe*, ſhines my ſecond Light.

Hee like to *SOL*, cleare-ſighted, conſtant, free,
You *LVNA*-like, vnſpotted, chaſt, diuine:
Hee ſhone on *Sicily*, you deſtin'd bee,
T'illumine the now obſcurde *Paleſtine*.
My firſt was conſecrated to *Apollo*,
My ſecond to *DIANA* now ſhall follow.

E. C.

A The

Page with the author's dedication[15]

[14] Raber, p. XVII; Donald W. Foster, "Resurrecting the Author: Elizabeth Tanfield Cary," in Raber, p. 32; and Elaine Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedie of Mariam*," in Raber, pp. 5-6.
[15] Cary, p. 2.

Furthermore, Dunstan and Greg remark that *Mariam* was listed in Archer's catalogue[16] in 1656, under the title of *Mariame. Tragedy. Lady Eliz. Carew*, and appeared in Kirkman's lists,[17] in 1661 and in 1671, with the author's name again spelt as 'Eliz. Carew,'[18] which in all three cases might refer to Lady Elizabeth Cary, wife of Sir Henry Cary. Interestingly, two centuries later, W. Carew Hazlitt cited *Mariam*'s author's name in the same way: "I came across a copy of *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry*, 1613, by Lady E. Carew."[19] If the last name 'Carew' is a variation of 'Cary,' this means that Cary's last name used to be spelt in two different ways over the centuries. Dunstan and Greg, having in hand no reasonable proof, confirming the possible linguistic variations in spelling of Cary's last name occurring over the past three centuries, preferred to consider the circumstances with extreme caution and claimed: "Since the name is spelt 'Carew' in the lists and 'Carey' [*sic*] in the dedication, the probability is that the former drew not from the latter, but from an inscription on the title of some copy in Archer's stock. Such old inscriptions are notoriously untrustworthy, and little authority can be attached to the statement in the lists."[20] It can be said, however, that Dunstan and Greg were not so far from the truth by attributing the last name 'Carew' to Elizabeth Cary. Ramona Wray, in the latest edition of the play, confirms the existence of the seventeenth-century hand signature, 'Eliz: Carew,' in one of the extant copies of the play, which may refer either to "the author's sister-in-law Elizabeth Bland Cary or to Cary herself,"[21] and thus, strengthen Dunstan and Greg's initial assumption on the matter and be crucial in the ascription of Cary's authorship of the play.

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[16] Early modern booksellers offered their purchasers the possibility to consult catalogues with the information on the printed texts existing on the contemporary market. Edward Archer's catalogue was an extremely precise and up-to-date compendium of all the plays, printed until the mid-seventeenth century, and their authors. Lauren Shohet, "The Masque in/as Print," in Marta Straznicky, ed., *The Book of the Play: Playwrights, Stationers, and Readers in Early Modern England*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006, p. 189.

[17] Francis Kirkman's collection of 690 English plays was available at his shop for sale or reading since 1661. Kirkman's catalogue, based on the research of previous booksellers, was improved by Gerard Langbaine the younger and became the formative document of English dramatic bibliography. L. H. Newcomb, 'Kirkman, Francis (*b.* 1632, *d.* in or after 1680),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15672, accessed 19 June 2014.

[18] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VII.

[19] William Carew Hazlitt, "Lady Elizabeth Carew's *Tragedy of Mariam,*" *Notes and Queries* 193, 1865, pp. 409-27.

[20] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VII.

[21] Wray, p. 58.

Despite having few documents, scholars tried to bring order and logic to this mysterious and confusing field. We may claim to possess some satisfactory information on Cary as a possible author of the tragedy, not simply an impressionistic idea of the knowledge displayed in the tragedy concerning, for example, the problems which might be connected with the author's private life and that should be carefully taken into consideration in the analysis of Cary's authorship of *Mariam*. Though several parallels can be drawn between the plot of the text and Cary's life, it is safer, perhaps, to attribute *Mariam* to Cary, on the basis of the information we have on Cary's talent and reputation as a playwright and her personal connections to the contemporary writers, who celebrated her extensive, multilingual education and cultural achievements. To be promoted by a prominent person was certainly provided with a reason in early modern England, especially concerning the practice of censorship, and thus, Cary, who was appreciated by her contemporaries,[22] undeniably proved to have put herself forward as the author and gained new authority – no matter whether legally, economically or symbolically.

1.2. Date of composition

As far as the dating of the play is concerned, Dunstan and Greg claim that it might have been written after 1602, the date of publication of Lodge's translation of Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*,[23] considered to be the main source for *Mariam*, but not later than 23 March 1605. Dunstan and Greg believe that Cary's dedication to a "worthy sister, Mistress Elizabeth Cary" refers to the wife of Cary's husband's brother, Philip Cary; and since Philip Cary was knighted on 23 March 1605, his wife (assuming they were already married) was not supposed to use the title of Mistress

[22] See the extant dedicatory letters to Cary written between 1612 and 1633. Deana Rankin states that Cary was "firmly planted in the public sphere" as a writer and as a dramatist in particular. Deana Rankin, "'A More Worthy Patronesse': Elizabeth Cary and Ireland," in Heather Wolfe, ed., *Literary Career and Legacy of Elizabeth Cary, 1613-1680*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 213-4.

[23] Dunstan and Greg remark that Lodge's translation of Josephus was already licenced on 26 June 1598. Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. XV.

after that date.[24] Other critics such as Nancy Cotton Pearse and Nancy A. Gutierrez[25] accept Dunstan and Greg's hypothesis. Marta Straznicky's view on dating the play in the first few years of Cary's marriage concurs with Dunstan and Greg's, but while speculating on the possibility of attributing the dedication to Henry Cary's sister, also named Elizabeth, the hypothesis firmly rejected by Dunstan and Greg,[26] she is not at all confident of establishing the time limit in dating the play.[27]

Karen Britland brings Dunstan e Greg's theory into question. She bases her assumptions on Cokayne's research on the Bland of Carleton family, according to which Philip and Elizabeth Bland of Carleton perhaps got married "in or shortly before 1609,"[28] given that their first child was baptised in 1610. The exact date of their marriage has not been established yet, claims Britland, and such circumstances may let us think that the couple did not join in matrimony "until Philip had received his knighthood, which would mean that Elizabeth Bland was never, technically, Mistress Cary."[29] It should be said, however, that the nature of such an assertion seems to be somewhat impressionistic. Supposing Philip and Elizabeth Bland had married earlier than 1609, initial potential health problems or even reciprocal decision about not having children in the first years of their union might have delayed the birth of their first child.

Stephanie Hodgson-Wright confidently claims that the last lines of the dedicatory poem addressed to the author's husband and sister-in-law[30] clearly show that Cary could not have written *Mariam* before 1603. Cary got married shortly before the end of 1602, soon after the match made in

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[24] Dunstan and Greg (1914), pp. VIII-IX, XVIII.
[25] Nancy Cotton Pearse, "Elizabeth Cary, Renaissance Playwright," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 18, 1977, p. 603; Nancy A. Gutierrez, "Valuing *Mariam*: Genre Study and Feminist Analysis," in Raber, p. 101.
[26] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VIII.
[27] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 143.
[28] Britland, p. X.
[29] Britland, p. X.
[30] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry*, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000, p. 14.

or by October of the same year;[31] and thus, it is unlikely she composed the play before she got married.[32]

Barbara K. Lewalski states that Cary's allusion in the dedication to Phoebus's sojourn in the Antipodes might refer to her husband's military experience (1604-1606)[33] including his imprisonment in Spain,[34] and thus, Cary could have only composed the play after his homecoming. Karen Britland adds that Henry Cary's participation in Campion's *Lord Hay's Masque*[35] in January 1607, as a Knight of Apollo, might have been an extra proof in dating, at least the dedication, no earlier than the winter time 1606/1607, given that the author's references to Apollo and Phoebus might have been inspired exactly by that performance.[36] Hodgson-Wright, with reference to Cary's biography, suggests that Cary might have waited for her husband's approval before continuing writing until his return, and thus, *Mariam* might not have been written before 1606.[37]

Elaine Beilin and Donald W. Foster also favour an autobiographical reading of the play, but from a more feminist point of view. They date it in the first few years of Cary's marriage, which actually started in 1606, because they believe that the play's plot draws upon Cary's own wifely experience, and therefore, Cary could hardly have plotted the drama before she started living with her husband.[38] On the one hand, Cary's biography seems to be supportive of their theory. In fact, it describes the first years of Cary as a married woman in the following way: "The first year or more she lived at her own father's; her husband about that time went into Holland, leaving her <there> still with her own friends. He, in the time they had been married, had been for the most part at the

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[31] Hodgson-Wright, p. 12.

[32] Hodgson-Wright, p. 14.

[33] Barbara K. Lewalski, "Resisting Tyrants: Elizabeth Cary's Tragedy and History," in Lewalski, pp. 190-1.

[34] Henry Cary left England for Holland in 1604 to serve as a soldier in the Protestant wars against Spain and was captured by the Spanish near the junction of the Ruhr and Rhine in October 1605, when the Spanish troops defeated English and Dutch soldiers. Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, p. 189.

[35] Henry Cary used to attend and take part in the entertainments. He certainly danced in Thomas Campion's entertainment for Queen Anne at Caversham, Berkshire, in April 1613, and he tilted in Ben Johnson's masque for the marriage of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and Frances Howard, on 1 January 1614. Britland, p. XXIII.

[36] Britland, p. X.

[37] Hodgson-Wright, p. 15.

[38] Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedy of Mariam*," p. 5; Foster, pp. 32-3.

court or his father's house, from her, and <so> had heard her speak little, and those letters he had received from her had been indited by others, by her mother's appointment, so he knew her then very little."[39] The same source, however, relates that Cary seriously embraced the idea of writing after she had moved to her parents-in-law's, and more precisely, when her mother-in-law forbade her to read books and took them all away from her during Henry's absence. Thus, it cannot be excluded that *Mariam* was, at least partially, composed before her husband's return from the wars in 1606.

Finally, Margaret W. Ferguson, Meredith Skura and Ramona Wray do not notice any clear evidence for an early dating of the play and considerably enlarge the time limit for its composition, stating that *Mariam* is more likely from the period between late 1602 and 1612, as they tend to include the whole range of relationships among the forces shaping Cary's knowledge on the topic.[40]

Dating Cary's *Mariam* has brought widespread discussion over the past one hundred years. It seems that scholars have outlined some most commonly agreed writing dates, but the problem concerning the exact time of the tragedy's composition has not been solved as most dates are subject to interpretation. I agree with Ferguson, Skura and Wray, who extend the time limit for *Mariam*'s composition till 1612, which seems to me very reasonable, considering the fact that the play was entered in the Register of the Stationers' Company by December 1612; on the other hand, I think it is not possible to rely on any earlier dates suggested by different scholars to establish the beginning of *Mariam*'s composition, especially the year 1602 suggested by Dunstan and Greg, as Cary might have consulted her primary sources even earlier, in other languages, considering her linguistic skills, and not necessarily in English after 1602. It should be stressed that, even though scholars were not able to establish the correct date of *Mariam*'s composition, they were able to place it in the historical and cultural context, which comprises the last years of the sixteenth century

[39] Weller and Ferguson, p. 188.

[40] Margaret W. Ferguson, "A Room Not Their Own: Renaissance Women as Readers and Writers," in Clayton Koelb and Susan Noakes, eds, *The Comparative Perspective on Literature: Approaches to Theory and Practice*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 106; Meredith Skura, "The Reproduction of Mothering in *Mariam*, *Queen of Jewry*: A Defense of 'Biographical' Criticism," in Raber, pp. 57-8; Wray, p. 10.

and the first years of the seventeenth century. This is not to be underestimated as it helps us conceive of the socio-cultural context in which the tragedy was composed. We have then the possibility to visualize what, how or why writers, in this case women writers, wrote at that time; in general, a true familiarity with a historical period and region, in which the author lived, allows us to understand how his or her social space and time were different from ours. This is not only central to interpret the text in depth, but also to understand our approach to reading *Mariam* and look at its matter in its proper perspective.

1.3. First publication

It seems that no manuscript of the play has survived. Such a manuscript, however, must have existed, and modern criticism has even speculated on the possibility that Cary's closet drama had circulated in manuscript some years prior to its publication. Dunstan and Greg were the first to observe that John Davies's 1612 dedicatory lines to Elizabeth Cary can prove *Mariam*'s early circulation in manuscript, at least among Cary's relatives and friends.[41] Other critics such as Barry Weller, Margaret W. Ferguson and Marta Straznicky find Dunstan and Greg's theory credible.[42]

As far as the first edition of the play is concerned, the only known early modern edition of *Mariam* was entered into the Register of the Stationers' Company on 17 December 1612, and was published in quarto by Richard Hawkins and printed by Thomas Creede in 1613.[43] Dunstan and

[41] Dunstan and Greg (1914), pp. VII-VIII.

[42] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 5-6; Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 141. For further discussion on the play's circulation in manuscript, see R. V. Holdsworth, "Middleton and *The Tragedy of Mariam*," *Notes and Queries* 231, 1986, pp. 379-80.

[43] Most copies of the quarto consist of eight four-leaf signatures, A-H, and signature I, which contains two leaves. Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. V; Weller and Ferguson, p. 44. Richard Hawkins first apprenticed to Edmond Mattes, a stationer in London between 1604 and 1611. He started working as a bookseller in his shop in Chancery Lane near Sergeant's Inn in London from 1613 to 1636. Cary's *Mariam* was his first entry in the Stationers' register and it was sold from Mattes's shop, whose Hawkins, perhaps, became owner. During his career his did not publish many plays, but some of them are indeed worth mentioning including Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Maid's Tragedy* (1630) and *A King and No King* (1631) and miscellaneous literature. Marta Straznicky, "Selected Stationer Profiles," in Marta Straznicky, *Shakespeare's Stationers: Studies in Cultural Bibliography*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, p. 254. Thomas Creede worked as a printer for William Ponsonby in London, at the sign of the Catherine Wheel in

Greg cite its entry in the Register of the Stationers' Company in their first modern edition of the play: "Entred for his copie under the hands of Sir George Bucke and master Harison Warden A Booke called Mariamne The tragedie of the fayre Mariamne Quene of Iurye."[44] Karen Britland in her 2010 edition of *Mariam* explains that Cary's play, Gervase Markham's *Hobson's Horse-Load of Letters* (printed by Thomas Snodham) and I.C.'s *Alcilia Philoparthens loving folly* (a miscellaneous collection of verses, printed by Snodham and Creede), were the first three volumes published by Hawkins, after he had started working on his own in Chancery Lane, and such circumstances, according to Britland, might have convinced him to publish a play by an unknown writer.[45]

Britland is convinced that Cary was helped to have her drama put into print and in her analysis suspects either Sir John Davies of Hereford or Gervase Markham of being crucial to Cary's succeess. Sir John Davies of Hereford was driven by a great admiration for Cary, explains Britland, and thus, might be thought to have negotiated her play's publication; what is more, his residence in Fleet Street, close to Chancery Lane, might have strengthened the possibility that he knew Hawkins's company very well and put in a good word for Cary.[46] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright agrees with Britland and adds that John Davies's 1612 dedication, which encouraged all women to publish their works, might have been of help to Cary seeking to reach the printing press.[47] Moreover, it seems that Cary herself was well-known among the Fleet Street and Chancery Lane publishers. Richard More's[48] 1614 edition of John Bodenham's *England's Helicon* and William

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Thames Street from 1593 to 1600, and at the Eagle and Child in the Old Exchange from 1600 to 1617. He used to work on several notable publications including Shakespeare's plays. Wray claims that his device, which shows the crowned and nude figure of Truth being hit with a whip, might have been of significance for a play, in which the titular protagonist is punished for speaking the truth. Wray, p. 71.

[44] Dunstan (1914), p. V.

[45] Britland, p. XXVIII.

[46] Britland, p. XXVIII.

[47] Hodgson-Wright, p. 14.

[48] The bookseller Richard More was the owner of the shop in St Dunstan's churchyard, adjacent to Chancery Lane. Britland, pp. XXVIII-XXIX.

Sheares's[49] 1633 edition of *The Works of John Marston*, both dedicated to Elizabeth Cary, according to Britland might imply that "both More and Sheares may have met Cary in their shops (which were about ten minutes walk from her London residences at St Bartholomew's and, later, Drury Lane)."[50] In addition, Sheares also had a relationship with Gervase Markham, whose play, *The Dumb Knight*, was published in 1633 and sold at Sheares's shop in Chancery Lane.

Britland believes that also Gervase Markham, whom Cary knew via her sister-in-law, Anne Cary, might have provided Cary with the possibility to have her play published, given that one of his books was also published by Hawkins in 1613.[51] Britland claims that the statement from Cary's biography, which says that one of her works "stolen out of that sister-in-law's (her friend's) chamber, and printed, by her own procurement was called in,"[52] might imply that *Mariam* was delivered to the print shop through Gervase Markham, via Cary's sister-in-law, Anne. Britland believes that Markham might have had a good knowledge of *Mariam*. The reference to *Herodias*, perhaps an early version of *Herod and Antipater*, in 1613 dedicatory letter to his continuation of Sidney's *Arcadia* might be an indirect evidence that Markham's *Herod and Antipater* (1622), co-authored with William Sampson, was inspired by *Mariam*. Britland claims that some of the early scenes of the plays have a similar structure, and therefore, unavoidably "bear comparison."[53] Whether or not Britland's hypotheses appear to be convincing, there is no formal evidence that Cary was indeed helped by some prominent persons of the period in order to make Hawkins appreciate her play's literary value. There seems to be no doubt, however, that the emerging market of publishing was not an appropriate place for female literary production, especially for noble ladies.[54] John Davies, explain Weller and Ferguson, admits it clearly in his 1612 *The Muses Sacrifice*: "The

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[49] The bookseller William Sheares's shop was located in Chancery Lane. Britland explains that between 1631 and 1633 he temporarily moved his shop from St Paul's Yard to Britain's Burse. Britland, p. XXIX.
[50] Britland, p. XXIX.
[51] Gervase Markham was first cousins with Anne Cary's husband, Sir Francis Leeke, titled Baron Deyncourt since 1624 and Earl of Scarsdale since 1645. They were relatives through Markham's mother, Mary, daughter of Sir Francis Leeke and Elizabeth Patton. Britland, p. XXVIII.
[52] Weller and Ferguson, p. 47.
[53] Britland, p. XXIX.
[54] Weller and Ferguson, p. 6.

Presse so much is wrong's / by abject Rimers that great Hearts doe scorne / To have their Measures with such Nombers throng'd / as are so basely got, conceiv'd, and borne."[55]

1.4. Surviving copies of the 1613 Quarto

Dunstan and Greg observe that the quarto published in 1613 has survived in two issues, either with Cary's dedicatory sonnet to: "Diana's Earthly Deputess, and my worthy sister, Mistress Elizabeth Cary" and the list of "the Speakers"[56] on the verso or without that leaf. Initially, Dunstan and Greg believed that only the Huth copy contained the above mentioned extra leaf, an insertion that was not found in other surviving copies of the drama. Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland, in their 1992 supplement to Dunstan and Greg's 1914 edition of the tragedy, confirm the existence of another extant copy, the White copy (now in the Huntington Library in San Marino, California), including the extra leaf; and furthermore, they reformulate Dunstan and Greg's first hypothesis on the existence of the leaf, which assumed that: "The printer had received the extra material after the press run was completed: he had printed it and added it to the copies of the book which were still in his shop."[57] According to Straznicky and Rowland, Dunstan and Greg only knew about the extra leaf in the Huth copy (perhaps from the catalogue of the Huth Library[58]), but in all probability, they had never consulted it,[59] and thus, their suspicion was wrong. In fact, Greg, who in the late 1930s re-examined the case, came to the conclusion that the dedication was more likely to be taken away from the public issue by Hawkins than added to the copies of the printed books, in order to give vague information about the identity of the author. Greg took his stand on the extra leaf, after he

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[55] Davies, p. 8.

[56] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. XXI. For further information on the extra leaf in extant copies of *Mariam*, see Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, eds, *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents,* London: Routledge, 1996, p. 47.

[57] Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg, eds, *The Tragedy Of Mariam, 1613*, with a new introduction by Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland, Oxford: Oxford University Press for The Malone Society, 1992, pp. VII, XXI.

[58] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. V.

[59] Dunstan and Greg themselves admit that they consulted three copies from the British museum and one from the Bodleian Library. Weller and Ferguson explain that Dunstan and Greg might have consulted the Bodleian copy without the leaf (designated G) for their 1914 edition of *Mariam*. Weller and Ferguson, p. 44.

had discovered that the Bodleian copy, labelled Bod. M,[60] evidently showed the stub of the cancelled A1 on its blank leaf before the title, and in view of this evidence finally assumed that only presentation copies were allowed to be kept in the original format.[61]

As far as the complete list of the surviving copies of the 1613 quarto is concerned, it was first published by Weller and Ferguson, in their 1994 edition of *Mariam*. They mention three copies at the British Museum (A, B, and C); three at the National Library of Scotland (D, E, and F); two at the Bodleian Library (G and M, the copy from the Malone collection), and some other single copies at the National Library of Art, Victoria and Albert Museum (Dyce); Worcester College Library, Oxford (Wo); Eton College Library (Eton); the New York Public Library (NY); the Beinecke Library, Yale University (Y); the Elizabethan Club, Yale University (EC); the Houghton Library, Harvard University (Ho); the Boston Public Library (BP); the Folger Shakespeare Library (Fo); the Huntington Library (Hu); and the Newberry Library (N).[62] Hodgson-Wright, in her edition of *Mariam*, includes one more copy in possession of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (Sh.B) and Pierpont Morgan Library (PM)[63].

1.5. Modern editions of *Mariam*

Since the early 1970s, an increasing number of studies in early modern English literature has aimed to analyse in depth women writers' social roles, interests and capacities. Scholars have begun to highlight the importance of sixteenth-century women writers' growing literary experiences, their heightened self-awareness of the discernment of an individualistic approach to writing and their sense of self-worth, assuming that many of them through their writings transcended the negative

[60] Weller and Ferguson, p. 44.
[61] Dunstan and Greg (1992), pp. XXI-XXII. Weller, Ferguson and Hodgson-Wright also mention the Eton Library copy to have visible cancelled stubs in. For further discussion on the A1 leaf, which perhaps circulated only within Cary's family and friends or at court, see Weller and Ferguson, pp. 44-5; Hodgson-Wright, p. 33.
[62] Weller and Ferguson, p. 46.
[63] Hodgson-Wright, pp. 32-3.

impact of their supposed cultural baggage and were able to redefine the socially prescribed self-perspective.

Elizabeth Cary is one of the early modern English women writers, who has aroused considerable interest among scholars, as the first English woman playwright. A few decades after Dunstan and Greg's first modern edition of Cary's play, *The Tragedy of Mariam*, with a critical commentary in the introductory section, concise but accompanied by concrete examples for the analysis, there began a lively debate in the academic community on the figure of this female author and her work. In particular, the text started inspiring critical enthusiasm, giving rise to nine critical editions of *Mariam*, edited between 1992 and 2012, some individually and others in anthologies, among which we may find the Malone Society reprint of the first modern edition by Dunstan and Greg with the additional commentary by Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland (1992),[64] the critical edition by Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson (1994),[65] the critical edition by Stephanie J. Wright (1996),[66] the critical edition by Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies (1996),[67] the critical edition by Diane Purkiss (1998),[68] the critical edition by Stephanie Hodgson-Wright (2000),[69] the critical edition by Clare Carroll (2003),[70] the critical edition by Karen Britland (2010)[71] and the critical edition by Ramona Wray (2012).[72]

These studies have helped to turn *Mariam* into a text much more accessible to readers, from a linguistic and philological as well as from a literary and historical perspective, eventually

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[64] Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg, eds, *The Tragedy Of Mariam, 1613*, with a new introduction by Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland, Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Malone Society, 1992.

[65] Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

[66] Stephanie J. Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam*, Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1996.

[67] Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, eds, *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents,* London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

[68] Diane Purkiss, ed., *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1998.

[69] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry*, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000.

[70] Clare Carroll, ed., *William Shakespeare's The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice: And, Elizabeth Cary's The Tragedy of Mariam*, New York: Longman, 2003.

[71] Karen Britland, ed., *Elizabeth Cary's The Tragedy of Mariam*, London: A&C Black, 2010.

[72] Ramona Wray, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland Her Life*, London: Methuen, 2012. All the references from this edition will be directly included in the text.

proclaiming it an educational text that is worth being pondered over from different points of view. However, as the publication dates of the above mentioned editions may prove, only after two decades the tragedy has reached the current meaning of a historical and socio-political text that establishes Cary's affiliation with the literary conventions of the time, stressing her literary skills in reworking important historical sources, in order to explore the transgressive themes of political, human, civil and religious rights. The 1992-2012 editions, thus, are the fruit of a deep reflection and a gradual discovery of the tragedy, making room, edition after edition, for a variety of reading choices, in order to provide readers with a greater awareness of the value of plurality of critical thoughts and critical inquiry methods.

The first modern edition of *Mariam* edited by Dunstan and Greg in 1914[73] and its 1992 Malone Society reprint appear to be addressed to a minority of readers capable of understanding the complex relationship between the text of the tragedy and a versatile but fragmentary, historical, critical commentary of the editors in the introduction to both editions. All subsequent editions of *Mariam* (written between 1994 and 2012), in which the modernized text[74] of the tragedy is accompanied by stage directions, notes, variations, error corrections, large bibliography, as well as a transversal introduction on the historical and socio-cultural context of the work, were edited with the explicit purpose of being used for teaching (at universities or high schools), according to the perspective that sets a goal to engage a wider audience in reading Cary's tragedy, which had always been considered anything but conventional. In other words, considering the long period, in which consulting *Mariam* was a privilege reserved for the academic elite, the number and the nature of its

[73] Dunstan and Greg's specific historical approach to the study of Cary's tragedy includes the analysis of its conception, printing story and transmission over the years. Their study, however, which from the beginning to the end offers a fully historical commentary to the tragedy, lacks any attention to the themes explored in the tragedy. Nowadays, the absence of critical discourse on values and principles that the literary text deepens and transmits (perhaps not of particular interest to Dunstan and Greg), can arouse different feelings in readers; on the one hand, we may run the risk of compromising the overall framework of the critical analysis, but on the other hand, such a study/edition may engage readers in a more personal reading, which gives plenty of space, for those who consult the edition, to reflect individually on the dynamics represented in the text.

[74] Diane Purkiss was the only editor, between 1994 and 2012, who decided to make a critical comment on *Mariam* and include into her edition the original text of the tragedy published in 1613.

editions currently available certainly prove that the editions of *Mariam*, published between 1994 and 2012, developed a tendency to read it and teach it, thanks to which the tragedy finally gained popularity also among non-specialist readers.

It all started in 1985, as we may read in the introduction to the 1994 edition: “The idea for this volume arose in 1985, when one of the editors was reading madly in Yale’s Beinecke Library in search of materials for a new undergraduate course she was planning on Renaissance women writers. She discovered *The Tragedy of Mariam* in its original 1613 edition – a beautiful red-leather bound quarto – and found the play itself mesmerizing.”[75] Thus, Weller and Ferguson, in 1994, were the first editors who decided to prepare a large edition of Cary’s tragedy, integrating also the modernized text of the author's biography written by one of her daughters, in which they explicitly state that the main goal of their study was both to facilitate students of literature and history in reading *Mariam* and to be useful for academic research: “In the first place, we have wanted to make the play accessible to students, not only those with an interest in Renaissance drama but also those who may encounter the tragedy and/or biography in a course in history or women’s studies… Although our primary goal has been to produce a teaching text, we believe that this edition should also have value for the scholar.”[76] The educational character of Weller and Ferguson’s 1994 edition can be definitely perceived; in comparison to the first two modern editions of *Mariam*, Weller and Ferguson’s edition underwent some radical changes, both in size and nature of contents, and became the first modernized, in-depth critical edition.

It can be noticed that the 1994-2012 editors altogether show concrete ambition to make the tragedy more comprehensible and useful to non-specialist readers at various stages of their education. The study of the Cary phenomenon in the secondary schools and at universities in the United Kingdom or in the world, in general, is yet to be done; though, it may be stated that the great interest in editing *Mariam* in the 1990s and 2000s was, in all probability, related to the scholars’ strategy to make space for *Mariam* in the publishing industry in order to favour its transformation

[75] Weller and Ferguson, pp. IX-X.
[76] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 48-9.

into an extracurricular or perhaps a fully curricular scholastic text, which nowadays can be studied along with the classic texts and promote the need for an unlimited and unconditional educational ideology that while reviewing the specific historical and cultural context may lead to a greater awareness of the present.

The 1994-2012 editors, therefore, would analyse more thoroughly the text of the tragedy and the different aspects of its plot, according to their taste and the new teaching propensity in the advanced society that in 1990s and 2000s started questioning and investigating some general phenomena that outlined these years. In other words, the transversal critical debate in the introductory sections of the 1994-2012 editions of *Mariam* consists of a constructive and ongoing dialogue among recent critical trends such as historical, sociological, biographical, gender, psychoanalytic and symbolic criticism, which contributed to a perspective of interpreting *Mariam* in relation to its interaction with the socio-cultural context. It is not surprising that in the United States and in the United Kingdom, two pioneer multicultural countries par excellence, critics began to embrace the approach of cultural studies in their analyses of the texts; it is not a coincidence, therefore, that the editors of *Mariam* started showing interest in the socio-cultural dimension of Cary's work, in which the plot of the tragedy provides the scholars with details to be used in the study of *Mariam* in relation to cultural, ideological and anthropological events from either the sixteenth or the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries.

The 1994-2012 editions of *Mariam*, thus, unlike its first two modern editions, are enriched by the extended historical and socio-cultural critical overview of the plot, characters, setting and conflicts described in the tragedy, emphasising either the thematic significance of the play or its thematic connections to other works, and thus, promoting its universal value. Their critical insight into the protagonists' inner struggle between their public roles and private selves helps capture the symbolic meaning of the tragedy and examine different social and ethical problems such as racial diversity, illegitimate power, religious discrimination, and finally, female assertiveness. This nearly twenty-year research eventually leads scholars-editors to the conclusion that Cary's play, drawing

on passions, jealousy, betrayals and secret machinations, aims to redefine, but not to distort, the role of woman and that of man within a rigid system.

According to what has just been said about the nature of all the editors' critical analysis in the introductory parts of the editions of *Mariam*, we may identify two main research methods used by the editors for their critical exploration of the tragedy, that is "explanatory"[77] and "judgemental."[78] Moreover, considering the interest of the majority of editors in creating more scholastic editions of *Mariam*, according to the capacities of non-specialist and specialist readers, I would like to take into consideration another investigative method, which seems to be at the basis of the critical analysis in the introductory sections of the 1994-2012 editions of *Mariam*, which I have decided to name "dynamic didactic approach" to the text.

As far as the explanatory approach is concerned, it placed *Mariam* within a historical perspective; it emphasised the importance of any elements of the past such as historical documents available on and about the tragedy, which played a central role in the geographical, historical and cultural contextualization of text. The judgemental approach to the study of *Mariam*, on the other hand, enriched the analysis of the tragedy with moral values and principles, in relation to the predominant twentieth- and twenty-first-century reading trends, leading, at times, the editors to quite impressionistic conclusions on the tragedy. Finally, the dynamic didactic approach to the study of the tragedy led the 1994-2012 editors of *Mariam* to portray the text as its moralistic message was ever-changing. They, in fact, proposed to read Cary's tragedy in today's global world, according to a critical perspective that perceives the historical text as a testimony that may contribute to the cultural growth of readers through the recovery of the past as well as through the dialogue with modernity. This was the spirit with which Weller and Ferguson prepared their first extended edition of *Mariam*:

In the presentation of *Mariam* (though not of the *Life*) we have for pedagogical reasons foregrounded the whole process of (re)constructing a seventeenth-century text for modern readers, and our annotations therefore give more prominence

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[77] "L'approccio esplicativo" in Italian. Mauro Palumbo and Elisabetta Garbarino, *Ricerca sociale: metodo e tecniche*, Milano: FrancoAngeli, 2006, p. 42.
[78] "L'approccio valutativo" in Italian. Palumbo and Garbarino, p. 43.

to textual choices and emendations than most editions designed for the classroom. It seems to us useful to emphasise to students both in literature and in other disciplines the process of historical recovery and inference through which the texts of the past reach a modern reader. This open consideration of editorial decisions will also allow the more advanced student and the Renaissance or textual scholar to second-guess or to dispute the conclusions and choices at which we have arrived.[79]

Moreover, Weller and Ferguson had in mind a clear project to make Cary's tragedy a universal text to be read and to be appreciated among the great classics of world literature: "We wished to supply examples of contemporary usage or allusion with which the widest range of readers would be familiar. In devoting such extensive commentary to *Mariam*, we are implicitly staking a claim for its inclusion in the mainstream canon of Renaissance drama."[80]

The 1994-2012 editors agree on the fact that Cary's tragedy is undeniably an educational text, in which the author elegantly manipulates historical facts with the intention to intervene in an urgent debate on the limits of monarchical and patriarchal society. Cary is perceived as a writer who tends to tackle England's socio-political issues at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, stressing above all the dangers of religious and political bias and corruption in the field of law and justice, and several examples of past abuses serve her to express silently the concerns of the period in which she lived. *Mariam*, therefore, encourages its readers to have an opinion on historical facts and learn to avoid the mistakes from the past.

Given that the 1994-2012 editors of *Mariam* definitely share a similar critical multidisciplinary approach to comment on the tragedy, so different from the unilateral historical interpretation of the first editors in their 1914 edition and its reprint, it could be interesting to understand whether it might be possible to choose one, the most efficient edition of *Mariam* for contemporary readers. The difficulty in giving a concrete answer to this question, perhaps, might find its explanation in the comment by an Italian scholar, Ettore Falconi, who firmly believes in the unique value of every single critical edition:

L'edizione critica non è una materia che possa sottoporsi a regole precise, valide in ogni caso ed ogni circostanza, tali da essere oggetto di una trattatistica completa. Essa non è una disciplina a sé, e neppure una metodologia autonoma… L'edizione critica è, piuttosto, un'arte; essa consiste cioè nell'applicazione pratica di conoscenze che formano il contenuto di discipline diverse, quali ad es. la paleografia, la codicologia, la storia politica, giuridica, economica, la

[79] Weller and Ferguson, p. 49.
[80] Weller and Ferguson, p. 50.

storiografia, la letteratura, la filosofia, ecc.; ma ciò sempre al di fuori di regole precostituite, con norme da elaborare di volta in volta, secondo quanto suggeriranno lo stato in cui l'opera ci è pervenuta, la configurazione dei vari problemi che ne scaturiscono, nonché l'esperienza, la preparazione (od anche, come suggeriscono alcuni, non fuori di luogo, la "fantasia" dello studioso).[81]

Considering, however, what Falconi said about the distinctive value of the multiplicity of documentary heritage included in each critical study, it may be interesting to list and discuss the differences among the ten editions of *Mariam* from this perspective.

In Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg's introduction, not particularly long but including well-documented case studies, the entire critical analysis was strictly conducted by both editors in relation to the quantity and quality of historical documents available to them by 1914, whose partial references mentioned in the edition, apart from a few citations and no image, can only be of help to the specialist reader. In addition, Dunstan and Greg's decision to edit the original 1613 text of the tragedy, with no explanatory notes, limits the understanding of *Mariam* for readers without a solid basis in history and literature. Their edition aims to reproduce *Mariam* as a reading text conservatively preserving most of the characteristics of the original authorial fair copy, and such a choice of the recreation of the text as it was originally written, may only make the specialist readers appreciate the very nature of the text's original purity and the authorial sanctity.

In the short supplementary critical comment to Dunstan and Greg's edition, reprinted in 1992, Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland's mainly historical approach to the study of *Mariam* slightly changes its nature in their conclusion, as they briefly point to the educational aspect of the tragedy. Their four-page examination, short but not to be considered of minor importance, offers few details on Cary's private life concerning above all her marriage, spiritual and professional crisis. The editors dedicate much of the space in their analysis to a comment on an error[82]

[81]The preparation of a critical edition does not undergo strict rules, which must be applied in all cases and circumstances in order to ensure an exhaustive treatment of the subject. It is neither a discipline in itself nor an autonomous methodology ... The critical edition is, rather, an art; that is, it implies the practical application of different types of knowledge that are at the basis of various disciplines such as paleography, codicology, political, legal and economic history, historiography, literature, philosophy, etc.; there are no pre-established rules to follow for this kind of research, however, as it depends on the conditions in which the work has been found, the configuration of various problems that may arise, as well as the experience, preparation (or even, as some believe, not out of place, the "imagination" of the scholar). Ettore Falconi, *L'edizione critica del documento*, Parma: Studium Parmese, 1975, p. 13.

[82] Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland give clarifications on Dunstan and Greg's theory on the provenance of the dedicatory sonnet and the list of 'Speakers,' included only in some copies of the 1613 edition. As a matter of fact,

committed by Dunstan and Greg in their 1914 edition of the tragedy, and conclude by listing, but not discussing, some articles and essays on Cary's contribution to early modern English literature, written between 1976 and 1988, which mainly celebrated the author as the first woman playwright to have explored the issue of female submission, both in the private and public spheres.[83] Straznicky and Rowland stress that in the 1970s and in the 1980s scholars slowly started showing interest in Cary's life and works, but yet several studies needed to be carried out to strengthen the inclusion of Elizabeth Cary in the early modern English Literary Canon. Their edition includes four images from the original 1613 text, such as the image of the cover of *Mariam*, the image of the first page of the tragedy, the image of the sheet with the dedicatory sonnet and the image of the sheet with the list of "Speakers"[84].

The above mentioned invitation of Straznicky and Rowland to explore Cary's text awoke great interest among a number of scholars of the period and led to the development of further academic discussion on the specificity of Cary's ethical thought as an English woman writer of higher social rank in the early seventeenth century, who in comparison to her contemporaries cultivated strong intellectual independence, considering the social, political and religious difficulties of the period. This new critical approach was adopted, in particular, by the editors of the 1994-2012 editions of *Mariam*, who aimed to promote mostly the communicative side of the tragedy that started being perceived as an educational text.

The 1994-2012 editions, thus, share a common goal in developing the readers' critical thinking abilities on the tragedy, but each editor also gave a personal touch to the research on *Mariam* and it may easily be seen that the 1994-2012 editions of *Mariam* do vary in the

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Dunstan and Greg, in their 1914 edition, argued that the sheet with the above mentioned details had been delivered late to the typographer, and therefore, could have been added only to the last copies that had still been in the typography. Nevertheless, the sheet, in all probability, was removed from the copies intended for wider distribution, considering that it clearly revealed the identity of the author. Given that Dunstan and Greg had access only to two copies preserved with the additional sheet, it is perhaps understandable that their hypothesis was based strictly on the documents to them available at the time of their research. However, as soon as the possibility of consulting new copies appeared, it was Greg himself to come to a conclusion that Dunstan's and his first theory was wrong. He admitted that they had made a mistake in his *Biography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* (1939-59), and Straznicky and Rowland perhaps thought to be correct to include this information in the 1992 reprint.

[83] Dunstan and Greg (1992), pp. XXIV-XXV.

[84] See Plates 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Dunstan and Greg (1992).

presentation of case material one from another. The editorial choices concerning the arrangement of the material in different volumes may be linked to the constraints of the economics of commercial publishing, which perhaps, edition after edition, led editors to grapple with questions and doubts of what they were to represent and how best to represent it. The different modes of presentation of the 1994-2012 editions prove that there was no tendency among the editors for the organization of the critical analysis, but on the contrary, they met editorial challenges and pushed beyond one conventional format to show their creativity and the originality of their work. Their active role in editorial design solutions and their inventive response to current thinking about the nature of Cary's text certainly prove their great awareness of the complexity of editing and the possibilities of the book format of an early modern text in the 1990s and in the 2000s.

As far as Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson's edition is concerned, its introduction provides us with detailed information about the play's textual history, structure and characterization, Elizabeth Cary's relationship to her parents, her marriage to Sir Henry Cary and their conjugal conflicts, her conversion to Roman Catholicism and its impact on her marriage, and finally, her struggle for women's rights. Moreover, while introducing the socio-cultural context for *Mariam*, they suggest and briefly discuss possible sources of the play, including the Jewish historian Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* (ca. A.D. 93-94) and *Jewish War* (A.D. 69-79), biblical passages about Herod not mentioned in Josephus, mystery dramas about Herod and early modern plays based upon the Herod-Mariamme[85] myth by Ludovico Dolce, Hans Sachs, and Alexandre Hardy, whose works, according to Weller and Ferguson, "provide evidence not only of how widely disseminated the story of Herod and Mariam was during the Renaissance but also of what different emphases the story could accommodate."[86]

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[85] The generally accepted modern spelling of Herod's second wife's name is now "Mariam;" its original spelling as "Mariame" or "Mariamme" changed into "Mariamne" in some Latin translations of Josephus. Maurice Jacques Valency confirms, however, that any other spelling of this name might have been used in the past. Maurice Jacques Valency, *The Tragedies of Herod and Mariamne*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1940, p. 7. I spell the queen's name as "Mariamme" as in Lodge's English 1602 translation of Josephus's works, while referring to the historical queen and her myth, and as "Mariam," while referring to Cary's titular protagonist.

[86] Weller and Ferguson, p. 26.

Furthermore, they also claim that the polemical religious works and humanist dramas from the Tudor era, concerned with the story of John the Baptist's death and used allegorically either against or in support of Henry VIII's 'double divorce' from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon and from the Church of Rome, might have offered Cary rich perspectives on the figure of Herod. They include among these *A Treatise on the Pretended Divorce between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon* by Nicholas Harpsfield (probably written during Mary's reign); *De origine et progressu schismatis Anglicani* by Nicolas Sanders (perhaps written in 1530s and published in 1585); *Ectrachelisitis, sive Johannes decollates*, by Jacob Schoepper (published in Cologne in 1548); *Archipropheta* by Nicholas Grimald (published in Cologne in 1548); *Baptistes, sive calumnia* by George Buchanan (published in England in 1577). Weller and Ferguson explain that "humanist plays focus on Herod's career as an allegorically rich story of pagan tyranny attacking Christian innocence; and they also share with the cycles and the Bible a tendency to conflate the three main historical Herods into a single wicked figure [offering] didactic warnings against tyranny to both rulers and subjects."[87]

Weller and Ferguson do not exclude the possibility that also works exploring female heroism, such as Jane Lumley's translation of Euripides's *Iphigenia at Aulis* (1557), Mary Sidney's translation of Garnier's *Marc Antoine* (1590), and Samuel Daniel's *Cleopatra* (1594), might have influenced Cary. References to Cleopatra in *Mariam*, according to Weller and Ferguson, might not have been accidental: "The very fact that Cleopatra's reputation – like that of Elizabeth Tudor both during her lifetime and after her death - was still being actively debated in Renaissance England might have contributed to Cary's decision to write a play thematically concerned with a woman's right to fame and a 'public voice.'"[88] Finally, Weller and Ferguson discuss the parallels *Othello*'s plot has with *Mariam*'s and allude to several verbal similarities between *Mariam* and *Antony and Cleopatra.* They state that Cary was an enthusiastic spectator until her financial situation permitted

[87] Weller and Ferguson, p. 33.
[88] Weller and Ferguson, p. 30.

her such entertainment, and this might let us suspect the influence of Shakespearean dramaturgy on her play, especially when it comes to her complex and flexible representation of the speaker's act of thinking, mainly Mariam's. They claim that Cary's play's "themes and language suggest intertextual connections with *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Othello* in particular - whether these plays were among the sources and influences of Cary's tragedy or it was among theirs."[89]

Since the date of composition and the circulation in manuscript of *Mariam* is still open to debate, any speculation about the play's relation to contemporary dramas might be crucial to understand its nature and possible literary value. Marianne Novy appreciates Weller and Ferguson's editorial choices and states that their impressive detective work contributed to a well-grounded and well-prepared scholarly edition since the editors' "large-scale interpretive comments about the play are finely modulated and complex."[90] Novy explains that Weller and Ferguson were the first editors who decided to "annotate generously and vote for a pedagogy that admits complication by often explaining in their notes many alternatives to the editorial choices they have made."[91] Weller and Ferguson's edition is provided with full scholarly extended apparatus, which allows both scholars and students to approach the text easily. As far as their edition's modern-spelling format is concerned, Weller and Ferguson justify their choice saying that:

> No manuscript of *Mariam* exists, and the spellings of the 1613 text are as likely to reflect the preferences of the printing house as authorial choices. The seventeenth-century text uses predominantly spellings which would now be identified as "British," but its orthography is inconsistent; we have followed British forms throughout, we have noted changes of spelling for the sake of normalization in the textual apparatus.[92]

Moreover, this edition's footnotes explain early modern phraseology for novice readers. For more advanced students and scholars, the editors provide discursive endnotes, including discussions of their editorial choices that invite readers to enter the editorial process. For textual scholars, the editors provide "a collation, in which they record substantive emendations and departures from the

[89] Weller and Ferguson, p. 41.
[90] Marianne Novy, Review of Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46, 1995, p. 366.
[91] Novy, p. 366.
[92] Weller and Ferguson, p. 48.

spelling and punctuation of the 1613 text."[93] It is also important to emphasise that this is the only modern edition supplemented with the text of Cary's hagiography, written by one of her daughters. Its modernized text, based on the manuscript in the Archives of the Département du Nord, includes the original useful comments and deletions.[94] This is worth mentioning because the following editions focus more on the literary and socio-cultural implications of the drama than upon biographical issues. I believe that Weller and Ferguson contributed to a comprehensive, wide-ranging analysis of the text and its position in the history of early modern women's writing by incorporating in their edition *The Lady Falkland: Her Life*, which certainly draws a portrait of a complex personality of Elizabeth Cary, a woman who did not have an easy life but whose failures and disappointments gave her no reason to give up. From this point of view I agree with Novy, who interestingly remarks that *Mariam* became: "a paradigm of the difficulties of early modern female authorship, and the editors provoke more thought about this topic by including *The Lady Falkland: Her Life*."[95]

Stephanie J. Wright's 1996 edition of *Mariam*, claims Carrie Hintz, is very pleasant to read, and its fresh notes "are credible and thorough, and allow the reader to navigate through the text easily."[96] Wright overlooks some of the author's biographical details and the text's history in general, but this does not render her edition less important. What actually differentiates her analysis from the earlier ones is her discussion of *Mariam*'s theatricality, after the first performance of the drama directed by Wright herself on October 19-22, 1994, at the Bradford Alhambra Studio. Hintz states, however, that Wright spends too much energy convincing her readers of the play's performativity. In fact, Wright firmly insists that the complex characterization of the protagonists and the presence of showy physical action in *Mariam* imply its suitability to be staged rather than merely read. Hintz finds this declaration overstated claiming that: "Both these arguments are

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[93] Sara Jayne Steen, Review of Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, *Renaissance Quarterly* 50, 1997, p. 658.
[94] Steen, p. 659.
[95] Novy, p. 367.
[96] Carrie Hintz, Review of Stephanie J. Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam*, *Early Modern Literary Studies* 3, 1997, p. 9.

specious; it is possible, as in a novel or dramatic poem, to thrill to the action of a sword fight, whether read out loud or silently."[97] Consequently, Hintz highlights that readers should not forget about the original form of the play and its assumptions: "the play is undeniably one of the most accomplished and riveting Senecan closet dramas of the period, and relates well to other public dramas of the period."[98]

In Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies's collection of playtexts, written or translated by women in the early modern period, *Mariam* is presented in modernized spelling and provided with extensive notes, explanations, and a complete bibliography. Moreover, the text is accompanied by a detailed and authoritative introduction exploring Cary's life and the history of her play. Piero Garofalo is very enthusiastic about the editorial choices concerning an extensive collection of contemporaneous documented evidence on all early modern women discussed in the edition and claims that the rich material collected by the editors to comment upon women's contribution to early modern drama provides readers with detailed information on "the position of women in relation to the development of the English theatre in both the public and the private spheres. Subdivided into four sections, the documents address attitudes toward women attending performances, the position of women as spectators, the idea of women performing, and the role of women in theatrical affairs (as partial owners and as employees)."[99] Janet Clare, however, highlights that in the part examining Cary's participation in the literary life of the period, the editors focus too much on the parallels between Mariam's conflict with Herod and Cary's unhappy wifely experience: "Cary was only about 17 when she wrote the play, and very recently married; biographical readings seem to be premised rather too much on hindsight. In a volume focused

[97] Hintz, p. 9.
[98] Hintz, p. 9.
[99] Piero Garofalo, Review of Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, eds, *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents, Theatre Journal* 50, 1998, p. 142.

specifically on drama, one would have liked more detailed consideration of the play's obvious dramatic and even theatrical qualities."[100]

Diane Purkiss's decision to present her 1998 edition in old spelling supported by detailed commentary notes, a complete textual apparatus and rich introductory information on the author and the text certainly makes this edition distinctive. Marta Straznicky says that Purkiss's close adherence to the original version of the play and the preference for commentary and explanation rather than emendation was not accidental, but on the contrary, the editor desired to make the readers experience the uniqueness and the historicity of an early modern text written by a woman: "The decision to adopt old spelling is cogent: this is the only way to preserve the character of writing and publishing practices whose relationship to gender is as yet little understood. Purkiss is equally guarded in her emendations, introducing changes only where there are obvious scribal or printing errors, or where the original reading is likely to cause confusion."[101] Straznicky states that Purkiss's major aim is to make the reader understand what it meant for a woman to write in early seventeenth-century England: "In showing that [early modern] conceptions of family, marriage, and identity can radically alter the way we approach the play, Purkiss succeeds in restoring something of the 'pastness' of Cary's work, while at the same time revealing that the author's access to the social and technical means of authorship endowed [her] with a significant measure of political agency."[102] Straznicky criticizes, however, Purkiss's decision to add stage directions to the text, including entries and exits, in order to make the readers visualize stage movements. Straznicky finds it rather controversial, considering Purkiss's way of representation of the play: "This procedure is certainly appropriate for the majority of readers who will approach the play with a conception of drama as a performance genre, but in accommodating this view Purkiss undermines

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[100] Janet Clare, Review of Susan P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, eds, *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents, The Review of English Studies* 48, 1997, pp. 241-2.
[101] Marta Straznicky, Review of Diane Purkiss, ed., *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, *Early Theatre* 4, 2001, p. 183.
[102] Straznicky, Review of Diane Purkiss, p. 183.

her own attempt to establish the fact that part of the 'pastness' of the play is its belonging less to the theatre than to the culture of reading."[103]

Stephanie Hodgson-Wright,[104] in reworking her 1996 edition of *Mariam*, certainly proves to have matured her critical perspective on the play. Her extended 2000 revision contains modifications in the introduction, in the text, in the apparatus of extant contemporary documents and in the bibliography. As far as the text is concerned, spelling and punctuation are standardised and modernised, speakers' names are given in full and not abbreviated as in the 1613 text. Act and scene numbers are expressed in Roman numerals (e.g., I. i) and not in Latin as in the 1613 version (e.g., Actus primus. Scoena prima). In her introduction to the edition, Hodgson-Wright briefly discusses the information on the author and the play including its date of composition, plot and characters, its genre and theatrical performativity, and finally sources. In the section about the sources, unlike other editors, she mainly focuses on the comparison of Cary's play with Thomas Lodge's 1602 translation of the Jewish historian Josephus's account of Herod the Great's second marriage, chronicled in his *Antiquities of the Jews* and *Jewish War*, claiming that several verbal similarities between the works might exclude the possibility that Cary consulted other European translations of Josephus available in England or on the Continent. Hodgson-Wright also discusses the differences in the time, place and action setting and the plot lines, between *Mariam* and the source stories taken from Josephus's works, claiming that:

> Cary employs the classical unities of time, place and action to condense and re-work the stories into a play in which gender politics are set in sharp relief against a background of dynastic conflict and Roman imperialism … Her employment of the classical unities foregrounds Judea, and particularly Herod's household, to which Herod becomes the destructive and intrusive "other".[105]

According to Hodgson-Wright, in Cary's free adaptation of the plot lines and the characterization of the protagonists, "the women are replaced at the centre of power and imbued with freedom of speech and self-determination."[106] Hodgson-Wright's 2000 edition, like the 1996 edition, amplifies

[103] Straznicky, Review of Diane Purkiss, p. 184.
[104] Stephanie J. Wright and Stephanie Hodgson-Wright are the same person.
[105] Hodgson-Wright, pp. 18, 20.
[106] Hodgson-Wright, p. 20.

and strongly supports the discussion of the play's status as a performance text of a dynamic and dramatic nature.[107] Marta Straznicky claims that Hodgson-Wright, while showing: "how literary history and performance criticism have modulated the ideological focus of feminist critique and grounded gender politics within a critical framework, […] transformed the edition from academic curiosity to functional textbook."[108] The major and particularly helpful changes include the reorganization and amplification of the material in the critical apparatus, which helps readers contextualize the private and public conflicts explored in the play. The edition includes the extracts from the main sources of *Mariam*: *The Antiquities of the Jews* (Book XV, Chapter IIII [sic], 387-88; Book XV, Chapter XI, 396-99; Book XV, Chapter XI, 400-01; Book XVI, Chapter XI, 425) and *The Jewish War* (Book I, Chapter XVII, 589-90; Book I, Chapter XVII, 592-93). The extracts from Flavius Josephus's works, originally written in Greek in the first century and translated into English by Thomas Lodge in 1602, are taken from the Brotherton Library Special Collection, University of Leeds, and quoted in modernised spelling and punctuation.[109] Moreover, Hodgson-Wright includes the extracts selected from a range of didactic and polemical texts published in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that, according to the editor, serve "to demonstrate the ways in which Church, State and household were conceived of and described in similar ways, with a particular focus upon the role and position of women within these institutions."[110] The excerpts, proposed in modern spelling and punctuation, comprise Juan Luis Vives's *Instruction of a Christian Woman* (1540), *The second tome of homilies* (1563), Robert Cleaver's *A godly form of household government* (1598), *The Book of Common Prayer* (1603), James I's *Basilicon Doron* (1599) and *The true law of free monarchies* (1603), Dorothy Leigh's *The Mothers Blessing* (1616), Rachel Speght's *A Muzzle for Melastomus* (1617), Ester Sowernam's *Ester Hath Hang'd Haman* (1617), William Whately's *A Bride-Bush, or A Wedding Sermon* (1617) and Elizabeth Brooke Jocelin's *The*

[107] Hodgson-Wright, pp. 30-1.
[108] Marta Straznicky, Review of Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry*, *Early Theatre* 8, 2005, p. 113.
[109] Hodgson-Wright, p. 145.
[110] Hodgson-Wright, p. 163.

Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Child (1624). They undeniably play a crucial role in drawing the reader closer to understanding the issues of gender and dynastic politics in seventeenth-century England.

The paired reading of Elizabeth Cary's *Mariam* and Shakespeare's *Othello,* in Clare Carroll's 2003 edition of *Mariam,* strengthens readers' understanding of the early modern English contradictory views on the role of gender, knowledge and power both in private and public sphere. The issue of domestic conflict explored in *Mariam* explicitly invites the comparison with *Othello*. Carroll, in fact, while demonstrating the close relationship between innocent Mariam and Desdemona, doomed to death, and madly authoritarian Herod and Othello, who while acting in a blind rage, bring fatal damage to their women, offers an insight into the social perception of domestic persecution and encourages readers to compare the contexts of the plays in order to frame their own attitude towards the historical actualities of female suppression. Carroll's modernized edition, accompanied by source materials on the early modern English socio-political context, provides fertile ground for the examination of gender roles in a society embedded in a matrix of cultural dissent. This pattern of text-pairing had already been briefly proposed by Weller and Ferguson, but Carroll's analysis certainly makes a strong first impression on readers.

Karen Britland's 2010 modernized edition, provided with the additional stage directions, the original quarto's misprints corrected and the speech prefixes regularised, is characterized by a wide-ranging introduction, which provides the reader with a valuably thorough bibliography of relevant material on the play's history, exploring the play, above all, in the context of closet drama and documenting the female emergence both in the private and public sphere. The editor seems to launch an incisive criticism of the cultural and religious issues the play explores, focusing on women's inferiority within both domestic and public contexts. Britland also lists the potential sources of *Mariam*. She believes that Cary was strongly inspired by biblical stories, mainly from the Old Testament and Apocrypha. Britland notices that Cary makes several allusions to the books of Genesis, Exodus, 1 Kings, 2 Esdras and Deuteronomy. The editor also puts emphasis on Cary's

humanist education, suggesting that Cary might have used Montaigne to represent Mariam's vacillation between grief and delight at her husband's death and Erasmus as a source for Constabarus's speech on friendship. Finally, Britland includes Christine de Pisan's *City of Ladies* or its Latin inspiration, Boccaccio's *De mulieribus Claris*, as material possibly consulted by Cary.[111]

Ramona Wray's 2012 edition, presented in modern spelling and punctuation, with a high-level and complete scholarly discussion of critical approaches to the play and its performance history, provides readers with a clear description of the play's history. Her engagement and interventions through the on-page commentary notes provide further explanation to the text, leading the reader to a better understanding of the plot. Moreover, several illustrations, representing events, characters and places, included in the edition, enrich the information on the play and the socio-political context in which the text was composed. Moreover, it is also worth mentioning her choice of including in the edition a couple of photos from the play directed by Liz Schafer at the Studio Theatre, Royal Holloway, in 1995. She was perhaps inspired by Hodgson-Wright, who first, in her 2000 edition, included some photos from the very first production of *Mariam* put on by Tinderbox Theatre co., in Bradford Alhambra studio, in 1994. I note the benefits of including illustrations, in general picture clues, within any kind of study as the images may enhance readers' awareness and knowledge of events, places and people from the text. In Wray's edition they reveal a very important function of visual message: aesthetic, expressive and informative, and should not be underestimated in the critical edition. Eliminating the possibility of readers relying on image supplements can hardly affect their understanding of the text, but on the other hand, it can, in all probability, sway them toward choosing one edition or another; but of course, readers may vary in their opinions on this matter. Undeniably, before Wray published her edition, several pioneering critics, working on *Mariam*, had already made noteworthy interventions, which significantly brought the play to critical visibility, but Wray's volume, accompanied by relevant materials on the historical context and theatrical significance of the play, certainly aims at generating new

[111] Britland, p. XI.

perspectives. Her innovative approach, as she declares, contributes to "a reappraisal of *The Tragedy of Mariam*, by attending to the play's Palestinian geographies and inventive uses of Old Testament and Jewish histories."[112]

To conclude, the interest and efforts in republishing a nearly forgotten *Mariam*, over the past few years, certainly have proved the critics' desire to mature, improve and amplify the critical perspective on the play. The above mentioned editions, while expanding the bibliography, adding the images of the period or other periods, and introducing a wider, helpful critical apparatus of *Mariam* and other contemporary texts, help us contextualize and strengthen the debates raised in the play. Moreover, they all together give evidence to the scholarly careful examination of Elizabeth Cary's writing that may be divided in two distinct phases concerning different perspectives on the critical analysis in the editions of *Mariam*. The first phase, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, embraces the historical study in Dunstan and Greg's 1914 edition; then, the following eighty-year long interval, known for the lack of publications of *Mariam*, leads to a revolution in the critical reception of the text,[113] that is the second phase, which includes all editions published between 1994 and 2012. The latter editions, with their historical, sociological, psychoanalytic and symbolic analyses, are of great importance in determining the editors' new educational approach that aims to search for freedom to establish the "hidden message" in the tragedy, and thus, its communicative dimension. This almost twenty-year-long homogeneous but personalized research which, edition after edition, tended to improve the studies on *Mariam*, shows that the 1994-2012 editions, unlike the first two, fully boost the new teaching policies of the period, providing fertile ground for initiatives and experiments in a new and uncertain field of the publishing industry of a seventeenth-century text, written by an unknown woman.

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[112] Wray, p. XV.

[113] The Malone Society 1992 reprint of Dunstan and Greg's 1914 edition, with an extra introduction by Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland, must be placed in between these two phases.

1.6. The author's and the play's popularity in early modern England

Scholars have expressed quite different views on *Mariam*'s first edition's popularity in early modern England, but it seems that the play and the author, in all probability, were well known to their contemporaries. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright emphasises that the poet Michael Drayton, in all probability Cary's tutor, in his 1597 *Englands Heroicall Epistles*, described Cary as a precocious and erudite girl:

> Sweete is the French tongue, more sweete the Italian, but most sweete are they both if spoken by your admired selfe. If Poesie were prayselesse, your vertues alone were a subject sufficient to make it esteemed though amongst the barbarous Getes: by how much the more your tender yeres give scarcely warrant for your more then womanlike wisedom, by so much is your judgement, and reading, the more to be wondred at.[114]

As far as *Mariam* is concerned, Dustan and Greg claim that Cary's contemporaries must have been familiar with the play, because they found the play mentioned in Rogers and Ley's 1656 list as *Mariamne Tragedy*, exactly under the same title as it was recorded in the Stationers' Register; in the 1656 Archer's catalogue, including the earliest ascription of the drama, *Mariame. T[ragedy]. Lady Eliz. Carew*; and in Kirkman's lists, under the title of *Mariam* in 1661 and *Marian* in 1671.[115] Karen Britland states that Edward Phillips mentioned the play in his *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum* in 1675.[116] Heather Wolfe, Dympna Callaghan, Deana Rankin and Ramona Wray, also believe that Cary undeniably succeeded in constructing her public identity, especially through *Mariam*, and a number of dedications to Cary and her works by prominent male writers such as Michael Drayton (1597), John Davies of Hereford (1612), Richard Moore (1614), William Basse (1622), Richard Belling (1624) and William Sheares (1633), may prove it.[117] Wolfe states that: "Allusions to Cary's works by the others suggest that she was deeply involved in a variety of networks that transmitted literary and controversial manuscript texts and that her printed corpus

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[114] Michael Drayton, *Englands heroicall epistles*, London: Printed by Iames Roberts for N. Ling, 1597, STC 7193, p. 44. Hodgson-Wright, p. 11.
[115] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. VII.
[116] Britland, p. XXVI.
[117] For further discussion of the dedications in verse to Cary, see Rankin, pp. 208-15.

represents only the tip of the iceberg."[118] Callaghan[119] emphasises that if Cary had been unknown to the literary early modern society, John Davies would not have praised her peculiar skills as a playwright in an appreciable way he had done:

With Feete of State, *dost make thy* Muse to *mete*
the Scenes *of* Syracuse *and* Palestine.
Art, Language; *yea*; *abstruse and holy* Tongues
thy Wit *and* Grace acquir'd *thy* Fame *to raise*.
…

Such nervy Limbes *of* Art*, and* Straines *of* Wit
Times *past* ne'er *knew the weaker* Sexe *to have.*[120]

Rankin adds that Cary's fame was firmly established in the public sphere because after many years "the last extant dedication to Cary, published by William Shears in 1633, [still] echoes Davies's invocation of Cary's exotic power and border-crossing reputation."[121] Wray, in the last edition of *Mariam*, underlines that Cary definitely must have been well known to her contemporaries: "from the evidence of her surviving work, and in the light of references to work no longer extant… Dedications to Cary bolster this view."[122]

Karen Raber, on the other hand, admits that Cary was especially known to her contemporaries for being mother of Lucius Cary, a prominent Puritan, nominated Secretary of State by the King in 1642; Cary's literary works, according to the scholar, played a minor role in the literary world both during her life and for a long time after her death.[123] Raber explains that Cary started enjoying widespread appeal in England only after Richard Simpson's publication of her hagiographic biography, *The Lady Falkland: Her Life*. It seems that the abridged version of the story of Cary's conversion to Catholicism, published in 1857, and its full transcription put into print

[118] Wolfe, *Literary Career*, p. 2.
[119] Dympna Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queene of Jewry*," in Raber, p. 178.
[120] Davies, p. 4.
[121] Rankin, p. 214.
[122] Wray, p. 5.
[123] See "Introduction," in Raber, p. XIV.

again by Simpson in 1861, together with Lady Georgiana Fullerton's 1883 edition,[124] greatly inspired nineteenth-century English Catholics.

The debate over Cary's and her play's fame and status in early modern England is still open. It is definitely challenging for critics to establish whether and how socially acceptable and significant a piece of work and its author were centuries ago. Whether or not historical records on Cary and her play can reliably determine the extent and the value of Cary's literary achievements in her times, they unquestionably prove that Cary attracted some attention from her contemporaries, and moreover, was privileged, especially through *Mariam*, as a distinguished and passionate woman writer deeply analysing the major issues of early seventeenth-century England.[125]

1.7. Genre and structure

Recent criticism on the genre of Cary's play has speculated that Cary might have been indebted in numerous ways to contemporary English writers, whose works evinced a strong awareness of Senecan conventions; emphasising their adherence, either fully or partially, to its generic features to support characterisation. This category of works is nowadays known as closet drama.

The term 'closet drama' was coined in the nineteenth century to refer to the plays composed not for the commercial stage.[126] Closet dramas, according to Jonas Barish, are characterised by a five act structure, and each act is followed by the commentary of the chorus on the action; long speeches and soliloquies; and a simple plot from historical sources both set in a single geographical location and within a limited time-span (mostly a day).[127] Moreover, these works open up space for such characters as messengers, who play an important role in gaining an insight into off-stage action. Nancy A. Gutierrez states that "the long soliloquies and monologues, the stichomythic

[124] Raber, p. XIV.
[125] See "Introduction," in Wolfe, *Literary Career*, and "Introduction," in Raber.
[126] Britland, p. XI.
[127] Jonas Barish, "Language for the Study, Language for the Stage," in A.L. Magnusson and C.E. McGee, eds, *The Elizabethan Theatre XII*, Toronto: P. D. Meany, 1993, p. 20. Quoted in Britland, p. XI.

dialogue, the reduced number of actors on stage to two or three, and the presence of the chorus - identify this genre as primarily intellectual or lyric. In short, narrative or dramatic activity is at a minimum; philosophical discussion and poetic mediation are the rule."[128]

Karen Britland observes that the practise of writing plays not for the commercial stage was widespread in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. English contemporary scholars such as John Studley and Jasper Heywood and their translations of Latin plays undeniably provided their students with rich material on classical drama, officially acknowledged to be read and performed by students as part of their education. Initially, only men were supposed to do these school exercises, and occasionally, women tutored at home.[129] Over the years, however, the genre started being associated more with elitism and private reading, alone or in small groups in the private space of the household, and it started being considered a category particularly suitable for women. Britland underlines, however, that the manuscript circulation of such texts was not always linked to the private world: "A variety of sermons, poems, letters and other hand-written documents, circulated around the country and across Europe, were copied out in part or in whole, were re-circulated, re-copied and passed on again."[130]

As a matter of fact, Senecan "private" dramas, explains Diane Purkiss, might have resulted to be more "public" or political than the plays written for the public stage, because they did not have to undergo the close examination of the Revels office, responsible for stage censorship.[131] Ramona Wray confirms that *Mariam*'s circulation in manuscript, in the first years of its composition, and in a 1613 printed book, implied both private play reading and public widespread circulation, and such a double status of the play should not be perceived as strictly private. Wray explains that "in the case of *The Tragedy of Mariam*, 'privacy' is not a fixed category; on the contrary, 'privacy' to a certain extent authorizes the play's movement into different arenas and

[128] Gutierrez, pp. 104-5.
[129] Britland, p. XII.
[130] Britland, p. XII.
[131] Purkiss, p. XVIII.

demonstrates its plasticity in connecting with multiple interpretative constituencies."[132] Britland adds that though we have no clear evidence of Cary's or others' desire to perform *Mariam* on stage, "that makes it neither intrinsically private, domestic nor apolitical."[133] Given that plays intended for private reading might also widely circulate in early modern England, Weller, Ferguson and Britland[134] do not exclude that Cary's play was likely to be consulted by the King's Men by 1611.

Among the works, based on classical stories and written in a slightly theatrical "Senecan" style, which Cary might have consulted, we may include *The Tragedy of Antony* (1590) translated by Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke; *The Tragedy of Cleopatra* (1594) by Samuel Daniel; *Cornelia* (1594) translated by Thomas Kyd; *The Tragicomoedi of the vertous Octavia* (1598) by Samuel Brandon; *Philotas* (1604) by Samuel Daniel; *Mustapha* (1596) and *Alaham* (1601) by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke; *Darius*, *Croesus*, *The Alexandrean Tragedy*, and *Julius Caesar*, collectively called the four *Monarchicke Tragedies* (1603-07) by William Alexander, Earl of Stirling.

Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, in line with earlier research by Kurt Weber, the biographer of Cary's son, Lucius, observe that Cary, far from her husband and still childless in the first years of her marriage, was likely to have attended the literary circle of the Countess of Pembroke and there to have become familiar with Senecan drama.[135] Marta Straznicky suggests that Michael Drayton, who is believed to be Cary's tutor, might have conveyed the literary activities of the Sidney circle to Cary. Straznicky explains that Michael Drayton was a friend of Samuel Daniel; an admirer of both Philip and Mary Sidney; a close friend of Thomas Lodge, a translator of Josephus, the primary source of *Mariam*; and an acquaintance of William Alexander.[136] What is more, Straznicky adds that by 1614, "Cary was entrusted with the protection of one of Renaissance

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[132] Wray, p. 56.
[133] Britland, p. XIII.
[134] Weller and Ferguson, p. 6; Britland, p. XIII.
[135] Weller and Ferguson, p. 5.
[136] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 144. For further study on the probable close relationship of Michael Drayton with the Tanfields, see Bernard H. Newdigate, *Michael Drayton and His Circle*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1941, pp. 87-95.

England's most celebrated miscellanies, a compendium of pastoral poetry by the likes of Sidney, Spenser, Drayton, Lodge and Breton."[137]

Weller and Ferguson speculate about Cary's comprehensive knowledge of Jane (also known as Joanna) Lumley's English translation of Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*, which might have been a suitable forerunner of Cary's play; they claim that *Iphigeneia* "was intended for a "domestic" audience of readers and even spectators… and a later woman writer such as Cary, who shared Lumley's class status as well as her religion, might have seen a copy of her play."[138] Such an observation might make sense in the reconstruction of Cary's potential forerunners; but it should not be forgotten that Lumley was a learned Catholic noblewoman and Cary, like Lumley, was of noble origins, but she converted to Catholicism many years after the composition and publication of *Mariam*, and thus, if she had read the manuscript of the first extant translation of a classical drama by an English woman, she would have consulted it, in all probability, still with a Protestant approach. Scholars, however, draw a parallel between Cary's choice to base her drama on the accounts of Herod and Mariamme, which bears resemblances to her conjugal dilemma, and Jane Lumley's decision to recreate a portrait of female heroism, virtue and self-sacrifice, while exploring her own familial conflict. Weller and Ferguson, in line with the theory by Margaret Arnold, are convinced that Jane Lumney has chosen Iphigeneia's story in order to reflect on the female heroism and self-sacrifice she was familiar with through the intrigues involving her own aristocratic patriarchal family. Her father, Henry Fitzalen, Twelfth Earl of Arundel, was a leader of the Catholic nobility, who not only conspired in favour of Mary, Queen of Scots, to make her ascend the English throne, but also played a crucial role in slaying Lady Jane Grey, Jane Lumley's mother's niece.[139]

As far as the nature and the subject matter of all the above mentioned dramas, which might have influenced Cary, is concerned, Gutierrez defines them as "tragedies of state, focusing on the rise and fall of great men, on the problem of tyrannous authority, … [in which] as a rule, issues of

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[137] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 145.
[138] Weller and Ferguson, p. 26.
[139] Weller and Ferguson, p. 27.

government are addressed not only in the public world of the state but also in the private world of the family, so that questions of duty and responsibility, loyalty and devotion have both political and domestic ramifications."[140] Moreover, she explains that closet plays are generally divided into two groups. The first group of plays, written before 1603, focuses on the difficulties of women in the domestic sphere rather than on the rise and fall of men in the public world, and the plays written after 1603 do the opposite. Gutierrez's categorization of Cary's play places it in the first group of closet dramas,[141] whose subject puts the emphasis on the female heroes facing domestic issues. Alexander Maclaren Witherspoon, on the other hand, thinks that Cary's play does not suit this group of plays because "their interest is primarily emotional, and while they are not 'family dramas' in the sense that Seneca's dramas are, their plots are concerned chiefly with the misfortunes of the individuals, and only indirectly with the fate of states and empires."[142]

Straznicky observes that these plays, in their generic resemblance, share gender-specific stoical discourse to define the 'politics of desire;'[143] in other words, the male-centred closet dramas tend to portray women's unbridled passions and desires and the female-centred closet dramas represent heroic women capable of self-control. While in the former women appear to be antithetical to the stoic ideal, in the latter women express the stoic ideal. Straznicky confirms that the traditional use of stoic discourse to represent the moral value of female characters is present but transformed in Cary's *Mariam*:

> Like the earlier female-centred closet dramas, Cary's play stages the reorientation of female desire from earthly to spiritual goods and fashions this reorientation as the prerequisite for female heroism. However, while the stoic ethic in *Mariam* does deliver the female hero from oppression into death, it also delivers to her a personal power that is not scripted by any of Cary's predecessors.[144]

[140] Gutierrez, p. 105.
[141] Gutierrez, p. 106.
[142] Alexander Maclaren Witherspoon, *The Influence of Robert Garnier on Elizabethan Drama*, New York: Phaeton Press, 1924, p. 116.
[143] For further study on the relevance of the stoic theory of desire to the representation of female virtue in the Sidneian closet drama, see Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," pp. 152-6.
[144] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 161.

Gutierrez explains that *Mariam* differs from her contemporary closet dramas in the relation between idea and plot, or more precisely between the didactic[145] and mimetic[146] aspect of these works: “Cary counters the image of woman by constructing a play less didactic and more mimetic.”[147] Compared to Cleopatra, Cornelia or Octavia, who appear helpless in the face of a hostile world, Mariam’s innocence incites her to challenge Herod’s tyrannous behaviour toward herself and her family. In other words, Mariam, a heroic rebel challenging patriarchal authority, plays an active role in her fate, while the protagonists of other closet dramas virtuously and stoically suffer adversities in their lives; their heroism is more passive. Pilar Cuder-Domínguez confirms that the male characters of *Mariam*, “compared to the women’s formidable attack on the public realm, may appear to be puny and adrift, lacking willpower and direction.”[148]

Cary’s drama provides us with a literary context which releases women from culturally forced silence and allows them free self-expression. Closet drama, explains Gutierrez, “can make room for a woman’s voice, as in fact, it does for Cary.”[149] Moreover, Cary’s capacity to use and reshape the stoic discourse in *Mariam*, not only reveals her awareness of social assumptions and constraints of marriage within a patriarchal society but also implies her active role of the woman critic, who enters into a suggestive and gendered dialogue with texts by other writers in the early modern period; “a woman author who is anything but domesticated, a woman author who in fact shares a politically charged cultural literacy with the intellectual aristocracy of her day.”[150]

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[145] Nancy Gutierrez cites Elder Olson’s definition of didactic poetry, according to which “didactic poetry focuses on generalized issues of debate rather than on the particular crisis of individuals. Action and character exist only as vehicles by which ideas can be communicated to the audience.” Gutierrez, p. 110. For further discussion of the distinction between didactic and mimetic poetry, see Elder Olson, “William Empson, Contemporary Criticism, and Poetic Diction,” in R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952, pp. 24-61.

[146] In contrast to didactic poetry, explains Gutierrez, referring to Elder Olson’s definition, “the contraction of mimetic poetry relies on plot – a series of human actions so organized as to effect a certain emotional and intellectual response from the audience. In other words, plot controls character and idea.” Gutierrez, p. 111.

[147] Gutierrez, p. 111.

[148] Pilar Cuder-Domínguez, *Stuart Women Playwrights 1613-1713*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011, p. 28.

[149] Gutierrez, p. 107.

[150] Straznicky, “Profane Stoical Paradoxes,” p. 146.

Cary appears to have a deep knowledge of other literary genres. *Mariam* seems to evince some characteristics of a revenge tragedy,[151] deployed in the characterization of Doris, Herod's first wife, and their son. When Doris first enters, she prays for vengeance:

Then was I young, and rich and nobly born,
And therefore worthy to be Herod's mate;
Yet thou, ungrateful, cast me off with scorn,
When heaven's purpose raised your meaner fate.
Oft have I begged for vengeance for this fact,
And with dejected knees, aspiring hands,
Have prayed the highest power to enact
The fall of her that on my trophy stands.
Revenge I have according to my will,
Yet where I wished this vengeance did not light.
I wished it should high-hearted Mariam kill (2.3.29-39).

Herod's son by Doris, Antipater, in the same scene, proposes to murder Mariam's children:

Each mouth within the city loudly cries
That Herod's death is certain. Therefore we
Had best some subtle hidden plot devise,
That Mariam's children might subverted be
By poisoned drink or else by murderous knife,
So we may be advanced, it skills not how.
They are but bastards, you were Herod's wife,
And foul adultery blotteth Mariam's brow (2.3.57-64).

In the fourth act, Mariam addresses Doris saying that she is a "spirit sent to drive [her] to despair" (4.8.56), and Doris replies to Mariam cursing her: "Had I ten thousand tongues, and every tongue / Inflamed with poison's power and steeped in gall, / My curses would not answer for my wrong, / Though I in cursing the employed them all" (4.8.85-8).

Britland also notices that Cary uses in the characterization of Silleus "the hyperbolic language of romantic love, prevalent in Elizabethan poetry."[152] She observes that Silleus, like a chivalric hero, at once attempts to defend Salome's reputation from Constabarus, saying: "My sword, / That owes his service to her sacred name, / Will not an edge for other cause afford" (2.4.25-7), and worships Salome's beauty, naming her "beauty's queen," "rare creature" and "Asia's miracle" (1.5.23, 31). Herod seems to imitate Silleus's language and describes Mariam in the same way as Silleus does with Salome. Mariam in the fourth act becomes for Herod: "rare

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[151] Britland, p. XIII; Alison Findlay also classifies *Mariam* among revenge tragedies. Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1999, pp. 76-80.
[152] Britland, p. XIII.

creature" and "rare miracle" (4.1.10, 28). Britland states that this romantic discourse or rather "clearly excessive woman-worship is clearly presented as problematic, leading, as it does, to personal and political instability."[153]

Ilona Bell, in her analysis of Cary's deployment of Renaissance lyric, explains that in *Mariam*: "the iambic pentameter lines, quatrains with alternating rhymes, are punctuated by occasional couplets that produce sonnets, or truncated sonnets, throughout the play."[154] According to Bell, the sonnet plays an important role in Cary's representation of secret lovers (Salome and Sileus), conspirators (Salome and Pheroras) and aspiring suitors (Doris and Antipater). Bell explains that the sonnet excellently intensifies and encircles conflicts between different characters (Salome and Constabarus, Mariam and Doris, Mariam and Herod, Mariam and her mother, Mariam and Salome), draw on their changeable emotional states, challenge and overturn their declarations, and finally, dramatize historical fears debated in *Mariam*. Bell comes to the conclusion that Cary's female characters use the sonnets to interrogate and comment on Renaissance dialogic love poetry, the genre "often seen as inhospitable to women since by definition and convention it expressed the thoughts and feelings of the male poet or speaker."[155] Tina Krontiris confirms that Cary's tragedy tends to dramatize the problem from a wife's rather than husband's point of view,[156] offering a counterpoint to Renaissance literary conventions and transforming the contemporary attitudes toward love, marriage, and women. Gutierrez shares Bell's and Krontiris's opinions and confirms that Cary's sonnets redefine the lyric genre, inviting the audience to question the conventional attitudes towards femininity, marital union and political power. She states that: "*Mariam*, the play, is the sonnet mistress's response to her poet lover; closet drama answers Petrarchan sonnet; female writer redefines a male-engendered literary form."[157] Britland believes that Cary's strong awareness of the poetic discourse through the wide use of sonnets in *Mariam* can certainly be related to her

[153] Britland, p. XIV.
[154] Ilona Bell, "Private Lyrics in Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam*," in Wolfe, *Literary Career*, p. 17.
[155] Bell, p. 18.
[156] Tina Krontiris, *Oppositional Voices: Women as Writers and Translators of Literature in the English Renaissance,* London: Routledge, 1992, p. 82.
[157] Gutierrez, p. 109.

family's connection to Sir Thomas Wyatt, the famous Tudor sonneteer. Britland recognizes the echoes of Wyatt's poetry at 2.4.39.[158]

Cary's manipulation of the literary forms, her tendency towards 'intellectual inquiry,' certainly reinforce the literary and philosophical depth of the play, becoming a source for the author's autonomy as an early modern woman writer, and allowing her self-discovery. Gutierrez states that Cary's re-creation of genres in *Mariam* raises a debate: "in which the resolution of the plot is left open-ended, to be made complete by audience response,"[159] and this dialogue deepens the audience's involvement in the intellectual inquiry. The result of such an approach, adds Gutierrez, is: "not a product by which woman defines herself in her writing, but a process through which woman speaks – within herself, with her culture, and even with future cultures – as she struggles for glimpses of self-knowledge and for structures of empowerment."[160]

1.8. Themes and approaches to reading *Mariam*

Modern critics have adopted different approaches in their reading of *Mariam*, and suggest that Cary's play belongs to a larger discussion, across the seventeenth century, concerning the issues of marriage, the legitimacy of divorce, monarchical absolutism, conscience, truth, identity, homeland, culture and traditions, and finally, women's voices within the private and public sphere. Britland says that "*Mariam* is an extremely complicated play that, like Shakespearian drama, never provides a single perspective on any issue."[161]

Karen Britland claims that Cary's play dynamically interrogates the issues of marriage and divorce:

> The play provides perspectives on marriage and divorce from all angles: we see Alexandra's situation as a widow and former queen; we hear Doris lament her post-divorce dispossession; we witness Mariam's discontent with her husband;

[158] Britland, p. XIV.
[159] Gutierrez, p. 114.
[160] Gutierrez, p. 115.
[161] Britland, p. VII.

we are party to Herod's desire for his wife and to Constabarus's distress over Salome's infidelities; we see Pheroras's joy at marrying Graphina and witness her careful submission to her husband.[162]

Jeanne Addison Roberts states that Cary's decision to explore the dynamic nature of marriage and divorce in her play might have been influenced by the fact that both controversial issues aroused either curiosity or bitter feeling in the early modern period.[163] It might have been a bizarre coincidence, but when on 14 November 1605, Sir Robert Rich could finally divorce his wife, Penelope (née Devereux),[164] accused of having an extramarital affair with Sir Charles Blount for half a decade, Cary might have had some direct information on the divorce's development and execution, because Penelope Rich was remotely related to the Sidneys, after her brother, Essex, had married Sir Philip Sidney's widow. She was also believed to be the 'Stella' of Sidney's sonnets.[165] Moreover, Sir Robert Rich was the landlord of much of St Bartholomew-the-Great and the Cary family were often present in the parish during their visits to London. The connection between families was strengthened even more when Henry Cary's nephew married Sir Robert's granddaughter.[166] Despite the fact that Cary was familiar with Sir Robert Rich's personal issues, we have no clear evidence to state that Rich's divorce inspired Cary to write *Mariam*; the Chorus's assertions in the third act about women's place in the private sphere might be convincing in indicating Cary's sympathy for Rich, but her general characterization of the female protagonists seem to prove that the play opts for no clear position on wifely subordination. Some years later, Lady Frances Devereux (née Howard) asked for the annulment of her marriage to Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex. The legal process started in May 1613, but it is certain that people had

[162] Britland, p. XIV. For further discussion on the subject, see Britland, pp. XVI-XVII.

[163] Jeanne Addison Roberts, "Marriage and Divorce in 1613: Elizabeth Cary, Frances Howard, and Others," in Laurie E. Maguire and Thomas L. Berger, eds, *Textual Formations and Reformations*, London: University of Delaware Press, 1998, p. 162; Jeanne Addison Roberts, "Sex and the Female Tragic Hero," in Naomi Conn Liebler, ed., *The Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 207.

[164] Alison Wall, "Rich, Penelope, Lady Rich (1563–1607)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23490, accessed on 10 July 2014.

[165] James Daybell, "Women, Politics and Domesticity: The Scribal Publication of Lady Rich's Letter to Elizabeth I," in Anne Lawrence-Mathers and Phillipa Hardman, eds, *Women and Writing, c. 1340-c.1650: The Domestication of Print Culture*, Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2010, p. 114.

[166] Britland, p. XVII.

already known about their conjugal crisis at least a year before.[167] Karen Britland reports that in the same year many plays with the divorce plot were published or reprinted, and moreover, given that Henry Cary and Frances Howard were second cousins, "it is interesting to wonder whether Cary's manuscript of *Mariam*, with its figure of the adulterous Salome, became newly interesting to the Cary family at this time and led, perhaps, to its publication."[168]

Weller and Ferguson believe that *Mariam*, thematically concerned with the issues of the legitimacy of divorce, alludes in multiple ways to themes of religious faith and martyrdom.[169] The scholars explain that Henry VIII's request for an annulment of his marriage and the following period of the English Reformation had a great impact on the English literary production of the period, extremely anxious about this 'double divorce': Henry VIII's from Catherine of Aragon and the splitting of the Church of England from the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church. During the Tudor-Stuart era, several polemical religious works as well as humanist dramas dealt with the figures of Herod Antipas[170] and John the Baptist, who became central in the lively debate over the legitimacy of Henry VIII's divorce from his first wife. The story of John the Baptist's death was given an allegorical significance and used either against or for Henry VIII's divorce. The writers' goal was to draw a parallel between the complex figure of Herod (either Antipas or the ten-times-married Herod the Great) and Henry VIII and between a complex figure of a dangerous woman (either Herodias, Salome or Mariamme) and Anne Boleyn. Henry VIII, like both Herods, was a lascivious adulterer. Anne Boleyn, like Salome, was an unchaste, shameless and outspoken woman, and like Mariamme, was a second wife, detested and condemned by the abandoned first

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[167] Alan Haynes, *Sex in Elizabethan England*, Sutton: Histroy Press, 1999, pp. 129-31.
[168] Britland, p. XVII.
[169] Weller and Ferguson, p. 30.
[170] Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great and his fourth wife, Malthace. He desired to marry Herodias, granddaughter of Herod the Great and his second wife, Mariamme. Herodias, however, was married to Herod Antipas's half-brother, Herod II (also called Herod Philip I). This impediment did not stop Herod Antipas from divorcing his wife and taking Herodias from Herod II. According to the Gospels, John the Baptist condemned such a behaviour saying, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark, 6:18) and he paid with his life for denouncing this immoral act. Salome, daughter of Herodias and her first husband, sought vengeance on John. Her graceful dancing on the occasion of Herod Antipas's birthday feast, enchanted the king to the point that he decided to give her whatever she desired. On the advice of her mother, she requested John the Baptist's head. Weller and Ferguson, pp. 30-1.

wife of the king, guilty of being unpleasant towards her lord and husband, and finally executed, innocent, for adultery.[171] Although we have no certainty whether the figure of Anne Boleyn was indeed the catalyst for Cary's characterisation of female protagonists, her story might imply striking analogies between her and Cary's Salome or Mariam. Weller and Ferguson explain that "literary works may create a force field of topicality that exceeds any single political or religious allegory. The evidence suggesting that the figure of Anne Boleyn lurks behind both the heroine and the female villain of Cary's play certainly inhibits any simple historical decoding of *Mariam* or any easy assumptions about the beliefs of its author."[172]

According to Britland, Cary had an interest in monarchical absolutism, which can be perceived in both of her texts, *Edward II* and *Mariam*. Britland explains that in the early modern period, and prevalently during the reign of James I, a monarch was often seen as joined in holy matrimony with the state, and thus: "the image of the family became a metaphor for statecraft and could be used by writers who wanted to investigate the methods and abuses of monarchical rule."[173] Cary's plot begins in the absence of the autocratic, imperceptive and tyrannous king Herod. In the first two acts of the play, under no authority, Mariam, Alexandra and Salome compete with each other for power. Moreover, in a hiatus of authority, the court also becomes a space filled with political disobedience; both Constabarus and Pheroras disobey Herod's instructions: the former gives protection to the sons of Baba, the latter decides to marry his true love, against the king's will. But when Herod is at court, his tendency towards mad absolutism reigns. 5 Chorus states that: "He at his pleasure might command her [Mariam's] death; / But now he hath his power so much betrayed / As all his woes cannot restore her breath. / Now doth he strangely, lunaticly rave, / Because his Mariam's life he cannot save" (5 Chorus, 26-9). Herod is also openly named 'tyrant' in the play, by Alexandra (1.2.2), by Babas's first son (2.2.6) and by Babas's second son (2.2.89).

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[171] For a discussion on Anne Boleyn's innocence of adultery, see Retha M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 191-214.
[172] Weller and Ferguson, p. 34.
[173] Britland, p. XVIII.

Wray states that Cary's interest in the phenomenon of despotism is clearly perceived: "In the play Herod is figured according to the dominant traits of the tyrant stereotype: he is autocratic, impetuous, murderous, susceptible to manipulation, cruel, wavering and insane … His flaws compromise his abilities as ruler and mark him out as an uncannily modern rendering of the dictator."[174] Herod's subjects, who following the voice of conscience choose not to obey the king slavishly, are all put to death on his order. The sons of Babas, accused of being political dissidents and helped by Constabarus to hide from Herod's fury (2.2.56); Constabarus himself (5 Chorus, 15), and Sohemus, who refuses to kill Mariam (4.4.72-3), undeniably give evidence of the king's dictatorial relations with his subjects. Britland claims that "in this play obsessed with social hierarchy and blood lines, clientage ties and influence derived from proximity to power are very noticeable."[175]

Members of the royal family often compromise their personal integrity for the purposes of supremacy. Herod himself is represented as an oath-breaker, who does not respect the promises given to Doris (2.3.25-8), and as a flawed king and vacillator, who can scarcely take a decision about the way he wants to kill his wife. Similarly, Salome does not hesitate to break her marriage oaths at her convenience, and her manipulative behaviour, partially with the help of the butler, eventually leads to the condemnation and death of several characters: Josephus, Baba's sons, Sohemus and Mariam. As far as the notion of oath-breaking is concerned, Britland states that in 1606, in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, the notion of oath-breaking was seriously brought into question.[176] James I's Catholic subjects were obliged to take the oath of allegiance, which proclaimed him the only rightful authority in the realm. Britland states that Salome accusing Mariam of having a heart as "false as powder" (4.7.74) might have implied the play's topical

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[174] Wray, p. 29.
[175] Britland, p. XVIII.
[176] Britland, p. XIX.

allusion to the Gunpowder Plot.[177] I think that scholars, who read Cary's play as a Catholic response to England's religious contemporary conflict, should be cautious in their analysis, as Cary at the time of the composition of *Mariam*, was still Protestant, and thus, could not be directly affected by the crisis of conscience some Catholics experienced from the first years of James I's reign, which led to a new wave of anti-Catholicism and harsher legislation against Catholics. Nonetheless, the play undeniably deals with the issues of absolutism, oath-taking, deception and doubt; Britland confirms that *Mariam*: "indicates that survival in the world of the court depends upon moral flexibility and deception."[178] The play discusses the nature of appearances and truth, it recommends coherent sentiments and behaviour, "upholding a continuity between inner thoughts and outward show;"[179] and its complex debate over conscience, reason, feelings, truth and untruth, provides room for the readers' awareness of a mutable, often ruthless, world.

Weller and Ferguson state that in the play, the 'thematics of substitution' make the tragedy a more dramatic representation of the relations at the court of Herod the Great. Starting from Herod himself, who usurps the Maccabean throne, we may learn that other protagonists' positions are seriously endangered by their rivals. Accordingly, Mariam replaces Doris as a new wife of Herod, Mariam's son, Alexander, replaces Doris's son, Antipater, and gains the right to Herod's throne. Josephus is replaced with Constabarus, and Constabarus with Silleus, all three in Salome's affections. Weller and Ferguson claim that "*Mariam* reminds its readers (or potential auditors) that the places which characters occupy have been occupied before them and that their relationships repeat earlier configurations ... The victims of power in *Mariam* [are] its none-too-scrupulous beneficiaries."[180]

Ramona Wray identifies *Mariam* in terms of its geographical reflection upon Jerusalem as a homeland, "fertile ground" (4.7.20), "happy in thy store" (4.1.1). Wray believes that the city played

[177] Britland, p. XX. For further information about the topical allusions to the Gunpowder Plot in *Mariam*, see Margaret W. Ferguson, *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003, p. 301.
[178] Britland, p. XIX.
[179] Britland, p. XX.
[180] Weller and Ferguson, p. 38.

an important role for Cary in her characterization of the protagonists: “Jerusalem is explicitly invoked on several occasions, the mode of direct address deployed at these points signalling a sense of the city as an informing location and a construction vital to characters’ self-definitions.”[181] Constabarus addresses the city “farewell, fair city! Nevermore / Shall I behold your beauty shinning bright” (4.6.29-30). Herod also enthusiastically calls the city: “Hail, happy city! Happy in thy store, / And happy that thy buildings such we see! / More happy in the Temple where w’adore” (4.1.1-3). Jerusalem, states Wray, was the subject of many accounts of the sixteenth and early-seventeenth English travellers such as Margery Kempe, George Sandys, Fynes Moryson and William Lithgow, who admired its great beauty and riches; and such a popular city might provide space for “set of relations, between Cary’s drama and the plays of her contemporaries, opening up areas of correspondence both with Jerusalem-set narratives and biblically inspired theatre.”[182] Jerusalem’s historical sites and monuments attract frequent comments from many of Cary’s protagonists. Sohemus mentions “The strength of all the city, David’s Tower” (3.3.77-8), which is characterized as witness embodying the city’s history: “Be witness, David’s city, if my heart / Did ever merit such an act of thine, / Or if the fault be mine that makes us part!” (1.6.68-70); Herod mentions the city’s buildings (4.1.2) and considers opening “David’s sepulchre” (4.3.19); and Doris refers to the city’s architecture saying: “you royal buildings, bow your lofty side” (2.3.1). In *Mariam*, Cary brings together Jerusalem’s ancient past, its traditions, achievements and constant accretion: “The play invests not so much in historical authenticity but, rather, in the ideas and values that multiple locations, within the Jerusalem setting, communicate.”[183]

Jewishness, Judaic culture, kings and prophets are explored and celebrated in several parts of the play. Constabarus refers to “holy lamb” (1.6.74); Doris mentions a thanksgiving festival for the fruit harvest, Sukkot, “the feast that takes the fruit from ground” (2.3.7); Constabarus addresses “mildest Moses” and his “wonders in the land of Ham” (1.6.71-2); Herod alludes to David, who

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[181] Wray, p. 18.
[182] Wray, p. 18.
[183] Wray, p. 23.

established Jerusalem as a capital city: "Methinks our parting was in David's days" (4.1.14). Wray states that "the play makes its imaginative investment in the city participating in a debate about the complexities of Jewish identity. Invocations of Judaic culture and mores are mediated through a heightened sense of setting, with language underscoring an impression of Jerusalem's rich lineage."[184] Furthermore, the questions about Herod's partial Jewish identity that positions him in the lower social class, emphasise the historical conflict between Israelites and the Edomites (or Idumaeans).[185] Herod, in fact, is an Idumean, who in the play becomes an object of racial slurs. Alexandra openly calls him a "Base Edomite, the damned Esau's heir" (1.2.6) and an "Idumean from the dust" (1.2.18). Wray claims that Herod's lower social status and lack of pure royal blood in his veins are clearly stressed in *Mariam*: "from the start of Cary's play it is implied that Herod is out of place, a type of outsider, and that his anxious wielding of authority is due in no small part to the marginality of his ancestry."[186] Questions of identity and rightful authority, explored in *Mariam* within both the public world and the private sphere, become crucial factors in establishing the protagonists' relationships with family and the surrounding world. Considering Cary's position and sensibility of an early woman writer, Nancy Cotton Pearse stresses the importance of the author's choice to set the plot of the tragedy in Jerusalem: "The play is a sophisticated achievement for a largely self-educated person of seventeen. Cary is very careful with details, adding bits of Jewish local color, and there are no anachronisms, which is unusual in the period."[187] Laurie J. Shannon, while exploring and exemplifying the difficulties upon Cary's self-authoring, states that "Cary's drama participates in "constitutional" debate and launches incisive critique of the foundational discourses of society, whether of Old Testament Judea or of Tudor-Stuart England."[188] Meredith

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[184] Wray, p. 24.
[185] Wray explains that though the Edomites (or Idumeans), descended from Esau, and Israelites, descended from Jacob, seemed to be closely related to each other (the Edomites were converted to Judaism by John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon Maccabee and Mariamme's great-great-grandfather), they were historical rivals. Wray, pp. 75, 88.
[186] Wray, p. 31.
[187] Nancy Cotton Pearse, "Elizabeth Cary, Renaissance Playwright," *Texas Studies in Language and Literature* 18, 1977, p. 604.
[188] Laurie J. Shannon draws attention to male friendship, in "*The Tragedy of Mariam*: Cary's Critique of the Terms of Founding Social Discourses," in Raber, p. 351.

Skura adds that: “Part of the play’s effectiveness derives from its ability to portray the many-faceted antagonisms and identifications in marriage and to place the isolated couple in multiple emotional as well as political contexts.”[189] Alison Shell also claims that: “The force of Cary’s play derives in large part from her use of history as a means of merciless self-interrogation.”[190]

Wray believes that Cary’s choice to set *Mariam* in Jerusalem might have been indebted to several other English contemporary Jerusalem-set dramas, representing the biblical stories of Jewish history: “[Cary] by choosing Jerusalem as an informing presence, … was following a number of contemporary dramatic works set in the city and revealing herself as attuned to the theatrical trends of her moment.”[191] Wray includes, among the potential inspiring Jerusalem-set sources for *Mariam*, George Peele’s *David and Bethsabe* (written in 1588); Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene’s *A Looking Glass for London and England* (written in c. 1590); the guild performance of John Smith’s *The Destruction of Jerusalem* in Coventry (1584); and Thomas Heywood’s *The Four Prentices of London* (1592). It seems that there were many other plays concerned with the history of Jerusalem, commissioned, written or staged during Cary’s lifetime, but are nowadays lost.[192] Wray claims that Cary’s *Mariam* distinguishes itself from the other plays of the period with scriptural underpinnings, because its action takes place in the period which dates back earlier than the Roman siege; in fact, in Cary’s play the Temple is still in all its glory. Yet, like other plays, *Mariam* “represents a key moment in the city’s record, a moment that paves the way for the coming of the New Testament and a conception of Jerusalem not limited to Jewish modes of interpretation alone.”[193]

Stephanie Hodgson-Wright claims that the play opens up space for a debate about women’s voices and women’s bodies.”[194] While Mariam and Salome seek to gain power over their own bodies, a desire originated in the absence of Herod, Doris and Alexandra try to re-establish their lost

[189] Skura, p. 62.
[190] Alison Shell, “Elizabeth Cary’s Historical Conscience: *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Thomas Lodge’s Josephus,” in Wolfe, *Literary Career*, p. 60.
[191] Wray, p. 25.
[192] Wray, p. 25.
[193] Wray, p. 26.
[194] Hodgson-Wright, p. 22; For further study on women voicing their views and their rebellion in *Mariam*, see Cuder-Domínguez, *Stuart Women Playwrights*, pp. 22-7.

privileged positions at court.[195] Mariam firmly refuses to use her sexual allure to manipulate her husband; Salome, on the other hand, does not care about her reputation and uses her body for personal gain. Salome's thirst for power does not prevent her from manipulating either women or men and eventually leads her to break with convention while having Mosaic law on her side. Hodgson-Wright explains that: "Mariam chooses abstinence, Salome chooses indulgence, but both attempt to carve out positions for themselves outside of the economy of dynastic marriage."[196] Doris desires to convince Herod to give their son, Antipater, the respect and recognition he deserves. Alexandra gives primary consideration to her family interests and reminds Mariam of Herod's injuries done to their family. While considering Herod the usurper to her family's lineage, Alexandra does not hesitate to accuse Herod before Caesar in order to take the kingdom's rule back into her own hands. Pilar Cuder-Domínguez believes that: "such extraordinary female visibility may be considered one of the telltale signs of domestic tragedy, and a clear indicator of the conflation of personal and political issues in the play's plot."[197] Britland explains that while "participating in a discourse that reads history as an expression of a divine plan, *Mariam* is not just concerned with the splitting and fragmentation of the female subject within a society that tries to exercise control over a woman's body and mind, but with the intrinsic instability of the fallen mortal world where deceit can be taken for truth and insides are rarely coterminous with outsides."[198]

Several other critics find *Mariam* to be explicitly a feminist manifesto and interpret the tragedy as an explicit condemnation of patriarchal society and male dominance within marriage and the state. This group of feminist critical studies include the analyses by Catherine Belsey,[199] Sandra

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[195] Graphina, explains Hodgson-Wright, is not included in the group of rebellious women in the play, because her social status as a slave does not permit her to have power over her body or act of thinking. Hodgson-Wright, p. 25.
[196] Hodgson-Wright, p. 24.
[197] Cuder-Domínguez, *Stuart Women Playwrights*, p. 22.
[198] Britland, p. XX.
[199] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama*, London and New York: Methuen, 1985, pp. 171-5.

Fisher,[200] Betty S. Travitsky,[201] Margaret Ferguson,[202] Ramona Wray[203] and Barbara K. Lewalski,[204] which have mainly focused upon the position of the play's titular character subjected at once to state and domestic tyranny. They emphasise that Mariam, while voicing openly her views and concerns, is able to resist King Herod's tyranny and maintain her own integrity. Marta Straznicky comments on Mariam's struggle to preserve her integrity of thought and speech in the following way: "The 'tragedie' of Mariam appears to be far more than the disastrous history of a woman under the murderous control of a tyrant. While Cary certainly is interested in patriarchal oppression, she is even more captivated… by the psychological drama of a woman learning the need to control her will."[205]

The issue of Mariam's position vis-à-vis her husband's authority has often received autobiographical readings in relation to Cary's problems within her own marriage and her crises of conscience, and brought a great number of critics to discuss the ways in which the play's titular character challenges contemporary notions about the nature of female utterance, considering either Cary's wifely experience or her conversion to Catholicism. The fact that one of the modern editions of *Mariam* was republished with the supplement of Cary's biography, *The Lady Falkland Her Life*, may strengthen the notion that some critics find particularly interesting to read the tragedy in terms of the author's own life, preoccupations and struggles. Elaine Beilin believes that Mariam's personal problems mirror the author's difficulties in her early married life: "The play may be seen as a psychomachia, one that Lady Cary resolved by extending the limits of her personal conflict."[206]

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[200] Sandra K. Fisher, "Elizabeth Cary and Tyranny, Domestic and Religious," in Margaret Patterson Hannay, ed., *Silent but for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*, Kent: Kent State University Press, 1985, pp. 234-7.

[201] Betty S. Travitsky, "The Femme Covert in Elizabeth Cary's *Mariam*," in Carole Levin and Jeanie Watson, eds, *Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987, pp. 184-7.

[202] Margaret W. Ferguson, "The Spectre of Resistance: The Tragedy of Mariam (1613)," in David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass, eds, *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, New York and London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 235-50.

[203] Wray, pp. 27-31.

[204] Lewalski, "Resisting Tyrants," pp. 179-212.

[205] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 165.

[206] Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedy of Mariam*," p. 11.

Donald W. Foster refuses to read *Mariam* either as allegory or as autobiography,[207] but does not exclude that the plot of *Mariam* was influenced by Cary's own unhappy situation: "Cary was the product of a continual interplay between her life ad her art, as each was made to imitate the other in acts of self-conscious re-creation."[208] Foster refuses to think that an inexperienced young bride was able to shape such a wanton and outspoken character as that of Salome.[209] Another critic, who suggests reading *Mariam* in relation to the author's own life, is Meredith Skura. Skura's approach, however, is rather different from her contemporaries who read the drama almost entirely in terms of Cary's own disastrous marriage. According to Skura, *Mariam* explores the matriarchal as well as patriarchal hierarchies in a family, and thus, should also be read in relation to Cary's relationship with her parents: "Though overtly about marriage, *Mariam* asks to be read into the whole web of relationships – female as well as male – in which the marriage exists, following links that extend backward and forward through Cary's life history."[210] Finally, Allison Shell, who also speculates about possible analogies between the author and the titular protagonist, emphasises the didactic nature of the play: "Cary constructs models of how to behave that may echo subsequent events in that author's biography – and it makes perfect sense to consider life and works together, providing that one does not conflate the two."[211] It should be mentioned that the scholarly approach towards the strict interpretation of the tragedy in terms of Cary's own life is, however, rather risky. First of all, because the only source that provides us with some details about Cary's private life is her hagiography, which undeniably reinforces the moral and religious ideals of the protagonist.[212] Secondly, Cary's status as daughter, wife, mother and writer is shaped by a biographer, whose identity is quite debatable. Supposing it was indeed written by one of her four daughters, who knew

[207] Foster, p. 32.
[208] Foster, p. 27.
[209] Foster, p. 29.
[210] Skura, p. 58.
[211] Alison Shell, "Elizabeth Cary's Historical Conscience: *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Thomas Lodge's Josephus," in Wolfe, *Literary Career*, p. 57.
[212] For further discussion on *Life*'s hagiographical nature, see Heather Wolfe, ed., *Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland: Life and Letters*, Cambridge and Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001, pp. 65-85.

the protagonist personally,[213] the text in any case should be interpreted with extreme caution as partial shaping of the protagonist's identity cannot be excluded.

To conclude, it seems that the play's plot draws on a wide range of themes including the issues of marriage, the legitimacy of divorce, monarchical despotism, ethical choices, truth, identity, home, culture and traditions, and finally, multiplicity of female and male identities, which enrich the tragedy and lead to explore a broad spectrum of political and social views and approaches in the period. Several studies on *Mariam*, of a particularly feminist nature, explore Cary's position as an early modern woman writer, who tends to deconstruct and subvert the dominant ideology of men's control over women's language, thoughts and feelings. Though the interpretation of Cary's dialogic position towards a delicate issue of female transgressive voice in the patriarchal society tends and will continue to divide critics in their reception of the text, Cary's discussion of the restrictions on women's place and space within marriage and within society undeniably proves the author's participation in the contemporary socio-political dialogue concerning the gender issues, widely set in larger socio-cultural context. Cary uses her drama as a way of investigating the realistic world, and according to this, I agree with Wray, who states that *Mariam*: "attracts gendered interpretations as well as approaches centring upon questions of national identity and allegiance."[214]

1.9. The theatrical dimension of the play

Rosemary Kegl, in her analysis of Cary's play's generic 'otherness,' asserts that "Cary's closet drama's tour de force"[215] is designed to subvert the play's generic integrity, and moreover, provokes 'crisis in genre,' which establishes the play's uncomfortable relationship to the stage: "*Mariam*'s

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[213] Elaine Beilin and Donald W. Foster claim that the credibility of the events reported by Cary's biographer is rather high in view of the fact that other historical sources draw on the same circumstances. Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedy of Mariam*," p. 11; Foster, p. 28. For more detailed information on the *Life* and its author, see Heather Wolfe, "A Family Affair: The Life and Letters of Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland," in Raber, pp. 87-98.
[214] Wray, p. 64.
[215] Rosemary Kegl, "Theaters, Households, and a 'Kind of History' in Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedy of Mariam*," in Raber, p. 129.

strict adherence to the generic expectations of closet drama not only fails to escape but actually manages to approximate the unsettling temporal compression that Philip Sidney associated with the popular stage."[216] Kegl raises an interesting question about *Mariam*'s theatricality; she defines *Mariam*'s conflicting generic nature as 'crisis in genre' because she believes that: "Cary's closet drama tends to replicate rather than reform the excess of the popular stage."[217] Furthermore, Kegl observes that quite a few scholars have already discussed *Mariam*'s thematic connection to staged plays such as *Antony and Cleopatra*,[218] *The Merchant of Venice*,[219] *Othello*,[220] *The Taming of the Shrew*,[221] *Arden of Faversham*,[222] and the mystery plays with Herod as a protagonist;[223] but none of these refers explicitly to Cary's closet drama's suitability for the stage and possible relationship to household dramaturgical practices. The supposition undeniably requires a closer analysis, considering that in *Mariam*, the protagonists' gestures and actions seem to construct little illusion of the theatricality of their presentation on stage. Yvonne Day Merrill, in fact, firmly questions the play's suitability for the stage, claiming that little physical action and the characters' long monologues or soliloquies make the play unplayable.[224] In a review, Greg Jameson explains that "*The Tragedy of Mariam* is not unproblematic in terms of its staging. There is little interaction between characters, giving it the feel more of a series of interconnected monologues than a play in its own right. This style affords every actor good speeches to make an impression, but it leaves it difficult for the drama to fully catch alight."[225] In another review, Roger Smith shares Jameson's critical resistance to *Mariam*'s performativity and explains that *Mariam* lacks its theatrical potential

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[216] Kegl, pp. 129, 133-4.
[217] Kegl, p. 132.
[218] Callaghan, pp. 185-7; Weller and Ferguson, pp. 42-3.
[219] Callaghan, pp. 180-4.
[220] Frances E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994, pp. 109-20; Weller and Ferguson, pp. 41, 174.
[221] Maureen Quilligan, "Staging Gender: William Shakespeare and Elizabeth Cary," in Raber, pp. 528-49.
[222] Betty S. Travitsky, "Husband-Murder and Petty Treason in English Renaissance Tragedy," *Renaissance Drama* 21, 1990, pp. 171-98. In this article, Travitsky discusses *Mariam*'s relationship to *Arden of Faversham* and *Othello*.
[223] Weller and Ferguson, p. 23.
[224] Yvonne Day Merrill, *The Social Constitution of Western Women's Rhetoric before 1750*, Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996, p. 193.
[225] http://www.entertainment-focus.com/theatre-review/the-tragedy-of-mariam-review/, accessed on 13 May 2014.

because “the piece consists almost entirely of long monologues, mostly of rhyming quatrains in ABAB format, delivered by characters who often don't take the trouble to tell us who they are. This tends to make it rather undramatic.”[226] Britland also thinks that considering *Mariam* as written to be acted is rather a forced idea. She believes that a play with a subplot about unhappy marriage and divorce, composed and published in the period of two famous and much debated divorces of Robert Rich and then Robert Devereux, “was hot property. When one adds the clientage ties between the Cary family and Robert Rich, the idea of a performance of *Mariam* seems highly inflammatory, while the circulation of the text among a group of people interested in, and concerned by, his divorce seems much more likely.”[227]

Some other critics, however, stand up for the idea that the play may prove to be performable and enjoyable. Maureen Quilligan states that Cary’s characters, especially the heroines, who speak openly and convincingly, construct their strong identities through speech: “Cary exposes the bodily costs of female public speech… [Cary’s play] speaks to the historical actualities of the suppression of women’s speech (especially “public” speech).”[228] Quilligan believes that Cary’s female characters’ verbal skills help them communicate directly with the audience.[229] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright’s goes even further and states that “*Mariam* is a play peopled by well-drawn characters, whose psychological complexity creates a drama which is variously horrifying, tense and darkly comic.”[230]

In view of such theories, some critics have speculated about Cary’s possible knowledge and interest in the theatrical tradition. Barbara K. Lewalski states that it is likely that Cary either read or attended Campion’s *Lord Hay’s Masque* in 1607, in which her husband danced as a Knight of Apollo.[231] Mary Cole Hill argues that Elizabeth Cary might have attended several dramatic performances with her in-laws, the Paget family, and the relatives of her mother-in-law’s sister-in-

[226] http://onestoparts.com/review-the-tragedy-of-mariam-tristan-bates-theatre, accessed on 13 May 2014.
[227] Britland, p. XXVII.
[228] Quilligan, p. 547.
[229] Quilligan, p. 549.
[230] Hodgson-Wright, p. 31.
[231] Lewalski, “Resisting Tyrants,” p. 190.

law, the Barret family.[232] According to Cole, these two noble families, as many others of the period, used to stage several dramatic performances in their houses; moreover, the Pagets and the Barrets seem to have hosted illustrious spectators, Queen Elizabeth I included, in their households in Staffordshire and in Aveley. Rosemary Kegl also emphasises that the Carys took active part in the household entertainments; what is more, she confirms that the Tanfields hosted Queen Elizabeth I for two days at Burford in order to see a performance there.[233] Interestingly, Cary's biography itself seems to give unequivocal evidence of Cary's theatrical experience: "After her lord's death she never went to masques nor plays not so much as at the court, though she loved them very much, especially the last extremely; nor to any other such public thing."[234] Undoubtedly, Cary's in-laws' and her own household's dramatic entertainments might have provided several and significant possibilities for Cary to learn about the tradition of staging.

Whether or not Cary's possible close contact with the stage before or during the composition of *Mariam* might have determined her awareness of the genre and encouraged her own exploitation of alternative theatrical spaces, and whether or not *Mariam* was intended for performance or even performed at Cary's times, is still under discussion and is awaiting further proofs of its tangible performativity. It is evident, however, that a growing number of scholars has recently started embracing the idea of performing Cary's play on the stage; we possess the information about a few of *Mariam*'s performances, which, since the early 1990s, have successfully taken place on different stages, despite the controversial nature of the play.

Catherine Schuler and Sharon Ammen first entertained the idea of preparing a performance script comprising literary and musical arrangements of some sections of *Mariam* at the "Attending to Women in Early Modern England" symposium sponsored by the Centre for Renaissance and Baroque Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, in 1990. Some years later, the

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[232] Mary Cole Hill, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999, pp. 207, 220.
[233] Kegl, pp. 126-7.
[234] Weller and Ferguson, p. 224.

"Women and Dramatic Production 1570-1670" project allowed for a professional production of *Mariam,*[235] directed by Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, with the Tinderbox Theatre Co. at the Bradford Alhambra Studio, in England, in October, 1994. It seems that Hodgson-Wright was the first to direct the play, but this needs further investigation. What we can be sure of is that there is no evidence *Mariam* was ever performed in the seventeenth century.[236] Liz Schafer decided to direct the play at the Studio Theatre, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, in November 1995.[237] In 1996, Paul Stephen Lim directed a staged reading of *Mariam*,[238] at the English Alternative Theatre at the University of Kansas. On 22 July 2007, a staged reading of *Mariam*[239] was directed by Rebecca McCutcheon for Primavera, specializing in revivals, at the King's Head Theatre, Islington. The National Museum of Women in the Arts and the Washington Shakespeare Company were involved in a further staged reading of *Mariam*[240] that took place on 4 May 2009 in Washington, DC. On 28 June 2012, John East directed the play at Central School of Speech and Drama, in London. On 14 March 2013, *Mariam*[241] was directed by Kirstin Bone and produced by the Improbable Fictions staged reading series in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Some months later, on 12 June, *Mariam at Burford - Youth and Young Girlhood*[242] was directed by Rebecca McCutcheon for Burford Festival 2013, at St John the Baptist Church, Burford, Oxfordshire, the church in which Cary probably got married. Finally, the Lazarus Theatre Company staged the play, directed by Gavin Harrington-Odedra, at the Tristan Bates Theatre in London's Covent Garden, 12–17 August 2013.

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[235] Wray, p. 64.
[236] Britland, p. XXVI.
[237] Britand, p. 31; http://rhul.mediacore.tv/media/mariam, , accessed on 13 May 2014.
[238] Hodgson-Wright, pp. 31-2.
[239] Wray, p. 64.
[240] Wray, p. 63.
[241] http://improbablefictions.wordpress.com/tag/tragedy-of-mariam, accessed on 13 May 2014.
[242] http://rebeccamccutcheon.com/2013/05/17/mariam-at-burford, accessed on 13 May 2014.

CHAPTER TWO: Elizabeth Cary's education

2.1. Elizabeth Cary as a voracious reader of her time

Before I investigate the material on the Herod-Mariamme story that might have inspired Cary to compose her *Mariam*, it seems to me crucial to discuss her educational background within the socio-cultural backdrop of the period in which she lived and wrote, mainly marked by men's monopoly of knowledge and the restrictions imposed on female authorship.

Elizabeth Cary, the only child of Sir Lawrence Tanfield (1551?-1625),[1] a successful Oxford lawyer and later Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Elizabeth Symonds (d.1629), led a good life of a daughter of the upper gentry, first at Burford, and later, at Great Tew, in Oxfordshire.[2] The future wife of Sir Henry Cary or Carey, later 1st Viscount Falkland (1576?-25 September 1633), and mother of eleven children between 1609 and 1624,[3] but also a dramatist, a poet, and a religious polemist, appears to have been a good and ardent female scholar of her period. The full-length biography of Elizabeth represents her as a well-read lady, who "learnt to read very soon and loved it much."[4] Though female literacy was encouraged at that time, it cannot be forgotten that nearly ninety percent of women by 1640 had difficulty writing their own names in early modern England and their writing skills seem to have improved gradually, reaching only twenty-five percent by the succession of George I.[5]

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[1] E. I. Carlyle, 'Tanfield, Sir Lawrence (*c.*1551–1625)', rev. David Ibbetson, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26959, accessed 27 May 2015.

[2] Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, pp. 183-4, 186.

[3] After the first seven years of marriage without children, Elizabeth bore to Henry six daughters, Catherine (1609–1625), Anne (1614–?), Elizabeth (1617–1683), Lucy (1619–1650), Victoria (1620–1692) and Mary (1621–1693), and five sons, Lucius (1610–1643), Lorenzo (1613–1642), Edward (1616–1616), Henry (1622–?) and Patrick (1623–1657). Weller and Ferguson, pp. 188, 191.

[4] Weller and Ferguson, p. 186.

[5] Writing skills were also limited to nearly seventy percent of the total male population by 1640. David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 176.

Cary's biography provides detailed information about her passion for reading since she was a child. We learn from the first pages of the account that:

> She having neither brother nor sister, nor other companion of her age, spent her whole time in reading; to which she gave herself so much that she frequently read all night; so as her mother was fain to forbid her servants to let her have candles, which command they returned to their own profit, and let themselves be hired by her to let her have them, selling them to her at half a crown apiece, so was she bent to reading; and she not having money so free, was to owe it them, and in this fashion was she in debt a hundred pound afore she was twelve year old, which with two hundred more <afore> for the like bargains and promises she paid on her wedding day; this will not seem strange to those that knew her well. When she was twelve year [sic] old, her father (who loved much to have her read, and she as much to please him) gave her Calvin's *Institutions* and bid her read it.[6]

Her severe parents, famous especially for their toughness and arrogance at Great Tew, in Oxfordshire, where the inhabitants used to complain bitterly of oppression by the Tanfields, who considered their neighbours "more worthy to be ground to powder than to have any favour showed to [them],"[7] seem to have encouraged Cary to pursue her studies in different fields during her childhood. Cary's mother is said to have been harsh with her adolescent daughter and to have controlled her intellectual thirst and restricted her access to books, but Cary's father, on the other hand, appears to have motivated her to read a lot, also in foreign languages. He was, in fact, highly regarded for his good education in his professional career: "As a lawyer Tanfield had a good reputation among his contemporaries: his judicial colleague Richard Hutton described him as a resolute and reserved man of great learning and the property in the Temple formerly known as Bradshaw's Rents was renamed Tanfield Court in his honour."[8]

Encouraged to study foreign languages, Cary, in all probability, had a reasonable knowledge of French, Spanish and Italian. In her biography we can read that "when she was but four or five year old they put her to learn French, which she did about five weeks and, not profiting at all, gave it over. After, of herself, without a teacher, whilst she was a child, she learnt French, Spanish, Italian, which she always understood very perfectly."[9] Perhaps, she also had some familiarity with Latin and Hebrew, but her biographer does not seem to be particularly enthusiastic about her

[6] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 187-8.
[7] Quoted in Carlyle, online.
[8] Quoted in Carlyle, online.
[9] Weller and Ferguson, p. 186.

fluency in those languages and emphasises that Cary was able to speak them at a certain time of her life, but having had no opportunity to practise them, forgot most of what she had learnt:

She learnt Latin in the same manner (without being taught) … after having discontinued it, she was much more imperfect in it, so as a little afore her death, translating some (intending to have done it all had she lived) of Blosius out of Latin, she was fain to help herself somewhat with the Spanish translation. Hebrew she likewise, about the same time, learnt with the very little teaching; but for many year [sic] neglecting it, she lost it much.[10]

Rudimentary knowledge of dead or living languages had long been a mark of privilege and education in England and with the introduction of a printing press in England in 1476, the study of foreign languages became easier and more widely available, pursued for mainly cultural, political and diplomatic reasons.[11] Humanists advocated especially the study of Latin and Greek. The presence of a growing number of grammars of Latin language in English[12] facilitated the English

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[10] Weller and Ferguson, p. 186.

[11] Vivian Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-Century England," in Vivian Salmon, ed., *Language and Society in Early Modern England: Selected essays 1982-1994*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1996, pp. 176-7.

[12] Terence, *Floures for Latine spekynge selected and gathered oute of Terence, and the same translated in to Englysshe, together with the exposition and settynge forthe as welle of suche latyne wordes, as were thought nedefull to be annoted, as also of dyuers grammatical rules, very profytable [and] necessarye for the expedite knowledge in the latine tongue: compiled by Nicolas Vdall*, Londini: Tho. Bertheleti, 1534. STC 23899; John Holte, *Lac puerorum. A Latin grammer in English,* London: by Wynkyn de worde, 1505. STC 13603.7; Anon., *Certayne briefe rules of the regiment or construction of the eyght partes of speche in englishe and latine,* Londini: Thomae Bertheleti, 1537. STC 21447; William Lily, *A shorte introduction of grammar generallye to be vsed: compyled and set forth, for the bringing vp of all those that intende to attaine the knowledge of the Latine tongue*, London: R. Wolfium, 1564. STC 15613.7; Roger Ascham, *The scholemaster or plaine and perfite way of teachyng children, to vnderstand, write, and speake, the Latin tong but specially purposed for the priuate brynging vp of youth in ientlemen and noble mens houses, and commodious also for all such, as haue forgot the Latin tonge ... By Roger Ascham*, London: Printed by Iohn Daye, 1570. STC 832; Marcus Tullius Cicero, *A very necessary and profitable entraunce to the speakyng and writyng of the Latin tongue. Or a certain draught taken out of Ciceroes epistles ... Translated by T.W.*, London: by Ihon Kyngston, 1575. STC 5307; John Véron, *A dictionary in Latine and English, heretofore set foorth by Master Iohn Veron, and now newly corrected and enlarged, for the vtilitie and profite of all young students in the Latine tongue, as by further search therin they shall finde. By R.W.*, London: by Henry Middelton, 1575. STC 24677; Petrus Ramus, *The Latine grammar of P. Ramus translated into English; seene and allowed,* London: Printed by Robert Walde-grave, 1585. STC 15252; Aesop, *AEsops fabl'z in tru ort'ography with grammar-nóts He'r-vntoo ar al'so iooined the short sentenc'es of the wýz Cato im-printed with lýk form and order: bóth of which autorz ar transláted out-of Latin intoo E'nglish by William Bullokar,* London: by Edmund Bollifant, 1585. STC 187; Terence, *Andria the first comoedie of Terence, in English. A furtherance for the attainment vnto the right knowledge, & true proprietie, of the Latin tong. And also a commodious meane of help, to such as haue forgotten Latin, for their speedy recouering of habilitie, to vnderstand, write, and speake the same. Carefully translated out of Latin, by Maurice Kyffin*, London: by T[homas] E[ast], 1588. STC 23895; John Rider, *Bibliotheca scholastica. A double dictionarie, penned for all those that would haue within short space the vse of the Latin tongue, either to speake, or write. Verie profitable and necessarie for scholars, courtiers, lawyers and their clarkes, apprentices of London, travellers, factors for marchants, and briefly for all discontinuers within her Majesties realmes of England and Ireland. Compiled by Iohn Rider, master of artes, and preacher of Gods word*, Oxford: Printed by Ioseph Barnes, 1589. STC 21031.5; John Sanford, *A briefe extract of the former Latin grammer, done into English, for the easier instruction of the learner,* Oxford: Printed by Ioseph Barnes, 1605. STC 21737; John Brinsley, *Cato translated grammatically directing for vnderstanding, construing, parsing, making, and proouing the same Latine: and so for continuall practice of the grammaticall analysis and genesis. Done for the good of schooles, and of all desirous to recouer, or keep that which they got in the grammar-schoole, or to increase therein,* London: by H. L[ownes], 1612. STC 4859; John Brinsley, *The posing of the parts, or, A most plaine and easie way of examining the accidence and grammar, by questions and answeres, arising directly out of the words of the rules. Whereby all schollars may attaine*

scholars of the period. Fluency in Greek as well as in Hebrew, on the other hand, was rather a rare accomplishment, perhaps because of the scarcity of material on those languages in England, at least throughout the sixteenth century.[13] Such circumstances, however, did not stop ardent readers of the Scriptures from learning Greek and Hebrew and sometimes even more unusual, oriental languages such as Aramaic, the original language of some parts of the Bible, mainly used in *Daniel* and *Ezra*; Syriac and Chaldee, both used to make ancient translations of the Bible; and finally, Classical Arabic, helpful in the Bible interpretation.[14] Furthermore, in the sixteenth century, the interest of the English people in French, Spanish and Italian works of different subjects started to increase and eventually resulted in several translations.[15] France, Spain and Italy were especially praised for their rich literatures but their languages were also employed in international correspondence among aristocratic families.[16] Occasionally, Portuguese was used by some English of the period, mainly for the activities of exploration and commerce;[17] the Celtic languages were useful for antiquarian reasons, and Arabic was studied for a better understanding of the etymology of the scientific words

most speedily, to the perfect learning, full vnderstanding, and right vse thereof; for their happy proceeding in the Latine tongue. Gathered purposely for the benefit of schooles, and for the vse and delight of maisters and schollars, London: n.p., 1612. STC 3770b.5.

[13] No English-Greek text books seem to have been available apart from one Latin-Greek text book, published by Richard Croke (1489?-1558), a Cambridge scholar, till the late sixteenth century in England. See *Richardi Croci Britani Introductiones in rudimenta Graeca*, Coloniae: in aedibus Eucharij Ceruicorni, 1520. STC 6044a.5. After Greek had been included in the curriculum of grammar schools, in the mid-century, more Latin-Greek grammar books started appearing in England in the last years of the sixteenth century and the first years of the seventeenth century, introduced by Petrus Ramus in 1581, Nicolas Clénard in 1588, William Camden in 1597, John Prideaux in 1607, Johann Scapula in 1619 and Lubin Eilhard in 1620. The first English-Greek text book was introduced in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Simon Sturtevant, *Anglo-latinus nomenclator Graecorum primitiuorum. E. Ioan. Scapulae lexico desumptorum. Or The English-Latin nomenclator of Greeke primitiue words Which beeing the first part of grammer, is to be learned of schollers as vvell as the other precepts of etymologie or syntaxis. Compiled by Simon Sturteuant*, Londini: ex officina Samuelis Macham, 1610. STC 23408.4. The first English-Hebrew grammar, translated by John Udall (1560?-1592) from Martinius, was available in England since1593. See Pierre Martinez, M*afteah leshon ha-kodesh that is The key of the holy tongue wherein is conteineid, first the Hebrue grammar (in a manner) woord for woord out of P. Martinius. Secondly, a practize upon the first, the twentie fift, and the syxtie eyght Psalmes, according to the rules of the same grammar. Thirdly, a short dictionary conteining the Hebrue woords that are found in the Bible with their proper significations. All Englished for the benefit of those that (being ignoraunt in the Latin) are desirous to learn the holy tongue; by Iohn Udall*, Leyden: by Francis Raphelengius, 1593. STC 17523.

[14] Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-century England," p. 176.

[15] Vivian Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England," *Histoire Epistémologie Langage* 16, 1994, p. 101; Francisco Javier Sánchez Escribano, "Portuguese in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Sederi* 16, 2006, p. 110.

[16] Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-century England," p. 176.

[17] Escribano, pp. 110, 116.

in Physics and Astronomy, and it was also indispensable for commerce in the Eastern Mediterranean.[18]

The study of foreign languages in England gradually acquired more significance since the first decades of the sixteenth century, and consequently, several attempts were made to encourage, initially only men and women of higher ranks, to be acquainted with foreign words. A growing number of grammars, polyglot dictionaries, phrase books and accounts of travels from unknown territories, published in different European and non-European languages, started appearing in England;[19] and explorers, merchants and Catholic missionaries, in particular, played a very important role in introducing foreign languages to English society. The first, bilingual edition of the *Vocabulaire* by Noel de Berlemont, published in 1530 and now lost, was reworked in 1551, including four languages: French, Flemish, Latin and Spanish.[20] English and German were added by the printer, Henry Heyndrick, to its 1576 edition. Portuguese appeared in two 1639 editions of the *Vocabulaire*.[21] John Baret published his quadruple dictionary of English, Latin, Greek and French in 1580[22] and Caudius Hollyband published his *The flourie field of foure languages* in 1583.[23] The earliest Italian grammar by William Thomas was already available in 1550; another one was translated from Latin into English by Henry Granthan in 1575.[24] In the 1590's, Antonio Corro's

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[18] Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-century England," pp. 176-7.
[19] Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-century England," p. 177.
[20] Escribano, p. 115.
[21] One of these editions was published anonymously for Michael Sparke. See *New dialogues or colloquies, and, a little dictionary of eight languages. Latine, French, Low-Dutch, High-Dutch, Spanish, Italian, English, Portugall A booke very necessary for all those that studie these tongues, either at home or abroad. Now perfected and made fit for travellers, young merchants and sea-men, especially those that desire to attaine to the use of these tongues*, London: Printed by E. G[riffin], 1639. STC 1432.
[22] John Baret, *An aluearie or quadruple dictionarie containing foure sundrie tongues: namelie, English, Latine, Greeke, and French. Newlie enriched with varietie of wordes, phrases, prouerbs, and diuers lightsome obseruations of grammar. By the tables you may contrairwise finde out the most necessarie wordes placed after the alphabet, whatsoeuer are to be found in anie other dictionarie: which tables also serue for lexicons, to lead the learner vnto the English of such hard wordes as are often read in authors, being faithfullie examined, are truelie numbered. Verie profitable for such as be desirous of anie of those languages,* Londini: Excudebat Henricus Denhamus typographus, Gulielmi Seresij vnicus assignatus, 1580. STC 1411.
[23] Caudius Hollyband, *Campo di fior or else The flourie field of foure languages of M. Claudius Desainliens, aliâs Holiband: for the furtherance of the learners of the Latine, French, English, but chieflie of the Italian tongue*, London: by Thomas Vautrollier, 1583. STC 6735.
[24] William Thomas, *Principal rules of the Italian grammer with a dictionarie for the better vnderstandyng of Boccace, Petrarcha, and Dante: gathered into this tongue by William Thomas*, Londini: n.p., 1550. STC 24020; Henry Granthan's *Italian grammar written in Latin by Scipio Lentulo, a Neapolitane, and turned into English by H. G.* was dedicated to Mary and Frances, the daughters of Lord Henry Berkeley. L. G. Kelly, 'Grantham, Henry (1566–1587),'

Spanish grammar, William Stepney's *The Spanish schoole-master,* Richard Perceval's *Bibliotheca Hispanica* and Richard Perceval's *Dictionary in Spanish and English* appeared.[25] Dutch language might be learnt from Marten Le Mayre's 1606 text book in English.[26] In 1617, John Minsheu introduced his *Guide into the Tongues in eleven languages*,[27] whose popularity led to its re-publication in 1625, 1626 and 1627. French, in particular, started substituting Latin and eventually became the language of the European courts by the seventeenth century.[28] Both women and men could learn French from a number of grammars of French and French text books, published

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11295, accessed 5 July 2015.

[25] Antonio Corro, *The Spanish grammer vvith certeine rules teaching both the Spanish and French tongues. By which they that haue some knowledge in the French tongue, may the easier attaine to the Spanish; and the likewise they that haue the Spanish, with more facilitie learne the French: and they that are acquainted with neither of them, learne either or both. Made in Spanish, by M. Anthonie de Corro. With a dictionarie adioyned vnto it, of all the Spanish wordes cited in this booke: and other more wordes most necessarie for all such as desire the knowledge of the same tongue,* London: by Iohn VVolfe, 1590. STC 5790; William Stepney, *The Spanish schoole-master Containing seuen dialogues, according to euery day in the weeke, and what is necessarie euerie day to be done, wherein is also most plainly shewed the true and perfect pronunciation of the Spanish tongue, toward the furtherance of all those which are desirous to learne the said tongue within this our realme of England. Whereunto, besides seuen dialogues, are annexed most fine prouerbs and sentences, as also the Lords prayer, the Articles of our beliefe, the ten Commandements, and a vocabularie, with diuers other things necessarie to be knowne in the said tongue. Newly collected and set forth by W. Stepney, professor of the said tongue in the famous citie of London*, London: by R. Field, 1591; Richard Perceval, *Bibliotheca Hispanica Containing a grammar; with a dictionarie in Spanish, English, and Latine; gathered out of diuers good authors: very profitable for the studious of the Spanish toong. By Richard Percyuall Gent. The dictionarie being inlarged with the Latine, by the aduise and conference of Master Thomas Doyley Doctor in Physicke*, London: by Iohn Iackson, 1591. STC 19619; Richard Perceval, *A dictionarie in Spanish and English, first published into the English tongue by Ric. Perciuale Gent. Now enlarged and amplified with many thousand words, as by this marke * to each of them prefixed may appeere; together with the accenting of euery worde throughout the whole dictionarie, for the true pronunciation of the language, as also for the diuers signification of one and the selfsame word: and for the learners ease and furtherance, the declining of all hard and irregular verbs; and for the same cause the former order of the alphabet is altered, diuers hard and vncouth phrases and speeches out of sundry of the best authors explained, with diuers necessarie notes and especiall directions for all such as shall be desirous to attaine the perfection of the Spanish tongue. All done by Iohn Minsheu professor of languages in London. Hereunto ... is annexed an ample English dictionarie ... by the same Iohn Minsheu,* London: by Edm. Bollifant, 1599. STC 19620.

[26] Marten Le Mayre, *The dutch shoole master VVherein is shewed the true and perfect way to learne the Dutch tongue, to the fartherance of all those which would gladlie learne it. Collected by Marten le Mayre, professor of the said tongue,* London: Printed by George Elde, 1606. STC 15453.7.

[27] John Minsheu, *Hegemon eis tas glossas· id est, Ductor in linguas, The guide into tongues Cum illarum harmonia, & etymologijs, originationibus, rationibus, & deriuationibus in omnibus his vndecim linguis, viz: 1. Anglica. 2. Cambro-Britanica. 3. Belgica. 4. Germanica. 5. Gallica. 6. Italica. 7. Hispanica. 8. Lusitanica seu Portugallica. 9. Latina. 10. Graeca. 11. Hebrea, &c. Quae etiam ita ordine, & sono consentientes, collocatae sunt, vt facilimè & nullo labore, vnusquisq[ue] non solùm, quatuor, quinque, vel plures illarum, quàm optimè memoria tenere, verum etiam (per earum etymologias) sub nomine, naturam, proprietatem, conditionem, effectum, materiam, formam, vel finem rerum, rectè nosse queat; ... Opera, studio, industria, labore & sumptibus Iohannis Minshaei in lucem editum & impressum. Anno 1617. = The guide into the tongues. With their agreement and consent one with another, as also their etymologies, that is, the reasons and deriuations of all or the most part of wordes, in these eleuen languages*, London: Printed by William Stansby and Melchisidec Bradwood, 1617. STC 17944.

[28] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," p. 100.

throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth century.[29] Among these, two were especially recommended for women, including Giovanni Michele Bruto's (1515-1594) *The necessarie, fit, and conuenient education of a yong gentlewoman,*[30] Pierre Erondelle's (1586?-1609) *The French Garden*[31] and Abel Boyer's (1667?–1729) T*he compleat French master for ladies and gentlemen: being a new method, to learn with ease and delight the French tongue*, which appeared in 1694.[32] In 1600, an English-Russian dictionary was drawn up by Mark Ridley, an English physician.

Thus, since the early years of the sixteenth century, humanists and reformers in England encouraged both men and women to study classical and contemporary languages; in either case, obviously, the possibility to study a foreign language was strictly related to social class, and to a large extent, to familial encouragement.[33] Till the mid-seventeenth century, only people of higher ranks were invited to pursue their studies of languages; moreover, there seemed to be some inclination for Englishmen to study the classical languages and for women to learn contemporary foreign languages:

> While Englishwomen of sufficient means were learning to read and speak French and Italian as "accomplishments," schoolboys were taught Latin because it was the entry to a cultural heritage which – even in the 17th century – consisted of a body of literature still probably far more extensive and serious than what was available in the vernacular.[34]

There were, however, some exceptions in this general tendency. In fact, royal women often had a solid knowledge of the classical languages as well as contemporary vernacular languages.[35] Mary Queen of France (1496-1533), Henry VIII' s sister, spoke Latin and French; Mary (1516-1558), daughter of Henry VIII and his first wife, Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536), also spoke Latin

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[29] EEBO lists the text books by Alexander Barclay (1521), Giles Du Wés (1546), Claudius Hollyband (1566, 1580, 1582, 1593), G. Ledoyen de la Pichonnaye (1576), Jacques Bellot (1578), John Eliot (1593), Guillaume Du Vair (1598) and Randle Cotgrave (1611).

[30] Giovanni Michele Bruto, *The necessarie, fit, and conuenient education of a yong gentlewoman written both in French and Italian, and translated into English by W. P. And now printed with the three languages togither in one volume, for the better instruction of such as are desirous to studie those tongues*, London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1598. STC 3947.

[31] Pierre Erondelle, *The French garden: for English ladyes and gentlewomen to walke in. Or, A sommer dayes labour Being an instruction for the attayning vnto the knowledge of the French tongue: wherein for the practise thereof, are framed thirteene dialogues in French and English, concerning diuers matters from the rising in the morning till bed-time. Also the historie of the centurion mencioned in the Gospell: in French verses. Which is an easier and shortter methode then hath beene yet set forth, to bring the louers of the French tongue to the perfection of the same. By Peter Erondell professor of the same language,* London: Printed [By E. Allde], 1605. STC 10513.

[32] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," p. 107.

[33] Kim Walker, *Women Writers of the English Renaissance*, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996, p. 5.

[34] Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-Century England," p. 175.

[35] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," pp. 100-1.

and French; Catherine Parr (1512-1548), the sixth wife of Henry VIII, was said to be familiar with Latin and Greek and fluent in French and Italian, she also undertook the study of Spanish when she became queen; Lady Jane Grey (1537-1554), Henry VIII's niece through his younger sister Mary, spoke excellent Greek, good Latin, Hebrew and Italian; she was also said to be familiar with Arabic and Chaldee; Elizabeth I (1533-1603), as a young girl, acquired French, Italian, Spanish and Flemish, under the supervision of her governess, Katherine Ashley. Her attendant, Blanche Parry taught her Welsh, and Richard Cox, headmaster of Eton and later Bishop of Ely, and William Grindal, a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, were appointed to supervise her education in Latin and Greek. After Grindal's death, Roger Ascham, an important English humanist and educational theorist, continued tutoring the princess in languages.[36] Some of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English women of the upper classes were also fluent in both classical and vernacular languages, even though

> unlike their royal sisters, women of the upper classes were under no obligation to undertake state duties or to converse with foreign ambassadors in Latin. To a large extent, therefore, instruction in the classical languages depended on the father of a family and his enthusiasm (or lack of it) for educated daughters; as with royal women, they would be instructed, not outside the home, but by private tutors.[37]

Tudor and Stuart women of higher ranks, who were especially fluent in the classical languages, usually came from the families "closely associated with the Court or the universities."[38] Though sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English men and women of higher rank were encouraged to speak foreign languages and some of them turned out to be distinguished linguists, it seems that, in general, the English of the period did not learn foreign languages willingly and easily,[39] and in view of their linguistic difficulties, any expressive or receptive foreign language abilities of both men and women can be considered rather significant for aristocracy of the period. Elizabeth Cary's linguistic education, in particular, perhaps, might be considered even more impressive. What is curious to

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[36] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, *Renaissance Drama by Women: Texts and Documents*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 7.
[37] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," p. 102.
[38] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," p. 103.
[39] Bulstrode Whitelocke (1605-1675), an English lawyer, writer and parliamentarian, gave his evidence on several practical, linguistic difficulties of the English abroad, after his mission in Sweden in 1654. Bulstrode Whitelocke, *A Journal of the Swedish Embassy in the Years 1653 and 1654, Impartially Written by the Ambassador Bulstrode Whitelocke*, Volume I, London: Longman, 1855, pp. 230-8.

note, in fact, is that she learnt languages in isolation,[40] without teachers, in the period, in which tuition was mainly given by noted scholars, linguists, learnt female or male tutors, or parents.[41]

Whether Cary was linguistically gifted or not, she must have had access to several literary texts of the period, including moral philosophy, poetry, theology, classical history and English chronicles:

She had read very exceeding much: poetry of all kinds, ancient and modern, in several languages, all that ever she could meet; history very universally, especially all ancient Greek and Roman historians, and chroniclers whatsoever of her own country; and the French histories very thoroughly, of most other countries something, though not so universally; of the ecclesiastical history very much, most especially concerning its chief pastors.[42]

Cary must have had a prodigious appetite for learning; we are told that even after her marriage, though her mother-in-law deeply disapproved of her precocious literary and linguistic abilities and eventually "took away all her books, with command to have no more brought her,"[43] she never stopped to read and such a practice even led her to start questioning her Protestant faith and change her religious beliefs.[44] Accordingly, Cary might have been well read in works of the saints of the Christian era, as her biographer asserts:

Of the Fathers <ve> she had read much, particularly the works of St Justin Martyr, St Jerome, very much of St Augustin, and of St Gregory, and of very many others some things, as she could meet with them , <yet> most of what she read of them was being translations, in Spanish, Italian, or French, at least for many year.[45]

Hagiographies or saints' legends were dominant literary genres in England in the Middle Ages, first intended for monastic or clerical audiences, but with time also designed to reach the lay public.[46] In early modern England, works about the saints and their writings were still recommended for women readers in order to strengthen their religious and moral values, driving them to the saints' way of life. Similarly, several lay writings, representing effective paradigms of female virtue, were considered appropriate reading for early modern women and used as models for imitation. Cary appears to have read some of them:

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[40] Some private tutors also lived with families for the duration of the child's studies. Salmon, "The Study of Foreign Languages in 17th-century England," p. 181.
[41] Salmon, "Women and the Study of Language," p. 109.
[42] Weller and Ferguson, p. 268.
[43] Weller and Ferguson, p. 189.
[44] Weller and Ferguson, p. 190.
[45] Weller and Ferguson, p. 268.
[46] For more details, see Joni Henry, "Humanist Hagiography in England, c. 1480–c. 1520," *Literature Compass* 10, 2013, pp. 535–43.

Of books treating of moral virtue and wisdom <and natural knowledge as Pliny / (such as Seneca, Plutarch's *Morals*, and natural knowledge as Pliny / and of late ones, such as French Mountaine [Montaigne], and English Bacon)> she had read very many when she was young, not without making her profit of them.[47]

In early modern England, Seneca's contribution to philosophy played a large role in the revival of Stoic ideas. Seneca was not only known for his tragedies but also for his moral essays in prose. The special interest in Senecan Stoicism was particularly applied to combat 'female heroism;' the Stoic ideal that "emphasises passive endurance rather than heroic action, [and] honors withdrawal and inner composure as positive virtues, ennobles the behaviour that was expected of women, to refrain from entering public life,"[48] and thus, turned out to be an attractive and inspirational model offering practical advice to all women according to the patriarchal culture of the time. Similarly, Plutarch was very famous in the English Renaissance for his essays, collected under the title *Moralia*,[49] which influenced significant sixteenth- and early-seventeenth philosophers and essayists such as Michel de Montaigne (1533-92)[50] and Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626),[51] and continued to be read throughout the seventeenth century in England. He wrote on education, claiming that the educative role of poetry and history was complementary to philosophy in educating the characters of young people. Four of the essays in *Moralia* are dedicated to women, whom he criticizes for their unconventional conduct or praises for their exemplary deeds, and whose behaviour patterns turned out to be a precious source to be used in the sixteenth- and early-seventeenth century English women's instruction.[52] Pliny the Elder, a Roman scholar, also read by Cary, was especially known

[47] Weller and Ferguson, p. 268.
[48] Mary Ellen Lamb, "The Countess of Pembroke and the Art of Dying," in Mary Beth Rose, ed., *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Literary and Historical Perspectives*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986, p. 213.
[49] Plutarch's *Moralia* might have been available to Cary in the 1603 English translation. Plutarch, *The philosophie, commonlie called, the morals vvritten by the learned philosopher Plutarch of Chaeronea. Translated out of Greeke into English, and conferred with the Latine translations and the French, by Philemon Holland of Coventrie, Doctor in Physicke,* London: Printed by Arnold Hatfield, 1603. STC 20063.
[50] Michel de Montaigne's moral essays might have been available to Cary in the 1603 English translation. Michel de Montaigne, *The essayes or morall, politike and millitarie discourses of Lo: Michaell de Montaigne, Knight of the noble Order of St. Michaell, and one of the gentlemen in ordinary of the French king, Henry the third his chamber. The first booke. First written by him in French. And now done into English by him that hath inviolably vowed his labors to the aeternitie of their honors, whose names he hath severally inscribed on these his consecrated altares. ... Iohn Florio*, London: by Val. Sims, 1603. STC 18041.
[51] Cary might have had access to the 1612 edition of Francis Bacon's *Essays,* which contains counsels of public morality and private virtues. Francis Bacon, *The essaies of Sr Francis Bacon Knight, the Kings Solliciter Generall*, London: by Iohn Beale, 1612. STC 1141.
[52] Evy Johanne Haland, "Women, Death and the Body in some of Plutarch's Writings," *Mediterranean Review* 4, 2011, pp. 3-20.

in England for his *Natural History*,[53] an encyclopaedic work on scientific matters, devoted to cosmology and astronomy, the physical and historical geography of the ancient world, zoology, botany, agriculture, medicine and drugs, geology and mineralogy. He also referred to famous artists and their creations and to Roman architectural styles and technology, providing valuable evidence on Roman life.

Furthermore, Cary's biographer claims that Cary also read works related to the controversies about religion:

> Of controversy, it may be said she had read most that has been written, <of these> having before she was a Catholic read the writings of all kinds of many Protestant authors; as much of the works of Luther and Calvin and more such; of all English writers of name, of past, Latimer, Jewell, and divers others; and of their newer divines of note whatsoever came forth; and much French of the same matter; after she was a Catholic, some Catholic ones (being well read in all the works of Sir Thomas More before), and she did always continue with leave to read Protestant controvertists. She had read something of very many other things, but in these she had fixed most.[54]

All these were widespread and highly recommended for reading by the sixteenth and early seventeenth women of all classes.[55] More's friendship with the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus, turned out to be crucial to the development of his own theory on literary studies, concerning in particular the possibility of receiving education. One significant aspect of More's humanism was his advocacy of female education. Utopian schools, in fact, were supposed to provide education to all children, permitting both sexes to attend freely the public lectures and pursue intellectual interests. More justified the need of educating women claiming that the main aim of education was to develop moral awareness, regardless of sex. In brief, what influential Protestant theorists of the period and Thomas More, had in common, was that they promoted the possibility of education for girls in order to raise chaste, pious and gracious women or women writers. Cary, thus, lived in a period in which, on the one hand, women's reading was constrained by gender, but on the other hand,

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[53] Cary might have read Pliny in its 1585 English translation. Pliny the Elder, *The secrets and wonders of the world A booke right rare and straunge, containing many excellent properties, giuen to man, beastes, foules, fishes and serpents, trees, plants &c. Abstracted out of that excellent naturall historiographer Plinie. Translated out of French into English,* London: Printed [by Henry Denham], 1585. STC 20032.

[54] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 268-9.

[55] Betty Travitsky, *The Paradise of Women: Writings by Englishwomen of the Renaissance*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, pp. 6-7.

classical studies next to "geographical and historical comparisons provided other contexts for the encouragement of women's education."[56]

Cary's education could not be complete without a good knowledge of the Bible. Cary's biographer relates that "she was most perfectly well read"[57] in the Holy text, and this should not be surprising considering that the Bible was one of the most influential texts, widely available in the English Reformation period,[58] and especially recommended for women to be read and used as inspirational source for potential writing. Gender was not a concern for early modern Bible educators and both men and women "were trained in childhood, often within a shared household context, to use the same tools to read and digest Scripture."[59] The 1543 Act for the Advancement of True Religion, which allowed gentlewomen to read the Bible in silence, soon took a different turn. Thanks to such exceptional female readers of the Bible as Katherine Parr, Anne Askew or Elizabeth I, female private contemplative and interpretative reading of the Scriptures was recognized and reinforced and later on "the early modern household was anything but a restricted or a hermetically sealed sphere of action"[60] for women: "from the earliest stages of the publication of the English Bible in print, women have been engaged in interpretative and activist reading, as well as affective, meditative reading of the Scriptures, and have manifested these modes of reading in religious writing."[61] The consultation of the Bible in early modern England, either "communal" or "solitary," "studious" or "meditative,"[62] was facilitated by the vernacular nature of the Scriptures. The availability of the vernacular Bible seems to have grounded several women's scriptural authority, shaped their interests and supported their religious voices, often involved in advocating the nature and role of women: "Female readings of the Bible took on positions that were often revisionist, radical, or entrenched, as women experienced the religious and political dislocations of the

[56] Walker, p. 5.
[57] Weller and Ferguson, p. 186.
[58] Kate Narveson, *Bible Readers and Lay Writers in Early Modern England: Gender and Self-Definition in an Emergent Writing Culture*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2012, p. 5.
[59] Narveson, p. 131.
[60] Femke Molekamp, *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England: Religious Reading and Writing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 7.
[61] Molekamp, p. 3.
[62] Molekamp, p. 19.

century."[63] Especially between 1545 and 1605, women widely consulted the Bible and employed its passages or single verses in their writings: "the scriptural basis of women's writing manifest[ed] itself both in the content and the style of their works… they [thought] Biblically, and their writing modulate[d], often imperceptibly between Biblical quotations or references and their own words."[64] This was encouraged by the generally negative attitude towards women's active participation in the literary production:

An early modern woman might have had her reading life transformed by the small format of her portable Bible, its interpretative apparatus, and the social networks involved in the devotional and hermeneutic practice in which she chose to engage. She may in turn have drawn upon these dynamics of her religious reading life in her writing, particularly given that the Bible was the most authoritative text available in early modern reading life, and that the establishment of an authoritative interpretative and literary voice could be complicated for women.[65]

Beilin confirms that a growing number of upper and middle class women chose to establish themselves as pious writers, because the biblical nature of their texts allowed women to enter easily and 'legitimately' the public word of writing and to catch the attention of a wider audience:

In the Reformed church, the figure of the pious woman, the 'learned and virtuous' lady who was chaste, patient, humble and charitable became an ideal in which women found the perfect voice for public speaking… Women wrote religious works because literary preaching offered a vocation compatible with their education and society's concept of virtuous womanhood.[66]

Furthermore, the educational program of the humanists and the Protestant insistence on a personal reading of the vernacular Bible implied the growing popularity of public preaching, which permitted also women to take part largely in lectures providing an introduction to the understanding of the Bible, its structure and contents; consequently they could get a word in the discussions.[67] Cary herself, in all probability, listened to and discussed the Bible being read outside of ordinary church services. Her biographer relates that she used to attend the house of a Protestant bishop, Docter Neale, Bishop of Durham:

which was frequented by many of the learnedest of their divines (out of the number of whose chaplains, those of the King's were frequently chosen, and some of their greatest bishops), she there grew acquaint[ed] with many of them, making great account of them, and using them with much respect (being ever more inclined to do so to any for their learning and worth, than for their greatness of quality, and she had learnt in the Fathers, and histories of former

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[63] Molekamp, p. 9.

[64] Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 51.

[65] Molekamp, p. 13.

[66] Beilin, *Redeeming Eve*, pp. 49-50.

[67] Kate Aughterson, ed. *Renaissance Woman: A Sourcebook. Constructions of Femininity in England*, London: Routledge, 1995, p. 9.

Christian times to bear a high reverence to the dignity they pretended to.) By them she was persuaded she might lawfully remain as she was, she never making question for all that but that to be in the Roman Church were infinitely better and securer. Thus (from the first) she remained about two and twenty year, flattering herself with good intentions. She was in the house of the same bishop divers ties present at the examinations of such beginners, or receivers, of new opinions, as were by them esteemed heretics, where some (strangers to her), wondering to see her, asked the bishop how he durst trust that young lady to be there? Who answered, he would warrant she would never be in danger to be an heretic, so much honor and adherence did she ever render to authority, where she >conceived> imagined it to be, much more where she knew it to be.[68]

Apart from the individual Bible reading, in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, family or collective Bible reading, on Sundays after church, used to take place in the households, to rehearse and debate the sermons, and thus, to understand whether the church teachings were properly understood.[69] Thus, Cary's acquaintance with the Bible, whether excellent or not, could have been either intimate or more official; she, in all probability, possessed a Bible at home, considering her high social rank and her father's distinguished educational background, or would have heard it discussed by the learned of her religion. What appears to be unquestionable is that she considered the subject seriously and her conversion to Catholicism may prove that she searched to acquire an extensive knowledge of the Bible, to remove all her religious doubts, which she might make further use of as an intellectual self-defence tool.

The sixteenth century, however, was a turbulent time in the history of the Bible. The Protestant Reformation, while encouraging the translation of the Holy text into the vernacular, significantly revolutionised the way in which the Bible was used and read. It naturally becomes relevant to understand which of the English translations of the Bible Cary might have used, considering that she might have had difficulty with reading the Bible in Latin or Hebrew. During the first years of Cary's education, there were not a few translated versions of the Bible, but I would opt in favour of the 1560 Geneva Bible,[70] as presumably consulted by Cary, before and while writing *Mariam*. Given that Cary was born Protestant and remained Protestant long after she had

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[68] Weller and Ferguson, p. 191.

[69] Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590-1640*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 60-116.

[70] According to Molekamp, over one hundred and forty editions of the Geneva Bible were printed in England between 1575 and the 1640s. Molekamp, p. 14. The Geneva Bible was consulted by several influential upper class families; in all probability, it influenced Mary Sidney Herbert's poetic psalm paraphrases. It appears that "this Bible [was] of strong politico-theological value to Sidney Herbert as members of her Reformist family [had] played political and financial parts in the making of this Bible." Molekamp, p. 16.

published *Mariam*, she was likely to read, what was considered the first truly Protestant Bible.[71] The other legally authorized versions for Anglican worship, including the 1539 Great Bible or the 1568 Bishops' Bible, were rather scarce and never enjoyed the great popularity of the Geneva Bible,[72] which on the other hand, was the first mechanically printed, portable and affordable Bible, available directly even to the common public; moreover, it included a detailed critical apparatus such as extensive commentary prologues to each book and notes in the margins, helpful in reading and studying the Bible:

The Geneva Bible, despite its origins, was by no means, confined to a readership comprising 'the hotter sort of Protestant', but became one of the most widely circulated books of Elizabeth's reign, due to its appealing combination of affordability, astute biblical scholarship, and many notes, summaries, diagrams, and maps. This Bible, therefore, helped to introduce and sustain a female readership of the Bible in English… The Geneva Bible brought the printed vernacular scriptures into the household on an unprecedented scale.[73]

The commentaries in the Geneva Bible might facilitate Cary's understanding of the biblical verses, and thus, strengthen her intense religious devotion;[74] in her biography she is said to be particularly devoted to the Virgin Mary: "she continued her opinion of religion, and bore a great and high reverence to our Blessed Lay, to whom, being with child of her last daughter (and still a Protestant) she offered up that child, promising if it were a girl it should (in devotion to her) bear her name, and that as much as was in her power, she would endeavour to have it be a nun."[75] Though the development of the critical apparatus of the Geneva Bible might also be perceived as an attempt, on behalf of the clerical authorities, to rein in the genuinely independent and creative reading of the lay readers,[76] what matters is that it enthusiastically inspired the new practice of personal studying of the Bible and lay composition. The explanatory nature of the Geneva Bible, in fact, encouraged

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[71] Marshall Foster, "The History and Impact of the Geneva Bible," in *The 1599 Geneva Bible Patriot's Edition*, White Hall: Tolle Lege Press, pp. XIII-XVII.
[72] Michael Jensen, "'Simply' Reading the Geneva Bible: The Geneva Bible and Its Readers," *Literature & Theology* 9, 1995, p. 31. Marshal Foster confirms that this Bible remained the most popular English language Bible even after the introduction of the King James Bible and was printed continuously in England till 1644. At least 144 editions of the Geneva Bible were published between 1560 and 1644, compared to five editions of The Bishops' Bible. Foster, p. XV.
[73] Molekamp, p. 6. For further information on the Geneva Bible, supplemented by clarifications such as commentaries, interpretive notes and introductions, conformed to church teachings and designed to facilitate and shape the reading experience, especially of the lay readers, see Narveson, pp. 23, 35.
[74] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 268-9.
[75] Weller and Ferguson, p. 196.
[76] Narveson, pp. 42, 50.

early modern English readers to make personal notes on the passages in the Bible to "put together their own words and ideas."[77] According to Foster:

It is no exaggeration to say that the Geneva Bible was the most significant catalyst of the transformation of England, Scotland, and America from slavish feudalism to the heights of Christian civilization. As the first Bible to be read by the common people in English, the Geneva Bible inspired those who championed self-government, free enterprise, education, civic virtue, protection of women and children, and godly culture.[78]

Cary, therefore, read about a variety of subjects and had the possibility to consider different viewpoints and perspectives; she is said to have taken advantage of any favourable circumstances to deepen her knowledge: "She had conversed <very> much and with those that were very capable of several conditions and qualities, the conversation of her friends being the greatest delight of her life…From which much conversation and reading she seemed to have much experience in some kinds."[79] Her daughter-biographer states that Cary was a very gifted learner and perfectly remembered everything she had studied:

… though she were most forgetful and heedless in small ordinary things, yet in passages of note (of which she had been acquainted with very many) she had a certain and clear memory; but in those things which had no relation to one another, she was apt to confound time strangely, that seeming to her <later> to be later (at least on the sudden) which, being of more importance, was more perfect in her memory than smaller things (happing) which had happened long after. And for what she had read, her memory was good and sure.[80]

Cary's passionate and in-depth examination of the literature available to her eventually led her to convert to Catholicism:

She continued to read much, and when she was about twenty year old, through reading, she grew into much doubt of her religion. The first occasion of it was reading a Protestant book much esteemed, called Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*. It seemed to her, he left her hanging in the air, for having brought her so far (which she thought he did very reasonably), she saw not how, nor at what, she could stop, till she returned to the church from whence they were come. This was more confirmed in her by a brother of her husband's returning out of Italy, with a good opinion of Catholic religion. His wit, judgement and <company> conversation she was much pleased withal.[81]

Furthermore, she must have been a very determined and motivated reader and writer; Margaret J. M. Ezell points to the fact that Cary "was able to compose under rather more distracting circumstances."[82] In her biography, we read that "her women were fain to walk around the room after her (which was her custom) while she was seriously thinking on some other business, and pin

[77] Narveson, p. 36.
[78] Foster, p. XIII.
[79] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 269-70.
[80] Weller and Ferguson, p. 270.
[81] Weller and Ferguson, p. 190.
[82] Margaret J. M. Ezell, "Women and Writing," in Anita Pacheco, ed., *A Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, p. 83.

on her things and braid her hair; and while she writ or read, curl her hair and dress her head."[83] Until her conversion to Catholicism, she seems to have written in the comfortable space of her household, which she could not enjoy anymore when she became a Catholic.[84]

The study of Cary's participation in the literary culture of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England is not an entirely new topic nowadays. Since in 1914 Dunstan and Greg triggered an academic interest in Elizabeth Cary's life and works, a number of significant questions have been tackled regarding her possible education in the period in which female tuition started to be perceived as an integral aspect of the cultural advancement of society, considering the winds of political, religious and social changes that blew in England at that time. Though it is not easy to reconstruct her literary background as many of her works were lost or destroyed, it is true that she at that time did achieve both acceptance and fame as a dramatist, changing our overall perception of the historical period, all but unavailable to women writers, and dramatists in particular. Interestingly, as far as Cary is concerned, she, unlike most women of her period, also had her own biography written, and such an account, whether fully reliable source on the author's life or not, is further historical evidence of her desire to be celebrated as an early modern English woman writer.

2.2. Elizabeth Cary as an early modern playwright

Though the women authors of the period may now appear to have been anything but silent, their emergent voices through writing were manipulated by the plurality of models of women's discursive agency within both the private and the public spheres, which were strictly defined by the male-dominated conduct literature, theological exhortations, and educational treatises. Masculine anxieties raised significant questions about women's rights to speak. Accordingly, while a growing number of humanists considered women's education in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century

[83] Weller and Ferguson, p. 194.
[84] Weller and Ferguson, p. 212.

England to be central to a social progress,[85] a complex system of social norms aimed at silencing women's voices. Several writings clearly disapproved of an outspoken representation of the female self and emphasized the importance of women's silence, chastity and obedience in general. Numerous works provide ample evidence of such views.

The Bible contains several passages condemning blunt talking.[86] Those which object to female volubility, must have been detrimental to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English women's well-being in the society. According to the Old Testament, in the Book of Proverbs, a woman should always open "her mouth with wisdome and the lawe of grace [should be] in her tongue" (Prov, 31:26). In the New Testament, other passages clearly refer to the issue of the restriction of a woman's speech. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians outlines that women should be subordinated to men: "But I wil that ye know, that Christ is the head of euery man: and the man is the womans head: and God is Christs head" (1 Cor, 11:3). Moreover, they should "keepe silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted vnto them to speake: but they ought to be subiect, as also the Lawe sayth. And if they will learne any thing, let them aske their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speake in the Church" (I Cor, 14:34-5). Paul warns women to remain silent rather than to exercise authority over men: "Let the woman learne in silence with all subiection. I permit not a woman to teache, neither to vsurpe authoritie ouer the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim, 2:11-2). In the epistle to Colossians, women are described as the weaker sex and advised to submit to men: "Wiues, submit your selues vnto your husbands, as it is comely in the Lord" (Col, 3:18); in the epistle to Ephesians, women are yet again taught to be submitted to their husbands in all: "Wiues, submit your selues vnto your husbands, as vnto the Lord. For the husband is the wiues

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[85] Cornelius Agrippa's claim about the abilities of women is one of the well-known indictments of contemporary patriarchal society; to support his argument, Agrippa turns to history to give examples of women whose social status was not always inferior and finally draws the inevitable conclusion that: "The woman hathe that same mind that a man hath, that same reason and speche, she goethe to the same ende of blysfulnes, where shall be noo exception of kynde." Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, *A treatise of the nobilitie and excellencye of vvoman kynde, translated out of Latine into englysshe by Dauid Clapam*, Londini: Printed by Thomae Bertheleti, 1542. STC 203, sig. A2[v].

[86] Ecclesiastes, 5:1-4; Psalm, 39:1; Psalm, 141:3; Proverbs, 4:23-24; Proverbs, 10:11; Proverbs, 10:19; Proverbs, 10:31-32; Proverbs, 13:3; Proverbs, 15:1-2; Proverbs, 16:24; Proverbs, 17:28; Proverbs, 18:20-21; Proverbs, 21:23; Ephesians, 4:29; Colossians, 3:8-10; Colossians, 4:6; James, 3:6; 1 Peter, 3:10; 2 Timothy, 2:16; Matthew, 12:34; Matthew, 12:36-37; Matthew, 15:11; and Titus, 2:7-8.

head, euen as Christ is the head of the Church, and the same is the sauiour of his body. Therfore as the Church is in subiection to Christ, euen so let the wiues be to their husbands in euery thing" (Ephesians, 5:22-4). Peter also strongly emphasizes women's intellectual subordination to men: "Likewise ye husbands, dwel with them as men of knowledge, giuing honour vnto the woman, as vnto the weaker vessell, euen as they which are heires together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not interrupted" (1 Peter, 3:7).

In addition to biblical bans on women speaking, numerous other texts of the period portrayed the ideal virtuous woman as one who should refrain from expressing her views and concerns in the private and public sphere. Juan Luis Vives, in *The Instruction of a Christian woman*, claimed that a good woman should be characterized by sober speech and should not desire to possess rhetorical abilities: "As for eloquence, I have no great care, nor a woman needeth it not."[87] Similarly, Thomas Becon, in his *Catechism* (1564), taught women to be "sober-minded, discreet, obedient to their husbands; and that the word of God be not evilly spoken."[88] In *The Book of matrimony* (1564), Becon advised women not to joke with words: "So likewise must she provide that her words be utterly estranged from all wantonness, jesting, filth speaking, and whatsoever may offend chaste eares."[89] Becon went even further and in his *Catechism* forbade women to use any gestures of opposition to men, by using "the head, eies, tong, lippes, hands, feete, or … any other part of the body."[90] The schoolmaster Richard Mulcaster, in his 1581 *Positions*, though in favour of the education of women, asserted that men were more gifted learners than women: "naturally the male is more worthy, and politikely he is more employed, and therefore that side claimeth this

[87] Juan Luis Vives, *A very frutefull and pleasant boke called the instructio[n] of a Christen woma[n], made fyrst in Laten, and dedicated vnto the quenes good grace, by the right famous clerke mayster Lewes Vives, and turned out of Laten into Englysshe by Rycharde Hyrd. whiche boke who so redeth diligently shal haue knowlege of many thynges, wherin he shal take great pleasure, and specially women shall take great co[m]modyte and frute towarde the[n]creace of vertue [and] good maners*, London: Printed by Thomas Berthelet, 1529?. STC 24856, sig. E2[r].
[88] Thomas Becon, *The worckes of Thomas Becon whiche he hath hitherto made and published, with diverse other newe bookes added to the same, heretofore neuer set forth in print, diuided into thre tomes or parts and amended this present [sic] of our Lord 1564; perused and allowed, accordyng to thorder appointed in the Quenes maiesties iniunctions*, London: Printed by John Day, 1564. STC 1710, p. 537[r].
[89] Becon, p. 675[r].
[90] Becon, p. 675[r].

learned education, as first framed for their use, and most properly belonging to their kinde."[91] Bartholomew Batty, in his educational treatise, *The Christian man's closet* (translated into English by William Lowth in 1581), recommended that girls should first study the psalter or psalms of David in metre, "which may withdrawe [their] minde from light and vaine tongues and baudie ballades."[92] In 1591, in *A preparative to marriage*, Henry Smith, a Puritan clergyman, advised a good wife to be silent instead of using words, which could destroy the harmony of a married couple: "They which keep silence, are well said to hold their peace, because silence oftentimes doth keep the peace, when words would break it."[93] Robert Dod and John Cleaver, other well-known Puritan clergymen, in their *A godly form of household government* (1598), wrote on a wife, who should speak only "upon good occasion and with discretion."[94] Their treatise extolled the importance of women's thoughtful and considered speech: "Let her heare and see and say the best, and yet let her soone breake off talke with such in whom shee perceiveth no wisdome, nor favour of grace. Let her not be light to beleeve reports nor readie to tell them againe to fill the time with talke; for silence is farre better then such unsavourie talke."[95] William Gouge, in *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622) declared that "silence, on the one side implieth a reverend subietion, as on the other side too much speech implieth an usurpation of authoritie."[96] He equated feminine silence with subjection, explaining that women were not supposed to be mute before their husbands but should avoid being loquacious: "for

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[91] Richard Mulcaster, *Positions vvherin those primitiue circumstances be examined, which are necessarie for the training vp of children, either for skill in their booke, or health in their bodie. VVritten by Richard Mulcaster, master of the schoole erected in London anno. 1561. in the parish of Sainct Laurence Povvntneie, by the vvorshipfull companie of the merchaunt tailers of the said citie*, London: by Thomas Vautrollier, 1581. STC 18253, p. 132.

[92] Barthélemy Batt, *The Christian mans closet Wherein is conteined a large discourse of the godly training vp of children: as also of those duties that children owe vnto their parents, made dialogue wise, very pleasant to reade, and most profitable to practise, collected in Latin by Bartholomew Batty of Alostensis. And nowe Englished by William Lowth*, London: Printed by Thomas Dawson, 1581. STC 1591, p. 75[r].

[93] Henry Smith, *A preparatiue to mariage The summe whereof was spoken at a contract, and inlarged after. Whereunto is annexed A Treatise of the Lords supper: and another of vsurie. By Henrie Smith*, London: Printed by R. Field, 1591. STC 22686, p. 65.

[94] Robert Cleaver, *A godlie forme of householde gouernment for the ordering of priuate families, according to the direction of Gods word. Whereunto is adioyned in a more particular manner, the seuerall duties of the husband towards his wife: and the wifes dutie towards her husband. The parents dutie towards their children: and the childrens towards their parents. The masters dutie towards his seruants: and also the seruants dutie towards their masters. Gathered by R.C.*, London: Printed by Felix Kingston, 1598. STC 5383, p. 96.

[95] Cleaver, p. 96.

[96] William Gouge, *Of domesticall duties eight treatises. I. An exposition of that part of Scripture out of which domesticall duties are raised. ... VIII. Duties of masters. By William Gouge*, London: Printed by Iohn Haviland, 1622. STC 12119, p. 282.

silence in that place is not opposed to speech, as if she should not speake at all, but to loquacity, to talkativenesse, to over-much tatling."[97] Richard Brathwait in his 1631 *The English Gentlewoman* still insisted on limitations on women's oral skills, devaluing their erudition: "Silence in a Woman is a mouing Rhetoricke, winning most, when in words it wooeth least."[98] English upper-class women were equally limited while speaking. Baldassare Castiglione, in *The Book of the Courtier* (translated into English by Thomas Hoby in 1561), sharply criticized gentlewomen's deceitful speeches: "Neither ought she (to show herself free and pleasant) speak words of dishonesty, nor use a certain familiarity without measure and bridle, and fashion to make men believe that of her that perhaps is not: but being present at such kind of talk, she ought to give the hearing with a little blushing and shamefastness."[99]

These sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English educational texts show that English conduct literature of the period amply focuses on the controversy over the nature of women's speeches, and thus, undeniably constitutes a significant socio-historical background to the study of Cary as a woman writer-public speaker. Women's silence was seen as nothing else but a sign of their obedience and respect towards their fathers, brothers or husbands. Catherine Belsey states: "Domestic absolutism required that women be able to speak in order to acquiesce, but it withheld the right to use that ability to protest or to make demands. To speak from a place of independence, from an autonomous position, to be, in other words, a subject, was to personate masculine virtue."[100] Similarly, Anthony Fletcher admits that women's speech did pose a threat to patriarchy: "Women's talk always threatened disorder; women's silence thus came to be prized to an absurd

[97] Gouge, p. 282.
[98] Richard Brathwait, *The English gentlevvoman, drawne out to the full body expressing, what habilliments doe best attire her, what ornaments doe best adorne her, what complements doe best accomplish her. By Richard Brathvvait Esq.*, London: Printed by B. Alsop and T. Favvcet, 1631. STC 3565, p. 90.
[99] Baldassarre Castiglione, *The courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio diuided into foure bookes. Very necessary and profitable for yonge gentilmen and gentilwomen abiding in court, palaice or place, done into English by Thomas Hoby*, London: Printed by Wyllyam Seres, 1561. STC 4778, sig. Bb4^{r}.
[100] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama*, London: Methuen, 1985, pp. 180-1.

degree."[101] Wendy Wall explains that writing women, in particular, still in the seventeenth century faced many difficulties in their 'literary careers':

> Women in early modern England faced tremendous obstacles in establishing themselves as public figures of any kind. Literary and historical scholars have dramatized these prohibitions quite glaringly in past years, as they have documented restrictions on female education; the link between public speech and harlotry; the definition of a woman's domain as that of domestic piety; the identification of silence as a feminine ideal; and the mastery of rhetoric as a male puberty rite. Constrained by the norms of acceptable feminine behavior, women were specifically discouraged from tapping into the newly popular channel of print; to do so threatened the cornerstone of their moral and social well-being.[102]

In brief, the ideal sixteenth- and seventeenth-century woman was supposed to use her voice reasonably without taking liberties in addressing personal or political concerns beyond the confines set by the society.

Cary's tragedy may be considered to have opened up space for women's manipulation of the language to express their fears and concerns within and relative to the patriarchal society of the period. Maureen Quilligan says that Cary exposes in her play "the bodily costs of female public speech." She believes that Cary's closet drama "speaks to the historical actualities of the suppression of women's speech" and must be seen as a gendered response to complicated cultural issues of the period concerning women's authorized female speech.[103] Margaret W. Ferguson claims that "the play offers a serious inquiry into the legitimacy of any state that is supported on and with reference to the institution of patriarchal marriage."[104] Nancy A. Gutierrez considers *The Tragedy of Mariam* to be subversive "not because it advocates woman's social and intellectual autonomy, but because it realizes the difficulties in implementing such autonomy."[105] Contemporary criticism of *Mariam* reinforces her crucial role as a married woman who attempts to assert herself through speech within marriage, but is finally silenced by her authoritative husband. Elizabeth Gruber notes that the proper balance of power within Herod's marriage to Mariamme

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[101] Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 14.

[102] Wendy Wall, *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993, pp. 279-80.

[103] Maureen Quilligan, "Staging Gender: William Shakespeare and Elizabeth Cary," in Karen Raber, ed. *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700. Volume 6: Elizabeth Cary,* Farnham: Ashgate, 2009, p. 547.

[104] Margaret W. Ferguson, "Allegories of Subjection: Literacy as Equivocation in Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam,*" in Margaret W. Ferguson, ed., *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender, and Empire in Early Modern England and France,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003, p. 331.

[105] Nancy A. Gutierrez, "Valuing *Mariam*: Genre Study and Feminist Analysis," in Raber, p. 110.

relied upon an instructive metaphor according to which husbands were linked to heads and advised to rule over their wives, who were conceptualized as bodies. Gruber states that: "Mariam's beheading, which literally enacts the separation of head from body, might be the play's most striking instance of word becoming flesh – as well as the fitting punishment for a recalcitrant woman who had refused to be ruled by her 'head.'"[106]

Cary's interest in retelling the Herod-Mariamme myth suggests a difficult literary target for this young female author, who took on a genre[107] that was considered traditionally masculine. It is true that early modern English women writers began to address wider audiences than ever before; they translated and composed works[108] which covered a wide range of genres and topics; but female 'private' writing,[109] including prose narratives, poetry, prayers, confessions and religious meditations, diaries, advice to children, private letters, medical and cookery receipts, prefaces and translations of male-authored works, ranked below the masculine 'public' ones such as epic poetry, tragedy and history, which required a specific rhetorical preparation in ancient languages and literature inaccessible to most women of the period, or more precisely allowed only to upper-class women, with well-defined limits. *Mariam*, a closet drama by an English woman playwright, asserts the opposite and helps the author remove this stigma within the English culture of her day. The conventional female genres were unable to accommodate Cary's interests, concerns and writing aspirations, and the tragedy manifested a set of distinct characteristics, which Cary, a "learned,

[106] Elizabeth Gruber, "Insurgent Flesh: Epistemology and Violence in *Othello* and *Mariam*," in Raber, p. 489.

[107] Elizabeth Cary's closet drama *The Tragedy of Mariam* was intended for reading rather than performance on stage. Ramona Wray, in her "Introduction" to 2012 edition of *The Tragedy of Mariam*, claims that Cary's *Mariam* "developed in relation to status, voice and heroic self-assertion" (Ramona Wray, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland Her Life*, London: Methuen, 2012, p. 54), and this may suggest rather 'private' character of the tragedy. At the same time, however, Wray observes that Cary's tragedy's 'privacy' cannot be considered "a fixed category." Wray, p. 55. According to Wray, "'privacy' to a certain extent authorizes the play's movement into different arenas and demonstrates its plasticity in connecting with multiple interpretative constituencies." Wray, p. 56. Some contemporary scholars, however, acknowledge that *Mariam* and dramatic representations for performance, though roughly different in genre, seem to have some aspects in common. Karen Raber states that "the apparent barriers between closet plays and theatrical plays fell to the recognition of clear thematic similarities and interconnections between the two categories." Raber, p. XXIV.

[108] Barbara K. Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 3; "Introduction," in Ann Rosalind Jones, *The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1620*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

[109] Aughterson, pp. 224-6; Walker, pp. 5, 17.

virtuous and truly noble Lady,"[110] found suitable. The author, in fact, questions contemporary restrictions and prohibitions on women's behaviour, and in particular, on their desire to speak freely, at the end of the third act, when she apparently leaves the Chorus to criticise the play's title heroine for speaking up her thoughts in public: "… she usurps upon another's right, / That seeks to be by public language graced / And, though her thoughts reflect with purest light / Her mind if not peculiar, is not chaste" (3 CHORUS, 25-8).

Yet, Cary exceeds the bounds of valorisation of female education and agency when her tragedy, after its initial restriction of circulation only within an intellectual elite,[111] gets published, giving the text the possibility to become more readily available, and therefore, helping Cary evolve in the discipline and speak up for the consideration of her role as a 'public author,' despite the fact that "the emerging institution of publishing was an unsuitable arena for aristocrats in general and for noble ladies in particular."[112] Female writing was perceived as personal entertainment, and thus, women who wrote with a view to publication were considered to transgress the aesthetic and ideological assumptions of the early modern period, in which: "the issue of chastity was intricately bound up with the problem posed by the (ideological) logic that made silence an equivalent of body purity."[113] Even though in her biography we read that she wrote "many things for her private recreation, on several subjects and occasions,"[114] Cary's experience as a writer might have meant more for her than simply a form of amusement; she seems to have been acutely aware of the socio-political tensions concerning women's writing and by using a tone of defence of virtuous women she attempts to support, in *Mariam*, her role of a woman writer-public speaker, either professional or amateur one: "And every mind, though free from thought of ill, / That out of glory seeks a worth to show, / When any's ears but one therewith they fill, / Doth in a sort her pureness overthrow" (3

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[110] See the title page of *Mariam*.
[111] The only witness we have is John Davies, who celebrated Cary as a learnt playwright in his 1612 *The Muses Sacrifice*.
[112] Weller and Ferguson, p. 6.
[113] Margaret W. Ferguson, "A Room Not Their Own: Renaissance Women as Readers and Writers," in Clayton Koelb, Susan Noakes, eds, *The Comparative Perspective on Literature: Approaches to Theory and Practice*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 97.
[114] Weller and Ferguson, p 189.

Chorus, 31-4). Cary's preservation of the Herod-Mariamme story, therefore, is an instance of the great question of what some women knew, sought to do and did with their knowledge, exactly as Juan Luis Vives foresaw in his *Instructions of a Christian woman*: "I perceive that learned women be suspected of many."[115]

Cary lived in a period in which women mostly confined themselves to the activities within a private word of the household and were not supposed to take part in public activities such as theatrical displays. Several contemporary documents give witness to such a negative attitude towards early modern English women's attendance at dramatic performances, at the playhouses or other public places. The preacher John Northbrooke, in his 1577 treatise, while attacking the theatre in general, primarily objected to women's theatregoing on moral grounds, as he was convinced that plays tempted women to lust, unfaithfulness, idleness and vanity:

> … no wives or maidens, that list to content and please sad and Honest men, will be found and seen at common plays, dancings, or other great resort of people. For the plays be the instruments and armour of Venus and Cupid, and to say good sooth, what safeguard of chastity can there be, where the woman is desired with so many eyes, where so many faces look upon her, and again she upon so many? She must needs [sic] fire some, and herself also fired again, and she be not a stone; for what maid can be pure and whole among such a rabblement, and not spotted with any lust? … If you will learn how to be false, and Deceive your husbands, or husbands their wives, How to play the harlots, to obtain one's love, How to ravish, how to beguile, how to betray, to Flatter, lie, swear, forswear, how to allure to Whoredom, how to murder, how to poison, how to disobey and rebel against princes, to consume treasures prodigally, to move to lusts, to ransack and spoil cities and towns, to be idle, to blaspheme, to sing filthy songs of love, to speak filthy, to be proud, how to mock, scoff, and deride any nation, like unto Genesius Aralatensis, etc., shall you not learn then as such enterludes how to practise them? Therefore great reason it is that women (especially) should absent themselves from Such plays.[116]

Similarly, Stephen Gosson, in his 1579 *Schoole of Abuse*, spoke of the considerable awkwardness caused by women's presence in the theatre;[117] and in another antitheatrical tract, he assumed that early modern theatres were "snares unto fair women."[118] In 1599, John Rainolds condemned every

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[115] Vives, sig. D2^{v}.

[116] John Northbrooke, *Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra. A treatise wherein dicing, dauncing, vaine playes or enterluds with other idle pastimes [et]c. commonly vsed on the Sabboth day, are reproued by the authoritie of the word of God and auntient writers. Made dialoguewise by Iohn Northbrooke minister and preacher of the word of God*, London: Imprinted by H. Bynneman, for George Byshop, 1577?. STC 18670, p. 63.

[117] Stephen Gosson, *The schoole of abuse conteining a plesaunt [sic] inuectiue against poets, pipers, plaiers, iesters, and such like caterpillers of a co[m]monwelth; setting vp the hagge of defiance to their mischieuous exercise, [and] ouerthrowing their bulwarkes, by prophane writers, naturall reason, and common experience: a discourse as pleasaunt for gentlemen that fauour learning, as profitable for all that wyll follow virtue. By Stephan Gosson. Stud. Oxon.*, London: for Thomas VVoodcocke, 1579. STC 12097.5, sig. B6^{v}.

[118] Stephen Gosson, *Playes confuted in fiue actions prouing that they are not to be suffred in a Christian common weale, by the waye both the cauils of Thomas Lodge, and the play of playes, written in their defence, and other obiections of players frendes, are truely set downe and directlye aunsweared. By Steph. Gosson, stud. Oxon.*, London: Imprinted for Thomas Gosson, 1582. STC 12095, sig. G6^{r}.

woman who “sware by her troth that she was as much edified at a play as ever she was at any sermon;”[119] and finally, in 1617, Samuel Rowlands asserted that a modest woman should refrain from taking part in any kind of theatrical activities: “at public plays she never will be known... / she knows how wise men censure of such dames, / and how with blottes they blemish their good names.”[120]

Interestingly, despite such prejudices on the part of contemporary English society, women of the period appear to have attended the public playhouses in significant numbers,[121] and moreover, had their experience as spectators, performers, employees, patrons and theatre owners:[122]

> Although women never achieved status equal to men in theatrical affairs, it would be erroneous to assume that they were wholly disconnected from the enterprise of playing. Some aristocratic women issued patents to playing companies, women served as gatherers at the public playhouses (occasionally acting in minor roles), and several women became shareholders in various playhouses. The patronage of playing companies by women was a trend begun by Queen Elizabeth I.[123]

As far as Cary’s access to contemporary theatre is concerned, she was certainly involved in private theatrical affairs thanks to her family’s interest, as I already argued in the first chapter; we have, on the other hand, no information about her potential experience as a spectator out of the household, but due to our knowledge of the early modern English female theatre audience, which establishes that playgoing, though against social norms of the period, was practiced by aristocratic and lower-class early modern English women, we may suppose that Cary’s interest in the theatrical tradition might have been sparked by direct contact with public dramatic performances.

Since women’s desire to write for the theatre was condemned by society, the first women playwrights appear to have been inspired by male authors. Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Sidney,

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[119] John Rainolds, *Th'overthrow of stage-playes, by the way of controversie betwixt D. Gager and D. Rainoldes wherein all the reasons that can be made for them are notably refuted; th'objections aunswered, and the case so cleared and resolved, as that the iudgement of any man, that is not froward and perverse, may easelie be satisfied. Wherein is manifestly proved, that it is not onely vnlawfull to bee an actor, but a beholder of those vanities. Wherevnto are added also and annexed in th'end certeine latine letters betwixt the sayed Maister Rainoldes, and D. Gentiles, reader of the civill law in Oxford, concerning the same matter*, Middelburg: Printed by Richard Schilders, 1599. STC 20616, sigs. A3^{v}-A4^{r}.

[120] Samuel Rowlands, *The bride by S.R.*, London: Printed by W.I., 1617. STC 21365.5, sig. E1^{v}.

[121] Stephen Orgel, “Nobody’s Perfect: Or Why Did the English Stage Take Boys for Women?,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88, 1989, p. 8.

[122] For further study on early modern English women involved in theatrical activities, see Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, pp. 164-75.

[123] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 158.

Countess of Pembroke, chose to translate men’s works; the former translated 123 lines from Seneca’s *Hercules Oetaeus* (n.d.) and the latter the full text of Robert Garnier’s *Marc Antoine* (1595). Cerasano and Wynne-Davies comment on Sidney’s choice, stating that:

A female author / translator, not to mention a member of the nobility, Mary Sidney would have opened her reputation to considerable risk by involving herself in public theatre. The extent of a Renaissance noblewoman’s participation would have been to act as a patron, and this the Countess did, sponsoring the small, and rather unsuccessful company, Pembroke’s Men. Thus by rendering a male author’s text into English (although her translation is a remarkably free one) and by involving herself in the private and protected environment of closet drama, Mary Sidney accomplished an extraordinary balancing act. Although she appeared to remain silent, merely repeating another’s words, her voice must be articulate through the translation, and although the actual production of her play was confined within a domestic sphere, its textual production was distinctly public.[124]

The first original tragedy, *The Tragedy of Mariam* by Elizabeth Cary, the first original comedy, *Love’s Victory* by Mary Wroth (c. 1621), and a romantic comedy, *The Concealed Fancies*, composed by the sisters Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth Brackley (c.1645), also seem to be largely influenced by men’s works:

Sidney’s *Antonie* and Wroth’s *Love’s Victory* were produced within the safe surroundings of the Sidney family homes, and they were respected, not as innovative women playwrights, but as inheritors of the Sidney tradition of literary brilliance. A similar protective coterie surrounded Elizabeth Brackley and Jane Cavendish, for despite the difficult circumstances, they had to endure during the Parliamentarian occupation of their home, their father, brothers and husbands all encouraged their skills as writers.[125]

English women writers were particularly dissuaded from entering the public world of drama because “playtexts not only allowed a woman’s voice to be interpreted through the veiling medium of the printed page, but also, more scandalously, allowed her voice to be actually heard by many and various people, through the theatrical display suggested by the text’s genre.” Such an early modern English approach towards women’s potential independence of thought and self-advertisement explains why none of the works by those women authors of the period was ever staged in a public theatre.

Yet, despite the socio-cultural restrains against women’s participation in the public word of theatre, as Cerasano and Wynne-Davies write, the early modern drama by women existed and “was not an isolated spurt of activity, but an essential and innovative aspect of the overall development of

[124] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, pp. 15-6.
[125] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 4.

the woman playwright in England."[126] In view of such an early modern conflicting approach towards women writers dealing with drama, the first original play by a woman can be perceived as a key document, which sheds important light on the woman author's strategy of self-establishment and defence of the female gender within the theatrical genre; in other words, Cary's play provides a useful starting point for an examination of the impact of theatre on women as well as for a reconsideration of the dynamics of genre and canon formation in early modern England.

2.3. An overview of the source material for *Mariam*

Drawing from biblical, historical and literary sources of different nature[127] continued to be a widespread practice throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in England. Wendy Wall observes that at that time in England "the opposition between original and secondary or imitative works [was] a categorical opposition largely absent… the notion of original writing became valorised only later."[128] Some writers of the period had access to different sources, and whether intentionally or not, blended them, or even mixed facts and fiction.[129] Moreover, that period opened up possibilities for a new form of social discourse, both by men and women, whose writings, though not necessarily explicit representations of English contemporary life, developed largely in response to the socio-political conditions prevailing in the years of Elizabeth's and James's reigns. As some critics have noted,[130] these two approaches to writing in sixteenth- and

[126] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 4.
[127] Richard Levin, "Unthinkable Thoughts in the New Historicizing of English Renaissance Drama," *New Literary History* 21, 1990, p. 435.
[128] Wendy Wall, p. 337.
[129] Lilly B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's "Histories": Mirrors of Elizabethan Policy*, Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie, 1947, p. 75.
[130] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989, p. XXI; Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990, pp. 75- 210; José Manuel González Fernández de Sevilla, "Political Strategies of Drama in Renaissance England," *Sederi* 1, Zaragoza: Librería General, 1990, p. 91; Graham Holderness, "Introduction," in Graham Holderness, ed., *Shakespeare's History Plays: Richard II to Henry V*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992, p. 30; Graham Holdemess, *Shakespeare Recycled: The Making of Historical Drama*, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, pp. 32-50; Alessandro Serpieri, "Abuse and Use of the Theatre: Shakespeare and the Puritans," in Paola Pugliatti and Alessandro Serpieri, eds, *English Renaissance Scenes: From Canon to Margins*, Bern: Peter Lang,

early seventeenth-century England should be seen as complementary; it appears, in fact, that sensitivity to the socio-political panorama led many writers, and especially the major dramatists of the period, to exhibit their cultural consciousness, doubts and concerns through their works, in which either historical knowledge about England and foreign countries or non-historical material often provided a good venue for the readers to reflect upon traditional values, but also excellent examples for evaluation of the existing conditions in the English society and further moralization.

Dramatists, in particular, while looking for inspiration in ancient stories or legends, started using their works as a powerful instrument of social propaganda and socio-political provocation. The dramatic works of the period were "capable of responding very rapidly to topical events, [and] the most appropriate interpretative context for forms of drama which aspire[d] to be more than journalism [was] likely to be the recent past rather than the immediate present (and certainly not the unknown and unknowable future)."[131] Surviving knowledge from the past appears to have provided a somewhat safer backdrop for some moralizing plots or subplots of women's dramatic works from the 1590s to the 1640s,[132] which while liberating their female authors' voices, started challenging the society's critical responses against women's independent thought and speech.[133] English drama at the turn of the seventeenth century, with its special interest in matters related to authority and the effective exercise of power reflected the ideals of contemporary élites and it was not "neutral at all. It was used and abused in order to subvert some forms of power and demystify imposed patterns of beliefs… The dramatist was not indifferent to the historical events that took place during his lifetime."[134] Tragedy, in particular, was the genre conventionally believed to be "most capable of transcending the historical moment and representing universal truths, which had a metatheatrical

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2008, pp. 22-56; Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre and Testimony in Shakespeare's England: A Culture of Mediation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 5-9.

[131] Rowland Wymer, "The Political Context of Early Seventeenth-Century Tragedy," in Robin Headlam Wells, Glenn Burgess and Rowland Wymer, eds, *Neo-Historicism Studies in Renaissance Literature, History and Politics*, Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000, p. 143.

[132] "Women who chose to write were condoned only if that work was private and or devotional, and any form of self-advertisement or publication revealed that the author had failed to live up to the Renaissance ideal of the chaste, silent and obedient woman." Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 3.

[133] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 3.

[134] Fernández de Sevilla, p. 92.

involvement in the transformation of reality. Contemporary formulations of the tragic made reference to particular affairs such as the representation of tyranny."[135]

Accordingly, Elizabeth Cary's interest in some events of Hebrew history might have been sparked by the contemporary disputes over the Jews and their laws and traditions, which took place in England. Weller and Ferguson state that:

> Although Jews had been officially banned from England since 1290 and would not be readmitted until 1656, there was evidently considerable interest in Jewish laws and customs during the Tudor-Stuart era, enough to lead one modern scholar to speak of 'Philo-semitism' as a characteristic of the latter period. Protestants were interested for theological and polemical reasons in a "return" to the Hebrew scriptures, but Catholic angered by Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and by his and his ministers' attempts to justify the divorce on scriptural grounds, had also begun to scrutinize the Old Testament with new attention.[136]

Yet, the time before and during Cary's life offered many other reasons for reflection on the period of religious and political strife and friction in the country, and the transversality of the Herod-Mariamme story, in particular Herod's usurpation of the throne, might have served the author to exploit the key political issue of the time, that is, the legitimacy of the English sovereigns. Whether any of the rich and varied events of the time inspired Cary or not, she appears to be one of those women authors who "shared a politically charged cultural literacy with the intellectual aristocracy of her day."[137]

In order to understand better how *Mariam*'s scholars have approached a comparative study of this sort over the past one hundred years, I have decided to follow the methodology suggested by C. S. Lewis, who distinguishes between the sources for literary works and the influences on literary works: "A Source gives us things to write about; an Influence prompts us to write in a certain way."[138] Lewis, in his study, refers to the Bible, but his approach may have a more universal application. In fact, I find it helpful to divide different types of texts into sources for Cary and texts that influenced Cary in her handling of the Herod-Mariamme subject matter. Moreover, I have suggested that sources for *Mariam* may be further subdivided into 'direct sources,' which as far as

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[135] Fernández de Sevilla, p. 92.
[136] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 18-9.
[137] Marta Straznicky, "'Profane Stoical Paradoxes': *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Sidneian Closet Drama," in Raber, p. 146.
[138] C.S. Lewis, "The Literary Impact of the Authorized Version," in Walter Hooper, ed. *Selected Literary Essays,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 133.

my analysis is concerned, deal with the story of Herod the Great's turbulent relationship with Mariamme, and 'semi-direct sources,' which tell us something about the protagonists we may find in Cary's play, but not necessarily reveal the details about Herod's marriage to his second wife. According to Lewis's theory, apart from Flavius Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*, an unquestionable source text for *Mariam*, largely cited by scholars among the play's sources, there seems to be a number of other source texts that might have inspired the author, most of which still await a detailed critical study, and two of which, namely the Bible (SDS)[139] and the early English dramas about Herod (SDS), in addition to Josephus's works, will be the object of analysis in the next chapters of this thesis, considering that all of them might have provided Cary with information. Finally, the last group of texts that might have inspired Cary comprises 'indirect influences,' that is those works which, though different from Cary's play, either in the choice of the subject matter or in the plot, might also influence the author, as shown in some recent studies.

2.3.1. The sources for the play

Elizabeth Cary liberally adapted the story of Herod and of his second marriage to Princess Mariamme, to write the *Tragedy of Mariam*. Dunstan and Greg were the first to state that Cary must have relied most directly on the Jewish historian Josephus's account of Herod the Great's second marriage, chronicled in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (ca. A.D. 93).[140] Josephus also narrated the story of Herod and Mariamme in the *Jewish War*,[141] but Dunstan and Greg explain that Cary appears to have taken up the details from the account in the fifteenth book of the *Antiquities*, which explicitly focuses on the disastrous marriage between Herod and Mariamme, Herod's suspicion of

[139] SDS stands for semi-direct sources.
[140] Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg, eds, *The Tragedy Of Mariam, 1613*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914, p. XIII.
[141] Book 15 of the *Antiquities* relates the story about Mariamme and Sohemus being accused of committing adultery and killed by Herod after his return from a visit to Caesar Augustus in 29 B.C. In the *Jewish War*, Mariamme and her alleged lover, Josephus, are accused and killed by Herod after his visit to Mark Antony in 34 or 35 B.C. Weller and Ferguson, p. 17.

Mariamme's adultery and its tragic consequences. Almost a century later, Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, in her 2000 edition of the play, listed the exact source chapters of *The Antiquities of the Jews* (Book XV, Chapter IIII [sic], 387-88; Book XV, Chapter XI, 396-99; Book XV, Chapter XI, 400-01; Book XVI, Chapter XI, 425) and *The Wars of the Jews* (Book I, Chapter XVII, 589-90; Book I, Chapter XVII, 592-93).[142] Cary is mostly believed to have read Josephus in translation, in all probability, in Thomas Lodge's 1602 English version.[143] Weller and Ferguson write that:

> It seems possible that Cary knew, or knew of, Lodge through Catholic channels and that both authors were drawn to Josephus's work because his account of Jewish oppression under the Romans offered rich allegorical resources for representing problems experience by Catholics in Elizabethan England.[144]

However, Josephus was one of the most important writers printed in the sixteenth century and several vernacular translations of his works appeared in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, German and Dutch in this period.[145]

Apart from Josephus's works, Cary might have drawn from many other sources to write *Mariam*; in fact, she was not faithful to the chain of events and figures chronicled in Josephus. The timeline of the original story, which in Josephus takes place in a year, in Cary's account is spread out over a day. But Cary also changed some aspects of the protagonists' characters; the most significant change regards Mariam's virtuous behaviour. Finally, Cary developed some subplots to her work, including the romantic subplot of Pheroras's union to Graphina and the immoral triangle of Salome, Constabarus, and Silleus, which are respectively either her literary invention or the story retold in a different chronological order in comparison to what Josephus related in his sources. Last but not least, Christian undertones in Cary's *Mariam*, can also be notably heard in Herod's acts, which eventually lead to Mariam's martyr-like death. Weller and Ferguson emphasise that:

> 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… Among her most significant revisions of the source is

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[142] Stephanie Hodgson-Wright, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry*, Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000, pp. 145-62.

[143] Flavius Josephus, *The famous and memorable vvorkes of Iosephus, a man of much honour and learning among the Iewes. Faithfully translated out of the Latin, and French, by Tho. Lodge Doctor in Physicke*, London: Printed by Peter Short, 1602. STC 14809.

[144] Weller and Ferguson, p. 18.

[145] Maurice Jacques Valency, *The Tragedies of Herod and Mariamne*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1940, pp. 5-7.

her emphasis on different styles of female speech and on the critical reactions of male characters to Mariam's speech in particular.[146]

Weller and Ferguson are among the few scholars who state that the Bible may have provided significant material for Cary's play, especially "the various (and somewhat enigmatic) passages mentioning Herod in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts."[147] Cary might have known about Herod from the Bible, from sermons and from the Corpus Christi plays, which if she did not see personally, she might have known by reputation. Several scenes taken from the medieval mystery cycles, which drew on the brutal and authoritarian Herod,[148] might have also been decisive in Cary's shaping of Herod. Cary might have consulted and combined in a single plot several accounts of king Herod and his family, either with some or no obvious connection among them, in order to address the issues and concerns of her audience as mirrored within the play.

Dunstan and Greg, keeping in mind Cary's linguistic skills, state that she might have read other contemporary accounts on Herod and Mariamme, such as Hans Sachs's 1552 *Tragedia…der Wu'trich Koning Herodes*, Ludovico Dolce's 1565 *Marianna*, and Alexandre Hardy's 1600 *Mariamne*. They explain further that though "the similarities are not close enough to prove borrowing… It is true that Hardy's drama is to some extent similar to Lady Cary's work, whilst the dramas of Dolce and Hans Sachs contain much that is foreign to her play."[149]

Dympna Callaghan mentions another interesting text, which draws on the story of Herod and Mariamme, *A Compendium and Most Marvellous History of the Latter Times of the Jewes Common Weale* by Joseph Ben Gorion.[150] This text was available in Hebrew and in the English 1567 translation by Peter Morwyn, and thus, might be included in the list of potential source material for *Mariam*. Alison Shell mentions Thomas Bentley's *The Monument of Matrones* from 1582.[151] Shell

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[146] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 17-8.
[147] Weller and Ferguson, p. 20.
[148] Weller and Ferguson, p. 23.
[149] Dunstan and Greg (1914), p. XIII.
[150] Dympna Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queene of Jewry*," in Raber, p. 190.
[151] Alison Shell, "Elizabeth Cary's Historical Conscience: *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Thomas Lodge's Josephus," in Heather Wolfe, ed., *Literary Career and Legacy of Elizabeth Cary, 1613-1680*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 67.

does not discuss the text in depth as a probable source for Cary's tragedy, but briefly comments upon similarities and differences between Bentley's and Cary's Mariam. Weller and Ferguson mention also texts which contain didactic warnings against tyranny, including Jacob Shoepper's *Ectrachelisitis, sive Johannes decollatus* (published in Cologne in 1546), Nicholas Grimald's 1546 *Archipropheta* (published in Cologne in 1546 but, according to Rebecca Bushnell, probably written at Oxford in 1546) and George Buchanan's 1544 *Baptistes, sive calumnia tragoedia* (probably written in Bordeaux between 1541 and 1544, and first published in England in 1577), as Cary's potential influential texts in the composition of the play.[152] As far as non-English material for *Mariam* is concerned, some scholars claim that Cary sometimes used words, which come closer to the original than any available translation at Cary's times, but we have no proof that she ever disdained the help of any of the English translations in circulation.[153] Obviously, the possibility that Cary might have consulted either works about Herod and Mariamme in foreign languages she was familiar with or in their English versions complicates the choice of possible source materials; but in my study, at least as far as the works about Herod and Mariamme, originally written in Hebrew, Greek or Latin, are concerned, I will prefer to cite them, when necessary, in their English translations as we have no information on Cary's knowledge of Greek[154] and in her biography we clearly read that she was not a fluent speaker of either Latin or Hebrew.[155]

2.3.2. The influences on the play

There seem to be some connections between *Mariam* and the texts that do not deal directly with the Herod-Mariamme subject, but appear to have a lot in common with Cary's play according to recent studies. Marta Straznicky and Richard Rowland, in their supplement to Dunstan and Greg's

[152] Weller and Ferguson claim that these humanist plays were written in Latin "for elite audiences and performed in schools and the Inns of Court," and thus, if Cary had not been able to read them in Latin, she might have tried to understand them while being performed on stage. Weller and Ferguson, p. 33.

[153] Dunstan and Greg (1914), pp. XIV-XV; Weller and Ferguson, pp. 24-6.

[154] Similarly, we know nothing about Cary's knowledge of German, and thus, it is perhaps true to admit that she could not read Hans Sachs's 1552 *Tragedia…der Wu'trich Koning Herodes* in original.

[155] Weller and Ferguson, p. 186.

introduction, claim that: "The play is obviously indebted in certain respects to the French Senecan drama of Lady Pembroke, Samuel Daniel, Fulke Greville, and Sir William Alexander, although its concentration on matters of personal conscience and family relationship does set it some distance from their emphasis on state politics."[156] Straznicky, in her further analysis of the probable links between Cary and members of the Sidney circle,[157] explains that "*Mariam* itself conforms to the dramatic mode of the Sidney writers: its extended monologic speeches, its emphasis on verbal rather than physical action, its choral commentaries, and the sententious quality of its thought."[158] According to Straznicky, *Mariam* might also be influenced by Mary Sidney's *The Tragedy of Antonie* (1595), Samuel Daniel's *Cleopatra* (1594), Thomas Kyd's *Cornelia* (1594), Samuel Brandon's *Octavia* (1598), and Fulke Greville's *Mustapha* (1609); the scholar explains that "these plays share much more than a generic resemblance: in all of them, stoical discourse is used to represent the politics of desire."[159] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies add to this list Samuel Daniel's *Philotas* (1605), since "thematically these plays explore the relationship of private desire to public life, and the destructive nature of authority when applied with arbitrary tyranny. Stylistically, Cary also follows the Senecan mode, emphasizing the unities of time, place and theme, as well as employing quatrains with alternate rhymes."[160] Weller and Ferguson include in this group Jane Lumley's English translation of Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*.[161]

Dympna Callaghan, Weller and Ferguson suggest the play's relationship to William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*[162] and *The Merchant of Venice*.[163] Frances Elizabeth Dolan and Weller and Ferguson discuss the relationship between Cary's *Mariam* and William

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[156] Dunstan and Greg (1992), pp. XXIV-XXV.
[157] Marta Straznicky, *Privacy, Playreading, and Women's Closet Drama, 1550-1700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 49-56; Marta Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," pp. 141-56.
[158] Straznicky, *Privacy,* p. 49.
[159] Straznicky, "Profane Stoical Paradoxes," p. 146.
[160] Cerasano and Wynne-Davies, p. 47.
[161] Weller and Ferguson, p. 26.
[162] Callaghan, pp. 180-7; Weller and Ferguson, pp. 41-2.
[163] Callaghan, pp. 180-2.

Shakespeare's *Othello*.[164] Maureen Quilligan observes the similarity of the play to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*,[165] and finally, Reina Green discusses the play's relationship to John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*.[166] In this last group of studies on the potential influences on the tragedy there seems to be the propensity to include the question of gender, class, race and religion in relation to *Mariam*'s topical nature and early modern English culture as categories of analysis. These critical interventions often focus on reading the play as an allegory of the constraints posed on early modern women's speech, writing and agency, and this is the reason why their interest in how much Cary owed to other writers for her literary knowledge and creativeness, appears to me to be rather forced, in the comparison to the few studies on the texts, which explore several aspects of the private and public life of Herod and his relatives, and thus, might have indeed helped Cary gain a new insight into the nature of the accounts about the king of the Jews.

Cary's play emerged from the specific cultural background of its author, from her knowledge of strikingly different texts including biblical, historical and literary material. Cary's creative genius displays itself by its ability to ponder existing works and make decisions, conscious or unconscious, intentional or spontaneous, about what to write and what to rework, to re-inject the Herod-Mariamme story into mainstream Jacobean literary taste. Scholars, however, appear to have dedicated a limited space to discuss Cary's efforts in reworking the source material available on the Herod-Mariamme subject matter in early modern England, and therefore, more clarity on the issue may enhance readers' appreciation of Cary. The purpose of the following chapters will be, therefore, to discuss the possible source materials, which might provide Cary with suitable, direct and semi-direct elements to plot *The Tragedy of Mariam*.

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[164] Frances Elizabeth Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars*: *Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700,* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994, pp. 109-20; Weller and Ferguson, pp. 42-3.
[165] Quilligan, pp. 527-49.
[166] Reina Green, "'Ears Prejudicate' in *Mariam* and *The Duchess of Malfi*," in Raber, pp. 461-73.

CHAPTER THREE: Elizabeth Cary's use of Flavius Josephus for *Mariam*

3.1. Elizabeth Cary: a precursor of the Mariamme drama in England

Not a few works, both prior and contemporary to Cary, explored and reworked several aspects of the private and public life of Herod and his relatives; Cary's choice to bring his myth back to life, focusing above all on his tumultuous marriage to the Queen of Judea, would seem therefore all but surprising. Yet, it was still relatively unusual to write a play based upon the murder of Herod's beloved second wife. Maurice Jacques Valency, in his study on the tragedies of Herod and Mariamme, explains that, though this tragic love story was chronicled in a considerable number of history books throughout the Middle Ages, it did not become the plot for a play till the mid sixteenth century.[1]

Only then a growing number of writers all over Europe started to deal with the Herod-Mariamme theme, including Hans Sachs, Lodovico Dolce, William Goldingham, L. L. de Argensola, Alexandre Hardy, Gervase Markham and William Sampson, Philip Massinger, P. Calderòn de la Barca, Francois Tristan l'Hermite and Tirso de Molina;[2] among these, Elizabeth Cary was the first in England who handled this material according to the emerging tradition of the Mariamme drama, whose focus was mainly on the events concerning the tragic fate of Herod's second wife Mariamme rather than on Herod.

William Goldingham's *Herodes Tragoedia* (1567), based on Book I of Josephus's *Jewish War* and on Book XVII of Josephus's *Antiquities*, focuses on the question whether Herod's misfortunes were caused by God or by Fate, and so its structure is quite different from that of a

[1] Maurice Jacques Valency, *The Tragedies of Herod and Mariamne*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1940, pp. 5-6.

[2] Hans Sachs's manuscript *Tragedia der Wütrich König Herodes* was written in 1552; Lodovico Dolce's *Marianna* was staged c. 1560 and printed in 1565; William Goldingham's *Herodes Tragoedia* was written c. 1567; L.L. de Argensola's *La Alejandra* was staged c. 1585 and printed in 1772; Alexandre Hardy's *Mariamne* was staged c. 1600 and printed in 1625; Gervase Markham and William Sampson's *Herod and Antipater* was staged c. 1620 and printed in 1622; Philip Massinger's *The Duke of Milan* was staged c. 1623 and printed in 1623; P. Calderòn de la Barca's *El Tetrarca* was staged 1635 and printed in 1637; Francois Tristan l'Hermite's *La Mariane* was staged and printed in 1636; Tirso de Molina's (Gabriel Tèllez) *La vida de Herodes* was printed in 1636. Valency, p. 291.

typical Mariamme drama.[3] Gervase Markham and William Sampson in their *Herod and Antipater* (1622) explore the relationship between father and son, and Philip Massinger in his *The Duke of Milan* (1623) draws attention to the character of Herod.[4]

In the period in which Cary composed *Mariam* some important restrictions, in particular on Biblical and political dramatic settings, existed in England, and such circumstances might have driven Cary to focus mainly on the private life rather than on the public image of the biblical and historical King Herod. Cary was not born when Queen Elisabeth I, on 16 May 1559, officially banned plays: "wherein either matters of religion or of the governaunce of the estate of the common weale shalbe handled or treated, beyng no meet matters to be wrytten or treated upon, but by men of authority, learning and wisdom;"[5] but those restrictions persisted in the early seventeenth century in the country and also included "a spate of plays based either upon the less sacred Apocrypha or upon the histories of Josephus."[6]

Josephus's works, however, especially in translations, appear to have spread and were even recommended to be used as "a kind of companion to the Bible, for both Old and New Testament"[7] throughout sixteenth-century Europe; what is more, Josephus's account on Herod's marital jealousy, in particular, appears to have provided the dramatis personae and the motif for a new kind of tragedy in which "the judicial murder of Mariamme [was] made the central catastrophe."[8] Dramatists of the period who realized the dramatic possibilities of this domestic psychological tragedy, "tried to put it into all moulds of drama. They made all kinds of people out of the historical personages named and described by Josephus. They twisted the plot every which way, and have

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[3] Howard B. Norland, "Neo-Latin Drama in Britain," in Jan Bloemendal and Howard B. Norland, eds, *Neo-Latin Drama in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 471-82.

[4] Elaine Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedie of Mariam*," in Karen Raber, ed., *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550-1700: Volume 6: Elizabeth Cary*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, p. 4.

[5] Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, Vol. 2, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969, pp. 115-6; For a further study on prohibitions on playing of religious and political matters, see Paul Whitfield White, "Patronage, Protestantism, and Stage Propaganda in Early Elizabethan England," *Yearbook of English Studies* 21, 1991, pp. 39-52.

[6] Murray Roston, *Biblical Drama in England,* London: Faber & Faber, 1968, p. 117.

[7] Silvia Castelli, "Josephus in Renaissance Italy - Printed Editions in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century," in Honora Howell Chapman and Zuleika Rodgers, eds, *A Companion to Josephus*, Chichester: Wiley, 2015, p. 406.

[8] J. B. Fletcher, "Herod in the Drama," *Studies in Philology* 19, 1922, p. 295.

intertwisted it with other plots, sometimes from Herod's other misadventures, sometimes invented."[9] The representation of the tragically pathetic side of Herod's character with relation to his second wife in particular, as presented by Josephus, with his hasty changes of temper and his passions nothing else but "lava-like, burning hot, [or] hard as rock if chilled by suspicion,"[10] allowed the survival of this biblical and historical persona within stage action.

With the exception of Dolce's (1565) and Tristan's (1636) plays, none of the other Herod-Mariamme works may be said to have achieved considerable prominence, either in their own time or later;[11] Cary's tragedy, on the other hand, seems to have been appreciated by her contemporaries and read not only at the time of its debut but also some time after its publication.[12] The purpose of this chapter will be, therefore, to understand to what extent Cary, in all probability well aware of the literary conventions of her time, patterned her tragedy upon historical accounts, and in particular, upon Flavius Josephus's works, including *The Antiquities*, completed circa 93-94 A.D., and perhaps also *The Jewish War*, completed earlier, between 69 and 79 A.D.[13]

As far as Cary is concerned, her attention to details in *Mariam* displays her great sense of alignment with Josephus in reviving and expanding the archetypal Herod-Mariamme myth. Interestingly, at times Cary also appears not to have hesitated to manipulate the historical source material to her liking. This is why, unlike Sandra K. Fischer who credits Cary with no literary creativity, stating that "Elizabeth Cary's tendency to choose well-known stories from prominent sources indicates one of the circumlocutious devices of the genres of marginality: [because] in a simple retelling of the facts, the author is not obliged to accept responsibility for what may be

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[9] Fletcher, p. 293.
[10] Fletcher, p. 303.
[11] Valency, p. 8.
[12] See the extant dedicatory works to Cary written between 1597 and 1633, including one of the *Heroicall Epistles* dedicated to Cary by Michael Drayton (1597), the dedication of *The Muses Sacrifice* by John Davies (1612), the dedication of *England's Helicon* by Richard Moore (1614), sonnets on Cary's departure for Ireland by William Basse (1622), the dedication of *The Sixth Book of the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* by Richard Belling (1624), and the dedication of *The Workes of Mr. J. Marston* to the recusant Lady Falkland by William Sheares (1633). Deana Rankin states that Cary was "firmly planted in the public sphere" as a writer and as a dramatist in particular. Deana Rankin, "'A More Worthy Patronesse': Elizabeth Cary and Ireland," in Heather Wolfe, ed., *Literary Career and Legacy of Elizabeth Cary, 1613-1680*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 213-4.
[13] The Herod-Mariamme story as described in *The Jewish War* is shorter and perhaps historically unreliable; in fact, it is believed to contain some anachronisms. Allen Wikgren and Ralph Marcus, eds, *Josephus in Nine Volumes,* Volume VIII, Jewish Antiquities, books XV-XVII, London: William Heinemann, 1963, pp. 42-3, 95-7, 111.

considered rebellious notions,"[14] I am going to determine the relationship between *Mariam* and Josephus's accounts, exploring both the similarities and divergences concerning the plots, events and the representation of the characters in Cary and in Josephus, in order to stress the complex and original nature of Cary's work.

As shown in the first chapter, several recent studies on Cary have focused on the problematic nature of *Mariam*, mainly exploring it as a thorough comment on the patriarchal society of early modern England;[15] my analysis instead is going to be centred on the exploration of the structure and language of Cary's play in relation to its source material, because "if not a great work, if not poetically accomplished, *The Tragedie of Mariam* is created from a strong conflict intelligently understood and sometimes eloquently expressed."[16] Moreover, Cary's use of a Senecan structure for the play involved significant changes to the original source material, including above all the alteration of the events and sometimes her personalization of the protagonists taken from Josephus.

3.1.1. Cary's creative writing of history

Elizabeth Cary appears to have displayed originality, not once but twice. Her interest in uncommon subject matters and literary genres atypical for women writers does not seem to be accidental. In

[14] Sandra K. Fischer, "Elizabeth Cary and Tyranny, Religious and Domestic," in Margaret Patterson Hannay, ed., *Silent but for the Word: Tudor women as patrons, translators and writers of religious works,* Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1985, p. 228.
[15] Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama*, London: Methuen, 1985, pp. 174, 191; Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp. 160-7; Margaret W. Ferguson, "The Spectre of Resistance: *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613)," in David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass, eds, *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama*, New York and London: Routledge, 1991, pp. 239-43; Laurie J. Shannon, "*The Tragedy of Mariam*: Cary's Critique of the Terms of Founding Social Discourses," in Raber, pp. 351-67; Kimberly Woosley Poitevin, "'Counterfeit Colour': Making Up Race in Elizabeth Cary's The Tragedy of Mariam," in Raber, p. 328; Nancy A. Gutierrez, "Valuing *Mariam*: Genre Study and Feminist Analysis," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 10, 1991, pp. 233-51; Dympna Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queene of Jewry*," in Raber, pp. 174- 87; and Elaine Beilin, "Elizabeth Cary and *The Tragedie of Mariam*," in Raber, pp. 7-22.
[16] Beilin, p. 6.

1627, in fact, she wrote a history of King Edward II,[17] whose story was "very much in the air at the time Cary composed her text,"[18] but as far as the plot and the genre of this work are concerned, Cary may, yet again, be said to have offered a very personal interpretation of the story, drawn from her own reading of the historical facts:

> In large part, Cary was able to circulate her text because it titled itself a 'history', yet it bears few of the usual markers of historical account, such as places and dates. Nor does it relate line by line the events as they happened in diary-like form as the annalists do. Her narrative gives almost no factual data about the events that transpired; a reader must know the details of the story well before reading it in order to understand what is going on. Cary's history also deviates from expectations raised by the title. Edward is a two-dimensional character who is flawed from the beginning and remains so to the end, despite the events he lives through. It is his queen, and those who surround and fail him, who receive the author's most developed treatments. [In brief,] Cary's idea of history emphasises a moral or didactic function rather than the transmission of facts.[19]

Cary, therefore, appears to have decided to write for a specific purpose and for a specific reader.

Donald R. Kelly and David Harris Sacks observe that in early modern England the differentiation between history and literary works was, "at least technically, an anachronism. In fact, 'literature' encompassed history, since the term conventionally signified anything preserved in writing ('letters')."[20] The scholars explain that "'history' and 'story' are derived from the same root, and they converged in early modern times, especially through the recognition of their common dependence on imagination."[21] Accordingly, Cary's idea appears to have been a strategic choice to produce texts that were confined within the contemporary conception of the transmission of facts but whose linguistic and rhetorical strategies at the same time might highlight this woman author's considerable education.

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[17] Elizabeth Cary, *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*, London: printed by J.C. for Charles Harper... Samuel Crouch... and Thomas Fox..., 1680. Wing F313. For a further study on Cary's authorship of *Edward II*, see "Appendix A: Elizabeth, Lady Falkland, and the Authorship of *Edward II*," in Barbara K. Lewalski, ed., *Writing Women in Jacobean England,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, pp. 317-20.

[18] Janet Wright Starner and Susan M. Fitzmaurice, "Shaping a Drama Out of a History: Elizabeth Cary and the Story of Edward II," in Raber, p. 445.

[19] Wright Starner and Fitzmaurice, p. 446. For a further study on the differences between Cary's history and the previous accounts on King Edward II, see Joan Parks, "Elizabeth Cary's Domestic History," in Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silox and Graham Roebuck, eds, *Other Voices, Other Views: Expanding the Canon in English Renaissance Studies*, Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999, p. 178.

[20] Donald R. Kelly and David Harris Sacks, "Introduction," in Donald R. Kelly and David Harris Sacks, eds, *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric and Fiction, 1500-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 2.

[21] Kelly and Sacks, p. 1.

Mariam, for example, may be said to have been written for an audience to whom the knowledge of Josephus was not indispensable to understand the intricate storyline of Mariamme's fate. The play, however, was undeniably intended for a sophisticated reader or listener, whose good literacy level and a wide range of knowledge were central to appreciate the text as a play. Cary, in fact, went further than simply rewriting Josephus. She used several expressions or single words that belonged to the domain of the learned of the time. In a number of passages, Cary's large education led the author to "define the boundaries of a common code of reference that resists change or penetration from outsiders."[22] Cary's allusions in *Mariam* range from biblical to mythological, often colliding and blending with allusions to the ancient or contemporary English and foreign intellectual elites' discourses.

As Ramona Wray shows in her analysis in the 2012 edition of *Mariam*, Cary sprinkles the tragedy with biblical references to the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer. According to Wray's study, Cary also draws numerous comparisons with Roman and Greek mythological characters, often leaving them unexplained. Such a use on the part of the author, again, permits her to express "the gnomic truths in the form of pithy sayings [which] provide moral assessment or judgement that needs application by the reader but no explanation by the author."[23] Again Wray confirms that some phrases or truths mentioned in the tragedy come from Roman poets or philosophers such as Ovid (2.2.17), Cicero (2.1.11) and Pliny the Elder (2.2.45) or Greek historians and philosophers such as Plutarch (1.1.3-4). Cary also appears to refer to some English and foreign contemporary teachings, and in particular, those by Thomas Harman (1.1.26); John Foxe (5.1.57); Philip Sidney (4.7.89, 95,98; 5.1.72); Philip Stubbes (4.7.61-2; 4.7.74); Joseph Swetnam (4.7.61-2; 4.7.104); Nicholas Breton (4.7.104); Desiderius Erasmus (2.2.16); Saint Peter Canisius (1.4.52); Alexandre Van den Busche (5.1.134) and Michel de Montaigne (4 Chorus, 17; 5 Chorus, 36). Last but not least, Wray individuates some proverbial sayings (1.2.9-10; 1.3.53-4; 2 Chorus, 6; 1.2.54), which may be examples of further linguistic strategies Cary adopted to combine

[22] Wright Starner and Fitzmaurice, p. 451.
[23] Wright Starner and Fitzmaurice, pp. 451-2.

with the literate sententiae or gnomic truths in order to offer interpretations of different problematic issues explored in the tragedy.

3.2. Flavius Josephus: a first-century Jewish historian and his major works

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish general and historian, was translated and printed in the Renaissance, famous for having chronicled and expanded the entire history of the Jews up to his times.[24] He was born in a distinguished priestly family in Jerusalem in A.D. 37-38, in the first year of Caligula, some forty years after Herod the Great's death and three-quarters of a century after this sovereign shattered his second marriage. Josephus received a good Jewish education in his childhood[25] and as an adult revealed a great interest in the leading politico-religious Jewish parties of his age, including the Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and eventually decided to join the Pharisees.[26] In the year 66 when the great Jewish revolt broke out he joined the insurgents and was appointed by the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem as a commander-in-chief to oversee the defence of Galilee.[27] Though initially the Jews were successful, the Roman General Vespasian soon advanced with the main army from Antioch to Galilee, burning cities and putting all patriots to the sword. Josephus came into Roman hands after they had conquered Jotapata, the town that was being defended by Josephus himself, but his life was spared. He managed to ingratiate himself with the victorious general, Vespasian, and as a freedman of the new emperor, he later supported the Roman forces and took part in their triumphal attacks in Jerusalem. After Vespasian's period of influence, the succeeding emperors, Titus and Domitian, also showed themselves sympathetically disposed towards Josephus, who after settling in Rome, was eventually offered the privilege of Roman citizenship as well as a yearly salary and lands in Judea in recognition of his act of loyal serving. In accordance with the Roman custom, after

[24] See Part IV on the transmission and reception history of Josephus's works, in Howell Chapman and Rodgers, pp. 305-413.
[25] Tessa Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society*, London: Duckworth, 1983, p. 26.
[26] Rajak, pp. 30-4.
[27] For further details on Josephus's participation in the Jewish revolt against Rome, in particular, his own defence of Galilee, see chapters 3-6 in Rajak.

the acquisition of his citizenship, Josephus also took up his patron's family name of Flavius for his own.[28] Moreover, such favourable conditions under the Flavian dynasty allowed him to devote himself to his literary career until his death in A.D. 101, during the reign of Trajan.

Josephus Flavius is especially well known for the *Jewish War* (Greek, *Περὶ τοῦ Ἰουδαϊκοῦ Πολέμου*; Latin, *Bellum Judaicum*) and the *Antiquities of the Jews* (Greek, *Ἰουδαική 'Αρχαωλογία*; Latin, *Antiquitates Judaicæ*). The former is nowadays believed to be the oldest major extant work by Josephus, completed towards the end of Vespasian's reign, around A.D. 79. This account in seven books was written in Aramaic and then translated by Josephus, with some help, into Greek.[29] It was mainly based on his memoranda completed during the Jewish revolt against the Romans (A.D. 66-73), from the capture of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes to the outbreak of the war, narrated in the first two books, and the war with Rome in which Josephus himself took part, narrated in the following five books. Its contents, celebrating the majestic power of Rome, are believed to have been reported for the sake of Roman propaganda.[30] In fact, right from the beginning Josephus expresses the real state of his feelings in favour of the Romans; in the first book of the *Jewish War*, he writes that the downfall of Judea was caused by the Jewish rebellious zealots (*War*, pp. 558-9). While attempting to reconcile the Jews to the Romans by condemning the revolt in the *Jewish War,* in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, the historian seems to have attempted to reconcile the Romans to the Jews, by explaining carefully and at length his people's history and traditions.

In fact, the latter work, in twenty books, written in the thirteenth year of Domitian's influence (A.D. 93), is a thorough description of Jewish history, from the creation of the world to the outbreak of the Great Revolt,[31] started in A.D. 66. The historian's purposes for *Antiquities* are

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[28] For a more detailed account of Josephus' life, see chapters 1, 5, 6, and 8 in Rajak.

[29] See Preface of the *Jewish War* in Flavius Josephus, *The famous and memorable vvorkes of Iosephus, a man of much honour and learning among the Iewes. Faithfully translated out of the Latin, and French, by Tho. Lodge Doctor in Physicke*, London: Printed by Peter Short, 1602, STC 14809, pp. 1-2. From now onwards the citations from Josephus's works will be taken from this edition and inserted in the text. This original Aramaic version is nowadays entirely lost. Valency, p. 5.

[30] Rajak, pp. 185-206.

[31] The Great Revolt was the first Jewish-Roman war (A.D. 66–73), a rebellion of the Jews of Judea Province (Judaea) against the Roman Empire, it was later followed by two other important rebellions, the Kitos War in A.D. 115–117 and Bar Kokhba's revolt of A.D. 132–5.

clearly linked to his intention to preserve the Jewish history for posterity; in fact, he admits to have mainly aimed at explaining what the Jews had been subjected to, what wars they had been engaged in and what were the consequences of these fights (*Ant.*, pp.1-3). Books I-XI are perhaps based on the first translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, made into popular Greek before the Christian era,[32] and enriched by the quotations of numerous passages from Greek authors such as Polybius (c. B.C. 200-c. 118), Alexander Polyhistor (flourished between B.C. 105 and 40), Strabo (64/63 B.C.-c. A.D. 24) and Nicolaus of Damascus (born around 64 B.C.), now mostly lost. Books XII-XX, which narrate the times preceding the coming of Jesus Christ and the foundation of Christianity, are our only sources for many historical events and characters, including the character of Herod. It must not be forgotten that Herod was the name of different rulers connected with the early history of Christianity, including Herod the Great, Herod Archelaus, Herod Antipas, Herod Philip I, Herod Agrippa I and Herod Agrippa II. Their names do appear also in the New Testament,[33] but nearly all our present knowledge of them comes from Josephus.[34]

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[32] There seems to be a lively scholarly debate on whether Josephus exclusively used the Hebrew Bible or also employed its Greek translations to write his works. Significant studies on the matter including those by Robert J.H. Shutt, Adam Mez, Sebastian P. Brock, Eugene C. Ulrich, George E. Howard, Harry E. Faber van der Meulen and Frederick F. Bruce have found either similarities between Josephus's works and the Hebrew text or the Greek manuscripts including those of *boc*$_2$*e*$_2$ and *Kaige*. What undeniably complicates our understanding of the question is the fact that not a few different Hebrew and Greek versions of the Bible existed at the time of Josephus and many of them might have been available to him. For a further study on Josephus's employment of the biblical sources in his works, see Louis H. Feldman, "Introduction," in Louis H. Feldman and Gåohei Hata, eds, *Josephus, the Bible, and History*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989, pp. 17-49; Sid Z. Leiman, "Josephus and the Canon of the Bible," in Feldman and Hata, pp. 50-9.

[33] Mark Toher, "Nicolaus and Herod in the 'Antiquitates Judaice'," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 101, 2003, p. 436. For a further study on the New Testament data on different Herods, see B.W. Bacon, "Pharisees and Herodians in Mark," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 39, 1920, pp. 102-12; H. H. Rowley, "The Herodians in the Gospels," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 41, 1940, pp. 14-27; W. J. Bennett, Jr., "The Herodians of Mark's Gospel," *Novum Testamentum* 17, 1975, pp. 9-14; and Peter Richardson, *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996, pp. 259-60.

[34] Several passages in books 16 and 17 of *The Antiquities* refer to the reigns of Herod's namesake successors. For a further analysis of Herods mentioned by Josephus, see Andrew E. Steinmann, "When Did Herod the Great Reign?," *Novum Testamentum* 51, 2009, pp. 20-5.

3.2.1. Flavius Josephus on Herod the Great and his marriage to Mariamme

Both Josephus's works provide rich information on Herod, surnamed the Great, whose marriage to Mariamme inspired several writers, playwrights in particular, throughout the centuries, a tradition born in the sixteenth century. Mark Thoer notes that 1,483 of 7,375 chapters of *The Antiquities*, almost a fifth of the total, are devoted to the character of Herod and "in their focus on the personality and career of Herod, these books have no parallel in either the most important biblical personalities of the *AJ* or in individuals who were contemporaries of the historian."[35] Toher notes, however, that:

In contradistinction to his earlier account in the *Bellum Judaicum*, in which Josephus presented the career of Herod in a loose topical arrangement of first his rise to power and his public career, then his building program, and finally his domestic tragedy, the account in the *AJ* maintains a chronological format. This approach allows a change in Herod's character to emerge as his success in external affairs yielded to domestic intrigue and tragedy. Through this focus on personality in the Herodian books of the *AJ*, the strength or weakness of an individual's character becomes a significant element in the motivation and explanation of events, and [moreover], in this respect Josephus's account reflects a distinctive characteristic of Nicolaus' historical narrative.[36]

We may learn from Josephus that Herod was born about 73 B.C.; he was son of Antipater, who was of Idumæan origin. The Idumæans descended from Esau and were conquered and ruled by John Hyrcanus towards the end of the second century B.C. They were considered Jews and thus supposed to live as Jews. Antigonus, in fact, considered Herod a half-Jew, and Cary's Alexandra also named Herod "Base Edomite, the damned Esau's heir!" (1.2.6). Herod the Great was the founder of the Herodian dynasty; he soon distinguished himself as a skilful diplomatist and commander, ready to please the Romans at any cost, and doubtless, the favour of Rome helped the Herodian family raise significantly their power. As a young man he was appointed governor of Galilee by his father, a procurator of Judea; he was then apparently twenty-five and not a youth of fifteen as Josephus states, given that nearly forty-four years later he died "almost seventy years of age." Soon, he also became prefect of Coele-Syria and determined to advance to new positions; after Julius Caesar's murder, he managed to win the favour of Cassius, the Roman Governor of

[35] Toher, p. 433.
[36] Toher, p. 436.

Syria, and Antony. After Herod's father was poisoned (43 B.C.), Judea found itself in a state of revolt. Herod, however, succeeded in suppressing the revolt and while defeating his rival Antigonus, the younger son of Aristobulus II, secured the sovereignty of Palestine. Though some Jewish nobles complained of the maladministration of Judea, Antony, who was helped by Herod's father while fighting under Gabinius in the East, never took any actions against Herod. On the contrary, Herod and his brother Phasael were appointed by Antony governors of Judea and given the title "tetrarch." Then, Antigonus, the uncle of Mariamme, invaded Palestine, assumed the kingship and Herod fled temporarily to Rome, where, supported by Antony, with the consent of Octavius,[37] he obtained from the Roman senate the sovereignty of Judea. Herod, however, was not able to enter his new dominion. Only after some years of conflict, when Herod married Mariamme, in 38 B.C., after repudiating his first wife, Doris, mother of his son, Antipater,[38] he strengthened his title to the throne by uniting himself with the Hasmoneans, who were very popular among the Jews. Antigonus was sent to Antioch where he was beheaded in 37 B.C., and from this date Herod assumed kingship in Jerusalem. Herod's obsessive and unreciprocated love for Mariamme eventually made the king become entangled in the domestic crisis which sullied his name forever:

> Josephus notes that domestic problems arose for Herod just as he became secure in power, and a number of times he remarks on the contrast between the prosperity of Herod's external affairs and the degeneration of his domestic situation. As presented in the narrative of Josephus, Herod is a tragic figure, a king who prospers and is able to maintain his empire even as he becomes less and less able to control the events and people closest to him.[39]

Despite Herod's qualities as an ambitious leader and a courageous warrior, which emerge from the first descriptions of the protagonist in Josephus narrative, "it is the transformation and degeneration of the character of Herod that provides the focal point for Josephus' account, and this same motif of a weak character inviting intrigue and manipulation runs through it."[40]

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[37] E.T. Salmon, "The Evolution of Augustus's Principate," *Historia* 5, 1956, pp. 456-78.

[38] Herod the Great had ten wives: (1) Doris, mother of Antipater; (2) Mariamne, mother of Aristobulus and Alexander as well as of two daughters; (3, 4) two of his own nieces, whose names are unknown, and by whom he had no children; (5) a second Mariamne, daughter of Simon Boethus (whom Herod appointed high priest), and mother of Herod Philip; (6) a Samaritan named Malthace, mother of Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and a daughter named Olympias; (7) Cleopatra of Jerusalem, mother of a son named Herod and of Philip, tetrarch of Iturea; (8) Pallas, mother of Phasael; (9) Phædra, mother of Roxana; and (10) Elpis, mother of Salome (*War*, I, xxviii, 4).

[39] Toher, p. 440.

[40] Toher, p. 438.

As far as the accounts on Herod and his relations are concerned, Josephus might have been inspired by some works on the king available to the historians at the end of the first century A.D., including the memoirs of Herod himself or a work on Herod by a certain Ptolemaeus of Ascalon; at least there is a consensus among scholars that Josephus almost surely relied on Nicolaus of Damascus's *History*[41] as a source for his account on Herod's personal and public life. Nicolaus, as Mark Toher explains, "was a participant in the events at Herod's court and a personal friend of Augustus;"[42] moreover, the Greek historian himself is believed to have been a tutor to Herod in history, rhetoric and philosophy.[43] In brief, it seems that from the examination of the fifty extant pages of Nicolaus's books, there is no reason to doubt Josephus's knowledge of Nicolaus's historical work.[44] It is important to emphasise, however, that unlike Nicolaus in his "panegyric of the king,"[45] Josephus in his accounts appears to have been negatively inclined towards Herod and his cruel behaviour; unfortunately, there has been no satisfactory theory that may explain the nature of Josephus's accusation of Nicolaus's partiality for Herod.[46]

Yet Josephus's five chapters of the fifteenth book of *The Antiquities* as well as a dozen chapters of the first book of *The Jewish War*, were not the only material which provided rich details on Herod and his relationship to Mariamme; the story was retold throughout the Middle Ages, including the tenth-century Hebrew adaptation of Josephus, *Gorionides*, the twelfth-century chronicle of the Byzantine John Zonaras, Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, and the *Speculum Majus* by Vincent of Beauvais.[47] But given that no other version of the story is extant, the above

[41] Nicolaus of Damascus's *History* in 144 books is believed to be the longest from antiquity. For a further study on Nicolaus's works, see Ben Zion Wacholder, *Nicolaus of Damascus*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962, pp. 14-36.
[42] Toher, p. 427. For a further study on the relationship of *The Antiquities* to its source by Nicolaus, see Ben Zion Wacholder, "Nicolaus and Josephus," in Feldman and Hata, pp. 154-63.
[42] Valency, p. 6 .
[43] Lee I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012, p. 47.
[44] Toher, p. 436.
[45] Toher, p. 428.
[46] Toher, p. 432.
[47] Valency, p. 6 .

mentioned works by Flavius Josephus have been the only source for the story for all subsequent generations.[48]

Josephus's two historical works provide us with details about events that often cannot be found in any other extant records and this renders his writings of extreme historical and literary value. Whether we should rely upon them or not has still been eagerly debated among Christian and non-Christian scholars.[49] Andrew E. Steinmann notes that:

> It is well documented that [Josephus] was not always accurate in his portrayal of events. Like many other ancient historians, he at times modified events to suit his rhetorical and ideological purposes. Josephus's accounts especially need to be examined when he reports speeches, which are not verbatim transcripts of what was said, but often contain the historian's account of what should have been said, could have been said, or what the historian wanted to have been said given his ideological biases. In addition, when Josephus reports on people's motives or is attempting to convince his audience of the reasons for a person's actions, he may well be embellishing the truth in order to accomplish his rhetorical goal of persuading his readers to adopt his view of events and their causes.[50]

What scholars seem to agree on, instead, is that Flavius aimed at promoting the antiquity and the superiority of the Jewish heritage in his almost propagandistic narratives.[51] Josephus, in fact, a mediator between Judea and Rome, a Flavian propagandist in the *Jewish War*, but also a preserver of the Jewish customs in the *Antiquities,* appears to have fully recognized the potential of his protagonists and utilizes them to commemorate the Jewish community of the time within the context of the Roman Empire.

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[48] Valency, pp. 3, 19.
[49] There seems to exist an extensive literature on the subject but it is perhaps worth mentioning the studies by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, "The Value of Josephus As a Historical Source," *Evangelical Quarterly* 15, 1943, pp. 179-83; Pieter J.J. Botha, "History, Rhetoric and the Writings of Josephus," *Neotestamentica* 31, 1997, pp. 1-20; Magen Broshi, "The Credibility of Josephus," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 33, 1982, pp. 379-84; Tessa Rajak, "The Sense of History in Jewish Intertestamental Writing," in A. S. Van der Woude, ed., *Crises and Perspectives: Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Polytheism, Biblical Theology, Palestinian Archaeology and Intertestamental Literature*, Leiden: Brill, 1986, pp. 124-45; Eric D. Huntsman, "The Reliability of Josephus: Can he be trusted?," in John F. Hall and John W. Welch, eds, *Masada and the World of the New Testament*, Provo: Brigham Young University, 1997, pp. 392-402; Donna R. Runnalls, "The Rhetoric of Josephus," in Stanley E. Porter, ed., *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 300 BCE-A.D. 400*, Leiden: Brill, 1997, pp. 737-54.
[50] Steinmann, p. 4.
[51] Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judicae of Flavius Josephus*, Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976, p. 181.

3.2.2. The popularity of Josephus's works in the sixteenth century and their accessibility for Cary

Josephus's works enjoyed popularity in the sixteenth century, as their translations in Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, English, Czech and Dutch, show.[52] In England, in particular, Josephus's works were available in two languages, in English since 1602, when Thomas Lodge's *The Famous and Most Memorable works of Josephus* first appeared; and until then, no other but the Greek edition appears to have been exclusively printed throughout the country.[53] Whether or not Elizabeth Cary had access to any of the translations, available in or out of England at the time, or worked upon the original version still awaits a thorough study. Given that Elizabeth Cary is believed to have had some knowledge of different foreign languages, or at least a good proficiency in three of them including French, Italian and Spanish, it cannot be excluded that she was familiar with the translations in these languages. It is certain, for example, that she translated into English in c. 1597, *L'Epitome du Théàtre du Monde* by Abraham Ortelius, and among the large number of its French editions available in that period, the 1588 and 1590 editions, both published in Antwerp by Christoffel Plantin for Filips Galle, with text by Peter Heyns, appear to have been the reliable sources for Cary.[54]

Overall, it is, perhaps, more prudent to assert that Cary could read and was undeniably able to understand all details of the English translation of Josephus. Dunstan and Greg argue that several verbal expressions to be found in both *Mariam* and in Lodge's translation of Josephus may prove that Cary did rely upon the English translation.[55] Moreover, apart from some similarities in

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[52] *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints. A Cumulative Author List Representing Library of Congress Printed Cards and Titles Reported by Other American Libraries,* 754 vols, London: Mansell, 1968-1981, vol. 285, pp. 148; 166-7; 168-70; 171-3; 175.

[53] Josephus, Flavius, *Phlabiou Iosephou eis Makkabaious logos· e p[e]ri autokratoros logismon. = Flavij Iosephi de Maccabaeis; seu de rationis imperio liber Manuscripti codicis ope, longe, quam antehac, & emendatior & auctior: cum Latina interpretatione ac notis Ioannis Luidi.*, Oxoniae: Excudebat Iosephus Barnesius, 1590, STC 14814.

[54] Lesley Peterson, ed., *Mirror of the Worlde*, translated by Elizabeth Cary, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012, pp. 7-8; Lesley Peterson, "The Source and Date for Elizabeth Tanfield Cary's Manuscript 'The Mirror of the Worlde'," *Notes and Queries* 51, 2004, pp. 257-63.

[55] Dunstan (1914), pp. XIV-XV.

language, there also seems to be the historical evidence, which enables us to suppose that Lodge's translation of Josephus might have been easily available to Cary.

In 1597, Michael Drayton, friend of Samuel Daniel, an admirer of both Philip and Mary Sidney, and a close acquaintance of Thomas Lodge, dedicated two of his *Heroicall Epistles* to Elizabeth Tanfield (at that time Cary was yet to get married), admitting to have been the privileged "witness of the many rare perfections where-with nature and education have adorned [her]."[56] Bernard Newdigate has assumed that such a touching declaration might have been released by no one but a tutor to the young girl.[57] If Drayton had ever performed such a role in Lawrence Tanfield's household, Cary might have had a chance to know Lodge personally, or at least, had easier access to his works. Furthermore, by 1614 Cary was dedicated one of the most celebrated miscellanies in England of the time, *England's Helicon*, a compendium of pastoral poetry by Sidney, Spencer, Breton, Drayton and Lodge included. Marta Straznicky claims that the dedication of the second edition of *England's Helicon* by its editor Richard More "would be very curious were there no known relationship between Cary and the poets whose work she is asked 'to shield from Envies pawe and times abuse.'"[58]

3.3. Flavius Josephus as a source for *Mariam*

As far as Josephus's works are concerned, while making the Queen's union to Herod the focus of a drama, playwrights could choose from a broad variety of material, thoroughly documented by Josephus, the motifs which they wanted to focus on in their plays, and this first choice was not an easy task because:

> The fortunes of Herod are not merely the private fortunes of a petty prince; they are bound up with the fortunes of civilization, with the destruction of the old and the dawn of the new era. The execution of Mariamne is no simple

[56] J. W. Hebel, K. Tillotson and B. Newdigate, eds, *The Works of Michael Drayton*, Vol. 5, Oxford: Blackwell, 1961, p. 123.
[57] Bernard H. Newdigate, *Michael Drayton and His Circle*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1941, p. 77.
[58] Marta Straznicky, "'Profane Stoical Paradoxes': *The Tragedie of Mariam* and Sidneian Closet Drama," in Raber, p. 145.

domestic crime, nor even the climax of a vendetta; it marks the end of the great Maccabean house, and foreshadows the ruin of a people.[59]

Moreover, the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century playwrights who sought to write a tragedy based upon the Herod-Mariamme story, did not have a really free hand to profile their characters, especially an archetypal character of Herod-villain preserved in several sources:

In the history, they found Herod's portrait drawn at length and in detail; in the Mariamne story and in its context, Josephus had impressed upon the Jewish king certain disagreeable traits of character which could hardly be overlooked. These characteristics had moreover been preserved in a weighty tradition which the church carefully cherished. The early dramatists could not look upon Herod with the dispassionate eye of one who freshly analyses human character.[60]

Josephus's story of persecution, therefore, became a clichéd story of savagery, possessiveness and revenge and any attempt to change its circumstances or shape its characters differently, after centuries of its well-established tradition, which was linked especially to the character of Herod, whose "face was black with accumulate hatred of fifty generations of honest Jews and Christians,"[61] might have been contested or rejected by the audience. Any attempt to rearrange the story or radically recolour its protagonists as Cary pleased might have conditioned the story's reception. Herod himself, in addition, had already lost his theatrical fashion at the time and this undeniably arouses the curiosity about the way Cary was able to overcome such difficulties and reintroduce the protagonists of the Herod-Mariamme myth. Perhaps, we do not need to search far for a reasonable answer to that question. Cary, in fact, who already in the play's title announces her main interest in dealing with the tragic destiny of "the fair Queen of Jewry," wants to draw the readers' attention to the circumstances of Herod's private life that at the time had been little explored, namely the tragic fate of his second wife, now commonly known as the plot of the Mariamme drama, which though subjected to the influence of the fashion of different times, became very successful on stage in the following centuries.[62]

In conformity with the unities of time and place of classical tradition, Cary appears to have compressed several events from Josephus, which spread over approximately two years in *The*

[59] Valency, p. 68.
[60] Valency, p. 17.
[61] Valency, p. 18.
[62] Fletcher, "Herod in the Drama," pp. 292–307.

Antiquities and *The Jewish War*, in a day or rather "twice six hours" (Chorus 5, 6), developing in addition to the main Herod-Mariamme plot, other two plots, including the Salome-Constabarus-Silleus plot and the Pheroras-Graphina plot. This means that *Mariam* hardly preserves the temporal correspondence to Josephus's works: "She follows Josephus fairly closely, but makes several alterations, sometimes compressing, sometimes amplifying, frequently transposing events, occasionally inventing scenes, to simplify the story and observe the unities."[63]

Cary starts the tragedy with the Argument, where by way of introduction, she summarises the most relevant events from the first four chapters of Book XV of *The Antiquities*, providing a context for the development of the story. Right from the beginning, we may observe the first changes Cary made to Josephus's account. As reported by Josephus, Herod is believed to have risen to power, after being supported by both the Roman Senate that appointed him the Tetrarch of Galilee and by his marriage to Mariamme, which promoted him as king of Judea, after having murdered the Maccabees who had the best title to the throne. Cary also stresses that to secure the Jewish throne Herod executed Mariam's grandfather and the king of Judea, Hyrcanus, and drowned the new high priest, Mariam's brother, Aristobolus. But these two events in Cary are reversed, as Josephus tells us that Herod first killed Aristobolus (35 B.C.) and Hyrcanus was slain later (30 B.C.). Cary, while briefly mentioning their deaths in the Argument (The Argument, 10-12), might have unintentionally made a mistake and inverted these events, or she misunderstood some parts of Josephus's account. Cary, in fact, says that "Alexandra, daughter to the one [Hyrcanus], and mother to the other [Aristobolus], accused him [Herod] for their deaths before Anthony" (The Argument, 13-14). According to what Josephus reported, however, embittered Alexandra appealed to Cleopatra for help in order to persuade Antony to question Herod after her son's death. Hyrcanus was not slaughtered yet at that time but later, before Herod's journey to Rhodes, when he was summoned by the newly empowered Caesar Octavius, later Augustus, in the spring of 30 B.C. Whatever reason Cary might have in juxtaposing these tragic events in the order she did in the Argument of her

[63] Dunstan (1914), p. XIII.

tragedy, the effect she obtained is very similar to that of Josephus in his works, in which these circumstances reinforce each other and play a crucial role in the development of the sad story of the Queen.

They lead, in fact, to Herod's two further trips abroad. On both occasions Herod orders to kill Mariamme in case he might lose his life, and on both occasions, the custodians, first Joseph and then Sohemus, who are asked to guard Mariamme, reveal her the truth during Herod's absence from home. In *The Antiquities* Herod's first order is more sentimental and the second one more political. Josephus remarks that Herod first leaves Mariamme with Joseph:

> Committing the gouernment both of the kingdome & his his priuate estate vnto him, giuing him secret instructions to kill *Mariamme*, if so be that *Anthony* should happen to doe him any mischief. For he loued her so extremely by reason of her beautie, that he supposed himselfe iniured, if after his decease she should be beloued by any other; and he openly declared that all that miserie which befell him, proceeded from *Anthonies* passion, and intire affection, and admiration of her beauty, whereof he had before time heard some report *(Ant.,* p. 387).

Josephus does not speak of Herod's jealousy over Mariamme when he describes the circumstances of the second order. We are rather said that both Mariamme and her mother should be killed "to the vtmost of their power continue the kingdome in his children, and his brother *Pheroras (Ant.* p. 395). Cary, on the other hand, only briefly mentions the first order in her play (1.3.50-2) and mainly focuses on the second order, justifying it as a result of Herod's excessive love and jealousy of Mariam (1.1.23-6; 4.4.12). In Cary, the second order is not extended to Alexandra. Yet in both works, the circumstances, in which the queen learns about the orders, enrage and lead Herod first to think, after his return, about her supposed adulterous relationships with both custodians, and finally, to put them all to death.

Several events which according to Josephus took place after Herod's return from Antony, including Herod's personal and political conspiracies with Antony and Cleopatra, the battle of Actium between Caesar and Antony, Herod's march against the Arabian King, an earthquake in Judea and Herod's double defeat of the Arabs are not discussed but condensed in Cary to the words "In this meantime" (The Argument, 27). It appears, therefore, that the political activities of Herod

only served Cary as the background for the representation of the politics of personal relationships at Herod’s court.

3.3.1. The plots

The tragedy mainly explores the relationships between men and women, developed in three plots.

The main Herod-Mariamme plot, which appears to be entirely taken from Josephus, is based upon such events as Herod’s return from Rhodes; Mariamme’s indifferent behaviour towards Herod after having learnt from Sohemus about the king’s secret command to kill her upon his sudden death; Salome’s machinations against her husband, Constabarus, and Mariamme; the execution of Sohemus; the cupbearer’s accusation; Mariamme’s slaughter; and finally, Herod’s terrible grief after her death.

The Salome-Constabarus-Silleus plot also comes from Josephus but Cary retells it in a slightly different chronological order. Salome's relationship with Silleus, which occurred in 7 B.C. in Josephus, that is nineteen years after Mariamme's death, is intertwined in Cary with the machinations of Herod’s sister and presented as a sub-plot to the Herod-Mariamme’s plot; moreover, in Cary, the Salome-Constabarus-Silleus plot involves the presence of the sons of Babas, whom we also meet in Josephus only after Mariamme’s death. These two relatives of Hyrcanus, condemned to death by Herod but helped by Constabarus to escape the punishment for nearly twelve years, help Salome get Herod’s consensus for her divorce from Constabarus, after having accused publicly the latter of hiding the rebels and conspiring against Herod.

The third and the last plot narrates the unauthorized union of Pheroras, Herod’s brother, to a slave girl, Graphina, who is a unique, fictitious character in Cary’s play. This marriage, again, plays an important role in Salome’s plotting against Constabarus. She, in fact, uses Pheroras to denounce Constabarus for harbouring Babas’s sons. Pheroras, afraid of being obliged to abandon his wife after Herod’s return home, carries out Salome’s plan and exposes Constabarus’s offence before the

king, in the hope to be supported by Salome in case Herod opposes Pheroras's decision to have married Graphina. In Josephus, instead, it is Salome herself who reveals Constabarus's secret to Herod. The last two plots, which might appear to be hardly relevant to the main plot, constitute a "curious jumble of material… [which at first sight evidently makes the play appear] episodic in structure, and makes a somewhat staccato effect,"[64] but interestingly, these three stories and their protagonists actually do explore Herod's susceptibility to be manipulated, which does not stop him from killing his beloved wife.

As for the main plot, from what Josephus relates about Herod's marriage to Mariamme we should expect the story to develop in three important phases as follows: "A man loves a woman excessively; he does or has done something which causes her to turn cold toward him; this coldness he is incapable of separating in his mind from the suspicion of infidelity, every circumstance works upon this suspicion, and he is driven to kill the woman he loves."[65] As a matter of fact, like Josephus's Herod, who is said to bear "the great affection vnto [*Mariamme*]… For he was as inwardly touched with the lawfull loue of *Mariamme*, as any other of whom the Histories make report" (*Ant.*, pp. 397-8), Cary's Herod also confesses his deep love for Mariam, which as he says is as strong as that of Octavius Caesar for Livia Drusilla, probably the only true love of the Roman sovereign:

The fair and famous Livia, Caesar's love,
The world's commanding mistress did I see,
Whose beauties both the world and Rome approve;
Yet, Mariam, Livia is not like to thee.
Be patient but a little while, mine eyes,
Within your compassed limits be contained;
That object straight shall your desires suffice
From which you were so long a while restrained (4.1.29-36).

Josephus's Herod's love for Mariamme appears to have been unconditional and the queen is said to have maintained "a great and intemperate libertie in her discourse" (*Ant.*, p. 399) throughout her life by his side; Cary's Herod not only lets his beloved "with public voice run on" (1.1.1) but also offers her all the riches, even the most improbable ones:

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[64] Valency, pp. 88-9.
[65] Valency, p. 15.

For thou shalt rule, and I will win the land.
I'll rob the holy David's sepulchre
To give thee wealth, if thou for wealth do care;
Thou shalt have all they did with him inter,
And I for thee will make the Temple bare (4.3.18-22).

In Josephus, Herod after his long travels desires to see and embrace his adored wife first: "For when as *Herode* beyond all expectation arriued in his countrey, being domed with mightie fortune, he first of all, as it became him, certified his wife of his good ridings and happy successe, whom onely amongst all other his friends and wiues, he embraced and saluted, for the pleasing conuersation and affection that was in her" (*Ant.*, p. 397). Cary's Herod, in his long-awaited first speech, which arrives only in Act 4, Scene 1, admits in the first lines to be happily back home because Mariam shares it with him:

Hail, happy city, happy in thy store,
And happy that thy buildings such we see!
More happy in the Temple where w'adore,
But most of all that Mariam lives in thee! (4.1.1-4)

Herod appears to be thrilled to have finally the possibility to see Mariam after his long and sorrowful absence from home. For Cary's Herod, the separation from Mariam, appears to have lasted one thousand years, and he cannot wait more to see her:

Oh, haste thy steps, rare creature! Speed thy pace,
And let thy presence make the day more bright
And cheer the heart of Herod with thy face.
It is an age since I from Mariam went;
Methinks our parting was in David's days,
The hours are so increased by discontent.
Deep sorrow, Joshua-like, the season stays:
But when I am with Mariam, time runs on.
Her sight can make months minutes, days of weeks;
And hour is then no sooner come than gone (4.1.10-9).

Herod's obsessive love for Mariamme, as both works narrate, appears to be intensified by the queen's great physical beauty. Josephus's Herod, in fact, is said to have constantly courted Mariamme for her excessive beauty of body and dignity of bearing in the presence of others:

[Mariamme] excelled both in continence and courage: notwithstanding that she defaulted somewhat in affabilitie and impatience of nature: for the rest of her parts, she was of an admirable and pleasing beautie and of such a cariage in those companies wherein she was intertained, that it was impossible to expresse the same, in that she surpassed all those of her time (*Ant.*, p. 399).

Cary's Herod also praises Mariam's attractiveness which according to him exceeds all the Roman beauties he saw:

You world-commanding city, Europe's grace,
Twice hath my curious eye your streets surveyed,
And I have seen the statue- filled place
That once if not for grief had been betrayed.
I all your Roman beauties have beheld,
And seen the shows your aediles did prepare;
I saw the sum of what in you excelled,
Yet saw no miracle like Mariam rare (4.1.21-8).

Cary, therefore, like Josephus, stresses Herod’s true love for his wife, which does not seem to be reciprocated in either work. Josephus tells us that Mariamme was not always lovable with her husband, on the contrary, she did not miss the chance to mock either his mother or his sister for their non-royal origins:

As touching her, she was both chast and faithfull vnto him, yet had she a certaine womanly imperfection and naturall frowardnesse, which was the cause that shee presumed too much vpon the intire affection wherewith her husband was intangled; so that without regard of his person, who had power and authoritie ouer others, she entertained him oftentimes very outragiously… vpbraided and publikely reproached both the kings mother and sister, telling them that they were but abiectly and basely borne (*Ant.*, p. 398).

We may further learn that such a firm and icy approach towards her husband changed for the worse after she had found out about his double order, the first left to Joseph and the second to Sohemus, to kill her upon Herod’s possible death. She, in fact, after Herod’s second joyful return home, after a yearly absence, received the king with great coldness and did not hesitate to rebuke him for the past atrocities, especially his malevolent behaviour towards her grandfather and brother; her great rage eventually led her to refuse her husband:

When as about midday the king had withdrawne himselfe into his chamber to take his rest, he called *Mariamme* vnto him to sport with her… Vpon this commaund she came in vnto him; yet would she not lie with him, nor entertaine his courtings with friendly acceptance, but vpbraided him bitterly with her fathers and brothers death (*Ant.*, p. 398).

In Cary, Mariam also refuses to please Herod, after his return: “I will not to his love be reconciled! / With solemn vows I have forsworn his bed… / To live with him I so profoundly hate” (3.3.15-6; 3.3.20) and Sohemus cautions her that her defiant words will only cause her suffering: “Unbridled speech is Mariam’s worst disgrace / An will endanger her without desert” (3.3.65-6).

While Josephus’s Mariamme appears to be rather constant in her feelings of revulsion towards Herod, in Cary’s work, when we first meet Mariam, in Act 1, Scene 1, we are said that her “tender love” (1.1.32) for him, “which once on him was firmly set” (1.1.20), ceased after she had

learnt about his obsessive jealousy, not once but twice, and her anger and scorn for him made her desire his death:

When Herod lived, that now is done to death,
Oft have I wished that I from him were free;
Oft have I wished that he might lose his breath;
Oft have I wished his carcass dead to see.
…
Hate hid his true affection from my sight,
And kept my heart from paying him his debt.
And blame me not, for Herod's jealousy
Had power even constancy itself to change;
For he, by barring me from liberty
To shun my ranging, taught me first to range (1.1.15-8, 21-6).

The inner dynamics of the tragedy are boldly established in this first scene, in which the titular protagonist, during her husband's absence, complains about the consolidation of his power as King of the Jews and accuses him of the murder of her brother and grandfather. Her speech conveys a turmoil of feelings; she hates her husband for his cruelties against her family and country and for despotic order revealed to her by his counsellor Sohemus that in case of his possible death, Mariam should be executed. Mariam admits to be fairly upset with Herod's order and realizes that she is alive only thanks to Sohemus's pity:

How happy was it that Sohemus' mind
Was moved to pity my distressed estate!
Might Herod's life a trusty servant find,
My death to his had been unseparated.
These thoughts have power his death to make me
bear –
Nay, more, to wish the news may firmly hold –
Yet cannot this repulse some falling tear
That will, against my will, some grief unfold.
And more I owe him for his love to me (1.1.47-55).

In Josephus, Mariamme, in her resentful state, after having learnt of Herod's two secret orders to slaughter her and her mother if something happened to Herod, does not conceal any of her inner disdainful feelings towards Herod and admits to be grateful for Sohemus's protection:

But as soone as he returned into his kingdome, he found all his houshold troubled, and both his wife *Mariamme* and her mother *Alexandra* grieuously displeased with him. For they supposing (and not without cause) that they were not shut vppe in that Castle for their securities sake, but as it were in a prison… *Mariamme* also supposed that her husband did but dissemble his loue, rather for his owne profit and commoditie, then for any intire affection he bare towards her. But nothing more grieued her, but that she had not any hope to liue after him, if so be he should happen to die, especially for the order he had left as concerning her: neither could she euer forget what commandement before that time he had left with *Joseph*; so that by all meanes possible, she laboured to winne the affections of those that had the charge of her, and especially *Sohemus*, knowing verie well that her safetie depended wholy on his hands (*Ant.*, pp. 396-7).

Cary's Mariam, hatefully disposed towards Herod upon his return, announces: "I cannot frame disguise, nor never taught / My face a look dissenting from my thought" (4.3.59-60). Her dark clothes display her bad mood: "My lord, I suit my garment to my mind, / And there no cheerful colours can I find" (4.3.5-6). This Mariam might seem to be slightly different in her initial approach towards Herod, in comparison to Josephus's, as she alludes to her original true feelings for her husband, but it is also true that when we first know her, she already cannot bear Herod, and soon, like Josephus's Mariamme, turns colder towards her husband. Cary, therefore, may be said to have followed fairly accurately the main plot of the tragedy, as provided by Josephus. Valency explains that:

> It may be posited that in almost all the Mariamne plays it is intended that Herod should love his wife to some extent. In a few of them he is depicted as a purely conventional husband; in most, he is a passionate and jealous lover… [This] distinction is important, for there is a vast difference between the construction of a play in which a man in love is made to kill a woman who loves him, and one in which he kills a woman who detests him… In the former case, outside forces are usually necessary to bring about the catastrophe, unless it be an accident; in the latter, the catastrophe is inherent in the situation. Somewhat more complex is the third possible situation - that in which Mariamne loves Herod at the beginning of the action, but no longer loves him at the end. In this case, the change in the heroine is the important part of the action, and may in itself lead more or less directly to the catastrophe.[66]

Cary's work can be placed in the second group, in which Herod, like the one in Josephus, is not beloved at all. While Mariamme displays such an unchanging attitude in Josephus, also in Cary, Mariam is "not a developing character, and there is no marked change in her attitude towards Herod, whom she consistently dislikes… the tendency in [such] plays is for Mariamme to be somewhat wooden and for Herod to be quite volatile."[67]

But while Josephus's Mariamme did not disdain to manipulate Herod, "from whom onely she expected no hardmeasure" (*Ant.*, p. 399), Cary's Mariam's chief source of failure was to please the king and to live with him agreeably:

> I know I could enchain him with a smile
> And lead him captive with a gentle word.
> I scorn my look should ever man beguile,
> Or other speech than meaning to afford.
> Else Salome in vain might spend her wind;
> In vain might Herod's mother whet her tongue;

[66] Valency, p. 69.

[67] In this group, Valency also includes Dolce's *Marianna* (1565) and other plays, which were written long after Cary's *Mariam*, including the tragedies by Tristan (1636), Lozano (1658), Hallmann (1670), Pordage (1674), Orrery (1694), Voltaire (1724) and other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plays based upon the Herod-Mariamme story.

In vain had they complotted and combined,
For I could overthrow them all ere long.
Oh what a shelter is mine innocence (3.3.45-53).

In the meantime, Salome's conspiracy against Mariamme takes over, in both works. The arousal of Herod's jealousy is not only fuelled by his sister Salome but also by Mariamme's only half-spoken words in her defence. Such a behaviour facilitates Salome's plotting and Herod cannot but suspect Mariamme's unfaithfulness.

From now onwards every circumstance works upon Herod's doubts. Josephus's Salome and her plan to use the King's cupbearer to convince Herod of Mariamme's desire to poison him is also present in Cary. But while in Josephus Herod was offered by a butler a love potion prepared by Mariamme and in order to know its composition ordered to torture Mariamme's eunuch, who ignorant of the situation and in great agony, confessed Herod the reasons of Mariamme's bad mood, the circumstances which eventually led to make Sohemus be sentenced to death and Mariamme brought to trial (*Ant.*, p. 398); in Cary, the events develop in a slightly different way, as the eunuch is not included among the protagonists of Cary's tragedy. In Cary, in fact, it is the butler, who upon Salome's order, offers Herod the poisoned drink presumably prepared by Mariam and tells Herod about Sohemus's treachery. Sohemus is unsurprisingly put to death and Mariam accused of being unchaste. After her accusation, in Cary, in particular, the queen, resolute in the validity of her ideals, while being allowed a last moment of assertion in prison, before she is led off to be executed, provides the last speech in defence of her chastity. Mariam afterwards loses her discursive control and we are only reported her last minutes by the Nuntio.

Mariamme's death is followed by Herod's great remorse and madness told both by Josephus and Cary with remarkable attention. Josephus narrates that once the queen was disposed of, the king's desire for her burnt still strongly and he would frequently call for her. He is said to have been so far overcome by his passion that he would order his servants to summon Mariamme as if she were still alive (*Ant.*, p. 339). Cary's Herod's grief also emphasizes his emotional duality and the

tendency to have conflicting feelings at the one time. His final internal struggle undeniably redirects the readers' focus on the fear of tyranny and injustice:

She was my graceful moiety; me accursed,
To slay my better half and save my worst.
But sure she is not dead, you did but jest,
To put me in perplexity a while;
'Twere well indeed if I could so be dressed
I see she is alive, methinks you smile.
…
Why, then go call her to me, bid her now
Put on fair habit, stately ornament:
And let no frown o'ershade her smoothest brow,
In her doth Herod place his whole content (5.1.133-8; 41-4).

Herod's repentance, which in both works comes upon Herod so suddenly and unexpectedly, changes the protagonist into a more complex, dramatic and pitiless character:

The scene, or act, of lamentation and repentance are characteristic … of all Mariamne tragedy… [moreover] ... the result of [such a treatment of the character] … as far as Herod is concerned, is to exaggerate his cruelty, but, at the same time, to emphasize his repentance, and so to widen the inconsistency in his character to the point of making him quite incomprehensible.[68]

The tyrants' repentance, therefore, had already been a cliché on the stage before *Mariam* was composed; in Cary's case, thus, "history and convention went happily hand in hand."[69] Herod's final severe introspection in Cary, however, undeniably bestows upon this archetypal stage villain new dramatic possibilities, revealing the vulnerable character of this authoritative king and man, who does not hesitate to punish women in defence of his honour and happiness but whose reputation appears to have been ruined by the same women. Overall, most playwrights of the period were interested not "in noble but in spectacular characters – tyrants of a Senecan cut [and] with this type of character the Herod of Josephus could easily be assimilated."[70] In fact, the complex character of Herod, selfish, cunning and weak at the same time, and his malevolent machinations within the domestic household, as they were set forth by Flavius Josephus, appeared for a growing number of dramatists of the period to fit the theatre. Needless to say:

The story itself, as Josephus tells it, is in the highest degree interesting and well suited to the drama. The characters are sculptured in the round, complete and whole almost to the last detail, yet their actions involve inconsistencies which

[68] Valency, pp. 49-50.
[69] Valency, p. 49.
[70] Valency, pp. 17-8.

tantalize analysis. The development has the attributes, rare in an historical account, of beginning, middle, and end. The moral implications are, or can be made, clear. The setting is more interesting, both historically and geographically.[71]

3.3.2. The characters

The first major parallel involves royal women and their influence upon the rulers. Both Josephus and Cary, in fact, depicted women protagonists in their richness of qualities, either rational, firm and courageous or innocent and genuine, but also authoritative and aggressive, who tend to transcend the limitations of the patriarchal society they live in. Their characterization of female protagonists, which differs from each other at times, plays an important role in making the story-tragedy compelling; in fact, their vivid and life-like characters are particularly believable.

Mariam, in Cary, appears to be a devoted wife to her husband, but she can hardly suppress her mixed feelings towards him, as he is responsible for her brother's, Aristobolus, and grandfather's, Hyrcanus, death. She reveals herself to be the Queen of the Jewish people, who rules with submission and blind loyalty to her dynasty. In the opening lines in Cary's tragedy, Mariam, as a sovereign, seems to enjoy freedom of speech in public: "How oft have I with public voice run on / To complaints Rome's last hero for deceit" (1.1.1-2), but this fatal privilege eventually will lead her to death. Josephus's Mariamme also courageously set herself against silent women. She takes advantage of her husband's enslavement to passion, and while treating him with arrogance, feels free to express her most earnest views on a range of delicate issues (*Ant.*, p. 399). In Josephus, in fact, the accounts of the queen placed in both *The Jewish War* (*War,* p. 589) and *The Antiquities* (*Ant.,* p. 398) represent Mariamme as cunning and highly manipulative, totally opposed to Cary's. Salome, an immoral and impure wife, is famous for her verbal authority, passionate character and sexual voracity. In the light of her transgressive desire to divorce Constabarus and marry Silleus, she names herself a "custom-breaker" in *Mariam* and does not hesitate to act as a frustrating conspirator, ready to slander innocent people, Joseph, Constabarus and Mariam, in order to receive

[71] Valency, pp. 7-8.

more attention as an authoritative woman. Josephus, on the other hand, does not accuse Salome of any mischievous behaviour towards her husbands. We are only said that "Herode was made king of the Jewes, and appointed Costabarus to be governor in Idumaea and Gaza, giving him Salome his sister to wife, after he had put Joseph to death, to whom she had bin maried before time *(Ant.,* p. 400). As far as her second marriage is concerned, we may learn from Josephus that "Salome fell at debate with Costabarus, for which cause she sent a libel of divorse to her husband, notwithstanding it were against the lawes and ordinarie customes of the Jewes (*Ant.,* p. 400). Salome's malice against Mariamme is evidenced in both Josephus and Cary. In Josephus, she persuades Herod to execute Mariamme as soon as possible for political reasons: "for that she alleaged that the king ought to feare, leaft some sedition should be raised amongst the people, if he should keepe her aliue in prison" (*Ant.*, p. 398). In Cary, Salome works upon Herod's jealousy and urges him to imprison and execute Mariam, while reminding him that: "Then you'll no more remember what hath passed? / Sohemus' love and hers shall be forgot? / 'Tis well, in truth. That fault may be her last, / And she may mend, though yet she love you not" (4.7.113-6). Despite such a divergence in the representation of Salome, through this character both Josephus and Cary draw attention to a similar concern that their cultures feared at the time, that is, powerful women desiring authority. On the other hand, Salome, as well as her brother, Herod, are both victims of racial harassment and attacks because of their parentage. In Josephus, Mariamme freely reproaches both Herod and Salome, claiming that they were abjectly born (*Ant.*, p. 338); in Cary, Salome, is defined by Mariam as half Jewish and half Indumean, who comes from the family repudiated by God: "Thou parts-Jew and parts-Edomite, / Thou mongrel, issued from rejected race! / Thy ancestors against the heavens did fight, / And thou, like them, wilt heavenly birth disgrace" (1.3.29-32). Herod himself, in a scene that is obviously out of character, says that Salome's dark complexion makes her look like an ape-like creature in comparison to Mariam: "Yet so unlike my Mariam in your shape / That, when to her you have approached near, / Myself hath often ta'en you for an ape. / And yet you prate of beauty! go your ways. / You are to her sun-burnt blackamoor" (4.7.101-6). In both works, Doris, Herod's

first wife and Antipater's mother, like Alexandra, Mariamme’s mother, is a parent struggling to claim the rights and protect the interests of her children. In fact, both maternal figures, especially in Cary, appear to be competitive and aggressive; at times, they appear to be distressed by the sense of inadequacy to embody their multifaceted roles of mothers, women, and members of the royal family. Doris is briefly mentioned by Josephus in *The Antiquities* (*Ant.,* p. 368); *The Jewish War* provides some more details on her. It is there that we may learn that:

For being now made king, he put away his wife, which he first married (which was a Ladie borne in Jerusalem, whose name was Doris) ... For he banished his eldest sonne Antipater, whom he had by Doris, out of the citie, onely for his childrens sake that he had by Mariamme, licensing him onely at festivall times to come unto the citie in regard of some suspicion of treason intended against him *(War,* p. 589).

Cary presents Doris in her play as the repudiated wife, who does not hesitate to denounce the discriminatory law that allows the husband to refuse his wife and children after divorce (4.8.51-4). Doris is a secondary character, who appears briefly twice in the play; first, when she desperately invokes Herod to consider her son, Antipater, as legitimate heir (2.3.1-55), and secondly, when she harshly challenges Mariam, accusing her of adultery (4.8.51-4). Overall, Doris appears to be of little importance for Cary, perhaps due to Josephus’s restricted historical data on her. As far as Alexandra is concerned, instead, while Cary represents her as a loving mother, in Josephus, her approach towards her children appears to be rather conflicting. First, we are said that when she learnt about her son’s death provoked by Herod:

In such sort, that diuers times she was ready to bereaue her of her owne life, and dispatch her selie out of miserie with her owne hands. But she contained her selfe to the end, that suruiung (and liuing after her sonne, who was so traiterously and fraudulently slaine, and prolonging her owne life without giuing any suspition or shadow, that she supposed her sonne to be thus cursedly murthered) she might with more opportunitie expect the occasion to reuenge her selfe (*Ant.*, p. 386).

But when Mariamme is accused of adultery by her husband and soon supposed to be killed:

Alexandra… fearing no lesse mischiefe from *Herodes* hands then her daughter was assured of; she vundecently changed her minde, and abiectedly laid aside her former courage, and magnanimitie… she went out to meete her daughter, and entertained her iniuriously, protesting publikely that she was a wicked woman, & vngrateful towards her husbads and that she wel deserued the punishment that was adiudged her (*Ant.*, pp. 398-9).

The minor character of Graphina, in Cary, completes the picture of female figures designed by Cary. She is a woman of humble origins, aware of her social and cultural inferiority, and thus,

passive and obedient towards men, but she is also capable of exerting a strong physical attraction for Pheroras.

Both in Josephus and Cary women either prevail or are crucial figures to the development of the plot. In Cary, especially in the first two acts of the tragedy, which are based upon the false rumour of Herod's death, women, almost exclusively, populate the stage, liberally speaking or taking up self-motivated actions during the king's absence. In *The Antiquities*, Josephus reports that during Herod's absence, Mariamme and Alexandra were supposed to be placed in the castle of Alexandrian, whereas Salome and Cypros, Herod's mother, in the castle of Masada (*Ant.,* p. 395), "for that by reason of certaine dislikes betwixt her [Mariamme], his mother and sister" (*Ant.,* p. 395). Cary appears to have wanted all her women protagonists to be at the centre of stage action. Mariam, relieved after having learnt of Herod's death, bursts into a bitter lament for her unhappy life by the side of her jealous and ambitious husband. Alexandra, Mariam's mother, openly condemns Herod for his cunning and atrocious actions to gain the throne of Judaea. Salome, Herod's sister, does not think twice to cast off her husband Constabarus and join in union with her Arab lover Silleus. Doris, Herod's first wife, brings her son Antipater to the capital against Herod's earlier orders. Finally, also Graphina, though of lower origin and consequently having little freedom, can freely live her love story with her beloved Pheroras, despite Herod's clear interdiction. In the third act, when Herod is unexpectedly on his way home, Mariam and Salome still appear to be leading protagonists on the stage. Mariam almost swears before Sohemus that she will never reunite with Herod; Salome, on the other hand, plots to denounce Constabarus in order to conceal her own offence against her brother-sovereign. In these first three acts, Cary develops the dramatic action centred around women at Herod's court who, as in Josephus (*Ant*., p. 397), develop a sense of self-confidence and attempt to reconsider their positions and take up actions after having found that Herod is believed to be dead. In the fourth act, on Herod's return, Mariam fulfils her earlier promises and indifferently approaches her husband; Salome keeps plotting against both Mariam and Sohemus, causing the former to be sent to prison and the latter to death immediately. In prison,

Doris, Mariam's greatest enemy, challenges Mariam's innocence cursing at her. The actions, undertaken by the above mentioned women, are all to be found in Josephus's accounts, though not in the same chronological order;[72] put together, they are highly relevant to the theme of the tragedy, which depicts this wrathful and revengeful king constantly tortured by conflicting passions towards women, who drive him to commit atrocities and eventually break into long lamentation and rabid self-accusation in the last act.

Josephus's and Cary's characterization of male characters also gives readers a strong sense of their complex personalities, which as women protagonists, are sometimes pictured differently by Cary, in comparison to Josephus. Both authors, however, represent different kinds of men: either authoritative and cruel or honest, affectionate and crazy for love and each male character plays a crucial role in the story and is fundamental to the traditional development of the tragedy.

Herod, an Idumaean King of Judea, is represented as a firm and cruel dictator, who absolutely lacks compassion for both his close family and subjects, but also, a man, who while dealing with female issues, turns out to be easily manipulated because of his passionate character and insecurities. Josephus's Mariamme and Cary's Mariam describe him as a tyrant and a bully from the beginning. His tormented marriage to Mariamme becomes an allegory to represent the 'passion' of an innocent wife. Valency observes that "The character of Herod in the Mariamme plays varies between rather wide limits, from the grim ferocious butcher almost all the way to the glamorous hero of romance, for his fortunes in the drama have been as varied as his fortunes in

[72] Graphina is the only female character that under such a name appears neither in the source text nor in other dramas on Herod and Mariamme. Valency explains that Graphina might be a variant of the name Glaphyra, who was the wife of Mariamme's son Alexander. Valency, p. 88. Contemporary scholars, instead, are either of the opinion that the name Graphina, which derives from the Greek 'graphein' meaning 'to write,' might have served Cary to embody the early modern ideal of feminine silence (Elaine V. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 169; Barbara K. Lewalski, "Resisting Tyrants: Elizabeth Cary's Tragedy and History," in Barbara K. Lewalski, ed., *Writing Women in Jacobean England*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 196; Naomi J. Miller, *Changing the Subject: Mary Wroth and Figurations of Gender in Early Modern England*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996, p. 52), or that Graphina might have been used by Cary to show that the culturally idealised silent women could find ways to express their voices. Margaret W. Ferguson, "Running On with Almost Public Voice: The Case of 'E.C.,'" in Florence Howe, ed., *Tradition and the Talents of Women*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991, p. 47; Jonathan Goldberg, *Desiring Women Writing: English Renaissance Examples*, Stanford University Press, 1997, pp. 164-71.

history."[73] Josephus's and Cary's Herod is a disgusting butcher, who however, is also a victim of racial discrimination; Mariam's mother names him: "Base Edomite, Esau's the damned heir!" (1.2.6). Sohemus, sensitive to feminine beauty and fragility, is not able to keep the terrible plan of Herod hidden, according to which he was supposed to kill Mariam in case of Herod's death, both in Josephus and Cary. Pheroras, Herod's brother, seems to be ready to fulfil his political-dynastic responsibilities by marrying Herod's eldest daughter, but on the other hand, cannot contain his passionate desires for his maid, when circumstances turn out to be favourable to him. In *The Antiquities,* more openly than in Cary, he continues the relationship with his maid (unnamed) during his brother's absence. Pheroras does not hesitate to refuse a wife for him of Herod's choosing:

[Pheroras] fell so farre in love with one of his maides, that he refused the kings daughter offered unto him, rather making choise of his maide. Herode took this in verie evill part, seeing his brother (who had received so many benefits at his hands, and was almost his fellow in his kingdome by his meanes) not to shew the like brotherly affection to him againe as he then ought, and himselfe to be an unhappie brother (*Ant*., pp. 423-4).

In *Mariam,* Pheroras, while fearing to loose his Graphina on the arrival of Herod, becomes involved with Salome's conspiracies. Both in Josephus and Cary, Antipater, Doris and Herod's son, is competitive and convinced that he can be given back the rights of the firstborn only after the fall from grace of his half-brothers - rivals (sons of his father and his second wife); Antipater proves to be capable of devising a plot to eliminate his half-siblings. Constabarus, Salome's second husband, is faithful to his wife and can hardly carve a strong position for himself in his marriage; he shows great solidarity with the weakest, and consequently, is determined to hide Babas's sons in order to help them escape the death penalty. This character definitely helps Cary represent Salome's wantonness in comparison with Mariam's chastity. In Josephus, Constabarus is a duplicitous individual, who acts only in his own interest; we are said, in fact, that after he became governor of Idumea under Herod:

Costabarus, seeing himselfe in this estate beyond his expectation, grew more elate and proud then his good fortune required, and in a little time forgot himselfe so farre, that he thought himselfe dishonoured, if he shoulde performe that which Herod commaunded him and scorned that the Idumaeans should be under the Jewes subjection, notwithstanding that they had received their manner of government from them *(Ant.,* p. 400).

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[73] Valency, p. 35.

He is said to have helped the sons of Babas only because such an action was to his advantage*:*

After that [Jerusalem] was surprised by Herode, and he grew master of the estate, Costabarus, who was appointed to keepe the citie gates, and to lie in wait that none of those who were accused to have forsaken the kings side, should escape, knowing that sonnes of Babas were greatly esteemed and honoured among the people, and foreseeing that their safetie might be small furtherance to himselfe, if at any time there might be fortune any alteration; he discharged, and hid them with his owne possessions *(Ant.,* pp. 400-1).

Silleus, as described by Josephus, becomes enamoured of Salome upon his arriving at Jerusalem. Due to his disagreement with Herod, he initially postpones his proposal of marriage to Salome. We are later told that when eventually Herod understood that Silleus's union to Salome might be profitable:

Unto him for the trafficke between his people and the Arabians, whose prince he was to be, and did alreadie enjoy a great part of the dominion. Herod told al this unto his sister, and asked her if she would marie him: and she answered, she would. Then they requested that Syllaeus should become a Jew in religion, or else it was not lawful for him to mary her. He would not condescend hereunto, affirming that he should be stoned to death by his people, if he did it; and so he departed without obtaining his purpose (*Ant.,* p. 425).

In *Mariam,* Silleus is described as a romantic lover, who in the scene between him and Constabarus, invented by Cary, does not reveal the same confidence in defending Salome's honour, as he displays in general in Josephus. In *Mariam*, it is Salome, in fact, who takes the initiative in their relationship. Finally, in both works we may find a few male servants, who never refuse to carry out their superiors' orders; the Butler in Cary, in particular, is so in pain after he accused Queen Mariam of attempting to poison her husband that the weight of guilt and remorse seem to be slowly driving him crazy and will eventually lead him to suicide.

To sum up, it is clear that some of Cary's characters underwent important changes in comparison to the source material by Josephus. Whether such changes were made by the author in order to adopt the Herod-Mariamme myth to the structure of a tragedy or for any other personal reasons, they did not appear to have compromised in any way the effect they had on the reception of the play. On the contrary, it may be said that Cary's characters, who were either considerably or slightly altered from the sources, undeniably might impress the reader and lead him to further reflection, especially if he was familiar with Josephus's works.

CHAPTER FOUR: Cary's knowledge of Herod from the Bible and the Herod plays

Scholars appear to have displayed little interest in Cary's indebtedness to the Bible and the English medieval dramatic adaptations of the biblical Herod, or rather Herods.[1] Unquestionably, the evidence of Josephus's works in Cary's play is easier to perceive than the evidence of the Bible or the Herod medieval plays, because the story of Herod's second marriage as narrated by Josephus is almost mirrored in *Mariam*. On the contrary, the Bible or the cycles might have only contributed to the author's better understanding of Herod's character; in fact, neither the former nor the latter sources say something about other characters in Cary's play.[2]

The purpose of this chapter will be, therefore, to understand in what way Cary might have been indebted to the aforementioned sources and how they were integrated into the tragedy. In particular, I intend to investigate to what extent the biblical episodes and the Herod plays on the slaughter of the innocent children in Bethlem and the trial of Jesus Christ before Herod may have influenced Cary's exploration of the tensions between the king and Mariam and between the king and his subjects. While we can be sure of Cary's good knowledge of the Bible, her acquaintance with the Herod mystery plays is not certain, but should not be excluded; the Mysteries, in fact, used to be staged in several English towns and villages and were still popular by the end of the sixteenth century:

They existed not only in the four northern cities, which retain a cycle today but in over a hundred other towns and villages, and possibly in a great many more than we have any existing records of… In the provinces the moral plays

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[1] It must be remembered that in the Holy book, Herod the Great and some of his descendants are often called with the same name instead of using their full names, an occurrence which still nowadays confuses readers about their identities.

[2] Alison Shell points out to the fact that several biblical commentators and writers on Jewish history, Lodge included, interchange in their texts three forms of the same name: "Mariam," "Miriam" and "Mary." That might allow us to stress comparisons between Cary's Mariam, Moses's sister, Miriam, and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Shell states that: "Both biblical women are likely models for a pious woman writer." Alison Shell, "Elizabeth Cary's Historical Conscience: *The Tragedy of Mariam* and Thomas Lodge's Josephus," in Heather Wolfe, ed. *Literary Career and Legacy of Elizabeth Cary, 1613-1680*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 59. Shell adds that Lodge, at times, spells "Miriam" as "Mariam" and refers to Herod's wife as "Mariamme," and thus, Cary's spelling of Herod's wife's name as "Mariam" may allude to Cary's interest in drawing a parallel between her protagonist and Miriam. Shell explains that both stories, an account about Miriam and the one about Mariam, have much in common: "they portray the outspoken female protagonist as at least having a good case, presenting the reader with something more complicated that a straightforward condemnation of female backbiting." Shell, pp. 58-60. In my analysis, however, I prefer to focus exclusively on the biblical characters that might have provided Cary with strictly direct information, grounded on the facts, for the development of her protagonists.

were the standard dramatic fare at the same time as Londoners thought only of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Johnson and their contemporaries. London has never been typical of the rest of the country, and to recall this fact in the history of the drama will remove some of the misconceptions upon the absolute evolution and development of the English theatre from one type to another.[3]

Herod's proneness to atrocities, generously chronicled by Josephus, was well-known to the English throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, also through the Bible and the medieval Herod plays.[4] His fame spread when the biblical Herods provided the plot for the medieval liturgical plays, which in turn, gave rise to the later mystery cycles performed by urban guilds that included not a few scenes with this unambiguously wicked king of the Jews, including the *Chester*, *York*, *Wakefield (or Towneley)*, *N-town (or Coventry)* cycles:

The essential characteristics of Herod came to the liturgical drama from the apocrypha and the writings of the Church Fathers long before the development of the mystery cycles, for the early continental Latin plays present a Herod endowed with most of the qualities which characterize him in the English mysteries; these characteristics were elaborated in the secularized mystery plays and in the popular pulpit by analogy with unpopular officials, 'rorynge… dewels,' and pagan prototypes; [and] Herod was traditionally conceived as a boaster and a braggart and was so presented throughout the history of the religious drama.[5]

The liturgical plays found in Herod's boundless savagery, ascribed to him by the Holy book, an obvious representation of evil; in fact, the biblical Herod persecuting Jesus and the innocent people suited well the dramatic role of a tyrant in these first theatrical performances. Herod's impulsive and brutal temperament became dramatically attractive because, while stimulating the devout audience's thinking, he could have an unequivocal effect upon them.[6] What is more, his personality was submitted to merely few changes in the course of his development on stage in the

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[3] Maurice Hussey, *The Chester Mystery Plays: 16 Pageant Plays from the Chester Craft Cycle*, London: Heinemann, 1957, p. X. Among the cities which possessed cycles, there were Aberdeen, Bath, Beverley, Bristol, Canterbury, Dublin, Ipswich, Leicester, Worcester, and probably also Lincoln and London. Individual plays have survived till today from cycles at Norwich, Northampton and Newcastle upon Tyne. William A. Armstrong, "Actors and Theatres," in Allardyce Nicoll, ed. *Shakespeare Survey, Volume 17: Shakespeare in his Own Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 191-204; Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage, and Playing in Tudor England,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 105.

[4] Roscoe E. Parker, "The Reputation of Herod in Early English Literature," *Speculum* 8, 1933, pp. 59-67. In addition to the dramatic representations of Herod that early English writers had at disposal, Parker also mentions the references to Herod in the English non-dramatic literature and briefly discusses the character of Herod the Great and Herod the Tetrarch from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Herod from *Piers Plowman*. Parker, p. 62. In my analysis, however, I am going to focus exclusively on the medieval dramatic representations of Herod.

[5] Parker, p. 67.

[6] Christopher Crane, "Wickedly Devotional Comedy in the York Temptation of Christ," in Christopher Crane, *Now mendys oure chere from sorow': The Rhetoric of Humor in Middle English Drama, Spiritual Instruction, and Chaucerian Religious Comedy*, Diss. The Catholic University of America, Ann Arbor: UMI, 2005, p. 31.

following centuries, and if any occurred, they aimed at stressing his rough and immoral character.[7] The authors of the mystery plays, therefore, while representing ranting Herod, still displayed their interest in "the dispensing of moral doctrine in palatable form."[8] In fact, though historical Herod-tyrant was also a gifted and energetic ruler, politician and diplomat, and finally a prolific builder in the entire history of ancient Judea,[9] "at the time when Herod was taken up by the Renaissance, and under the circumstances, he was in no condition to take on tragic grandeur, nor were there many playwrights disposed in those days to bestow grandeur upon him."[10]

4.1. Cary and the biblical Herods

Cary's work contains a number of references to the Bible:

Striking are the play's allusions to biblical stories, particularly from the Old Testament and Apocrypha. In Act 1, which establishes the importance of Mariam's genealogy, allusion is to material from the books of Genesis, Exodus, 1 Kings, 2 Esdras and Deuteronomy. It seems Cary deliberately limited her references to New Testament verses to ensure the relative authenticity of her historical story. This also means that when post-Christian allusions are made, particularly in Act V around Mariam's execution and the butler's suicide, they are all the more striking.[11]

Wray, in particular, emphasises that Cary did sprinkle the tragedy with numerous biblical references to the Old Testament and to the Book of Common Prayer which often collide and blend with allusions to the ancient or contemporary English and foreign intellectual elites' discourses.[12] As far as Cary's knowledge of Herod from the Bible is concerned, instead, her references to the Holy text might have been of more generalized nature; the specific linguistic parallels cannot be found as the author does not describe any biblical event concerning the king in the tragedy.

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[7] Maurice Jacques Valency, *TheTragedies of Herod and Mariamne*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1940, pp. 26-7. For a further study on Herod's characteristics on medieval stage, see David Staines, "To Out-Herod Herod: The Development of a Dramatic Character," *Comparative Drama* 10, 1976, pp. 29-53.

[8] Parker, p. 63.

[9] Herod's constructions, including defensive, religious, urban and palatial buildings, either in Judea or outside his own country, as well as several founded, re-founded, restored or embellished towns and cities, are relatively well documented by Josephus. For a further study on the architectural legacy of Herod, see Ehud Netzer, *Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008, pp. 243-69.

[10] Valency, p. 18.

[11] Karen Britland, ed., *Elizabeth Cary's The Tragedy of Mariam*, London: A&C Black, 2010. p. XI. See also Arthur Cyril Dunstan and Walter Wilson Greg, eds, *The Tragedy Of Mariam, 1613*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914, p. XIII; Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, eds, *The Tragedy of Mariam: The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life By One of Her Daughters*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, p. 34.

[12] Ramona Wray, ed., *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland Her Life*, London: Methuen, 2012, pp. 14-5.

There were more than one Herod in the biblical tradition, including Herod the Great, his three sons, Herod Archelaus, Herod Antipas and Herod Philip I, Herod the Great's grandson, Herod Agrippa I, and finally, Herod the Great's great-grandson, Herod Agrippa II.[13] Herod the Great, Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa I, were "simply called 'Herod' in the Bible and consequently often conflated in later literary traditions."[14] The Gospel of Matthew relates that Jesus was born during the reign of Herod, "at Bethleem of Iudea, in the dayes of Herod the King" (Matthew, 2:1-2), but Matthew's Herod's name is accompanied neither by the epithet nor by the second name. The Gospel of Luke starts exactly in the period of Herod's reign, the King of Judea (Luke, 1:5), but again, in Luke, no further information on Herod's name is given. Herod the Great might, therefore, be confused with his son, Herod Antipas, who unlawfully married his brother's wife, ordered the execution of John the Baptist and scorned and teased Jesus (Matthew, 14:1-11; Luke, 13:31-32, 23:7-12), and with his grandson, Herod Agrippa I, who killed James, son of Zebedee, and imprisoned Peter (Acts 12:1-19); in fact, both Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa I are simply called 'Herod' in the Scriptures. Moreover, the Bible, which often gives us misleading information on their real identities,[15] shows that these Herods were rather similar in character and such a fact may lead us to think that any of them might have reinforced Cary's characterization of Herod.

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[13] For a further study on Herods present in the Bible, see H. H. Rowley, "The Herodians in the Gospels," *Journal of Theological Studies* 41, 1940, pp. 14-27; Samuel Sandmel, "Herodians," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* II, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962, pp. 594-5; J. Julius Scott, Jr. *Customs and Controversies: Intertestamental Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament,* Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 1995, pp. 97-100; Thomas D. Lea and David Alan Black, *The New Testament: Its Background and Message,* Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2003, pp. 291-328; D.A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, pp. 14-53.

[14] Weller and Ferguson, p. 20.

[15] William Shakespeare did not make distinction between biblical Herods and in his *Antony and Cleopatra* referred to Herod the Great's murder of the infants (Shakespeare, I.ii.29-30) and to the beheading of John the Baptist ordered by Herod Antipas (Shakespeare, III.iii.3-6), calling the protagonists simply 'Herod of Jewry.' Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, New York: Macmillan, 1935, pp. 267-8.

Herod the Great

The biblical story of the massacre of the children, narrated by Matthew, dated between A.D. 80-100, gives us important information on the first Herod-tyrant mentioned in the Bible, Herod the Great, who while fearing Infant Jesus and his future possible usurpation of the Jewish throne, did not hesitate to execute all baby boys of Bethlehem (Matthew, 2:16-18). No other Christian or non-Christian record refers to this episode, and consequently, even though such an occurrence does not seem improbable in itself, some scholars have objections against its authenticity.[16]

In the Gospel of Matthew, we are told that the Magi meet Herod on their way to worship the new-born king of the Jews, Jesus; after having been warned in a dream to avoid Herod on their way home, they return to their countries by other roads, and thus, reveal nothing to Herod about the Messiah. Herod becomes enraged when he learns he was outwitted by the Wise Men of the East, ordering the slaughter of all the two-year-old boys and younger in Bethlehem and close by:

Then Herod, seeing that he was mocked of the Wisemen, was exceeding wroth, and sent foorth, and slew all the male children that were in Beth-leem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two yeere old and vnder, according to the time which he had diligently searched out of the Wisemen (Matthew, 2:16).

Matthew's Herod shows no mercy towards the innocent children, his subjects, exactly as Cary's Herod does towards Mariam and her relatives, to cement his own claim to the Jewish throne. Cary's Herod, in fact, admits to have Mariam's grandfather killed: "Hyracanus plotted to deprive my head / Of this long-settled honour that I wear, / And therefore I did justly doom him dead, / To rid the realm from peril, me from fear" (4.3.35-8). Soon after Herod's confession, we learn from Mariam that Herod also put an end to her brother's life: "I know that, moved by importunity, / You made him priest – and shortly after die" (4.3.51-2). Cary's Herod's wrath, suspicion and jealousy lead him, however, to bathe in blood more innocent people at his court. In Act 1, Salome reveals that

[16] For a further study on the historical verisimilitude of Herod's killing of the children, as narrated in Matthew, see Michael Grant, *Herod the Great,* New York: American Heritage, 1971, pp. 228-9; Richard T. France, "Herod and the Children of Bethelem," *Novum Testamentum* 21, 1979, pp. 98, 105-7, 114-120; Paul Maier, "Herod and the Infants of Bethlehem," in E. J. Vardaman, ed., *Chronos, Kairos, Christos II*, Macon, GA: Mercer University, 1998, p. 179; and Michael Grant, *Jesus,* London: Phoenix, 1999, p. 71.

Herod ordered her first husband's death as soon as he learned that Joseph had revealed Mariam Herod's secret order to kill her upon his possible death (1.3.41-4). When Cary's Herod finds out that Constabarus hid Babas's sons, he orders Pheroras to: "Go, take a present order for his death, / And let those traitors feel the worst of fears! / … Then haste them to their death" (4.2.33-4, 41). Again, when Cary's Herod learns about Sohemus's decision to reveal Herod's order to kill Mariam in case he was killed, he desires for his counsellor nothing but death: "O heaven! Sohemus false? Go, let him die; / Stay not to suffer him to speak a word. / O damned villain! Did he falsify / The oath he swore e'en of his own accord?" (4.4.12-6). Finally, once Butler assures Herod of Sohemus's death, the Jewish king decides to punish even his wife, Mariam, for her disrespectful behaviour towards him: "Have you designed Sohemus to his end?… Then call our royal guard / To do as much for Mariam. They offend / Leave ill unblamed or good without reward" (4.4.73-6). At this point, I agree with Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, who claim that Herod, "the Slaughterer of the Innocents, may contribute, associatively, to the definition of the character who bears his name in Cary's *Mariam*, especially in the play's final act, in which the dying Mariam acquires symbolic features of Christ and his precursors, the Slaughtered Innocents."[17]

In addition, Matthew's description of Herod's questioning of three Magi about the new born king of the Jews proves how the biblical Herod, determined to defend his position of a king, seeks to get some knowledge of his victim:

> And gathering together all the chiefe Priestes and Scribes of the people, hee asked of them, where Christ should be borne. And they saide vnto him, At Beth-leem in Iudea: for so it is written by the Prophet, And thou Beth-leem in the lande of Iuda, art not the least among the Princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come the gouernour that shall feede that my people Israel. Then Herod priuily called the Wisemen, and diligently inquired of them the time of the starre that appeared (Matthew, 2:4-7).

As in the Bible, in which "the use of the Magi as undercover agents is consistent with Herod's known penchant for espionage, and he [has] no reason to doubt their compliance;"[18] also in Cary's work, Herod, who sees his wife as a threat to his position, questions his faithful Butler to reassure himself of Mariam's guilt:

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[17] Weller and Ferguson, p. 21.
[18] France, p. 116.

What hast thou here?
…
Confess the truth, thou wicked instrument
To her outrageous will! 'Tis poison, sure.
Tell true, and thou shalt scape the punishment
Which, if thou do conceal, though shalt endure.
…
Know'st thou the cause thereof? (4.4.1, 5-8, 11).

Last but not least, some similarities can be seen between the lines, which both in Matthew and in Cary, further stress Herod the Great's insane desire for dominance and revenge, even upon his death. The Gospel, in addition to the account on the slaughter of the innocent children, while announcing Herod's death, again recalls his terrible aspiration to kill Jesus: "And when Herod was dead, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeareth in a dreame to Ioseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the babe and his mother, and goe into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the babes life" (Matthew, 2:19-20). These lines of the New Testament might have exerted some influence on Cary who in *Mariam*, upon Herod's death, also wants to remember Herod for his immoral actions: "Here Herod lies that hath his Mariam slain" (5.1.258). In fact, the biblical Herod the Great is mainly represented as a ruler soiled in the blood of countless innocent human beings; Cary, similarly, appears to have associated her Herod more with his violent behaviour than with any other act of his life. Herod the Great, as described by Josephus, did not lack moments of greatness; Cary, however, like the Bible (Matthew, 22:7; John, 2:20), only briefly refers to his strong architectural taste and his chief accomplishments, making him boast to possess beautiful buildings such as those in Jerusalem (4.1-3). It is rather Herod's merciless conduct and insufferable egotism that stain his name forever in Cary in the same way they do in the Bible.

Herod Archelaus

In addition to Herod the Great, the Bible briefly mentions another Herod, namely Herod Archelaus, one of Herod the Great's sons. The only allusion made to him in the Gospels can be found in Matthew, who says that Archelaus received some of his father's territory, and more precisely the

area of Judea, after Herod the Great's death: "But when he heard that Archelaus did reigne in Iudea in stead of his father Herod, he was afraide to go thither: yet after he was warned of God in a dreame, he turned aside into the parts of Galile" (Matthew, 2:22). We have no further information in the Bible on this Herod,[19] and the lack of more details about his life, unlike the other Herods, makes it difficult to include him in my analysis.

Herod Antipas

Herod Antipas (or Antipater) was another son of Herod the Great. The Bible relates that Herod Antipas ruled as "the tetrarch" of Galilee: "Nowe in the fifteenth yeere of the reigne of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being gouernour of Iudea, and Herod being Tetrarch of Galile" (Luke, 3:1). The Gospel portrays him as superstitious: "At that time Herod the Tetrarche heard of the fame of Iesus, And sayde vnto his seruaunts, This is that Iohn Baptist, hee is risen againe from the deade, and therefore great woorkes are wrought by him" (Matthew, 14:1-2). In Cary, Herod resists Salome's cruel suggestions to slaughter Mariam, superstitiously claiming: "Beware of this! You make a godly hand / If you of weapons do deprive our land" (4.7.13-4); and when some lines later, Salome accuses Mariam of her falsity, Herod fearfully and unfoundedly comments on it:

It may be so; nay, 'tis so. she's unchaste,
Her mouth will ope to every stranger's ear:
Then let the executioner make haste,
Lest she enchant him, if her words he hear.
Let him be deaf, lest she do him surprise
That shall to free her spirit be assigned.
…
Her eyes can speak, and in their speaking move.
Oft did my heart with reverence receive
The world's mandates. Pretty tales of love
They utter, which can human bondage weave (4.7.77-82, 89-92).

Luke says that this Herod was also cunning and immoral: "The same day there came certaine Pharises, and said vnto him, Depart, and goe hence: for Herod will kill thee" (Luke, 13:31). Jesus

[19] We may only suppose that he was a man of violent temper, reminding us a great deal of his father, Herod the Great, and his younger brother, Herod Antipas, if we consider that Joseph was unwilling to move Mary and little Jesus to Bethlehem after fleeing to Egypt, because Bethlehem was under the control of Archelaus.

calls him "the foxe" (Luke, 13:32) and Cary's Herod takes actions in the same fox-like way (4.3.44-50), sarcastically admitting to have plotted all "with hearty truth" (4.3.46).

Moreover, Matthew tells us that this Herod abandoned his first wife, a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, for the sake of Herodias, the wife of his brother Herod Philip I. This detail might have further inspired Cary to include Herod's first marriage to Doris in the tragedy, an occurrence mentioned in Josephus (*Ant*., p. 368), but which did not turn out to be of particular interest for Dolce,[20] for example. Herod Antipas's union with Herodias, however, was considered particularly sinful because the latter was the daughter of Aristobulus, his half-brother, and therefore his niece, and at the same time the wife of another half-brother. Herodias had an unhealthy influence over him and was able to manipulate him so that he would do anything for her. Matthew relates that Herod was ready to grant every Herodias's wish, even the most atrocious:

For Herod had taken Iohn, and bounde him, and put him in prison for Herodias sake, his brother Philips wife. For Iohn saide vnto him, It is not lawfull for thee to haue her. And when hee woulde haue put him to death, hee feared the multitude, because they counted him as a Prophet. But when Herods birth day was kept, the daughter of Herodias daunced before them, and pleased Herod. Wherefore he promised with an othe, that he would giue her whatsoeuer she would aske. And shee being before instructed of her mother, sayde, Giue mee here Iohn Baptists head in a platter. And the king was sorie: neuertheless, because of the oth, and them that sate with him at the table, he commanded it to be giuen her (Matthew, 14:3-9).

Similarly, Cary's Herod, charmed by Mariam's beauty, claims to be ready to please her, at any time and in any possible way, even by stealing from the holy David's sepulchre:

What is't that is the cause thy heart to touch?
Oh, speak, that I thy sorrow may prevent.
Art thou not Jewry's queen, and Herod's too?
…
I'll rob the holy David's sepulchre
To give thee wealth, if thou for wealth do care;
Thou shalt have all they did with him inter,
And I for thee will make the Temple bare" (4.3.9-10, 19-22)

Overall, Herod Antipas was as violent as his father; it was he who ordered the killing of John the Baptist: "And sent, and beheaded Iohn in the prison" (Matthew, 14:10), because the latter confronted him saying that it was not legitimate to marry a brother's wife (Mark, 6:18). At first, Herod Antipas was not completely convinced to put John to death because he respected him, "for

[20] Lodovico Dolce, *Marianna, Tragedia di M. Lodovico Dolce, Recitata in Vinegia nel Palazzo dell'Eccellentiss. S. Duca di Ferrara, con Alcune Rime e Versi del Detto*, In Vinegia appresso Gabriel Giolito De'Ferrari, 1565.

Herod feared Iohn, knowing that hee was a iust man, and an holy, and reuerenced him, and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly" (Mark, 6:20). It was Herodias, in fact, who wanted John slaughtered (Mark, 6:17-29), and she eventually found a way to make Herod kill John, using her daughter, Salome. The latter, after having danced before Herod and his guests on Herod's birthday feast, charmed Herod into offering her whatever she wanted. She then: "went forth, and said to her mother, What shall I aske? And she said, Iohn Baptists head. Then she came in straightway with haste vnto the King, and asked, saying, I would that thou shouldest giue me euen now in a charger the head of Iohn Baptist" (Mark, 6:24-5). Herod Antipas, though sorry for John, eventually displayed his pride and recognized that he made a promise, almost an oath, and thus, had to fulfil Herodias and Salome's request: "And immediatly the King sent the hangman, and gaue charge that his head shoulde be brought in. So he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gaue it to the maide, and the maide gaue it to her mother. And when his disciples heard it, they came and tooke vp his body, and put it in a tombe" (Mark, 6:27-29). In Cary, we may find Salome who not only is using the Butler (4.4.2-3, 9-10, 12-3) but also she herself is trying to persuade Herod to kill Mariam, making decisive, cold suggestions on what he should do; though she persists for long (Act 4 Scene 7), Herod, like the one in the Bible, hesitates till the end before giving the final order to punish Mariam. At the end of this long scene, he still claims:

HEROD
Oh God, 'tis true! Sohemus! Earth and heaven,
Why did you both conspire to make me cursed,
In cozening me with shows and proofs uneven?
She showed the best and yet did prove the worst.
…
Oh, she was made for nothing but a bait,
To train some hapless man to misery.
I am the hapless man that have been trained
To endless bondage. I will see her yet.
Methinks I should discern her if she feigned;
Can human eyes be dazed by woman's wit?
Once more these eyes of mine with hers shall meet,
Before the headsman do her life bereave:
Shall I forever part from thee, my sweet,
Without the taking of my latest leave? (4.7.117-20;135-44).

Cary's Herod is truly disappointed with Mariam but wants to believe that Mariam is honest: " I had not doubted Mariam's innocence, / But still had held her in my heart for pure" (4.8.159-60). This is why he prefers her to be imprisoned rather than killed: "But bear her but to prison, not to death" (4.4.94). He eventually remembers, however, to have been offended by Mariam twice and his honour does not allow him to do otherwise but to put her to death:

She shall not live, nor will I see her face.
A long-healed wound a second time doth bleed.
With Joseph I remember her disgrace;
A shameful end ensues a shameful deed.
Oh, that I had not called to mind anew
The discontent of Mariam's wavering heart!
'Twas you, you foul-mouthe Ate, none but you,
That did the thought hereof to me impart.
Hence from my sight, my black tormentor, hence!
…
Destruction take thee! (4.7.149-57, 163).

After having executed his wife, Cary's Herod, a tireless persecutor, comments on his behaviour as if his actions as an omnipotent ruler-judge should be justified because of his sovereign position: "The cruel deed, though by another's hand; / My word, though not my sword, made Mariam bleed, / Hyrcanus' grandchild died at my command" (5.1.188-90).

Furthermore, though it is Pontius Pilate, who should be considered the man in charge for Jesus' crucifixion (Luke, 23:16-24), it appears that Herod, who wanted to see Jesus imprisoned during his life (Luke, 9:9), was not completely indifferent to Jesus' fate and eventually had some responsibility for his execution. Luke shows him at the trial of Christ in his perplexity before tormenting Jesus, but though hesitant, Herod Antipas questions Jesus prior to the cross and chooses not to free him. He rather becomes a friend of unjust Pilate (Luke, 23:6-15),[21] as in Cary, Herod becomes an ally of his sister, whom he earlier considered inferior to Mariam (4.7.104-7), and though doubtful about his wife's guilt, he decides to keep her in a prison cell in Jerusalem before taking the final decision about her fate.

[21] For a further study on the 'friendly' relationship between Herod and Pilate, see Paul W. Walaskay, "The Trial and Death of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94, 1975, pp. 87-90.

Only Luke includes in his Gospel Jesus's hearing before Herod. Mark and Matthew, both narrate the trial before nobody else but Pilate. The Lukan source implies that if it had not been for Herod Antipas, Jesus would have been freed, as Pilate in the preliminary examination found no fault in Jesus. It would appear, therefore, that it was Herod Antipas who was mostly responsible for Jesus' condemnation.[22] In fact, in the New Testament, Act 4:27 puts the responsibility for Jesus's execution upon Herod: "For doutlesse, against thine holy Sonne Iesus, whome thou haddest anoynted, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered themselues together." Cary, similarly, puts the responsibility for Mariam's death upon Salome and Herod jointly.

Herod Philip I

The Gospel of Luke also mentions Herod Philip I, tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis: "Nowe in the fifteenth yeere of the reigne of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being gouernour of Iudæa, and Herod being Tetrarch of Galile, and his brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea and of the countrey of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene" (Luke, 3:1). Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us that it was from him that Antipas lured Herodias away (Matthew, 14:3; Mark, 6:17; Luke, 3:19), but we have no further information on him from the Bible, and thus, he cannot be the object of the comparison with Cary's Herod.

Herod Agrippa I

The Acts describe well Herod the Great's grandson, Herod Agrippa I, who did not hesitate to take sides in the struggle between Judaism and the emerging Christian sect, assuming the role of its bitter persecutor. Herod Agrippa I, in fact, appears to have harried the church whenever possible; he

[22] Joseph B. Tyson, "The Lukan Version of the Trial of Jesus," *Novum Testamentum* 3, 1959, pp. 256-7. For a further examination of the Lukan variations to Jesus' trial in comparison to Matthew and Mark, see Tyson, pp. 249-58.

slew James the apostle, the son of Zebedee and the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter; luckily Peter escaped from prison by a miracle, being helped by an angel (Acts, 12:1-11). In the Acts, we may learn that when he made a public speech at Caesarea during a public festival, the people proclaimed him a god: "And vpon a day appointed, Herod arayed himselfe in royall apparell, and sate on the iudgment seate, and made an oration vnto them. And the people gaue a shoute, saying, The voyce of God, and not of man" (Acts, 12:21-2). Like the biblical Herod Agrippa I, also Cary's Herod has the authority to speak and act as if he was a divinity: "he ha[s] power to judge" (2.1.33) and no one inferior to him can oppose his wishes and commands. Pheroras bitterly complains about it: "Else had I been his equal" (2.1.37), as also he, as a brother to Herod, must submit to the omnipotent monarch's words: "his power [Herod's] and not my choice / Had made me solemnly the contract swear" (2.1.19-20).

Herod Agrippa II

Herod Agrippa II figures in the New Testament in Acts 25 and 26. Paul appeals to him as to a king with a good knowledge of the Jewish culture and history: "I thinke my selfe happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answere this day before thee of all the things whereof I am accused of the Iews: Chiefly, because thou hast knowledge of all customes, and questions which are among the Iews: wherefore I beseech thee, to heare me patiently (Acts, 26:2-3). Herod Agrippa II is also believed to have presided over the trial of Paul, with the Roman procurator, Porcius Festus, in Acts 25:13 and 26:32. Herod Agrippa II allows his victim to defend himself, giving Paul the opportunity to preach the Gospel to all who were assembled during the questioning, but he eventually condemns his actions, ironically admitting: "Almost thou perswadest me to become a Christian" (Acts, 26:28). Cary's Herod similarly approaches his victims; he gives Mariam the opportunity to defend herself after being accused of an unchaste behaviour: "They can tell / That say I loved him. Mariam says not so" (4.4.35-6). Mariam also delivers a self-justifying monologue in prison in Jerusalem (4.8.1-

46). Cary's Herod, however, like Herod Agrippa II, eventually accuses her of shamelessness and deceitful behaviour, making her defensive words sound absolutely meaningless:

Oh, cannot impudence the coals expel
That for thy love in Herod's bosom glow?
It is as plain as water, and denial
Makes of thy falsehood but a greater trial.
Hast thou beheld thyself, and couldst thou stain
So rare perfection?
…
I might have seen thy falsehood in thy face.
…
Thy face, encountering it, my wit did fetter
And made me my for delight my freedom sell. (4.4.37-42, 61, 66-7)

It must be stressed that Herod Agrippa II, the last of the line of Herods, was mentioned in the Bible with his full name, and thus, perhaps, could hardly be confused with other Herods. His approach towards his subjects, however, clearly does not differ from that of other Herods, reinforcing a kind of archetype of the biblical Herod.

Given that the Bible does not tell us anything about Herod's second marriage, but there are many passages referring to this legendary man in the text, I felt free to see an allusion or echo to how Cary represented her Herod in *Mariam*. The Bible might have served Cary as a model for the representation of this male evil character, whose manipulative and immoral actions establish a dominant motif both in different biblical accounts and in Cary. Seen from this point of view, the Bible might have become a kind of subtext for Cary's tragedy

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4.2. The influence of the early English Herod plays on Cary

Some conventional aspects of the dramatization of the biblical themes of tyranny against innocent people and of sacrifice, which the Herod plays on the slaughter of the innocent children in Bethlem and the trial of Jesus Christ before Herod explore, appear to loom large in *Mariam*. In particular, Cary's Herod may be said to share some striking characteristics with the Herod-villain explored by

the Chester,[23] York,[24] Wakefield (or Towneley)[25] and N-Town (or Coventry) plays;[26] in addition to the biblical and historical sources, they provide Herod with a range of excessive emotions. Cary's version on Herod's bloody conquest and paranoid preservation of the Jewish throne as well as exceptionally despotic approach towards his family and subjects seems to give her protagonists the same psychological relief as the early English dramas.

In medieval England, the dramatization of this villain was mainly associated with "the proclamation of his raging passions, the boasting of his might and power, and the torrential abuse of all who crossed his purposes and thwarted his aims."[27] Cary apparently knew of that Herod, because her representation of the king as the archetype of earthly tyrants, "most beloved of all" (1.6.112), visibly accentuates his high regard for himself, seething rage and inexorable moral and emotional confusion. Although I am hardly the first to claim *Mariam*'s connection to the aforementioned plays,[28] so far, scholarship on them as a model for Cary's characterization of Herod has been neglected, in all probability, because of no direct evidence that may link the author with any of their performances or written versions; nothing, at the same time, precludes the possibility that she would have known them. Moreover, considering that "the lines of demarcation between the medieval theatre and that of the early modern period [were] blurred,"[29] the consideration of the influence of the medieval Herod plays on Cary deserves greater recognition.

The scriptural stories provide the examples of a multiplicity of villains that might be explored on the early English stage, but "the main interest [of the playwrights of the time] centred around some five or six, who invariably appeared in every play and monopolised a large proportion

[23] The play used for the analysis from the Chester cycle is *The Slaughter of the Innocents*. All quotations come from R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills, eds, *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, London: Oxford University Press, 1974.

[24] The plays used for the analysis from the York cycle include *Herod Questioning the Three Kings and the Offering of the Magi, The Massacre of the Innocents* and *Trial before Herod*. All quotations come from Clifford Davidson, ed., *The York Corpus Christi Plays*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2011.

[25] The plays used for the analysis from the Wakefield (or Townely) cycle include *Offering of the Magi* and *Herod the Great*. All quotations come from George England and Alfred W. Pollard, eds, *The Towneley Plays*, London: Published for the Early English Text Society by H. Milford, 1897, reprinted 1952.

[26] The plays used for the analysis from the N-Town (Coventry) cycle include *Magi, Slaughter of the Innocents* and *Death of Judas & Trials Before Pilate and Herod*. All quotations come from Douglas Sugano, ed., *The N-Town Plays*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007.

[27] Frederick T. Wood, "The Comic Elements in the English Mystery Plays," *Neophilologus* 25, 1940, p. 195.

[28] Weller and Ferguson, pp. 22-3.

[29] Margaret Rogerson, "Raging in the Streets of Medieval York," *Early Theatre* 3, 2000, p. 106.

of the dialogue, as well as amused the audience with rough horseplay and meaningless bellowing."[30] Among these outstanding, repulsive figures there were Cain, Pilate, Judas, the Devil and Herod. The exemplary nature of these villains served to reinforce the orthodox message of the theatre, inviting the audience to recognize evil while taking part in the performance.[31] Herod's dramatic bombast and rant, in particular, established this nasty character as a "potent emblem of interpretative control."[32] In Cary, Herod's bombastic speeches do not always occupy as much textual space as in the early English dramas. Undeniably, the onset of the Reformation in England affected several texts of the dramatic plays, suppressing, altering, or simply censoring them from as early as the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553). The early biblical dramatic representations tended to change their focus on the subject matter, inevitably influencing future generations of playwrights, but the "Reformation distaste for the religious culture of the past…[eventually] brought about the final days of the great cycles."[33] Cary could not but take all these circumstances into consideration while making alterations to the characterization of her protagonists, Herod in particular. This may also explain, perhaps, why none of these dramas closely parallels Cary's in word choice; rather, they appear to have instilled in Cary a cultural fascination with the dramatization of Herod, a character whose "stage résumé [was] impressive [at the time]. His monstrous and colourful behaviour, [in fact,]… can be regarded as one of the leading lights…of the medieval English theatrical world as a whole."[34]

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[30] Wood, pp. 194-5.
[31] For a further study on the limits and potential of the vernacular theatre in Medieval England and the effects of its socio-political dimension and the didactic intent of the playwrights, see R.W. Hanning, "'You Have Begun a Parlous Pleye': The Nature and Limits of Dramatic Mimesis as a Theme in Four Middle English 'Fall of Lucifer' Cycle Plays," in Clifford Davidson, C.J. Gianakaris and John H. Stroupe, eds, *The Drama in the Middle Ages: Comparative and Critical Essays*, New York: AMS, 1982, pp. 140-68; Claire Sponsler, "The Culture of the Spectator: Conformity and Resistance to Medieval Performances," *Theater Journal* 44, 1992, pp. 15-29.
[32] William Fitzhenry, "The N-Town Plays and the Politics of Metatheater," *Studies in Philology* 100, 2003, p. 29.
[33] Harold Gardiner, *Mysteries' End*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946, p. XIII. For a further study on the complex interactions between a traditional drama and the English Reformation, see Peter Happé, "'Erazed in the Booke': The Mystery Cycles and Reform," in Lloyd Kermode, Jason Scott-Warren and Martine Van Elk, eds, *Tudor Drama Before Shakespeare, 1485–1590*, New York: Palgrave, 2004, pp. 15–34.
[34] Rogerson, p. 110.

4.2.1. Herod's bombastic and paranoid pride

One of the characteristics that Herod of the early English plays developed is a confident, at times paranoid and ironical, boasting of his power, and Cary, in *Mariam*, seems to put the emphasis on these character traits of the dramatic Herod, making her protagonist also bombastically allude to his supreme power. The process of secularization of the English drama involved the development of realism and comedy that in some early English plays went hand in hand,[35] establishing the new dramatic value of the rigid and prudish biblical stories; Cary's Herod, while trying to validate his kingly position, categorically but also as if he suffered from a fear of failure, at once stresses his importance as a symbol of patriarchal ideology, diverts and amuses a potential reader-spectator.

Cary's Herod, on his first appearance in the play, greets Jerusalem, emphasising the greatness of his realm under his command, using the royal 'we' (4.1.1-3). The early English dramas also often put in evidence Herod's great influence over the nation and his possessions. In the York *Massacre of the Innocents*, Herod, in the first verses, cynically orders his subjects, wherever they are, in the fields or in towns, to worship him as their much-loved lord:

Ye aught to dare and doute,
And lere you lowe to lowte
To me, youre lovely lord.
Ye awe in felde and towne
To bowe at my bidding (6-10).

Herod of the Wakefield (Towneley) play, *Offering of the Magi*, also shows up bombastically in the first scene and his first words foreground the absolute and despotic nature of his rule; he states to be the lord of every land, town and construction that exist in the world:

Of all this warld, sooth, far and nere,
The lord am I.

Lord am I of euery land,
Of towre and towne, of se and sand;
Agans me dar noman stand,
That berys lyfe (5-10).

[35] Wood, p. 206.

In the Wakefield (Townely) *Herod the Great*, Herod's messenger, Nuncius, introduces the king at the beginning of the play, worshipping Herod's qualities and fame all over the world:

He is Kyng of Kyngys / Kyndly I Knowe,
Chefe lord of lordyngys / chefe leder of law,
Ther watys on his wyngys / that bold bost wyll blaw,
Greatt dukys downe dyngys / ffor his greatt aw,
And hym lowtys.
Tuskane and turky,
All Inde and Italy,
Cecyll and surry,
Drede hym and dowtys.

ffrom paradyse to padwa / to mownt flascon ;
ffrom egyp to mantua / vnto kemp towne ;
ffrom sarceny to susa / to grece it abowne ;
Both normondy and norwa / lowtys to his crowne;
his renowne
Can no tong tell,
ffrom heuen vnto hell;
Of hym can none spell
Bot his cosyn mahowne.

he is the worthyesf of all / barnes that are horue;
ffree men ar his thrall / full teynfully torne;
Begyn he to brall / many men each skorne;
Obey must we all / or els be ye lome (37-58).

In the same play, Herod himself, in his first appearance, after Nuncius, emphasises he has absolute power and is well-known everywhere: "My name spryngys far and nere / the doughtyest, men me call, / That euer ran with spere, / A lord and kyng ryall" (109-11). Also in the N-Town (Coventry) *Magi*, we first see Herod, who bombastically exalts the absolute and boundless nature of his royal character, stating his total power over the heaven and the earth:

Ther is no lord of lond in lordchep to me lyche,
Non lofflyere non lofsummere, evyrlastyng is my lay!

Of bewté and of boldnes I bere evermore the belle;
Of mayn and of myght I mastyr every man!
I dynge with my dowtynes the devyl down to helle,
For bothe of hevyn and of herth I am kyng sertayn!

I am the comelyeste kynge clad in gleterynge golde,
Ya, and the semelyeste syre that may bestryde a stede!
I welde att my wyll all wyghtys upon molde!
Ya, and wurthely I am wrappyd in a wurthy wede! (3-12)

In Cary, Herod in his first appearance, while boasting about his own greatness, appears to be very similar to Herod represented by the York, Wakefield (Towneley) and N-Town (Coventry) scenes on the innocents; more verses in *Mariam*, however, while portraying the vicious instincts and

pomposity of the king, provide an insight into the rather paranoid character of this man, the similar way the early English dramas do.

Cary's Herod compares himself to the lion, a majestic and heraldic beast, well known especially for its strength, power and ferocity (4.4.89-90); Alexandra also calls the throne of Judea usurped by Herod a "lion-guarded chair" (1.2.66). Moreover, Cary's Herod aspires to command nature, including the sun and the moon (5.1.193-201) as well as the universe with its gods (5.1.202-5). In the York *Herod Questioning the Three Kings and the Offering of the Magi*, Herod's "opening words are full of bombastic alliteration, and his claims are entertainingly hubristic,"[36] stressing his own greatness and power over the nature, the world's creatures and the supernatural world:

The clowdes clapped in clerenes that ther clematis inclosis,
Jubiter and Jovis, Martis and Mercurii emyde,
Raykand overe my rialté on rawe me rejoyses,
Blonderande ther blastis to blaw when I bidde.
Saturne, my subgett, that sotilly is hidde,
Listes at my likyng and laies hym full lowe.
The rakke of the rede skye full rappely I ridde,
Thondres full thrallye by thousandes I thrawe
When me likis.
Venus his voice to me awe
That princes to play in hym pikis.

The prince of planetis that proudely is pight
Sall brace furth his bemes that oure belde blithes;
The mone at my myght he mosteres his myght,
And kayssaris in castellis grete kyndynes me kythes;
Lordis and ladis loo luffely me lithes,
For I am fairer of face and fressher on folde,
The soth yf I saie sall, sevene and sexti sithis
Than glorius gulles that gayer is than golde
In price.
How thynke ye ther tales that I talde,
I am worthy, witty, and wyse (1-22).

Cary's Herod has a well-grounded knowledge of the same divinities mentioned by the York play, but proves it in slightly different circumstances, namely while mourning Mariam's death. He addresses Saturn, Jove, Mars, Venus and Mercurius, listing their attributes (5.1.211-21). In brief, Herod is portrayed in the York play as ridiculously superior over the universe; a kind of comic villain, "arousing laughter of derision in the audience that reinforces its rejection of the evil he

[36] Sheila K. Christie, "Bridging the Jurisdictional Divide: The Masons and the York Corpus Christi Play," in Margaret Rogerson, ed., *The York Mystery Plays: Performance in the City*, Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2011, p. 64.

represents."[37] Yet again, his bombastic and delirious exclamations appear to mirror "the courtly tradition with which the use of royal speech associates him and turns him into a parodic figure of ordinary mankind and, at once, of the secular king."[38]

Cary's punning on the royal titles in lines 11-12, in Act 4 Scene 3, further emphasises her Herod's unequivocal awareness of his kingly position (4.3.11-2). Cary, therefore, appears to imitate in different verses the charismatic boisterousness and superiority complex of Herod explored on the early English stage, designed to show the snobbish and fanatic, at times almost comic, side of his human nature. While the holy stories were becoming more and more secular, some comic, profane and vulgar elements were often interpolated to represent foolery. Christopher Crane explains that:

> In an age so conscious of the dichotomy and tension between the earthly and heavenly, the sophisticated and deliberate use of this tension to convey and reinforce the institutional position should offer no surprise… A medieval audience could laugh at Herod's boasting or Cain's crude abuse of Abel without fear that such laughter would undermine an orthodox view of their wickedness. Such drama point[ed] to a faith that not only gave freedom to laugh, but a faith strengthen[ed] through the comedy, which reminded spectators of their own fallibility and made the forgiveness and grace at the center of that faith more inviting.[39]

Cary appears to have an ambiguous attitude towards comedy and the comic in general; although her play is devoid of any earthly humour, her way of bringing the problematic of Herod's moral choice and stance sometimes appears to take the form of irony. Cary, for example, during Mariam's trial, skilfully attempts to belittle Herod's emotional power over his wife, portraying him ironically as a hesitant king, surprisingly slow to make decisions.

4.2.2. Herod's wrath

A certain emphasis on Herod's excessive wrath is apparent in *Mariam*'s scenes, in which Herod, full of himself, impulsively orders, threatens and puts his subjects to death in an attempt to preserve his kingship and reputation. Cary appears to have enlivened these scenes in comparison to

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[37] Crane, p. 36. For a further study on the comic elements incorporated into the rigid and stereotyped biblical narratives explored by the English medieval drama, see Wood, pp. 194-206.

[38] Crane, pp. 36-7. For a further study on the opposing visions in the celebratory characterization of medieval Herod's raving, combining both orthodox and potentially subversive elements of religious drama, see Martin Stevens, *Four Middle English Mystery Cycles: Textual, Contextual, and Critical Interpretations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, pp. 53-61.

[39] Crane, p. 41.

Josephus's or biblical accounts on Herod, in which the events are described in a comparatively flat way. Herod's tendency to lose his temper is significantly accentuated in the early English plays and Cary might have relied upon this complex interplay of images that undeniably provides another perspective and rich material for deepening the exploration of Herod's tormented sense of supremacy as well as ethical confusion.

Cary's Herod authoritatively commands his subjects, through the power of his language, Joseph (1.3.41-4) and Sohemus (1.1.47-8) to take care of Mariam and kill her upon his potential death, Pheroras to marry his eldest daughter (2.1.16-20), Mariam to fulfil her marital responsibilities (4.1.10-12; 4.3.11-3,57-8,61,63), and finally, the Butler to confess Mariam's crime (4.4.5-6). In the Chester *Slaughter of the Innocents*, Herod's first words imply his prominence and control over all subjects, also the high-ranking figures: "Princes, prelates of price, / barronnes in blamner and byse, / beware of mee, all that binne wise, that weldes all at my will" (1-4).

In Cary, the cunning king wants to reward or rather bribe those who earnestly listen to him and obey him. He attempts to convince Mariam to submit to his requests by offering her riches: "I'll rob the holy David's sepulchre / To give thee wealth, if though for wealth do care; / Thou shalt have all they did with him inter, / And I for thee will make the Temple bare" (4.3.19-22). Similarly, in the Wakefield (Towneley) *Offering of the Magi*, the messenger, who successfully returns to Herod with three Kings, is promised a reward: "Thi waryson shall thou haue for thy, / By hym me boght; And certainly, that is good skyll, / And syrs, ye ar welcome me tyll" (365-8). In the Wakefield (Towneley) *Herod the Great*, Herod promises the knights a material reward for killing the children, explaining that after they have carried their task out well, they are worthy castles and towers as well as money:

As I am kyng crownde / I thynk it' good right!
Ther goys none ou grownde / that' has sich a wyght';
A hundreth thowsand pownde / is good wage for a knyght,
Of pennys good and rownde / now may ye go light''
with store;
And ye knyghtys of oures
Shall haue castels and towres,
Both to you and to youres,
ffor now and euer more (442-50).

In the N-Town's *Slaughter of the Innocents*, the King also promises the knights the landholdings and goods, after they have murdered the children: "Ye shul have stedys / To youre medys, / Londys and ledys, / Fryth and fe! / Wele have ye wrought!" (121-5).

Those who are hatefully disposed towards Herod, including Pheroras (2.1.6-8, 13-16), Babas's sons (2.2.1-6; 2.2.63-8), Sohemus (3.3.69-70) and Mariam (4.3.53-5), are threatened with death. Herod justifies it saying that he, as a king, cannot leave wrongs unpunished: "They offend / Leave ill unblamed or good without reward" (4.4.76). Several speeches in Cary represent Herod as the ruler with limitless power, who freely decides about the fate of any of his subjects. Cary's Herod himself underlines the power of his language: "My word, though not my sword, made Mariam bleed, / Hyrcanus' grandchild died at my command" (5.1.189). He forces Pheroras to kill Constabarus and Babas's sons (4.2.33-4, 41; 4.6.1, 7-8). He commands the Butler to slaughter Sohemus and Mariam: "Have you designed Sohemus to his end? … / Then call our royal guard / To do as much for Mariam" (4.4.73-5). He orders the soldiers to help lead Mariam to death: "Here, take her to her death. Come back, come back!" (4.4.77). He gets furious with Salome, and after her long insistent speech on Mariam's infidelity, he condemns her: "Destruction take thee!" (4.7.163). Eventually, after Mariam's death, he angrily shouts at her executioners: "hell take her murderers" (5.1.149). In the York *Massacre of the Innocents*, Herod orders to respect him and threatens the audience; he first orders them to stop shouting and then orders them to bow to him, underlining that he gets easily heated in case he gets disobeyed:

Powre bewcheris aboute,
Peyne of lyme and lande,
Stente of youre stevenes stoute,
And stille as stone ye stande,
And my carping recorde
…
Ye awe in felde and towne
To bowe at my bidding
With reverence and renoune,
As fallis for swilk a kyng,
The lordlyest on lyve
Who herto is noght bowne,
Be allmighty Mahounde,
To dede I schall him dryve (1-5; 9-16).

Herod of the Wakefield (Towneley) play, *Offering of the Magi*, calls for silence in his presence and orders everybody to bow to him; he demands respect from his subjects, otherwise, they will be punished with death:

Peasse, I byd, both fare and nere,
I warne you leyf youre sawes sere;
who that makys noyse whyls I am here,
I say shall dy.
…
All erthly thing bowes to my hand,
Both man and wyfe.

Man and wyfe, that warne I you,
That in this warld is lyfand now,
To mahowne & me all shall bow,
Both old and ying;
On hym wyll I ich man trow,
ffor any thyng (1-4; 11-18).

In the same play, Herod states he will have everyone who is disrespectful towards him beaten up and warns the potential traitors to fear him as he will patrol all the land to find them:

I shall dyng thaym downe bydeyn,
And wyrk thaym wo;
And on assay if shall be seyn,
Or I go.

And therfor will I send and se
In all this land, full hastely,
To looke if any dwelland be
In towre or towne,
That wyll not hold holly on me,
And on mahowne (39-48).

Cary's Herod also claims that he will find Babas' sons-traitors, wherever they hide themselves, and take revenge on them; he tells Pheroras: "let those traitors feel the worst of fears! /... / I'll be deaf to prayers and blind to tears" (4.2.34, 36). Another Herod, who demands silence and claims to tame people's talking in case they do not obey him, is the protagonist of the Wakefield (Towneley) play, *Herod the Great*:

Bof I shall tame thare talkyng,
And let thame go hang thame:

Peasse both yong and old / af my bydyng, I red,
ffor I haue all in wold / in me standys lyfe and dede;
who that is so bold / I brane hym thrugh the hede;
Speke not or I haue told / what I will in this stede (80-1; 91-4)

Some lines later, when Herod's knights bring him bad news about the Magi who have slipped past them and are now far away, Herod reproaches them and beats them. The third knight beseeches him to stop: "Why put ye sich reprefys / withoutt cause? / Thus shuld ye not thrett vs, / vngaynly to bete vs, / Ye shuld not rehett vs Withoutt othere sawes" (157-162). Herod, however, gets enraged more and continues abusing them, so that they can understand who has more power (163-76). Herod cannot calm down after the Magi's escape, in fact, his two counsellors implore him: "Syr, peasse this outrage!" (246). The exasperated Herod starts cheering up only when it is suggested that he orders the death of the prophesied infant king, and therefore, all the male children under two years old. In Cary, concerned Pheroras, who is ordered to kill Constabarus, also pleads with Herod to spare the latter's life: "He is, my lord, from Salome divorced, / Though her affection did to leave him grieve; / Yet was she by her love to you enforced / To leave the man that would your foes relieve" (4.2.37-40), but Herod only quickens the execution of his order (4.2.41).

Furthermore, Cary's Herod pompously confirms to be ready to get rid of any rivals to maintain his grip on the throne. He shamelessly and sarcastically explains to Mariam that he has sentenced Hyrcanus to death to protect the kingdom:

Hyrcanus plotted to deprive my head
Of this long-settled honour that I wear,
And therefore I did justly doom him dead,
To rid the realm from peril, me from fear.
…
I wish I had a kingdom's treasure spent,
So I had ne'er expelled Hyrcanus' spirit (4.3.35-8).

Herod later does the same with Mariam, whom he also considers the usurper: "with usurper's name I Mariam stain" (4.4.72). In the Chester *Slaughter of the Innocents*, Herod states that Jesus, the potential usurper of his throne, deserves death: "That boye, by God almight, / shall be slayne soone in your sight" (21-2). In the York *Herod Questioning the Three Kings and the Offering of the Magi,* Herod wants to beat and strike Jesus: "What false harlott, liste thee flight? / Go betis yone boy and dyngis hym downe" (132-3). In the York *Massacre of the Innocents*, Herod explicitly expresses his desire to hang Jesus:

Thou lyes! false traytoure strange,
Loke nevere thou negh me nere.
Uppon liffe and lymme
May I that faitour fange,
Full high I schall gar hym hange,
Both thee, harlott, and hym (125-30).

In the Wakefield (Towneley) *Offering of the Magi*, Herod claims that Jesus deserves death: "Kyng! the dewill ! bot of what empire? / Of what land shuld that lad be syre? / Nay, I shall with that trature tyre; / Sore shall he rewe!" (283-6). In the Wakefield (Towneley) *Herod the Great*, Herod similarly admits that his position gives him the liberty to do away with any potential rival, who may jeopardize his kingly position: "Had I that lad in hand, / As I am kyng in land, / I shuld with this steyll brand / Byrken all his bonys" (105-8).

Herod of the early English plays gives a clear idea of his omnipotence and vengeful rage, shedding further light on the English medieval theatrical conventions; Cary's representation of Herod, in *Mariam*, as a majestic and excessively angry king, who corrupts the people around him and pursues villainy for the sake of his own advantages, depicts Herod as a figure "who speaks to the ambivalences of vernacular drama, as his performance simultaneously depicts idealized and corrupt relations between king and subject, stage and audience."[40] Cary undeniably took up Herod's aspirations to absolute authority and control from Josephus's accounts, but the motif of the king's bragging, his pride and hunger for power, with all his socio-political and dramatic functions in Cary, differs in its representation from the historical sources and might have been strengthened by the images included in the medieval Herod plays.

4.2.3. Mariam's trial before Herod

The trials or murders offered a good opportunity for the medieval audience to take delight in witnessing scenes of brutality; in fact, in "an age which could find fun and enjoyment in the burning of a heretic, which could jeer at the sufferings of the unfortunate victim and celebrate the occasion

[40] Fitzhentry, p. 36.

with drinking and revelry,"[41] the medieval scenes depicting pain and both physical and verbal torments of the victims, often treated with surprising levity, could not but have success on the stage. In *Mariam*, several murders commissioned by Herod are mentioned, but the sufferings of his victims under torture do not occupy so prominent place as in the early English dramas, perhaps, because Cary herself did not consider it an opportune diversion. Josephus also ignored this aspect of Herod's nature and orders, but this was not a rule for the playwrights dramatizing the Herod-Mariamme story; Lodovico Dolce in *Marianna*, for example, focused considerably on the dramatic Herod-tormenter, who delights in the torture and execution. Cary's description of Mariam's trial before Herod, however, bears a striking similarity to Jesus's trial before Herod in the York *Trial before Herod* and in the N-Town's *Death of Judas; Trials before Pilate and Herod*.

The scenes, which retell the story of Jesus's trial or Passion, usually offer more scope for verbal aggressiveness and obscenities, exploring the "off-handedness of rulers"[42] and their sinful complicity in tormenting the victim. Cary also include the intentional mocking verbal offences on the part of the accusers during Mariam's process but puts more in evidence her seriousness, which like that of Jesus's, "triumphs over the court's villainous humour;"[43] and her silence, which like that of Jesus's-the Trickster, "is perhaps the ultimate trick"[44] against the court's charges and cruel sarcasm. Yet, Herod's confused and disjointed accusatory speeches, in his painful and unfounded search for "a meanes to murder her [Mariam] withal" (4.7.3), render Mariam's process considerably anxious.

Mariam is accused of two crimes, and even if Herod states that poison is in doubt, whereas adultery is certain (4.4.98-100), there is no evidence that Mariam committed either. She is, therefore, taken to trial, but does not deserve such a treatment. Moreover, unexpectedly, apparently innocent Mariam refuses to fight for her good reputation and freedom; the only words she pronounces before Herod are: "Is this a dream?... / They can tell / That say I loved him. Mariam says not so" (4.4.27,

[41] Wood, p. 204.
[42] Rubén Valdés Miyares, "The Religious Sense of Humour in the English Mystery Plays," *Selim* 17, 2010, p. 126.
[43] Miyares, p. 125.
[44] Miyares, p. 125.

35-6). After that, she chooses to be silent. Similarly, Jesus is unfairly put before a judge, Herod, and accused of having performed several miracles. In the N-Town play the dramatic Herod stresses that:

It is told me thu dost many a wondyr thyng:
Crokyd to gon and blynd men to sen,
And thei that ben dede gevyst hem levyng,
And makyst lepers fayre and hool to ben.

These arn wondyr werkys wroughth of thee!
Be what wey, I wolde knowe the trew sentens!
Now, Jhesu, I pray thee — lete me se
O meracle wroughth in my presens! (197-204)

Soon after, the stage direction in the play reports that: "And here Jhesus shal not speke no word to the Herowde."

The crucial point is, however, that in Cary, Herod focuses his attention not on the alleged attempt on Mariam's life, but on possible proofs that might save her life. Salome (4.7.61-4, 73-6, 97-100, 113-16) and the Butler (4.4.2-3) attempt to persuade Herod of Mariam's guilt. Herod's sister (4.7.4, 14, 21, 26, 33) and the messenger (4.4.9-10, 12-3) impatiently wait to see their victim punished, similarly to the knights in the York play: "Nay, bewscheris, be not so bryme, / Fare softely, for so will it seme" (420-1) and to the Jewish people in the N-Town play (233-44). Herod, instead, at once, appears to be unpersuadable (4.7.22-24, 29-32, 34-36, 53-60, 101-112, 159-160) and hesitant; torn between his personal desire and the duties of an offended king and husband, Herod vacillates over whether to send Mariam to death for long (4.4.84-100). In the York play, the vicious and cynical Herod, does not want to take the responsibility for condemning Jesus and gives a long speech in which he suggests to resend Jesus to Pilate.

Wendis fourth, the devyll in thi throte.
We fynde no defaute hym to slee.
…
Nay, losellis, unlely ye lerned all to late,
Go lere thus lordingis of youre londe such lessons to lere.
Repaire with youre present and saie to Pilate
We graunte hym oure poure all playne to appere,
And also oure grevaunce forgeve we algate,
And we graunte hym oure grace with a goode chere.
As touchyng this brothell that brawlis or debate,
Bidde hym wirke as he will, and wirke noght in were (398-9; 404-11).

The N-Town play also puts in evidence Herod's lack of confidence while judging Jesus and stresses his final decision to make Jesus appear before Pilate, in order to be sentenced: "But I wyl not thi

body all spyl, / Nor put it here into more peyn. / Serys, takyth Jhesus at youre owyn wyl / And lede hym to Pylat hom ageyn (250-3).

4.2.4. Herod's repentance

Cary lays a great emphasis on the dramatic Herod's paranoid hunger for power over his subjects' lives, which subsequently leads him to madness and eventual remorse, a characteristic only briefly mentioned in the historical sources, that may surprise and capture the attention of the reader-spectator at the same time.

In Cary, after the Nuntio reports to Herod that: "Her body [Mariam's] is divided from her head" (5.1.90), Herod starts feeling very remorseful. His sense of guilt leads him to place the blame elsewhere. He gets angry with the Butler: "for it was the slave / That said she meant with poison's deadly force / To end my life that she the crown might have: / Which tale did Mariam from herself divorce" (5.1.111-4). Then, he gets furious with the executioners and wishes them an agonizing death (5.1.149). Finally, he condemns Salome, since if it had not been for her accusations, Mariam's life might have been spared. Now that Herod understands it, Salome's behaviour provokes his wrath:

Accursed Salome! Hadst thou been still,
My Mariam had been breathing by my side.
Oh, never had I, had I had my will,
Sent forth command, that Mariam should have died.
But, Salome, thou didst with envy vex
To see thyself outmatched in thy sex.
Upon your sex's forehead Mariam sat
To grace you all like an imperial crown,
But you [Salome], fond fool, have rudely pushed thereat,
And proudly pulled your proper glory down (5.1.157-66).

The Chester *Slaughter of the Innocents* also depicts a repentant Herod, who after having lost his son in the massacre of the little boys, gets madly angry. He cannot accept the fact that his son was among the children killed and blames his son's nurse and the knights for his loss: "Fye, hoore, fye! God give the pyne! / Why didest thou not say that child was myne? / But yt is vengeance, as drinke

I wyne, / and that is now well seene… / … They might well knowe by this daye / he was a kings sonne” (397-400; 411-2).

In Cary, Herod’s initial wrath, after receiving the sad news, soon changes into an incomprehensible state of melancholy. He does not seem to be lucid; he orders Nuntio to make Mariam appear before him, wearing her dress and queenly jewels: “go call her to me, bid her now / Put on fair habit, stately ornament” (5.1.141-2). He speaks as if he believed Mariam could still be saved: “Why, yet methinks there might be found by art / Strange ways of cure. 'Tis sure rare things are done / By an inventive head, and willing heart” (5.1.91-3). Herod exalts Mariam to a godlike status with powers over time (5.1.195-246), and within all this praise, he eventually admits that he behaved as a monster and deserves death (5.1.247-54). The Chester play reports that Herod remembers his son wearing rich clothing and jewellery which, as he says, while being a symbol of his son’s princely position, should have stopped the executioners from killing him:

Hee was right sycker in silke araye,
In gould and pyrrie that was so gaye.
…
What the divell is this to saye?
Whye weare thy wyttes soe farre awaye?
Could thow not speake? Could thou not praye
and say yt was my sonne? (409-16)

The Chester Herod later melancholically states he has caused serious harm to many people (423-5) and eventually admits that his son’s death was his fault, and thus, he deserves nothing but death:

I have donne so much woo
and never good syth I might goo;
therefore I se nowe comminge my foe
to fetch me to hell.
I bequeath here in this place
My soule to be with Sathanas.
I dye now; alas, alas!
I may no longer dwell (426-33).

Both in Cary and in the Chester play, Herod’s remorseful discourse is more concerned with his inner state after his fatal order has been fulfilled than with the victims themselves, and the detailed examination of his responsibility for Mariam’s and his son’s deaths may be seen as a direct attack on the role of the patriarch, perhaps, used to scrutinize the social and political position which the king-husband and father, was supposed to occupy in society.

4.2.5. Giving voice to women: mothers on stage crying upon their children

Women rarely appeared as protagonists in the medieval theatre; the biblical tradition, in fact, not only underestimates the role of women in salvation history but also appears to be rather misogynistic. Despite women's marginal contribution to the action in the biblical narrative, womanhood was represented on the English medieval stage and could not but influence a feminist approach to later plays:

> A drama that commandeered the attention and the resources of many medieval people for a long period of time and that was deeply embedded in the culture's prevailing modes of social organisation, in its dominant myths, and in its ceremonial and festive life, must surely bear important relations to medieval thinking about gender.[45]

Several mystery plays focused on the issue of gender and explored at times positive, negative or dichotomous roles of women.[46] The female characters in early English plays were Virgin Mary, Elizabeth, Eve, but also witches, vamps, bitches, wives, mothers or goddesses.[47] Cary's tragedy provides a fruitful exploration of women's positions within the public and private spheres, and some of them might have been reinforced by the representation of the female characters from the Herod plays.

I argue, in fact, that Cary might have shaped her two motherly figures, Doris and Alexandra, upon those represented in the Chester, York, Wakefield (Towneley) and N-Town (Coventry) plays on the slaughter of the innocents, who lay the blame on Herod and mourn for their children, killed on his command. Cary might use the potential of the uncontrollable and sorrowful mothers of the innocents to portray her mothers who spontaneously undertake action, visible and audible, that can be read not only against the grain of dominant patriarchal ideologies but also receive a sympathetic

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[45] Theresa Coletti, "A Feminist Approach to The Corpus Christi Cycles," in Richard Emmerson, ed., *Approaches to Teaching Medieval English Drama*, New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1990, p. 79.

[46] In recent years, a growing number of studies has appeared examining the cycles from a feminist perspective. For a study on the positive or the misogynistic roles of women within the mystery plays, see Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre*, London: Methuen, 1988, p. 67; Coletti, pp. 79-80. For a study on the mysteries as conduct plays and a means to educate female audience, see Kathleen Ashley, "Medieval Courtesy Literature and Dramatic Mirrors of Female Conduct," in Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, eds, *The Ideology of Culture*, New York: Methuen, 1987, pp. 25-38; and Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe?," in Barbara Babcock, ed., *Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978, pp. 147-90.

[47] Case, p. 67.

response from the reader. Alexandra, mother to Mariam, and Doris, mother to Antipater, while playing relatively minor roles in the play, are not marginal to the central action; both help investigate the function of the unruly and outspoken women in society as well as exemplify model conduct for mothers, who fight to defend the rights of their children.

In Cary, Alexandra relates to Mariam that heartless Herod murdered Aristobolus, brother to Mariam and the only son to Alexandra: "His cruel nature, which with blood is fed; / That made him me of sire and son deprive" (1.2.26-7); she angrily claims that Aristobolus was born "to wear the crown in his [Herod's] despite" (1.2.72). Doris, after being abandoned by Herod, claims that their only son is the only legitimate aspirant who should succeed to Herod's throne, but he has been rejected by his father: "my boy, whose birth, though great it were, / Yet have thy after-fortunes proved but poor" (2.3.13-4). In the York *Massacre of the Innocents*, a mother grieves the death of her only son, emphasising her pain now that she has remained alone: "The knight upon his knyffe / Hath slayne my sone so swette; / And I hadde but hym alone" (212-4). Other distraught mothers in the same play state that Herod's decision to slaughter their children shattered their lives: "Allas, I lose my liffe; / Was nevere so wofull a wyffe / Ne halffe so wille of wone" (215-7). In the N-Town's *Slaughter of the Innocents*, one of the mothers cannot understand the sense of such a cruel destiny for her child and the lack of respect for her motherly efforts on Herod's side: "Longe lullynge have I lorn! / Alas, qwhy was my baron born? / With swappynge swerde now is he shorn" (89-91). Other mothers in this play claim to have suffered incessantly after their children's loss: "Both mydnyth, midday, and at morn! /... / My fourty wekys gronynge / Hath sent me sefne yere sorwynge!" (95, 101-2). Cary also stresses that Herod's order to kill Alexandra's son makes the woman suffer a lot for a year: "Full many a year have I endured in woe" (1.2.83); Doris with her son are said to be deeply in pain for nine years after they get thrown out from Jerusalem: "Nine times have we with trumpets' haughty sound, / And banishing sour leaven from our taste, / Observed the feast that takes the fruit from ground, / Since I, fair city, did behold thee last" (2.3.5-8).

Cary's mothers go further than complaining about the fates of their children; Alexandra calls for revenge for Herod's cruel behaviour: "My curse pursue his breathless trunk and spirit" (1.2.5) and also advises Mariam to smile and enjoy the time now that the king is likely to be dead: "Thine eyes to cheer, thy cheeks to smiles be bent, / And entertain with joy this happy hour" (1.2.75-6). Doris after being abandoned by Herod, curses Herod and Mariam, because their relationship deprived Doris's son all the kingly rights (4.8.77, 87-8). Doris demands justice; she considers Mariam adulterous and her children with Herod illegitimate. Doris wants to punish Herod for his indifference towards their son: "Oft have I begged for vengeance for this fact, / And with dejected knees, aspiring hands, / Have prayed the highest power to enact" (2.3.33-5), but if Herod shows paternal generosity towards Antipater, she is willing to stop rebuking him: "His cruelty shall not upbraided be / But in thy fortunes I his faults will smother" (2.3.55-6). In the Chester *Slaughter of the Innocents* two desperate and enraged mothers do not hesitate to threaten Herod and his knights with death, after the execution of their children. Both women want to see the king and the executors hanged (344, 349-52, 377-80, 387). In the York *Massacre of the Innocents*, mothers openly declare to be ready to do everything to protect their children from harm. The first mother says: "To dye I have no drede, / I do thee wele to witte, / To save my sone so dere" (204-6), and the second mother states: "Allas, for doule I dye. / To save my sone schall I, / Aye whils my liff may last" (199-201). In the Wakefield (Towneley) *Herod the Great*, mothers also do not hesitate to protest and attack the knights who are ordered to kill their children (332-3, 335, 337-9, 353-60, 374-9, 380-4), and after the slaughter, while weeping in torment, they cry for vengeance on pitiless "Herode and his knyghtys all" (367) for their murdered sons (366-9, 376-9, 388-91).

In Cary, Herod represents a strong patriarchal figure; neither Alexandra nor Doris, with their respective sons, can escape the influence of his dominion, similarly to the mothers of the slaughtered innocents in the early English dramas. Both become examples of mothers' compassion and sorrow and gain the readers' sympathy while retaliating against the degenerate Herod-father and brother-in-law and challenging the traditional roles assigned to women-mothers. In brief,

gender seems to be all but irrelevant in early English drama, and therefore, the mothers of the innocents from the cycles might have offered a genuine opportunity to articulate Cary's interpretation of the motherly figures at Herod's court, and thus, reflect on the complex nature of gender.

Conclusions

The aims of my thesis are twofold - first, to survey the available material on *The Tragedy of Mariam*, and thus, to stress a growing contribution to the field of Elizabeth Cary's writing; secondly, to offer a fresh approach to her tragedy, exploring the primary sources for her revised version of the Herod-Mariamme myth, with a particular focus on Herod, a well-known protagonist not only of the biblical accounts but also of a number of English medieval dramas. While positioning the play in comparison with its undisputed source material by Flavius Josephus, that is *The Antiquities*, completed circa 93-94 A.D., and perhaps also *The Jewish War*, completed earlier, between 69 and 79 A.D., my reading of *Mariam* assumes that the criteria by which the sources of Cary's tragedy were initially selected, perhaps, should be revisited and may have major implications for the way in which her text has been received. My critical evaluation of other sources for *Mariam*, including the Bible and the English medieval dramas about Herod, in fact, aims at giving a new perspective on Elizabeth Cary's literary skills and her re-inclusion into the established canon of the early modern English literature as it now stands. Whilst it is feasible to extend the literary canon indefinitely, I suggest to read *Mariam* in terms of its literary diversity and dynamism, that implies the combination of Elizabeth Cary's historical knowledge, literary consistency and literary genius. I have intended to create critical awareness, bestowing a new status on this play, namely that of being exemplary and structurally multifaceted for its historical period in terms of its vital interplay with other texts as a result of its author's choices.

In English medieval and renaissance culture, Herod, far more than other biblical protagonists, served as an archetype. In Cary, the historical Herod appears to be simultaneously idealized and vilified, as if the author would like to acknowledge his real complexity rather than symbolic value, by mingling different images of Herod that appeared across English culture. In other words, the constant repetition of the Herod myth through centuries defined and reinforced the parameters of his dramatization, but Cary did not want to suppress her creativity and attempted to

interrogate and revise it at the same time. Such an approach to this legendary character allowed Cary to maintain a link to the traditional theatrical Herod while asserting her own perspective.

Early modern English women writers have been constantly underestimated and such an attitude towards their literary aspirations often overshadowed the value of their texts; I desire to see Cary as a historical phenomenon, a creator of a text that earned its place in the history of early modern English literature. Christiane Rochefort once said that “A man’s book is a book. A woman’s book is a woman’s book;”[1] my reading of *Mariam* makes of Cary simply the writer who, yet again, proved that myths may be flexible and unstable.

[1] Christiane Rochefort, “Are Women Writers Still Monsters?,” in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds, *New French Feminisms*, Brighton: Harvester, 1981, p. 183.

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