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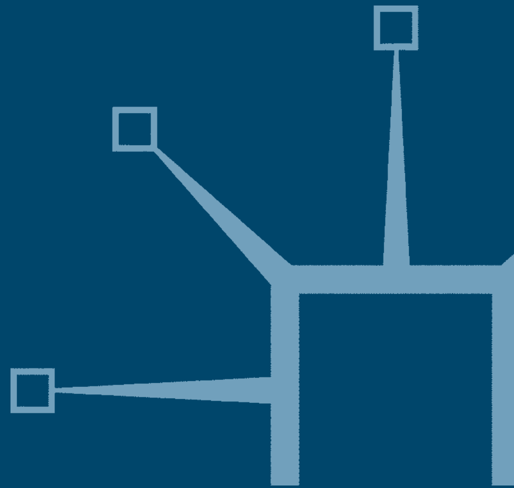
Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance

Relative Values

Marion Wynne-Davies



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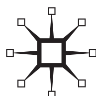

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For my Family: Geoff, Rich and Robs

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Introduction: Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance

I

'… the family, the immediate social group, the work situation, the religious community.'[1]

In *Archaeology of Knowledge* Michel Foucault examines how discourses and discursive formations emerge and he provides examples of possible first surfaces including, as the quotation above notes, 'the family'. As the argument progresses, Foucault goes on to explain the processes necessary for the identification of such discursive formations:

> A discursive formation will be individualised if one can define the system of formation of the different strategies that are deployed in it; in other words, if one can show how they all derive (in spite of their sometimes extreme diversity, and in spite of their dispersion in time) from the same set of relations.[2]

The purpose of this book is to explore the ways in which Early Modern families provided not merely sites for the initial appearance of discourses, but developed distinct and 'individualised' discursive formations or familial discourses. Although most families devise their own way of talking and writing, this does not necessarily constitute a specific discourse in the way Foucault intends. For a familial discourse to occur a family must develop a set of self-presentation skills that project a defined identity across an array of cultural, social and political domains. Equally important is the way in which familial discourses are initiated or emerge onto a first surface; for example, they rarely form through peer effort, but rather originate from the work and influence of one specific

family member. This key figure activates others within the group, either consciously or unconsciously, setting down the main generic and thematic elements of the discourse, simultaneously allowing the emergence of power relationships alongside the discursive elements. Yet, even this combination of a family group with one inspirational member is insufficient to instigate a specific discourse, and in order to move beyond influence towards development and perpetuation, there must be a defining historical moment or context. The family engages in terms of time and place with a set of material circumstances, not exclusively as a paradigm for a wider social group, nor as a basic reflection of historical circumstance, but through a dialogic process that enables self-construction as well as interaction with other temporally located discourses. It is this combination of group, initiating individual and material context that finally propels a family into constructing an identity via a specific discourse.

The scope of familial discourses is, therefore, extensive and recognisable; for example, modern families with a distinctive identity would include the Astors, Churchills, Kennedys and Freuds.[3] This book sets out to trace how five Early Modern families – the Mores, Lumleys, Sidney/Herberts, Carys and Cavendishes – initiated and developed their own identifiable literary self-representations. The Early Modern family has been the focus of considerable investigation, from the contemporaneous accounts, such as the Puritan preacher William Perkins's praise of married life in *Christian Oeconomie*, to more recent re-evaluations, by historians and literary critics.[4] One of the most influential works, Lawrence Stone's *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800*, traces the changing aspects of family life from the 'shared economic and political interests, and … the norms and values of authority and status' of the first half of the sixteenth century, through the growth of patriarchal power, to the development of 'affective individualism' after 1640.[5] The families discussed here roughly conform to such classifications: the Mores and Lumleys were still implicated in shared political – and spiritual – value systems; the Sidneys and Carys negotiated, as Stone puts it, 'the subordination of the family to its head', while the Cavendishes move towards a point where the individual was 'placed above the kin, the family'.[6] But their writings also manifest distinct challenges to these definitions, particularly in terms of female authorship and identity. Stone warns against 'highly personal, often very idiosyncratic [writing], reflecting the quirks and quiddities of the individual psyche of the author', yet by comparing separate texts produced by different family members of the same group, it becomes possible to evidence the way in which distinct discourses evolved, discourses that

were not so much 'quirks and quiddities' but powerful cultural instruments.[7] As such, the Early Modern familial discourse did not so much reflect the social and political changes of the period, but, within its limited area of influence, engaged with assumptions, challenged prejudices and initiated change. This book sets out, therefore, not to trace the social and historical development of the Early Modern family, but to locate the sites and to trace the development of these familial discourses and their cultural engagements through five specific family groups.

The families investigated here were driven by a range of social and political factors that were often located in different temporal and spatial sites. These synchronic moments of literary productivity are, however, balanced by diachronic lines of influence. Evidence of how families negotiated these discursive axes is particularly apparent in the works by women writers of the groups. It has long been a cliché of feminist criticism to ask, 'did women have a Renaissance?' and Joan Kelly Gadol might well have refined the question to determine whether or not women benefited from the gradual liberalising of familial structures between Stone's definitive dates of 1500–1800.[8] The answer is, inevitably, as fraught as the critical evaluations of female literary productivity in this period. Given the evidence of the number of Early Modern women writers who were located within family groups (for example, Margaret Roper, Gertrude More, Mary Sidney, Mary Wroth, Elizabeth Cary and Margaret Cavendish), it may appear that the protective environment of extended kinship offered the security necessary for female authorship. Such assumptions are further substantiated by the predominance of humanist educational methodologies within noble households of the period that suggest tolerance towards women's cultural productions. On the other hand, as Catherine Belsey points out, the Early Modern family was 'quite explicitly an ideological apparatus … [and] a model of the proper distribution of authority and submission'.[9] Such 'proper … authority' determined female obedience to male kin as a natural and spiritually ordained hierarchy, in which writing was allowed, but only within permissible bounds. Similarly, in his seminal work, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt focuses upon how 'the "I" [is] localised in particular institutions', one of which is 'the patriarchal family'.[10] In discussing the construction of female identity it is essential to recognise that while women writers might have benefited from the liberalised familial structure of the Early Modern period, they were at the same time constrained by the ideological boundaries of 'the patriarchal family'. In excavating the ways in which familial discourses of this period engaged

with dominant social and cultural expectations and assumptions, women's writing offers a particularly rich field, since the texts act as points of negotiation, in terms of both family and gender identities.

This introduction sets out to explain the 'individualis[ing]' factors employed in defining the thematic elements discussed in the following chapters. In each case, the role of the family group, the inclusion of a key initiating figure and the interaction with a specific historical moment is located. It is also important to delineate the implications of familial discourses for women writers, exploring how they were both liberated and contained by the ideological apparatus of kinship. Nevertheless, while these defining elements of a gendered familial discourse are all present in the writings of the families discussed, each group produced a distinctive form of self-representation. Diversity, dispersion and 'quiddities' must be set alongside the identifiable systems and particular points of derivation. Like families themselves, familial discourses are sites of contestation, and it is precisely these areas that offer the most productive analyses for feminist historicist criticism.

II

Key figures, family groups and historical contexts

Familial discourses, while enabling a number of family members to write, are usually initiated by a single figure who becomes the catalyst for textual production and, given the patriarchal ideology of the Early Modern family, it is hardly surprising that this person was almost exclusively male. The most clearly definable initiator was Thomas More, whose commitment to humanist education and Catholicism combined to produce a family that was dedicated to maintaining an inheritance of faith, while at the same time being able to employ the tools of writing and editing to ensure the sustainability of their discourse for themselves and the English Catholic community. Similarly, Philip Sidney acted as the initiator for the Sidney/Herbert familial discourse and, like More, his death served as a catalyst for their literary productivity. Sidney was constructed by, and for, his family as ideal in terms of his choice of genre, politics and faith. Other key figures are not so easily located, because they have not already been categorised by accepted historical and cultural practice. For example, Henry Fitzalan, who initiated the Lumley familial discourse, wrote nothing original himself, was proud that he only spoke English and valued political power over cultural interests. Nevertheless, he was determined that his children should receive the same

humanist education as the families of other Tudor nobles, including the Mores. This early training enabled the development of a family discourse that combined politics, faith and a fondness for revenge. Another unlikely initiator was William Cavendish, who although being a derivative dramatist, instigated an interest in dramatic writing together with a range of attendant themes that were developed and altered by his daughters, Jane and Elizabeth, and by his second wife, Margaret. The Early Modern conventions governing the construction of familial identity as well as those of male and female literary productivity ensure that men dominate as key figures, yet there is one notable exception – Elizabeth Cary, who instigated and developed a distinct form of writing that influenced her immediate family for over a period of fifty years.

The dominance of parental lines of influence within the Early Modern familial structure is echoed within individualised discourses, although the differences between the families discussed are considerable. In the More family, Thomas More was constructed and idealised as a 'spirituall father' in whom patterns of affection and duty become merged with faith. This relationship was echoed a century later by Cresacre More who placed his daughters in a French convent to ensure the continuation of the family's commitment to the Catholic faith. Similarly, the Cavendish discourse is founded upon a father–daughter relationship that is evidenced in the dedications to, and themes adopted from, William Cavendish by Jane and Elizabeth. The absence of Cavendish during the later years of the Civil War, however, shifted the discourse towards sisterly affection and sibling authorship. This empowerment of female experience and independence is also shown in the writings of Margaret Cavendish, although her pursuance of the familial forms and themes are influenced by her husband and not his children. In parallel developments, the Cavendish patriarchal hierarchy was eroded by both sisters and second wife. The Cary familial discourse echoes that of the Mores. Like Thomas More, Elizabeth Cary constructed herself as a spiritual parent, putting faith before family affection and dedicating six of her children to a cloistered life. This appears to have been the catalyst for a gendered division in which the sisters became increasingly identified with their Catholic female community, although still indebted to their mother, while their brother, Lucius Cary, reacted against their choice of both gender and faith, promoting Protestantism and reworking his familial narrative in order to supplant his female blood relatives (mother and sisters) with a self-fashioned male family (a brotherhood of scholars and a literary 'father' – Ben Jonson). For the Cavendishes and Carys the initial parent–child hierarchy becomes abandoned because of

historical and locational influences, transforming the familial discourse into one based on sibling relationships. In the Lumley and Sidney/ Herbert familial discourses synchronic relationships always dominated. For the Lumleys there was no single overpowering family member, but rather a network of blood ties that became inextricably linked to the religious politics of the day. In the Sidney/Herbert family there is a distinct generational split, with the earlier family (siblings, Philip, Mary and Robert) and the later group (first cousins, Mary Wroth and William Herbert) valorising their group identity through the pursuit of cultural and political pre-eminence. Moreover, both Jane Lumley's and Mary Wroth's plays demonstrate the ways in which the dominant familial themes may be modulated and challenged as the women responded to literary discourses from outside the family circle. Each family had to negotiate changes brought about by external influences that demanded strategic alterations of the power relationships within the group. Their success in sustaining an identifiable discourse is, inevitably, varied, from the half-centuries of the Cavendishes, Carys and Sidney/Herberts to the brief decade of the Lumleys. Only the Mores retained a unique and self-perpetuating familial discourse for more than a hundred and fifty years.

The families considered in this book comply, to a certain extent, with the Early Modern ideological constructions embedded within the family, privileging male initiators and parent–child hierarchies. Nevertheless, female initiation (Elizabeth Cary) and a challenge to paternal dominance (Lumley, Wroth, Cary and Cavendish) are also present, particularly at the point of interface with cultural and social discourses from outside the family circle. This is why the formation of a group identity must be located in historical and political circumstance. As Foucault notes,

> Discourse … is not an ideal timeless form … [rather] a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself, posing the problem of its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality.[11]

Specific familial discourses need to be positioned in the synchronic moment of their production and the 'divisions' and 'transformations' recognised, not as undercutting the discursive formation, but as an inevitable aspect of its emergence. For the Mores the English Reformation provided a powerful impetus to write, and although this textual production was instigated by More's martyrdom, the merging of private and public over the subsequent century saw the More family develop as both an exemplar to, and an archetype of, Early Modern English Catholics.

The Lumleys too were Catholic and experienced the same fluctuation of preferment as did the Mores, although they were never as radical in the avowal of their faith and consequently were not forced into exile. The defining historical point for the Lumley discourse was the moment, in 1553, when Henry Fitzalan made a speech to the assembled English nobles provoking the abandonment of Jane Grey and the proclamation of Mary as Queen. As such, Fitzalan played a key role in the shifting fortunes of the English state and its attendant faith/s, but he also initiated a familial discourse that was to combine politics, religion and an acute sense of familial promotion. The Lumley discourse is not dominated by the Counter Reformation like that of the Mores, instead showing the political manoeuvrings necessary for survival in the Early Modern English court. The importance of faith and, in particular, Catholicity is considerable, not only for the sixteenth-century Mores and Lumleys, but also in the subsequent century for the Carys. However, for the Cary family, spiritual conviction divided spouse from spouse, parents from children and sisters from brothers. Because of her conversion to Catholicism, Elizabeth Cary was rejected by her mother, husband and two sons, and the impact of the Cary women's commitment to the Counter Reformation ultimately caused an unbreachable rift between the sisters and their brothers.

After the Reformation and Counter Reformation, the next single most powerful historical impact upon Early Modern families and their individual discourses was the English Civil War. The Cavendish familial discourse was successively fissured and moulded by the war, and their writings evidence the ensuing social and political upheavals, from William's pre-war faith in the indestructible nature of class and gender hierarchies, through Jane and Elizabeth's war-time insecurities in their besieged and captured home, to Margaret's post-war bleakness. The Cavendishes serve as examples of their gender and class but also demonstrate through their writings the mutations necessary for sustaining a distinct familial identity. Of all the families discussed in this book it is only the Sidney/Herberts who flourished in the more secure atmosphere offered by the courts of Elizabeth and James. The Sidney/Herbert familial discourse is, in consequence, more ambitious and outward looking, as the family acquired and reworked successive genres: the Petrarchan sonnet, prose romance, spiritual texts, closet drama and household theatre. The relative peace of the fifty years that framed the writings from Philip Sidney to Mary Wroth allowed the construction of an extensive cultural ideology and an expansion across a wide field of literature. As such, the Sidney/Herberts engage with the dominant social concerns of Early Modern England, consolidating and extending their familial

power and pursuing their commitment to the Protestant cause. Rather than being compelled by a single synchronic political moment into literary activity (although the death of Philip Sidney had an undeniable familial impact), the Sidney/Herberts respond more broadly to the political discourses of their time.

Familial discourse offers a complex mixture of a family's self-determined identity and its externally established role. Thomas More's martyrdom, Henry Fitzalan's speech condemning Jane Grey, Elizabeth Cary's conversion to Catholicism all respond to, and engage with, Reformation and Counter Reformation politics in Early Modern England. The experiences of the Cavendish family during the Civil War, in particular the months of Jane and Elizabeth's captivity, are linked to the wider effects upon others of their social group. Philip Sidney's death may have promoted a familial identity for his siblings and their children, but his posthumous reputation also ensured an association of the personal and public that linked the Sidney/Herberts with a wider political and cultural milieu. For the families discussed here it is this 'individualised' combination of initiator, family relationships and location within a specific historical context that served to generate a familial discourse.

III

Women writers

Early Modern familial discourses promote female authorship and locate women writers in close correspondence to their male counterparts. But opportunities for men and women within a familial discourse were distinctly unequal; writing for publication or manuscript circulation being a case in point. Whereas most of the male authors discussed here readily transmuted their works into published form, the work of their female kin often remained in manuscript. Harold Love sums up received critical opinion in *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* where he argues that

> The stigma of print bore particularly hard on women writers [and that] … Scribal publication, then, provided an avenue for those women poets who either through preference or lack of access eschewed the press.[12]

Perhaps the key word here is 'preference' since the choice, by women and men, of scribal publication was influenced not only by gender, but

also by a wide range of social and political factors. Within a familial discourse such gendered curtailment needs to be set against an array of influences, as George Justice notes, '[of] social prestige, aesthetics, religion and family'.[13] By gendering familial discourse it becomes possible to locate the fissures in Early Modern patriarchal expectations of authority and to interrogate the ways in which recent criticism unquestioningly accepts such definitions. Patterns of authorial choice simultaneously cut across gender boundaries and police female creativity, and it is at this intersection that the ideological discourses of the period fracture, allowing fissures through which women's writing emerges as part of, yet apart from, the family that engendered it.

The families discussed in this book all include women writers whose works comprise some of the most innovative and significant texts produced by female authors in English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The following chapters include discussions of writings by Margaret Roper; Gertrude More; Jane Lumley; Mary Sidney/Herbert; Mary Wroth; Elizabeth, Lucy and Anne Cary; and Jane, Elizabeth and Margaret Cavendish. Their work is consistently analysed alongside their male counterparts, rather than as part of an exclusively female tradition. This focus is apposite because it is essential that women writers are not ghettoised into a gender-specific unit and because it ensures that their work remains valued within the wider remit of Early Modern textual productivity. This book, by focussing on families that allowed female authorship to exist, situates male and female writers within the same discursive formation and excavates the differences between their linked productivity and self-representation.[14]

The women represented here follow the patterns identified by earlier critics in which conformity to gendered expectations is often undercut by covert or open rebellion. When analysing a gendered discourse, power relationships within the group must be acknowledged, as Foucault comments,

> The longer I continue, the more it seems to me that the formation of discourses and the genealogy of knowledge need to be analysed, not in terms of types of consciousness, modes of perception and forms of ideology, but in terms of tactics and strategies of power.[15]

Within familial discourses 'strategies of power' are inevitably gendered and the way women engage with such processes differs from those adopted by their male counterparts. It is only by uncovering the unconscious modes of discursive formation within the familial group that it

becomes possible to challenge the notion of a given gendered identity in which women must always be passive and silent. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, women appear to relinquish individual subjectivity, submerging their own identities within the familial whole; for example, Margaret Roper's commitment to sustaining her father's memory as an exemplar to the Catholic faith drew her away from her earlier literary identity as humanist scholar. In the mid-sixteenth century, Jane Lumley demonstrates acquiescence to her family's agenda, but by reworking, rather than faithfully translating, *Iphigenia,* she suggests a female incursion into the political drama of the mid-sixteenth century outside familial boundaries. Towards the close of the century the education of noble women had become established at court. Elizabeth I had benefited from a humanist education and the Sidney/Herbert women participated in the scholarly work activated by this increased toleration. Mary Sidney Herbert was lauded in her own lifetime for her erudite translation of the psalms, and the learning and literary skills of her niece, Mary Wroth, were publicly acknowledged. Wroth's innovative and confident writing, however, could not be contained within the confines of a familial discourse and her tragi-comedy, *Love's Victory*, evidences the way in which Early Modern women writers began to locate themselves within an authorial, rather than a family, group. Within the Cavendish coterie a similar pattern emerges: Jane and Elizabeth initially conformed to the paradigms initiated by their father, subsequently altering their focus in order to represent female experience. This shift away from conformity is represented most compellingly in the works of Elizabeth Cary and Margaret Cavendish. Cary is pre-eminent as a female author; she was the first English woman to write an original play and the first to evolve a distinctive gendered familial discourse. Cavendish is one of the most well known and researched English female authors of the seventeenth century; alone among the women writers considered here, her 'fame' has persisted from her own age to the early twenty-first century. Unlike Jane and Elizabeth, Margaret published her work, thereby enabling public scrutiny and reasonably easy access for future critics. A pattern of female creativity thus emerges: the Mores submerging their identity into that of their saintly ancestor; Lumley and both the Cary and Cavendish sisters choosing limited transgression; Wroth and Elizabeth Cary demonstrating a complex mix of undercutting and reaffirming gendered conventions; and Margaret Cavendish representing the first Early Modern English woman to ensure her work remained extant by relentless and seemingly reckless and idiosyncratic publication. If Early Modern familial discourses served to construct female identity as conforming to,

and contained by, dominant patriarchal ideologies, at the same time synchronic moments of divergence and diversity within these discourses enabled women writers to negotiate the divide between compliance and individual subjectivity.

IV

The following chapters, on the More, Lumley, Sidney/Herbert, Cary and Cavendish families, trace the initiation and development of individualised discursive formations, excavating common strategies of communal representation and identifying the referents that determine the groups' projections of their own specific identity. In each case the dominant ideological framework binding the families is set against the ways in which individual family members negotiated the discursive boundaries, and these diversionary moments are located within a specific temporal and material frame. Finally, this book sets out to prove that Early Modern families produced, employed and deployed unique discursive formations and that these familial discourses are intrinsic to our understanding of the ways in which Renaissance women constructed and represented themselves as writers.

1

'Though a temporall man, yet your very spirituall father':[1] The Roper/Basset Line and the Lives of Thomas More

I

The More family

The first three chapters of this book focus upon the family of Thomas More and the discursive formation that defined the group for over 150 years. The extensive and prolonged influence of More upon his descendants and their writings necessitates a division of the material into cognate areas. Three distinct strands within the overall familial discourse are identifiable: the perpetuation of More's reputation through a series of 'lives', the preservation of More's writings through publication and the replication of More's spiritual experience through retreat into a cloistered existence. These separate endeavours were roughly divided between the branches of the More family: the Roper/Bassets focus on biography, the Rastell/Heywoods published More's works and the More/Cresacres retreated from material and worldly concerns. The following three chapters excavate this overlap between bloodlines and spiritual mission, situating the traces within the successive historical circumstances of the development of the More familial discourse. At the same time, it is essential to understand that the tripartite focus on maintaining and sustaining Thomas More's influence is evidenced throughout the family's endeavours, and the conclusion to Chapter 3 brings the various elements and their expressions together.

The focus of the More family is also important for the way in which it reveals the role of women writers within a discursive formation. Thomas More's pursuance of a humanist agenda that encouraged the education of women is commonly acknowledged, and the works of his female descendants, Margaret Roper and Gertrude More, have been recognised

by feminist criticism. The Mores provide a particularly interesting site for investigation, since the power structures that are intrinsic to a familial discourse are central to the father–daughter relationship between More and Margaret Roper. This chapter sets out to explore the way in which the initiation of the family's identity was dependent upon a negating of individual authorship and the implications that this strategy had for Margaret Roper and the other female members of the More family.

II

Margaret Roper

Pre-eminent of place in all More family histories is Thomas More's daughter, Margaret Roper. Their relationship is defined in the letters Margaret wrote to her father when he was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1534:

> MYNE OWNE MOST ENTIERELIE BELOUUED FATHER.
> I thinke my selfe neuer able to geue you sufficient thankes, for the inestimable coumforte my poore heart receyued in the reading of your most louinge and godly letter. Representing to me the cleare shynynge brightenesse of your soule, the pure temple of the Holy Spirite of God … [and she concludes] Your most louing obedient daughter and bedeswoman Margaret Roper, which dayly and howrelie is bounden to pray for you …[2]

Margaret already perceived More's writing as precious and relic-like, and would have been acutely aware that his execution was almost inevitable. The 'godly letter' and the 'bounden' prayer, therefore, encode a double message: the warm response of daughter to her father and a spiritual passage promoting the inescapable duty of a member of the Catholic Church. This dual injunction was repeated continually over the next century as Thomas More's texts were transcribed, translated and reproduced by family members, by those who would pray 'dayly and howrelie' in imitation of their 'spirituall father'. The More family's evocation of the parallel between earthly and heavenly fathers draws upon a common Christian trope in the Early Modern period and would have been familiar to both Catholic and Protestant families alike. Yet, there are two distinct ways in which this patrilineal pattern is particularly adapted by the Mores to form a specific familial discourse. First, the representation of Thomas More as a God-like figure, with an almost complete exclusion

of other paternal possibilities, was particularly pervasive and persistent; it is an overwhelming image that recurs in the writings of every member of the More lineage for over one hundred years. Second, the conventional Early Modern identification of the religious and material relationship between the parent and child, which existed most conventionally between father and son, was reworked by the More family so that women were included within the spiritual–secular bond.

The More family demonstrates greater equality between male and female authors than was usual for the period, and among More's children and their spouses it is his daughter, Margaret Roper, who is acknowledged to have had the closest association with her father. The strength and intimacy of their relationship is manifest in their obvious affection for one another, as many familial anecdotes prove, such as the father's prayers for his daughter as she lay sick and the daughter's passionate embrace of her father at their final meeting. But these narratives themselves are integrated into a broader familial recognition of the importance of Margaret in the dissemination of More's spiritual legacy. Margaret's letters are included alongside those of her father in the successive publication of his works, and her husband, William Roper, freely acknowledged that More 'most intirely tendred her' and that she was 'his deerely beloved daughter'.[3] Even the state accorded her special prerogatives, both openly, by allowing her to visit her father in the Tower, and covertly, by using her in an attempt to make More comply with the King's wishes. And it was Margaret who, by defying the Privy Council's demands for More's papers with her evasive reference to 'a few personal letters, which she humbly begged to be allowed to keep for her own consolation', preserved his last writings for posterity.[4] It was this unique combination of close affection, the impact of Christian humanism on women's education, and the religious and political circumstances surrounding More's death that allowed Margaret Roper to invert gender conventions, becoming her father's literary and spiritual heir.

Margaret Roper's reputation as a scholar was established by the time she was nineteen and well before More's death. Erasmus's dedication of his *Commentary on the Christmas Hymn of Prudentius* (1523) refers to the 'well-written, modest, forthright' letters written to him by Margaret and her sisters, and her response to his dedicatory letter was a translation of his *Precatio Dominica* (1523) into English as *A deuout treatise vpon the Pater noster* (1524).[5] The translation was not formally ascribed to Margaret, but it would have been instantly recognisable as her work from the prefatory letter written by Richard Hyrde, the tutor to the More household at that time. The translation proved popular and was published in three

editions (1524, 1525/6 and 1531), ensuring that Margaret's erudition was established before her father's fall from favour in 1534. Hyrde's letter is a humanist treatise on the importance of educating women, and he uses Margaret as the perfect example of the benefits of such learning, pointing out that her 'vertuous conuersacion / lyuyng / and sadde demeanoure / may be profe euydente ynough / what good lernynge dothe' and that her translation is 'erudite and elegant'.[6] Unlike most other Early Modern women writers, Margaret's reputation has become increasingly well established, at first through the accounts of her own family and later by the numerous More biographers. Nicholas Harpsfield's 1557 account – 'of all other mistris Margarete Roper did pricke neerest her father, as well in witt, vertue and learning' – is surprisingly close to Richard Marius's present-day representation: 'it is evident that he [More] reserved his strongest love for Margaret, his eldest daughter, the most learned of his children, the most like him'.[7]

As feminist critics began to explore the Early Modern period, Margaret Roper was seen as an important innovator and one of the earliest women to have received a humanist education. In the 1980s, feminist critical evaluation concentrated upon making her works readily accessible to present-day readers, as in Katharina M. Wilson's anthology, *Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation* (1987), and Elaine V. Beilin's comprehensive survey, *Redeeming Eve* (1987); for example, Beilin points out that 'her learning and virtue, so unendingly praised, conformed by definition to the humanist ideal for women'.[8] However, as feminist critics began to evaluate the works of the rediscovered women authors, the individuality of Margaret's contribution began to be questioned. As Betty Travitsky points out, 'the progressiveness on the "woman question" of the group of humanist-courtiers often known as the Sir Thomas More Circle is somewhat debatable', and Mary Ellen Lamb sums up,

> as the daughter of Thomas More, her life and letters are too much a part of her father's narrative to assume prominence in a critical literature that valorises resistance to fathers and to patriarchy.[9]

By the late 1990s the trend had altered once again, with critics attempting to reclaim Margaret Roper for a radicalised feminist agenda, either by searching for some opposition to patriarchy, for example with Jonathan Goldberg's 'suggest[ion] … that Roper found in Erasmian reproduction a way to swerve from and to rewrite her relationship to her earthly father', or by arguing, as does Lamb, that her collaboration with More was 'far from passive'.[10] The persistence with which present-day critics

turn to her work serves to reaffirm the fact that Margaret's reputation exhibits an almost unique continuity for an Early Modern woman writer, in that her fame has been sustained without interruption from her own century to ours. On the whole, however, critical opinion has judged Margaret's work as derivative because of her dependence upon a tradition of writing inherited from her father and her preferment of translation. Apart from *A devout treatise*, it seems likely that she undertook further translations, which are now lost, and that in supervising the education of her own children, she encouraged her daughter, Mary Basset, to develop a similar skill and preference.[11] Even the critical readings, which present her challenging the patriarchal hierarchy, still recognise that her reputation would not have emerged or have persisted if she had not been the daughter of the Catholic martyr Thomas More. Therefore, while More's reworking of the parent–child trope of a spiritual inheritance privileged Margaret and thereby reversed the usual pattern of gendered inheritance, at the same time, he cast her inescapably as a daughter, always dependent upon the biographical and textual legacy of her father.

The bond between Margaret and Thomas More was essential to the development of a tradition of writing that encompassed both female and male authors in the More familial discourse. Therefore, in order to understand Margaret's role in the initiation of this discursive formation, an exploration of the daughter–father axis of literary productivity is necessary. In order to begin such an analysis, I wish to return to the criticisms of Mary Ellen Lamb and Jonathan Goldberg and their summation that if Margaret Roper is to be considered an author in her own right, her individual voice must be seen to emerge from her letters and not from the translations. Lamb argues that Margaret was a willing collaborator in the humanist project of female education and that her letters clearly belong to an individualised humanist epistolary convention, while Goldberg looks particularly at her single extant holograph letter to Erasmus and demonstrates that in it Margaret rewrites the history of her education so as to 'challenge her relegation to the paternal/domesticated sphere'.[12] The humanist agenda of these early letters is unquestionable and affirms that Margaret had already begun – at least by 1525 – to establish a reputation for herself as a scholar independent of More. Ten years later, the individualised subjectivity detected by Lamb and Goldberg ceased to be an option as More's fate became inextricably bound up with the lives of his family. Thus, when Margaret Roper turned from the erudite Latin of her humanist epistles to the rougher and more experiential English used in her letters to the imprisoned More, she simultaneously transformed her authorial identity. The aspiring young humanist scholar drawing upon the experience and reputation of her male teachers

was supplanted by a radical exponent of her faith and of her father's reputation, even if such zeal had perforce to remain contained within scribal publication and the covert concealment of More's papers. Margaret's humanist learning remained intact, but it was addressed to a different purpose and was subsumed into the greater and more immediate need of family and faith as they merged with her father's spiritual legacy.

Margaret's letters to More are included in More's English *The Works of Sir Thomas More* (1557); however, in compositional terms, they pre-date the *Works'* publication by twenty years. These letters should not be categorised as part of her father's posthumous anthology; instead they should be recognised as an essential part of the establishment of the very tradition that enabled later biographers and editors, such as Roper, Rastell and Harpsfield, to publish at all. The letters themselves evince a forthright and colloquial style that is familiar with the formal rhetoric of disputation and the use of precedent within argument. Margaret's tone is quite distinctive and in comparison with More's didacticism serves as the common reader's voice, continually trying to understand the irrevocable choice of martyrdom. This is particularly apparent in the letter written to Alice Alington, in which Margaret recounts a dialogue between herself and More. The letter is justifiably famous and has been the focus of considerable speculation as to the actual authorship of the text. In its first publication in the English *The Works of Sir Thomas More*, the editor, William Rastell, commented that

> But whether thys aunswer wer writen by syr Thomas More in his daughter Ropers name, or by her selfe, it is not certaynelye knowen.[13]

If Rastell, with his intimate knowledge of the family, could not be sure about the true authorship of the letter, it is hardly surprising that the puzzle has remained unresolved. As R.W. Chambers, in his introduction to Nicholas Harpsfield's *The life and death of Sr Thomas Moore,* so clearly put it, 'The speeches of More are absolute More; and the speeches of Margaret are absolute Margaret. And we have to leave it at that.'[14]

III

The letter to Alice Alington

The letter in question begins with a framing section addressed to Alice Alington and then develops into a disputation that is recognisably More's in its stylistic parameters. Margaret's voice acts as a rhetorical prompt to the reasoned arguments her father provides and as a personal and impassioned plea to More to save himself for the sake of his family.

The direct tone and simple vocabulary of Margaret's words seem to belong to the fearful daughter trying to persuade her father to swear to the Oath of Supremacy, 'Surely father quod I, without any scruple at all, you may be bolde I dare say for to sweare that'.[15] In the same column, however, the style shifts sharply to More's legalistic discourse and complex sentence structures:

> But Margaret fyrst, as for the lawe of the lande, thoughe euerye man beynge borne and inhabityng therein, is bounden to the keepinge in euerye case upon some temporall payne of Goddes displeasure too, yet is there no manne bounden to sweare, that euery lawe is well made.[16]

As the letter proceeds, this intermingling of voices becomes more abrupt and faster paced, but the clear differentiation of voices is never lost. For example, Margaret argues with domestic familiarity:

> And so I can in good faith go now no ferther neither, after so many wyse men whom ye take for no saumple, but if I should say like M. Harry [More's fool]: why shold you refuse to swere father: for I have sworn my self.[17]

More's immediate response picks up the trope of Margaret as Eve that he has used throughout the letter, providing stylistic continuity, and answers his daughter with an intimate gentle mockery:

> At this he laughed & sayde. That word was like Eve too, for she offered Adam no woorse fruit than she had eaten her self.[18]

But Margaret instantly persists, adding her personal fears to reinforce her entreaty:

> But yet father quod I by my trouth, I fere me very sore, that this matter will brynge you in mervellous heauy trouble.[19]

Of course there is no real expectation on either side that Margaret's persuasions will result in More's change of mind, and the letter draws to its appropriate and predictable close with the reassertion of More's arguments in a long homily that turns to reassurance and prayer:

> I shall full heartely praye for us all, that wee maye meete together once in heauen, where we shall make merrye for euer, and neuer haue trouble after.[20]

At the end of the letter the framing device of Margaret's address to Alington is discarded to allow More's voice full import to the daughter before him and to his step-daughter as she awaits his response, as well as to the world outside the Tower, to his family, friends and the English Catholic community in general. In these final paragraphs the speech belongs utterly to More, but the letter remains in Margaret's name. The printed text is simultaneously authored by the daughter and spoken by the father, and this complete intermingling is achieved precisely at that moment when one of the subjects (More) was so deeply imperilled that he had already slipped towards negation.

Given such a thorough interleaving of voices, it almost seems surprising that the debate about the authorship of this letter should continue to flourish, yet the ideological narratives of critics immersed within schemes of faith and gender appear to demand a single conclusion.[21] Such investigations are trapped by an understanding of literary creativity in which individual authorship and a self-fashioned identity are persistently privileged. The construction of an authorial family out of blood and conviction inevitably precludes such bald divisions, and there is always a point at which influence becomes mutuality. For the More family this 'moment' extended over the months of Thomas More's imprisonment to his final execution. It was a period that through its extension of familial trauma served to weld the authorial productivity of the group into a singularly coherent and persistent discourse. The first evidence of this collective identity occurs in the letter Margaret Roper sent to Alice Alington. In familial terms, the letter is the product of a mutual discourse: it was produced by two members of an intimate group in terms that make individual identification difficult; it was addressed to a third member of that group and then circulated in manuscript form to others of the same company; and it was finally published twenty years later by yet another family member. The printed text in the English *Works of Sir Thomas More* is, therefore, a culmination of collaborative textual productivity, and Rastell's headnote, which conflates More's and Margaret's authorship, should be recognised for what it is, an integral part of the familial contribution and not a spur to the critical investigation of authorship.

The roles of More and Margaret in the initiation of the discursive formation must, however, be located within the material circumstances that produced the letter to Alice Alington. In August 1534, when Margaret transcribed the dialogue with her father, it would have been apparent that a release would not be forthcoming and that More's execution, probably painful, public and humiliating, would ensue. Neither father nor daughter would have counted upon many more opportunities for

More to explain the reasons for his continued refusal to swear to the oath or to reassure his family of his persistent spiritual conviction. For More and Margaret, therefore, any claims to an individual voice would have ceased to have a rational or an emotional attraction. At this stage in More's imprisonment it would have been highly imprudent to have smuggled out his actual writings, and he would have known that any suggestion that Margaret had done so, even after his execution, would have put her in danger. It was essential that father and daughter colluded in creating a double voice in which More's willing acceptance of death could be recorded both for their family and the English Catholic community. The fact that two manuscript versions of the letter exist in addition to the one published in the English *Works* suggests that the letter was scribally published and circulated at a time when it was not safe to consider formal publication. The blurring of More's and Margaret's voices and the consequent obscuring of authorship thus served a dual purpose of confusing the authorities and of reassuring the faithful.

Margaret Roper's letter to Alice Alington was essential to the development of her own family's discourse. It also provides us with the first example of an Early Modern woman writing so closely within a familial tradition that her words become inextricably intermingled with those of another writer from within the same group. Significantly, the letter is written in a drama-like form. The dialogue as set down by Margaret resembles Plato's *Crito* in construction, length and narrative context, while in its lively tone and colloquial speech it points towards the greater familiarity with vernacular drama that the More household certainly enjoyed.[22] For example, Crito's increasingly monosyllabic responses to Socrates contrast sharply with Margaret's continued vehemence. These ready shifts between the authoritative and experiential voice suggest a familiarity with spoken dialogue, which is reinforced by the fact that Margaret had disputed with her sisters before Henry VIII.[23] Dramatic disputation provided Margaret with a form that was both necessary and appropriate for the conveyance of her father's message. The letter's framing device acts almost like a prologue in which the audience is addressed, and the subsequent dialogue is described in terms that allow the reader to picture the action as it unfolds on the 'stage' of More's cell. As Margaret 'came nere', we are asked to imagine her entering the cell, after which father and daughter pray on their knees before rising to 'sit and talke'.[24] Read in these terms, the letter's ultimate abandonment of its framing device looks fully appropriate in that More, the drama's tragic protagonist, is allowed to speak the epilogue that heralds his death.

The cell that was supposed to enclose More and render him mute was transformed through a process of familial collusion into a public arena on which the tragedy of Thomas More could be acted out on his own terms. If the scaffold was a stage erected and controlled by the state, then Margaret Roper's letter became the dramatic platform that liberated More's voice through scribal and textual publication.

IV

William Roper

The use of dramatic dialogue in the More family's writing found its most cogent expression in the work of the Rastell/Heywood branch of the family tree, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The immediate concern of the Roper/Basset line was to ensure that Thomas More as a subject remained foregrounded in the public memory. This strategy was developed partly by William Roper, Margaret's husband, who was one of the most important figures in the subsequent generation of the More family and who acted consciously to disseminate knowledge of More's writing and his martyrdom. It was Roper who chose Nicholas Harpsfield as his father-in-law's biographer and it is almost certain that he was one of the contributors to William Rastell's production of More's English works. Roper's own *The Lyfe of Sir Thomas More* (c. 1557) was probably composed as a source text for the official published biography, although the number of manuscript copies extant today, as well as those known to have existed, suggest that this work, like Margaret's letter to Alice Alington, had become scribally published before the first edition in 1626.[25]

Roper's *Lyfe* establishes More's spiritual remit in the very first sentence, describing More as

> Of a cleere vnspotted consciens, as witnessethe Erasmus, more pure *and* white then the whitest snowe, *and* of such an angelicall witt, as England, he saith, neuer had the like before, nor euer shall againe …[26]

Roper's biographical notes re-articulate the terms and phrases of Margaret's letters, particularly the one quoted at the start of this chapter. The 'cleare shynynge brightenesse' described by Margaret is echoed by William's 'cleere vnspotted … pure … white … whitest snowe', while her treasuring of her father's written text is linked with what would become an increasingly common reference to More's 'wit', and finally her adjective 'godly' finds a more explicit heavenly form in 'angelicall'.

The idealised love of a daughter had become, in the twenty years after More's death, the beginnings of a process of canonisation. It is essential to remember, however, that William Roper's entitlement to make this plea derives from his identity as a member of the More family through marriage, a point he makes clear in his preface: 'I, William Roper, thoughe most vnworthy, his sonne in lawe by mariage of his eldest daughter'.[27] The relationship is restated and amplified by Harpsfield in the 'Epistle Dedicatorie' to Roper of *The life and death of Sr Thomas Moore* (1557):

> You and your familie are by no one thing more adorned, illustred and beautified, then by this woorthy man, S*ir* Thomas More, in marying his daughter, the excellent, learned and vertuous matrone, mistris Margarete More. He was your woorthy Father in lawe: what say I? your father in lawe? nay, rather your verye father in deede; and though a temporall man, yet your very spirituall father.[28]

Roper's own family are in turn 'illustred and beautified' by the reflected light of Thomas More, who is now explicitly recognised as a 'spirituall father'. Harpsfield extends the More eulogy to Margaret, who becomes 'learned and virtuous', again a description that becomes increasingly common. Then, somewhat strangely, for a work dedicated to William Roper, Harpsfield chose to use Margaret's maiden name. In a period when women were legally and culturally identified with their husbands, such a nomenclative assignment denotes a contemporary recognition of the dominance of More's role as father within the whole familial group.

V

Mary Basset

The inheritance foregrounded by Harpsfield continued to emerge in the Roper/Basset line through the work of Margaret and William's daughter, Mary Basset, who also contributed to William Rastell's collection of Thomas More's English works. Rastell constructs Mary Basset's role in the familial enterprise in similar terms as those used to describe her mother; she is More's spiritual and scholarly heir, eschewing her father (Roper) and her two husbands (Clarke and Basset). In his introductory epistle, Rastell describes how he gained access to Mary's manuscript translation into English of Thomas More's *An exposition of a parte of the*

passion of our sauiour Iesus Christe that More had composed while he was imprisoned in the Tower. The More original was, as Rastell notes,

> Lately englished by mistres Mary Basset (a nere kinswoman of his own) daughter to William Roper esquyer and Margarete hys wyfe, daughter to the sayde syr Thomas More. … and is … so sette oute in oure tongue, and goeth so nere sir Thomas Mores own english phrase that the gentlewoman (who for her pastyme translated it) is no nerer to hym in kynred, vertue and litterature, than in hys englishe tongue: so that it myghte seme to haue been by hys own pen indyted fyrst, and not at all translated: such a gyft hath she to folowe her graundfathers vayne in wryting.[29]

Rastell carefully ensures that the 'gentle reader' is aware that Basset possesses More credentials; that she has been encouraged to publish her work, thereby showing appropriate womanly reticence; and that she is the true inheritor of her grandfather's aptitude in 'vertue and litterature' as well as of his 'kynred' blood. Through his editorial choices and commentaries William Rastell was particularly influential in constructing, maintaining and, most importantly, publicising the sense of a Morean family inheritance that was ready to encompass female productivity. A parallel familial construction is found in Harpsfield's biography of More, where he adds further information about Mary Basset; she was 'very well experted in the Latin and Greek tongues' and completed further translations, including the '*Ecclesiasticall History of Eusebius*', which remains extant in manuscript form.[30] During her own lifetime Basset's scholarly interests extended beyond the translation of her grandfather's *History of the Passion*, yet she was increasingly drawn into the More family literary inheritance, and her role within the transmission of More's words became inextricably linked with the way in which his martyrdom was portrayed.

The translation of the *History of the Passion*, which had been begun by More and printed in the English works, concludes just as Christ and the disciples leave the upper room and begin their journey to Gethsemane. The parallel is made explicit: as Christ is seized in the narrative, so More's words are broken off abruptly and, like Christ, More is prepared for martyrdom. The conclusion of the translation is provided in More's original Latin text, which was published in Louvain in 1566 and would certainly have been available in manuscript form in England prior to that date.[31] Nevertheless, for the immediate and widespread dissemination of the concept of More as a martyr and the consequent strengthening of

the Catholic faithful at home, an English translation was essential. It is impossible to know the chronology of Basset's undertaking and whether or not she responded to an agenda informed by the family's overarching concerns or whether she became personally engaged with the spiritual message of her grandfather's text. Such an intermingling of personal and familial interest had, by the mid-1550s, become an accepted aspect of the More discourse. The translation is acknowledged to be a faithful rendition of the content and style of More's own writing, and Basset's obvious concern is replication, unlike the active co-authorship invoked by her mother. The translation, however, echoes the letter to Alice Alington through linking More's death to the history of Christ's betrayal. The stark ending of More's Latin *tum demum primum manus iniectas in Iesum*, reproduced by Basset's 'dyd they fyrst lay handes upon Jesus', and the notice of More's execution, 'and sone after he was putte to death', make a forceful link between the martyrdoms of Christ and Thomas More.[32] Although not as deeply implicated in the Morean discourse as her mother, Mary Basset's translation of this last key section of her grandfather's *History of the Passion* served to rework the narrative of More's execution at the Tower just as Margaret Roper's letter had rewritten his imprisonment. Through the English *Works of Sir Thomas More* the Protestant state's execution of a traitor is transformed into the Catholic family's image of a Christ-like martyrdom. And the determination of More's descendants to publish the crucial conclusion to his text in an English translation undertaken by a family member affirms the way in which, for the Mores, the familial discourse was rapidly evolving a public purpose. This outward movement was to become more pronounced in the Rastell/Heywood branch of the family tree, but before turning to this line of the genealogy, it is important to consider briefly another near-contemporary life of Thomas More associated with the Roper/Bassets, Ro. Ba.'s *The Lyfe of Syr Thomas More* (c. 1599).[33]

VI

Ro. Ba.

Ro. Ba. was Robert Basset, whose grandfather, Sir John Basset, was the eldest brother of James Basset, Mary Basset's husband. Ro. Ba. did not have a direct blood link to the Mores, but he could claim, through his grandfather, to be a grand nephew of Thomas More's granddaughter. While such a link seems to present-day notions of kinship distant and tortuous,

placed within the context of sixteenth-century English Catholicism and the overwhelming power of Thomas More's memory, it had much more resonance. Ro. Ba. was more familiar with the Roper/Basset side of the More family tree; for example, he spends thirteen pages on Margaret and William Roper and their daughter Mary Basset, in comparison to two sides on all the other More children.[34] He particularly praises Margaret, not only for being a 'gentle … wife' and a 'most naturall louing Childe [to her father]', but also for her role as a mother:

> To her Children she was a duble mother, as not onely to bring them forth into the world, but brought them also heauenwarde, by instructing them in vertue and learning.[35]

Margaret is described as inheriting her father's virtue and learning, and for Ro. Ba. she takes on a feminised version of More's dual identity as familial and spiritual parent. Harpsfield's description of Thomas More as 'though a temporall man, yet your very spirituall father' is simultaneously repeated and altered by Ro. Ba. in his representation of Margaret as 'a duble mother' who gives birth to her children in both physical and spiritual terms. When he comes to Mary Basset, the daughter of 'this blessed couple', Ro. Ba. complies with William Rastell's formulation on the translation of More's treatise on the Passion:

> She … so elegantlie and eloquentlie hath penned it that a man would thinke it were originallie written in the English tongue by Sir Thomas hym selfe.[36]

He also adds information about further translations by Mary Basset that are not mentioned in the other lives of Thomas More. It is perhaps this greater familiarity with his near-relation that makes Ro. Ba. more dismissive of Mary Basset than her mother, Margaret Roper.

In many ways Ro. Ba.'s *Life of Sir Thomas More* accumulates and draws together the two strands of Thomas More's descendants, combining the memorials of the English recusants with the writings of those who had preferred exile. Ro. Ba. might well have had personal connections with the More family exiles since his cousins, Charles and Philip Basset (Mary Basset's sons), were known to have been involved with the Jesuits in London during the 1580s, a group that would certainly have included Jasper Heywood, another member of the extended More family group. In addition, Charles Basset himself travelled on the continent and was admitted to the English College in 1581.

When Ro. Ba. composed his 'life of More' at the close of the sixteenth century, all of the immediate family who had known More personally were dead: Margaret Roper died in 1544, Mary Basset in 1572, and William Roper in 1578 in his eighty-second year. Unsurprisingly Ro. Ba.'s memorial of martyrdom and its inheritance were to prove the final literary production of the Roper/Basset line within the context of the More familial discourse. The biographies of Thomas More had expanded out from the core of Margaret's accounts, through Roper's notes and his commissioning of Harpsfield's life to Ro. Ba.'s accumulative undertaking. Beyond this English More circle, on the continent, the exiles contributed to Thomas Stapleton's account of More, and finally, the martyr's great-grandson Cresacre More brought together the various and diverse stands of his family's spiritual and cultural productivity in *The Life of Sir Thomas More*.[37] Of course, the More biographers spiral out from these early beginnings in a long line, from the brief portrait penned by Erasmus to the thick tomes of twentieth-century scholars such as Richard Marius and Peter Ackroyd, each interpreting the life and death of the Catholic martyr from their own ideological perspective.[38] Stubbornly and persistently, the family narrative remained entrenched, and this confluence of familial influence extended beyond the Roper/Basset replications of More's life into the editorial activities of the Rastell/Heywoods.

2
'Sory coumfortlesse Orphanes': The Rastell/Heywood Line

I

The second branch of the More familial discourse emerges in the Rastell/Heywood line, beginning with the collection of More's works brought together by William Rastell and concluding with John Donne's works with their fraught rejection of his Morean inheritance. The Roper/Bassets were characterised by the singular continuity of a biographical discourse and perpetuation of the familial discourse. The Rastell/Heywoods, on the other hand, represent the way in which the discursive practice of the Mores reached a point of schism in which faith divided rather than united Thomas More's descendants. There are no women writers in this line of Morean descent, although a comparison of the responses to the familial discourse by John Donne and Gertrude More, discussed in Chapter 3, evidences the way in which schism and assimilation functioned in a gendered context.

II

John and William Rastell

William Rastell was Thomas More's nephew on his mother's side and his father, John Rastell, was a member of what Peter Ackroyd describes as 'the second More circle', along with the Ropers and the Heywoods.[1] Both Rastells were publishers, the father producing some of Thomas More's earlier texts and the son, who took over the family business around 1530, producing the later and post-martyrdom works. The dividing line between John and William Rastell's publishing enterprises was, however, more divisive than a mere separation of business affiliations, since

by the early 1530s John Rastell had been converted to the Protestant cause, while his son remained a lifelong Catholic. Nevertheless, in the 1520s, before John Rastell became alienated from the More group, he published several works that are associated with them.

The two connections between John Rastell and Thomas More were their family bond as brothers-in-law, and the fact that More gave Rastell two of his works to publish, *The Life of Pico della Mirandola* (c. 1510) and *The Dialogue Concerning Heresies* (1529).[2] However, in terms of the construction of a familial identity, the most intriguing link between the Mores and Rastell occurs in *The Twelve Merry Jests of Wyddow Edyth* (1525).[3] This book tells the tale of a duplicitous widow who attempts to fool Thomas More's household into thinking she is a woman of means and they entertain her with 'reuell and the gossupping'. Inevitably, the truth is discovered and Edith is dosed with a strong purgative and put in 'mastiff chaynes', allowing Rastell to comment ironically:

> At Chelsay was her arrival
> Where she had best cheare of all
> In the house of Syr Thomas More.[4]

The picture of More's house at Chelsea as a centre for Rabelaisian jests and scatological pranks is very far from the pious household depicted in Chapter 1, yet there is no reason to doubt the veracity of either representation. While Erasmus's 'learned academy' might today be the most well known image, John Rastell would have been a regular visitor to Crosby Place, and Walter Smith, the reputed author of *The Twelve Merry Jests of Wyddow Edyth* was one of More's servants.[5] In addition, the famed Morean wit could be applied as easily to domestic or vernacular satire as to the high discourses of faith and philosophy. This double-edged wit re-emerges in a self-aware form in the writings of his descendants, particularly in that of the Heywoods. However, it is particularly significant for tracing the development of the family narrative that in the early sixteenth century a light-hearted and humorous presentation of the More family was perfectly acceptable in print and, therefore, as an image suitable for public consumption. After More's martyrdom such depictions of buffoonery would carry unacceptable insinuations of ridicule for the pious family who wished to sustain an unsullied spiritual and familial faith. Not surprisingly, John Rastell, the publisher of this comic work and later Protestant convert, was himself ridiculed as a fly in another Morean text, John Heywood's *The Spider and the Flie*.[6]

By 1530 John Rastell's son William had set up his own press and taken over as Thomas More's publisher, his first work as an independent publisher being the production of More's *The Supplication of Souls* (1529). Thereafter the Rastell branch of the family tree was to become steadily entwined with the spiritual and literary legacies of Thomas More and, like the Roper/Bassett line, the Rastells eschewed other patrilineal ties for those of the Catholic martyr. Rastell's publishing ventures involved him in the public perpetuation of Thomas More's 'father's spirit' and, as such, placed him in a precarious position during Protestant ascendancy. The construction of the familial identity was initiated by the Mores themselves, but the state and Church, Catholic and Protestant alike, all rapidly reinforced and constantly renewed such roles.

William Rastell continued to publish Thomas More's works, as well as two of John More's translations, until More was imprisoned in the Tower in 1534, at which point Rastell prudently abandoned publishing for law.[7] From this point until the accession of Mary I in 1553, Thomas More's writings became unpublishable; identified by the Protestant state as treasonous and blasphemous, his works became too dangerous to put into print in England. This act of suppression served to reinforce the precious quality of More's books, letters and even his recorded conversations. In consequence, although William Rastell was not able immediately to publish the works More produced in the Tower, with the help of the Ropers and the Heywoods he preserved the manuscripts, prepared them during his exile in Louvain and put them into print in *The Workes of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of England, wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge* (1557) as soon as it became safe to do so.[8] For Catholics and Protestants alike this fluctuation between textual suppression and the publishable voice was to continue through the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. In this sense, the writings of Thomas More conform to the common wave-like pattern of religious publishing during the English Renaissance, affirming the family's role as safe repositories for the Morean discourses and propelling the Mores themselves into a continuum of scribal publication.

William Rastell's role within the formulation of the More discourse was pivotal. Through his dedicated efforts to amass, collate and publish More's English works and through his informative editorial additions he succeeded in bridging the three early branches of the familial descent – the Roper/Bassetts, the Rastell/Heywoods and the line descended from John More. In so doing he publicly laid claim to a familial identity that encompassed piety, humility, scholarship, dramatic dialogue, wit and

duty, coupled with the more disturbing elements of self-denial, enclosure and martyrdom. At the same time he tacitly encouraged a tradition of scribal publication that would sustain More's memory during periods of Protestant hostility. Yet, even beyond this massive structural force, he foregrounded his own personal inheritance of those Morean discourses he had helped consolidate.

In 1553 William Rastell gave Richard Tottel, the publisher, More's *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation* to produce, although the same work subsequently appeared in his own collection of 1557. The content of *A Dialogue* offers some reasons as to why, when Rastell was so particular about the other manuscripts, he should choose another publisher to produce this text in advance of those gathered in his own edition. As K.J. Wilson notes, the book 'represent[s] in intimate colours the same familial relationship between Vincent and Anthony as that between Rastell and his uncle [More]'.[9] The parallels are made immediately apparent as Vincent/Rastell addresses Anthony/More in the first speech of the dialogue:

> But that maye be your great coumfort good uncle, sith you depart to god: but us here that you leaue of your kinred, a sorte of sory coumfortlesse Orphanes, to all whom, your good helpe, coumfort, and counsell, hath long been a great staye, not as an uncle unto some, & to some as one farther of kinne, but as though that unto us all, you had been a naturall father.[10]

Like William Rastell, Vincent sees his uncle as his 'naturall father' and like Rastell again he perceives that the power of this benign paternal influence extends to all 'kinred'. The text also allows for the parallel expansion from the comforting father on earth to the benevolent power of God, a comparison that was an entrenched aspect of the More family discourse. *A Dialogue of Comfort* thus retains its Christian message while becoming pertinent to the translator's own life, and since More himself was sorely in need of comfort, as he lay imprisoned in the Tower, he may be identified with both Vincent and Anthony. The dialogue thus replicates itself on various levels, so that it is at once God's comfort for humankind, God's particular care for More as he lay in the Tower, the comfort More himself offers to Rastell and finally the care More takes of all his 'kinred'. In the context of the English *Workes* these multiple readings are foregrounded for the reader by Rastell through his adroit use of head notes, whereby he reworks the text into a commentary upon the events in More's life. In *A Dialogue* William Rastell participates in the same discourses as his cousins in the Roper/Bassett line, representing

More as a pious, almost god-like father whose prayer, wit and duty serve, like Christ's, to comfort those left on earth even as he is executed by the unbelievers. While the Roper/Bassett line concentrated on ensuring that More's 'life' was chronicled for subsequent generations of the faithful, the Rastells worked to record More's writings and words in manuscript and published text. However, William Rastell's choice of *A Dialogue* as the text in which he represents his own personal involvement with More is redolent of Margaret's dialogic form in the letter to Alice Alington. This specific identification of members of the More household represented in dramatic form was to become particularly associated with the Rastell/Heywood branch of the More family tree.

III

John Heywood

When William Rastell and the Clements fled to Louvain in 1562/3 they were accompanied by John and Eliza Heywood. This was not surprising since Eliza was William Rastell's sister and her husband, John Heywood, could claim his own strong associations with Thomas More. The Chancellor had furthered the young dramatist's career at the court of Henry VIII and More's own proclivity for dialogue and disputation had found a happy parallel in Heywood's early dramatic works.[11] However, until recently, Heywood has been judged as a playwright who studiously avoided the religious controversy that made up the bulk of More's canon. A thorough re-evaluation of Heywood's writings has now been established, in particular by Greg Walker in *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (1998). Walker's explanation of the relationship that existed between More and Heywood in the early 1530s is significant:

> As Heywood's most recent editors [Axton and Happé] have suggested, there are sufficient telling coincidences of phrase and argument between Heywood's interludes and More's polemical writings to suggest that Heywood was aware of the latter's work (and probably vice versa) and that his own writing was informed by it. But, what too great a concentration upon the similarity of detail between the two authors' work obscures is the profound difference in their overall strategies. Both men were striving to defend the church and traditional religious practice in their work, but they did so in markedly different ways. While Heywood [supported] … accommodation … More was actively pursuing a policy of confrontation.[12]

A quick glance at the works of More and Heywood published between 1532 and 1533 by William Rastell's press affirms Walker's argument, setting the Chancellor's polemical prose treatises such as *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* against the court dramatist's moderate interludes, such as *John Johan* and *The Pardoner and the Friar*. There can be no doubt that Heywood and More differed in their 'strategies', but Rastell was quite at ease publishing both men's works, evidencing again that several contradictory discourses could and did occur within the More household. But with More alive and free such differences would have easily coexisted. After all, when William Roper joined the family he had been a Protestant. It was not until More's imprisonment in 1534 that the earlier divisions began to be subsumed in the recognised need for a combined familial defence against the forces of the English Protestant Reformation. Critics have linked More and Heywood not because of 'too great a concentration upon the similarities of detail', but because of the way in which John Heywood was inevitably drawn into the close family network after the execution of Thomas More. Furthermore, this familial fashioning was replicated and reinforced at the time by contemporary political and religious critiques. The post-1534 construction of John Heywood as a member of the More circle serves to highlight precisely the way in which a familial discourse is a complex mixture of self-determined identity and an externally established role.

It was not until Mary's accession to the throne in 1553 that Heywood was able to publish the work that participates most fully in the More discourse and to pronounce publicly his true spiritual and familial identity in *The Spider and the Flie* (1556).[13] The poem is written in Chaucerian couplets and is packed with contemporary political, spiritual and familial allegory. There are beautiful woodcuts of the spider, fly, maid and of John Heywood himself, but altogether the work is not readily accessible to present readers and hardly appears to have been noticed by Heywood's contemporaries.[14] Perhaps this is not surprising since, although at the end of the poem, the maid – who represents Queen Mary – crushes the spider just as Cranmer was executed, most of the events described occurred twenty years earlier.[15] Since the poem recounts the trial of Thomas More (the fly) by Henry VIII (the spider), it is hardly surprising that Heywood chose to publish after the accession of a Catholic monarch. It was not only Heywood who allowed this propitious atmosphere to spur him into literary productivity, for Roper's manuscript *Life* was written shortly before 1557 and William Rastell's English *Works* were published in that year.[16] The key referents to More are repeated in these works and

echoed by Heywood in his poem. Through the character of Buzz, the fly, Heywood alludes to More's wit ('mine experience and mother wit'), his school ('by my skoole, / Is taught (ere this) of cobwebs to beware'), his focus upon the instability of fortune ('Oh Fortune, false flaterer that ever was'), and replicates the legal astuteness of More's arguments when he was on trial.[17] Even particulars of More's final months are depicted, from Buzz's quiet reading of spiritual works apart from the general debate to his final words and dutiful submission to his fate. But in the end, *The Spider and the Flie* is an allegorical poem published by a loyal Catholic during the reign of Queen Mary and not penned by a religious dissident after the execution of Thomas More.

The freedom to vindicate the More family and to accuse their persecutors was, however, short-lived as Mary's pro-Catholic reign ended and the Mores faced persecution a few years after the accession of Elizabeth I. By 1564 Heywood had left England with William Rastell and the Clements, and he remained in exile with them until his death in 1578. It is impossible to verify Heywood's deathbed witticisms in which he appears to echo Thomas More, but the dramatist's immersion in the colloquial humour of the More family may be shown in his replication of one of the comic incidents retold of their household. In Heywood's *Epigrams* (composed successively and published between1556–1662) he includes 'Of the foole and the gentleman's nose':

> One gentilman hauyng an other at meate,
> That guest hauyng a nose deformd foule and great.
> The foole of that house, at this tyme standyng by,
> Fell thus in hand with that nose sodeinly.
> Nose *autem*, a great nose as euer I sawe.
> His master was wroth …
> The foole at thyrd warnyng, mindyng to mend all,
> Stept to the boord againe criyng as he gose,
> Before god and man, that man hath no nose[18]

This incident appears to be based on an actual event and is referred to both by Erasmus in 'In Pursuit of Benefices', where a character is recognised by his 'remarkable nose', and by Ellis Heywood in *Il Moro* (1556).[19] In addition, two of More's own Latin epigrams concern men with large noses, suggesting a gradual accrual of narrative passed through the generations of the Mores as they reworked and reclaimed the various images, comic and serious, of their inherited familial discourse.[20]

IV

Ellis and Jasper Heywood

John Heywood's son, Ellis, also participated in the mid-1550s revival of interest in Thomas More, writing – in Italian – *Il Moro* (1556). The book is a fond reconstruction of More's academy of learning at Chelsea, although Heywood's depiction of the 'beautiful and commodious home' and the 'true and perfect Academy' is, as he acknowledges, an idealised picture of a world he never knew. Material accuracy was, however, unimportant for Ellis Heywood, since he was not interested in tracing More's life or in reproducing his texts, as had the earlier generation through the combined efforts of Roper and Rastell. Instead, Ellis Heywood attempted to recreate the very essence of More's humanist knowledge by reviving the language, form and references used in *Utopia*. As Roger Lee Deakins points out in his introduction to the most recent edition of *Il Moro*,

> The More who speaks in *Il Moro* is the More who wrote *Utopia* (1516), the exponent of a tolerant, humanistic culture and an internationally renowned man of letters, not the fierce anti-Lutheran polemicist of the 1520s or the Catholic martyr of the 1530s.[21]

Yet, *Il Moro* did not evade the dominant Morean discourse of a pious and dutiful death and Ellis Heywood concluded his book with an epitaph on More's memory:

> Not long after, that admiration was greatly increased by his truly Christian death, when he lowered his head to the very blow of the axe with a happy and open face, reassured by his pure conscience, like one whose great courage faced that final end with more hope of life than fear of death.[22]

Heywood's emphasis on More's 'nettisima conscienza' (pure conscience) recalls Margaret's description of her father's 'shynynge brightnesse' and the 'pure temple' of his soul, phrases which became firmly entrenched within the More discourse of martyrdom. This does not, however, contradict Deakins's claim that Ellis Heywood's portrayal of More was not the 'Catholic martyr of the 1530s', since Heywood's evocation of his granduncle does not belong to the public pronouncements of the English Catholics. *Il Moro* is a private work, composed in a language unfamiliar to many of Heywood's faith in England and it is instilled

with a 'complete affection for his [More's] reverend name' rather than religious zeal.[23]

The post-1557 reinvention of More's imprisonment as a spiritually enriching enclosure is central to Ellis Heywood's *Il Moro*, although the text also demonstrates already established aspects of the familial discourse. Ellis Heywood's role within the Rastell/Heywood branch of the More textual genealogy demonstrates that he had benefited from the Morean humanist legacy as well as from his father's knowledge of court drama. The dialogic structure of *Il Moro* affirms this combination of inheritance and training, for the lines are philosophical, devout, rational, ironic and comical in turn without losing the characterisation of the particular speaker. This is evident in the story of the fool and the nose that Ellis probably heard from his father and was able to verify from his reading of Erasmus. The narrative is told at a point in *Il Moro* when the disputation focuses on whether it is possible for riches to make one happy. Thomas More intervenes to explain how the argument has developed from a small into an outrageous error, illustrating his point with reference to the story of the fool and the nose:

> Patenson (More's fool) who was standing by my table while we were eating and saw among the guests a gentleman with an unusually large nose. After staring in the man's face for a while, he said, 'By my blood – this gentleman has one whale of a nose!' We all pretended not to hear lest we embarrass the good gentleman. Realising that he had erred, Patenson tried to put himself in the right again by saying, 'I lied in my throat when I said that this gentleman's nose was so large. On my word as a gentleman, it is quite a small nose.' When they heard this everybody wanted to laugh out loud, and they ordered that the fool be chased away. But Patenson to … arrange the matter more to his own advantage … went to the head of the table and said, 'Well, I just want to say one thing: this gentleman has no nose at all.'[24]

Although the quotation above is taken from Deakins's translation, in the Italian original the description of Patenson, 'el pazzo del S. Moro', closely juxtaposes 'pazzo', that is 'fool' in Italian, with 'Moro' referring in the narrative context to Thomas *More*, and *moro* through its Latin translation suggests 'fool' thereby closely linking the two words and the men they refer to. The use of this pun coupled to the family name in English, combine to present a cumulative image of Patenson as a timely reminder of the closeness of wit and folly. Such puns were a commonplace to Thomas More himself and had been skilfully reworked by Erasmus who wrote

Moriae encomium (*In Praise of Folly*) in praise of More. Ellis Heywood's humanist education and his family's associations would have made him particularly familiar with the works of Erasmus, and his choice of title, *Il Moro*, openly acknowledges this debt with its suggestion of wit, folly, death and familial inheritance. But the specific reference to Harry Patenson serves to foreground one of the key devices in the More familial discourse. The easy shift between the family name (More), death (Mors) and the fool (Morus) has already been indicated and was certainly an intellectual play on meaning that interested More himself, as may be shown from the Latin poem in which he exploits the punning possibilities of his own name:

> Moraris si sit spes tibi longa morandi,
>   Hoc to uel Morus, More, monere potest.
> Desine morari, et caelo meditare morari,
>   Hoc te uel Morus, More, monere potest.[25]

The name 'More' shifts into 'Moraris … morandi … morari' with their sense of delay and lingering, which implicitly expands to a pun on 'morior' to die, as well as repeating the name 'Morus', the fool. For the More household their 'Morus' was a particular person and the use of the figure or name of Patenson developed almost as a shorthand family reference to the complex metaphysical analogies that these issues demanded. Margaret Roper cites Patenson in her letter to Alice Alington, the fool's role in the story of the nose is described by Erasmus, and by John and Ellis Heywood. He even appears in Holbein's Basel sketch of the family and re-emerges both in the Nosell version of the family group and in the Lockey miniature where he peeps from behind a curtain close beside the image of Cresacre More in whose history he briefly reappears. For those outside the More circle Patenson was merely a fool, but for the family he was a constant reminder of the precarious boundaries between wisdom and folly, and between life and death. With this inheritance of signification it is hardly surprising that Margaret invoked his words for her father, and even less so that in subsequent years Ellis Heywood should rework the familial narrative to transform a dark foreboding into a witty moral tale.

There are other forms of the familial discourse vying for display and transformation within Ellis's accomplished work. For example, his choice of a dialogic form in which Thomas More himself takes part is further evidence of the persistency of the dramatic element in the family's literary traditions. Just as in Margaret Roper's letter, William Rastell's

edition of *A Dialogue* and John Heywood's poem, Ellis's writing continues to liberate the voice and rework the words of Thomas More. The dramatic arena and the dramatis personae are both expanded and altered in *Il Moro*. At the beginning of the text, More welcomes six scholars to his home and they discuss various philosophical and moral issues. It is generally assumed that, apart from More himself, the characters in *Il Moro* are fictional, bearing no resemblance of those who actually attended More's house at Chelsea. Some of the descriptions are, however, quite detailed suggesting that more specific identifications might be possible. For example, one of the speakers, Paul, carries a ring that bears the inscription 'MEMENTO MORI'. While this clearly alludes to the pun on More's name, William Rastell bequeathed to John Heywood a ring with an 'effigie capitis mortui' that had once belonged to another of the More circle, Anthony Bonvisi.[26] There can be no doubt that Ellis Heywood would have known of this ring, and the identification of the fictional character Paul with Rastell is affirmed by the fact that both are lawyers. Similarly, Leonard, a foreign merchant, could be linked to Bonvisi; Alexander the doctor associated with John Clement, who also practised medicine; and the garrulous Lawrence might represent John Heywood. This would mean that the two brothers, Peter and Charles, could mirror, William Roper and John More, two of the brothers-in-law. The possibility of identifying family members in a quasi-dramatic text had thus, in the twenty years after More's death, become an integral aspect of the Mores' literary discourse. In addition, by seeming to rearticulate Thomas More's own speech, the dialogic form allowed a simultaneous perpetuation and alteration of the family's cultural and spiritual inheritance.

Before *Il Moro* the dialogues depicting Thomas More had all placed him at the most dramatic moment of his tragedy, awaiting death in his narrow cell in the Tower. The impact of the ensuing ambiguity as the image remained enclosed just as the voice was textually liberated must have been particularly appealing for the early martyrdom texts. But Ellis Heywood transfers More from his cell into the garden of his home, Crosby Place:

> The spot pleased them greatly, both for its comfort and for its beauty. On one side stood the noble City of London; on the other, the beautiful Thames with green gardens and wooded hills all around … And yet this garden was more noble than any tapestry, which leaves more desirous than contant the soul of him who beholds the images painted on cloth.[27]

The difference from the setting described in Margaret Roper's letter is startling. Not only is More depicted at liberty, generously offering his hospitality to a group of young scholars, but the very setting of the disputation has shifted to an Edenic pastoral vision that is more satisfying to the soul than any representation could ever be. Of course, as an acutely self-aware author, Heywood would have been alert to the irony of his textual depiction of More's garden, an idyll that he had never experienced and that is presented as an earthly representation of a paradisiacal reality. And even here he calls upon a further representation, in that a garden setting is also used by More in the dialogue of counsel in *Utopia*.[28] But these metaphorical allusions are essential to an understanding of *Il Moro* in chronological terms; it is only through the utilisation of a double allegory that Heywood is able simultaneously to locate More before his death in the actual garden at Crosby Place, as well as after his martyrdom in the heavenly gardens of paradise. The text calls upon the past but exists in a metaphysical present that does indeed provide 'content' to the souls of the More family. Like Patenson, the garden at Crosby Place re-emerges regularly into the Morean family discourse: as an image of heavenly perfection that offers solace to those on earth. As Patenson peeps from behind the curtain in the Lockey miniature, so Holbein's original window opens out to an idyllic garden enclosed within muted redbrick walls. Like the Lockey miniature, *Il Moro* is a private and intimate text written for a coterie, but in spite of these restrictions or perhaps because of them, Heywood's work provides us with evidence of the changes that were already occurring in the literary traditions of the More family.

By the mid-1550s certain aspects of the More family discourse had settled firmly into place: there was a certain commonality between the two branches in their depictions of Thomas More's purity and spiritual faith, his role as father, his wit and his martyrdom. Divergences had, however, already become manifest. The Roper/Bassetts had become, mainly through the instigation of William Roper, associated with the production of biographical accounts, whereas in the Rastell/Heywood line there was an emphasis upon sustaining More's voice and writings. Neither purpose was exclusive of the other since both groups contributed to a united objective of perpetuating Thomas More's memory. Ellis Heywood conforms to all these familial expectations. But when he sets the whole of *Il Moro* in a world of spiritual retreat, in the quasi-paradise of More's Chelsea garden, he represents a development in the family's literary productivity that was to have a far-reaching impact and which was finally to draw together the separate strands.

The More family's focus upon the idea of a retreat from the material concerns of public life and a self-imposed confinement was drawn from

the last years of Thomas More's life and the manner in which he described it. The English *Works* includes a translation of the self-epitaph composed in Latin by More in which he talks of being 'wery of worldly busines', of 'w[ith]drawing himself from the business of this life', and of causing a 'tombe to be made for himselfe'.[29] For More this 'withdrawal' became the literal fact of his imprisonment in the Tower, an incarceration that was to end in death and the final enclosure of the tomb. For those who knew and loved Thomas More, the initial withdrawal, the subsequent imprisonment and the final enclosure of death was a bleak and unwelcome fact, for the subsequent generations the image of imprisonment changed. Ellis Heywood was born in 1530; he would hardly have known Thomas More and would certainly have been protected, for political and personal reasons, from the family's fear and grief in the years leading to More's martyrdom. In *Il Moro*, Heywood is able to rewrite More's withdrawal in spiritual terms and consequently relocates the More family discourse into an acceptance of metaphysical self-confinement that gradually developed into the actual enclosure of monastic walls.

Ellis entered the Jesuit College at Antwerp and his brother, Jasper, joined the Society of Jesus in Rome, returning to England in 1581 as head of the Jesuit mission. By 1583 Jasper Heywood had been captured, identified as a priest and imprisoned in the Tower, but although the confinement was uncomfortable, instead of being executed he was deported and died in Naples in 1597/8.[30] Some of Jasper Heywood's poems are preserved in the anthology *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576–1606) that contains verses probably written while he was at Oxford and retained by his friends in manuscript form.[31] The form and language of these poems is often cumbersome, but although the sentiments are clumsily expressed, Jasper Heywood wrote within the More family tradition accepting its strictures of self-denial and implying a longing for death and the final enclosure of the tomb that was gradually becoming a central theme in their shared discourses by the late sixteenth century. The combination of a Morean inheritance and the religious example of Ellis and Jasper Heywood (particularly the latter's as he was an active Jesuit) resulted, not unexpectedly, in the intense religious convictions of Ellis and Japser Heywoods' nephews, John and Henry Donne.

V

John Donne

Elizabeth Heywood (Ellis and Jasper's sister) married John Donne about 1562 and it was to them that John Heywood entrusted his property

when he became a religious exile in 1564.[32] John Donne the poet was born sometime before July 1572 and his brother, Henry, a year later. No biography or biographical criticism of John Donne excludes the influence of the More family on the poet's spiritual, literary and cultural inheritance. John Carey sums up Donne's background in the first sentence of his authoritative analysis, *John Donne. Life, Mind and Art*, where he writes:

> The first thing to remember about Donne is that he was a Catholic; the second that he betrayed his Faith.[33]

Carey could well have added '… and his Family', since for any descendant of Thomas More faith and family had long since become inextricable. An awareness of the demands and dangers of his mother's familial connections must have been apparent to Donne from an early age. As a child he would have been aware that his maternal grandfather, John Heywood, was a religious exile and that both her brothers, Ellis and Jasper, were Catholic priests living abroad. Other, more distantly related members of the family had died in exile (the Rastells and the Clements) and several young women had already chosen to become nuns. Closer to home, Thomas Heywood, his grandfather's brother, was arrested on Palm Sunday 1574 for saying the mass and was executed in June of that year, while between 1581 and 1583 Jasper Heywood was in England as part of the Jesuit mission and subsequently imprisoned. Dennis Flynn in his comprehensive account of Donne's Catholic connections, *John Donne and The Ancient Catholic Nobility* (1995), argues that the young man would have met his uncle during this visit. Finally, Donne's younger brother Henry was arrested in 1593 for sheltering a priest and died while imprisoned at Newgate. It is impossible to know the exact impact of these events on John Donne, but an acute awareness of the exclusivity of his ancestry coupled with a sense of the dangers it bequeathed is apparent in Donne's oeuvre. As he points out himself in his address to the reader in *Pseudo-Martyr*,

> So, as I am a Christian, I have beene ever kept awake in a meditation of Martyrdome, by being derived from such a stocke and race, as, I beleeve, no family, (which is not of farre larger extente, and greater branches,) hath endured and suffered more in their persons and fortunes, for obeying the Teachers of Romane Doctrine, then it hath done.[34]

But if Donne was as immersed within the traditions of his family, as the Mores, Ropers, Rastells and Heywoods, his response to such an inheritance was very different.

John Donne's spiritual and literary identity was constructed within the familial discourse of the Mores and with all the power of a small but intensely pervasive ideology it proved impossible to escape from completely. This intermingling of the familial and spiritual inheritances meant that Donne would have been seen as a betrayer of the English Catholic cause, just as much as his family would have thought him disloyal to the memory of Thomas More. And his upbringing and immediate family contacts being what they were, it would have been impossible for Donne not to perceive that sense of betrayal along with his own passionately argued reasons for an escape from such associations. The increased critical awareness of Donne's Catholic inheritance through the biographical readings of John Carey and Dennis Flynn and the historicist focus of David Norbrook and Arthur F. Marotti, makes it essential to read the poet's writing with an echoing doubled awareness.[35] These analyses have informed the argument here, but a detailed repetition of the individual readings would be redundant in this study. What is important to stress for the thesis of this book is that the allusions usually foregrounded not only demonstrate a general indebtedness to a Catholic upbringing, but also textual evidence of the extent to which Donne participates in discourses already established within the More family.

To begin with, the sheer impact of Thomas More's personal inheritance could hardly be evaded and Donne's respectful testimony to More, 'Sir *Thomas Moore*, ... whose firmenesse to the integrity of the Romane faith, that Church neede not be ashamed', demonstrates that he was alert to the image of his ancestor as 'pure'.[36] His description of More as 'firme', with 'integrity', and 'a man of the most tender and delicate Conscyence, that the world saw, since *Aug*. [Saint Augustine]', recalls Margaret Roper's depiction of her father's 'cleare shynynge brightenesse of [the] ... soule' and Ellis Heywood's reference to More's 'venerando nome' (reverend name) and his 'nettissima conscienza' (pure conscience).[37]

Although Donne's description of More from *Biathanatos* is often used to depict a straightforward sense of his inheritance and an admiration for his ancestor, the terms placed within their textual context are replete with irony. Donne alludes to More in the First Part of *Biathanatos* in which suicide is presented as an excusable sin and, in Distinction 4 where examples are given of 'well policed Estates hauing admitted it [suicide]',[38] Donne notes,

> *S.r Thomas More*, (a man of the most tender and delicate Conscyence, that the world saw, since *Aug*:) not likely to write anything in iest

> mischeueousy interpreted, says, that in *Vtopia*, the *Priests* and Magistrates did vse to exhort Men, afflicted with Miserable diseases, to kill themselues, and that they were obayd as the interpreters of God's will; But that they who killd themselues, without giuing an account of theyr reasons to them, were cast out vnburyed.[39]

The irony of the passage is immediately apparent, for no member of the More family, or anyone who had read More's *Utopia*, could suggest that Thomas More never wrote anything in 'iest'. The very passage that Donne alludes to, 'Alioqui qui mortem sibi consciuerit causa non probata sacerdotibus & senatui', points out that suicide is only condoned if approved of by the priests and transferred to the Christian state, this means not at all.[40] More ironically intervenes in the philosophical debate about suicide by 'allowing' it in a fictional land in terms that precisely deny it in his own Christian world. In parallel, Donne sets out a seeming defence for state-condoned suicide, only to use as his proof that such a practice should be deemed acceptable in a fictional state that is itself a sharp ironic statement upon the inadmissableness of suicide. Beyond the simple irony that permeates the whole of *Biathanatos*'s discussion of suicide, there is a more specific familial irony that concerns Donne's under-standing of his ancestor's self-chosen martyrdom. For that same 'tender and delicate Conscyence' was precisely that which made Thomas More choose to die and he, like his counterparts in *Utopia*, refused to 'giu[e] an account of [his]..reasons' for not swearing to the Oath of Supremacy. If More attacks these suicides in *Utopia,* then Donne turns his own arguments against him and inteprets his ancestor's martyrdom as sinful and meaningless. Of course, even that irony turns back upon itself since Donne's very acceptance of More's argument and his skillful use of it must be interpreted as scholarly admiration, an appreciation precisely of the fact that More did write in 'iest' in a way that invited Donne's 'mischeueous..interpretat[ion]'. This is typical of *Biathanatos* as a whole since the work veers between what appears to be a genuine acceptance of justifiable suicide and a virulent satire against those who take their own lives. As Donne suggested in a letter accompanying the manuscript to Sir Robert Ker, the subject of *Biathanatos* is 'misinterpretable' and that 'certainly there was a false thread in it', and his ambivalence is compounded by his instruction to Ker to 'publish it not, but yet burn it not'.[41] Even the text's history confers a sense of the undecided, since although Donne finished the work by 1608, that is before *Pseudo-Martyr*, it remained in manuscript form and was not published until after his death in 1648.[42] Donne's complex and ambiguous relationship to his familial inheritance

was established by 1608 in a prose work specifically dealing with the issue of martyrdom and this combined rejection/acceptance of the Morean discourse emerges throughout his work.

Nevertheless, the human space of the father is, as always within the Morean discourse, quickly retraced with the spirit of a heavenly father, as in Donne's 'Satire III' where he writes,

> Is not our mistress fair religion,
> As worthy of all our soul's devotion,
> As virtue was to the first blinded age?
> … Alas,
> As we do them in means, shall they surpass
> Us in the end, and shall thy father's spirit
> Meet blind philosophers in heaven, whose merit
> Of strict life may be imputed faith, and hear
> Thee, whom he taught so easy ways and near
> To follow, damned?[43]

A number of synchronic lines weave through this poem, so that the past is both a pagan world of 'blind philosophers' as well as the more immediate past of 'thy father's spirit' whose 'easy ways' of faith seem to lead only to damnation. As the subsequent lines of the satire play out the Protestant Netherlands against Catholic Spain, and a Protestant Harry (Henry VIII) against a Catholic Philip (Philip II of Spain), the addressee is finally abjured to relinquish these 'mere contraries' and to trust only in God. Although, of course, the irony of such advice is that it is precisely the source of God's truth that is being contested, and that by relinquishing the 'father' of the first lines the poet himself becomes like those who leave 'their roots, and …[are] given / To the stream's tyrannous rage'. Donne's evocation of the father's spiritual inheritance becomes as oblique and contorted as his allusions to Thomas More's textual and philosophical influence. The 'father', both religious and secular must be acknowledged, regretted, rejected and ironically reworked.

The tone of 'Satire III', as with much of Donne's writing, is dialogic, recalling the Rastell/Heywood side of his More inheritance, but there are no formal presentations of different speakers as in Margaret Roper's letter to Alice Alington or in Ellis's *Il Moro*. Instead, the voices in the poems and prose shift and change mutating into a variety of subjects, each distinct and clearly identifiable within the vernacular phrases. For example, the poems that allude to martyrology and relics – themes already closely associated with the More family – invoke several subject positions. In

'The Relic' and 'The Canonisation' the lover's voice links an idealised version of secular love with false martyrdom 'in a time, or land, / Where mis-devotion doth command' ('The Relic', ll. 12–13) and projects the couple's canonisation 'for Love' ('The Canonisation', l. 36), while in 'Elegy VI' by renouncing his love the speaker becomes a 'recusant … to be excommunicate' (ll. 45–6).[44] The shift between spiritual and secular love was common to the discourse of courtly love, yet the evocation of Catholicism and the image of relics had a particular resonance for members of the More family. Donne would have known from his mother that Margaret Roper had inherited her father's hair shirt and had passed it to Margaret Clement, and that Ellis and Jasper Heywood had apparently argued over the ownership of one of More's teeth.[45] Like his philosophical discussion of suicide and martyrdom and the poetic evocation of the 'father's spirit', the spiritual allusions in the songs and sonnets are, simultaneously, the despised fakeries of Catholicism and the powerful invokers of a personal and intimate inheritance.

While these brief reflections of a conjoined Catholic and Morean inheritance emerge and fade throughout Donne's writing, he was successively to revisit one of the most compelling concerns for the later members of the family: the desire for retreat, enclosure and self-erasure. As a member of a well known recusant family living in England, John Donne would have been sharply aware of the actual dangers of imprisonment. Yet his writing is open to the paradoxical spiritual attractions and risks of self-imposed confines, of self-martyrdom and of the anachronism of a spiritual freedom being constrained within, and by, the body. There are clear links with the established More family discourse and Donne persistently draws our attention to these associations. For example, as has already been noted, in *Biathanatos* Donne takes this determined self-withdrawal from the world to its logical conclusion. This fascination with the destruction of the self must have been engendered by the familial memory of More's execution, an event that had by this point defined the familial discourse for over eighty years. For Donne, however, the narrative did not provoke the resigned grief of those who had known More, nor did it proffer an image of spiritual seclusion as in his uncle's *Il Moro*. Rather, Donne perceived More's death as a self-inflicted tragedy, one that might have been informed by integrity, but was nevertheless a 'suicide' brought about by deliberate choice and not imposed by the Protestant state, by the martyr-hungry Catholic Church or even by God's will. It is this ultimate division in the sense of purpose that separates Donne from his inheritance, and that slices through this particular

branch of the family tree. When Thomas More relinquished his home, his family and all earthly associations so that he could, as he saw it, fulfil God's will, he famously informed William Roper that 'the field [was] won'. That field was, of course, in itself a mutable metaphor, in that while More was the battlefield which God's faith had won, the English state too had become a battlefield between the Catholic and Protestant Churches, on which More hoped that this overt statement of his faith would help the former to triumph. But the actual phrase through publication in Roper's work and subsequent transmission through the family had allowed More's vision of self-abnegation to triumph throughout the 'field' of his descendants. Thus, the very denial of the individual subject had served to perpetuate an entrenched version of that same self-identity through the multiple construction of a community of authorial voices – until John Donne. By isolating More's acutely self-fashioned memory of himself as martyr, Donne appears to recognise, and therefore facilitate his escape from, the very familial constraints that would have bound him along with the Mores, Ropers, Rastells and Heywoods. In this representation of More's inheritance Donne's response seems almost to presage Stephen Greenblatt's argument that in Thomas More's writings and life there was

> [a] complex interplay [between] … self-fashioning and self-cancellation, the crafting of a public role and the profound desire to escape from the identity so crafted.[46]

More's own construction of a self-memorial inscribed in words, text, image and through the blood of his descendants demands that negation be set alongside perpetuation. The consequent textual industry of family members – from the conflated voices of Margaret's dialogic letter, through the many lives, works and portraits, to the re-articulation of More's own voice in works like *The Spider and the Flie* and *Il Moro* – necessitated an awareness of a cultural inheritance that might have had its origin in More's imprisonment and death, but which rapidly acquired its own identity. It is this family discourse, fashioned through a protracted period of time and by various members of the same genealogy, that John Donne inherited. And finally, in Donne's own work it becomes possible to read his own debate with the inevitability of death and with his ancestry.

Thomas More anticipated the last confines of the tomb when he wrote of Christ's passion in the garden of Gethsemane and John Donne concluded 'Death's Duel', his final sermon, with 'a passion Sermon; since all

his [Christ's] life was a continuall passion'. More begins his treatise with the metaphor of the spiritual house, the final safe resting place:

> Such men I meane as I am (alacke) my selfe, that so much tyme and studye besette aboute their nyghtes lodgeing here, in passing by the waye, & so little remember to labour & provide, that they may haue some house commodious for their ease, & well favoredly trimmed to their pleasure, in ye place whether once we go we shal, & when we come once there, dwell there we shal, & inhabit there for euer.[47]

Donne begins with a parallel image of the building:

> The body of our building … is this; *He that is our God,* is the *God of salvation* … But of this building, the foundation, the buttresses, the contignations are … in the three divers acceptations of the words amongst our expositors: *Unto God the Lord belong the issues of death*, [and concludes that] our issue in death, shall be an entrance into everlasting life.[48]

Donne goes on to describe the trial and crucifixion of Christ and concludes with a prayer for the resurrection of the soul couched in the terminology of the sacrament:

> There bathe in his [Christ's] tears, there suck at his wounds, and lie down in peace in his grave, till he vouchsafe you a resurrection, and an ascension into that kingdom which he hath purchased for you, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.[49]

For Thomas More such a conclusion was impossible, since the whole discourse of martyrology demanded that his text must close as Christ is taken and imprisoned, his own death becoming an echo of the crucifixion. But Donne's conclusion is reminiscent of the prayers with which More concludes his chapters and, significantly, are not included in the translation by Mary Bassett. More prays to Christ for all humankind that they might gain 'the gloryouse countrey, wherein thou haste boughte us enherytaunce for euer wythe thyne owne precyouse bloude' and that

> Thyne own blessed bodye and bloude, for a memoryall of thy bitter passion, gyue us suche true fayth therein, and suche feruent deuocion thereto, that our soules may take fruitfull gostlye foode thereby.[50]

The parallels between the two visions of death permeate the texts, allowing Donne to echo More, just as their religious discourses of individual pain and dissolution merge with those of the faithful. But there are even more specific, more particularly familial links.

As the last rites of death enclosed More's headless corpse in the hastily purchased winding sheet of miraculous renown, so Donne anticipated his own funeral within the closed context of a familial metaphor:

> We have a winding-sheet in our mother's womb, which grows with us from our conception, and we come into the world wound up in that winding-sheet, for we come to seek a grave.[51]

For Donne the 'mother's womb' was inextricably bound to his Morean inheritance and to that construction of a self in which the concepts of perpetuation and cessation were similarly entwined. Thus, the closure of the body and of the blood inheritance of the 'mother's womb' should herald the final release of the soul and of 'the father's spirit'. But for John Donne, like his famous ancestor Thomas More, the 'winding-sheet' of the womb could not free itself from the darker image of the funereal winding sheet. The two most distinctly individuated figures within the More familial discourse were inevitably drawn within the bindings that they themselves helped form and yet fought against. In the third and final branch of the More family such dissidence was eschewed: Cresacre More's writing and his foundation of a Catholic Abbey demonstrate a determination to sustain the familial commitment while Gertrude More's submission to the rule of family and faith evidence a response antithetical to John Donne's.

3
'Worthy of their blood and their vocation': The More/Cresacre Line

I

John More and the More/Cresacres

While John Donne has become the most brilliantly well known of More's descendants, More's actual son, John, has faded into obscurity. The unfortunate combination of physiognomy (that receding chin so clearly depicted in Holbein's sketches), his contemporary reputation as in Bacon's acerbic suggestion of imbecility and his father's overwhelming reputation seem to have driven John More into the shadowy recesses of familial memory.[1] Yet, during More's lifetime, John was encouraged to write and he participated in the same humanist and Catholic interchanges as his sister Margaret. In 1533 his translations of a sermon by Friedrich Nausea and of a treatise by the humanist Damião de Góis were published, and two books were dedicated to him, Erasmus's edition of Aristotle's works (1531) and Simon Grynaeus's edition of Plato's works (1534).[2] Until the point of his father's imprisonment, it is possible to perceive John More's steady movement along the accepted path of a humanist scholar, indebted to his father and teachers alike. In this he parallels Margaret and, while he might not have been as close to his father, his gender would have opened up opportunities that were not accessible to his sister. Again, like Margaret, after More's execution, John came under suspicion and he was imprisoned with William Daunce and John Heywood in 1543 for conspiring against Cranmer. But John More's subsequent career seems to have slid into that quiet oblivion essential for the safe maintenance of an English Catholic household through the turbulent years of Protestant rule.

Although dormant, this branch of the More familial discourse did not perish, instead, re-emerging after the accession of Charles I, it heralded

a period of greater security for English Catholics. This impetus resurfaced in John More's grandson, Cresacre More, who seems to have been constructed by his family as having a special relationship with the early Mores, since his name was derived from Anne Cresacre, one of Thomas More's original household at Crosby Place and wife to his son, John, and he was christened on the anniversary of Thomas More's martyrdom. This chapter traces the way in which Cresacre More negotiated with his Morean inheritance, in particular the writings of Thomas More and John Donne, and how his establishment of an abbey helped perpetuate the familial discourse through the writings of Gertrude and Agnes More.

II

Cresacre More

Cresacre More's most famous work is *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas More Knight* (1626).[3] It revisits the family's key discourses, repeating those of the earlier 'lives', rehearsing Thomas More's words like the collections of the 1560s, and reworking the later narratives of seclusion and spiritual retreat. It is almost as if Cresacre presents himself as a culmination of a familial discourse that had become so dispersed and fragmented that a unifying and coherent voice was needed to draw the strands back together. Even its authorship conforms to the early More examples of joint composition, since Cresacre's own role in the production of the life was obscured for 200 years, the text being attributed to his brother, Thomas More (IV).[4] The dedication of the life to Henrietta Maria in 1630 and the signature – the initials 'M.C.M.E.' (Master Cresacre More Esquire) – affirm Cresacre's authorial role and date the work's composition to between 1615 and 1620. It was published in 1631 at Douai, although the fact that ten manuscript versions remain extant demonstrate that even as late as the seventeenth century the More family's works continued to retain the exclusivity of scribal publication.

Cresacre deployed similar materials in his other two extant works, *Meditations and Devout Discourses upon the B. Sacrament* (1639) and *A Myrrhine Posie* (1639).[5] In *Meditations*, he stresses two central tenets of the More familial discourse, commenting upon the importance of 'spirituall parents' and the explaining value of self-enclosure in 'a secret chamber … serving God by praier and fasting'.[6] Cresacre's most interesting intervention occurs in *Meditations* where he appears to engage with John Donne's sermon, 'Death's Duel', in particular the difficult connections made between Christ's death and subsequent resurrection, winding sheets and

the mother's womb. This response was, in itself, a further continuation of the familial dialogue since, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter, Donne's sermon evidences a critical reworking of Thomas More's description of Christ's passion in the garden of Gethsemane. Cresacre would have undoubtedly been aware of Donne's relationship to the Mores and his description of receiving the sacrament offers sufficient parallels to suggest that he knew of his relative's sermon. In his meditation Cresacre begins conventionally by asking Christ to 'give me grace to receave it [the sacrament]'; immediately after, however, he digresses into a description of the Virgin Mary, asking Christ,

> Thy ... Mother was to receave thee but once into her sacred womb, and yet, o Lord, how dist thou sanctifie her? How didst thou prepare her?[7]

The analogy is contorted yet still clear, for Christ's mystical purification of the Virgin's womb is compared with an analogous sanctification of the communicant before the sacrament is taken; as such, the body of the Christ child enters the womb, just as the body of Christ in the form of the wafer enters the body of the speaker. While not as elegantly expressed, Cresacre's evocation of the sacrament parallels that of Thomas More, 'Thyne own blessed bodye and bloude, for a memoryall of thy bitter passion, gyue us suche true fayth therein', and Donne's 'suck at his wounds ... till he vouchsafe you a resurrection ... with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood'.[8] However, Cresacre proceeds precipitously into a discussion of Christ's death and his winding sheet:

> Thou wouldest after thy death, have thy dead body to be buried in a new monument, wherein none had beene buried before; to be laied in a winding sheete of fine and cleane laune.[9]

Within the description of preparation for the sacrament, Cresacre's diversion to discuss Christ's burial and 'winding sheete' is unexpected, but becomes more understandable when placed in the familial context of More's relic-like shroud and, more particularly, Donne's seamless transition of the 'winding sheete [which we have] in our Mothers wombe', which 'growes with us from our conception', to the winding sheet 'we come to see [in] a grave'.[10] The image in 'Death's Duel' is compelling and, more importantly, visually consistent, as the opaque sack surrounding the baby in the mother's womb, the caul, is transformed into the white sheet wrapped around the body of a corpse. Cresacre's shift of focus fails to retain the continuity of image, so that the Virgin

Mary's womb, which is sanctified by Christ, is followed immediately by Christ's dead body wound in symbolic 'cleane laune'. The traditional sense of Christ's spiritual perfection is retained through the references to 'puritie' and 'cleane', but the disjunction between birth and death is too abrupt. Moreover, Cresacre seems to recall at this point that it is the human body that moves from caul to shroud, and not Christ's, as he immediately points out, 'that same body now not dead', and asks Christ to 'purge me [and] cleanse mee, that I maye be a new syndon [shroud]'.[11] Without the intellectual powers and rhetorical skills of both the initiator and militant of the More familial discourse, Cresacre's attempt to participate in this debate was doomed to failure. Containment, the power of inheritance and a recognition of ultimate self-negation were some of the most compelling elements of the Mores' construction of identity, yet, for Cresacre, these fragment into separate images of the Virgin's womb, the dead Christ in his shroud, and the supplicant asking to be purged so that their 'syndon' will be clean, even though this means we have to imagine a live communicant wearing a shroud.

Cresacre's investment in the More family's sense of cultural and spiritual identity, however, extended beyond the production of texts into a material recreation of his ancestor's seclusion. Unlike his near contemporary and relative, John Donne, Cresacre envisaged this enclosure, not as an enveloping tomb, but as a sheltered portal leading the troubled soul from this world to the next. In 1620 he funded the establishment of a community of Benedictine nuns at Cambrai, the Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation, and his daughter, Helen More (Dame Gertrude), was one of its founding members. In the summer of 1623, Dame Gertrude, with six other English gentlewomen, including her cousins Grace and Anne More, set sail to found a missionary congregation in Cambrai. They were joined by the fourth cousin, Bridget More, in 1629.

III

The Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation, Cambrai

Given their family connections, it might seem inevitable that the young More women should forsake an increasingly hostile homeland for the secure Catholic environment of the Abbey in France. In addition, the Morean inheritance of scholarly pursuits and selfless humility, exemplified in the first generation's daily activities and in their fathers' own example, should have led seamlessly into the profession of faith and the closeted existence of the cloister walls. But these assumptions, while fitting into the familial narrative so elegantly constructed by Cresacre, fail

to tally with the material circumstances both of the Abbey's foundation and the commitment of the female members of his family to its perpetuation. Although it was not possible for young women to become nuns in England during the early seventeenth century, the acute persecution of the Catholics promulgated under the Protestant Tudor and Jacobean reigns had become distinctly blunted by the early 1620s. While the Protestant Sidney/Herbert faction still exerted considerable power at court, James's overall policy of appeasement and desire for peace made life bearable for the English Catholic families. This is not to say persecution did not persist, but the compelling reasons for the earlier More-family exiles of the mid-fifteenth century were no longer in place. The marriage of Charles to the Catholic Henrietta Maria in 1626 brought about a further curtailment of the worst form of anti-Catholic purges. Perhaps it was precisely the incursion of a continental form of Catholicism that demanded the English Catholics, and the More family in particular, to anchor their faith more securely and the new abbey at Cambrai was completely under the jurisdiction of the English Congregation of Monks of the Order of St Benedict. The More family sought to perpetuate its role, not only as a spiritual exemplar to the English Catholics, but as the beleaguered community's very sense of itself, merging the single family within the overall group, just as the individual subject had been subsumed within the family.

But if the English Catholics and the Mores increasingly shared a discourse of idealised alienation, the individual members of Cresacre's own family proved less than enthusiastic in their support of the family endeavour. For example, the manuscript account of Dame Gertrude More's early years at Cambrai relates how she was

> of an excellent Judgement for her age (being but 18 year old) and of a piercing Wit, of a Very Good Nature, Gentle and Affable, of a Harmlesse Carriage, when she came first; yet withall, of a Lively Extroverted Disposition, Curious, and of a Working Imagination, prone to Solicitudes and Recreations, & Violent in her affections. She Knowing her Own Talents, and Wanting Instructions … decayed much in her Naturall Virtuousnesse. Her Simplicity became Turned into Craftinesses, her Tractablenesse into stoutnesse of stomach, & By wch her Guilt of Conscience Daily increased.[12]

It is not difficult to imagine the lively and witty young woman – and for a More wit was an essential characteristic – who was used to the cultured comforts or 'solicitudes'of her father's home and to the excitements of

the court's 'Recreations', being cast down by the austere life to which she found herself committed. Nor had Dame Gertrude felt a missionary zeal while at home in England. On the contrary, she seems to have been carried along by Cresacre's total commitment, moved to fulfil the narrative of her 'father's spirit', although this was in itself a perfectly More-like role.

The account of Dame Gertrude's struggles and final acquiescence to the Benedictine rule has since come to be perceived as a perpetuation, not of her More inheritance, but as an example of the powerful spiritual influence of Father Augustine Baker. The history of Father Baker's efforts to be accepted by the English Congregation and the changes within the Congregation itself are important for the understanding of Dame Gertrude's writing, and are dealt with briefly here.[13] When Cresacre More helped found the abbey in Cambrai in the early 1620s, he had been responding to a general trend initiated by the Council of Trent (1545–63) that called for the enclosed orders to return to their essential purpose of prayer and a perpetuation of the dialogue with God. For the English Catholics this need was particularly acute since with the suppression of religious houses there had been no formal and accepted participation in the dialogue of prayer. Rather, the primary activity in England had been the mission spearheaded by the Jesuits, which had included several members of the More family. By the 1620s there had been a marked shift in the direction taken by the English Catholics, and the More family embodied such a change. While the Heywoods of the late sixteenth century responded to the dramatic and dangerous call of the Jesuit mission, the Mores, early in the subsequent century, followed the call for enclosed prayer and the establishment of safe religious houses on the continent. This was, for Cresacre and his particular branch of the family tree, a way in which the central tenets of his illustrious ancestor's life could be recreated in the present, and must have seemed divinely ordained.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the continental houses proved more problematic than had at first been envisaged. The form of prayer decided upon, a combination of daily meditation and frequent examination of the conscience that had helped the Jesuits on their mission, coupled with the choice of those Jesuits as confessors and directors, often led to a somewhat narrow and over-prescribed methodising. While such a structure had a place within the mission, it failed to take into account the individual needs of the young women for whom the strictures of an enclosed life were strange, and who adjusted and developed into their new lives at different rates. The new abbey at Cambrai was no exception and Dame Gertrude along with other postulants began to be troubled in their consciences, feeling further from God than

they had in England. Realising that these difficulties had to be addressed, the Lord President of the English Congregation, Dom Rudesind Barlow, appointed a new director to the abbey, Father Augustine Baker.

Father Baker had himself found the current methodising of the Benedictine forms of prayer too constricting, and his own experiences had allowed him to formulate a type of instruction that was directed at guiding souls, both religious and lay, towards a full dialogue with God. Although Father Baker proved successful with others, at first Dame Gertrude resisted him, and it was only late in 1625 that she finally acquiesced to his teaching and found herself at relative peace and able to pray. Still, her acceptance did not occur until Baker explained how some souls, those who are beset with 'indevotions' and the subtractions from divine grace, must resign themselves to aridity and use that state as a means of attaining divine grace.[14] To this Gertrude responded, 'O, O, O, that must be my waie' and her subsequent writings attest to how aridity, mortification and the evocation of a negated self facilitated the freedom of the soul to come to God.[15] While Father Baker had accomplished his mission within the walls of the abbey at Cambrai, his methods were questioned by the Chapter, which suggested that the forms of prayer he had devised for his pupils were both too difficult and too close to the mystical meditations of the saints. Father Baker was called to answer these accusations, his papers were confiscated and examined, and at the very moment he faced the ecclesiastical authorities, Dame Gertrude lay dying.

IV

Gertrude More

Before her death of smallpox in 1633 Dame Gertrude composed a number of pieces that were originally arranged by Father Baker but were published in two separate volumes after his death. These were *The Holy Practises of a Devine Lover or the Sainctly Ideot's Devotions* (1657), with an unsigned dedication to the Abbess Catherine Gascoigne, and *Confessiones Amantis, or A Lover's Confessions and Ideot's Devotions* (1658), which was dedicated to Bridget More by Rev. Francis Gascoigne. There is a certain amount of overlap between the two texts, but the latter work adds Dame Gertrude's *Apology* and a number of fragments that had been found in her cell at her death.[16] In these writings Gertrude returns recurrently to the troubled reluctance of her early days at the convent and to the processes, which led to her ultimate acceptance of and obedience to

Benedictine authority. For example, in The *Confessions* there are several poems, which directly refute those initial material yearnings,

> All things, desires, and loves are vaine,
> but only that which tends
> To God alone …

and she goes on to rework the courtly love metaphor of stag and hart thereby demonstrating her own relocated discourse,

> No Stagge in chase so thirsty is,
> or greedy of sweet spring
> As is my soul of thee my God …
> My soul, where is thy love and lord,
> since him thou canst not find?
> To him relation thou maist have,
> as often as thou goes
> Into the closett of thy hart,
> thy griefs for to disclose.[17]

The signification of 'lord' slides from secular to spiritual, the hunt itself is transmuted from sexual pursuit to the internalised quest for Christian love, and the 'griefs' revealed within that closeted space lament life and yearn for death, for 'while I live, I'll never cease, / to languish for his love'. Inevitably, of course, the shadow of the secular remains imprinted upon the conversion to the spiritual, so that Gertrude's imagined end is couched in the terminology of courtly love, while her vocabulary deliberately invokes the most sexually-laden of Biblical texts, the Song of Solomon. Her 'ending' therefore begins to look indistinct, almost as if two tracings have been superimposed but not precisely aligned: Gertrude's identity is neither one nor the other, nor does it shift between the two, it simply manifests a closely related but untouching doubleness.

Contradictions recur throughout Dame Gertrude's writings; they do not overwhelm the central meditative structure of her work, but re-emerge at key moments when she self-consciously evokes opposing discourses structuring them as simultaneous and self-contained. Her themes are common concerns – for example, the mystical dialectic of spiritual and secular love described above – but the maintenance of division and separation belongs to her reworking of the More family discourse. This is nowhere more apparent than in the title she chose for her work, *The Ideot's Devotions*. In the few criticisms that focus upon Dame Gertrude's

work this phrase has proved contentious. The editor's preface to the first edition (1657) interprets the 'idiot' as a male author, probably Father Baker:

> *This* Ideot, *who to others seemes ignorant, and foolish; to you is knowingly ignorant, and wisely vnlearned*.[18]

Marion Norman suggests that the term 'Ideot's Devotions' was altered 'at Baker's suggestion to avoid confusion with a work of his own by that title' and that the word '*idiot* derives from the Greek for an uninitiated or unlearned person'.[19] Of course, the 'idiot' is all these things and more, or rather More-like. For translated simply within her familial discourse, the 'Ideot's Devotions' become the devotions of 'morus', the idiot, the fool, Harry Patenson, Thomas More, his descendants and most especially Gertrude *More* herself. In her choice of title Dame Gertrude certainly participates in her own era's debates about the methodology of prayer and fully supports her spiritual director within the Benedictine community, Father Baker, but she simultaneously evokes a trenchant and personalised history of English Catholicism. The two are not incompatible and could easily have been drawn together by Gertrude herself or the subsequent critics of her work. The fact that they are not may reflect the tracings of spiritual history in which Dame Gertrude is associated with Father Baker and his importance to the English Benedictine community, rather than with her great-great-grandfather who had after all died a century before.

Yet, placed back in 1625, Gertrude, along with Agnes, Bridget and Anne, appear as the inheritors of a particularly More-like spirituality and not exclusively as Father Baker's neophytes. A combination of the Abbey's foundational identity, the descriptions of Gertrude More written by others and the textual parallels between her own work and that of Thomas More evidence this familial inheritance. The Abbey's very existence had depended upon Cresacre, who was engaged in writing a life of Thomas More. The admission records to the Abbey specifically refer to the More cousins' familial associations.[20] Gertrude is persistently identified with Thomas More: her *Spiritual Exercises* is prefaced with a poem that foregrounds this link, being addressed to 'Renowned *More*' who is asked to 'View heer thy Grandchilds broken Hart'; and her death notice similarly affirms the link:

> In ye year 1633 ye 17 of August, died D. Gertrude more, of ye noble family of Sr Thomas ye famous Martyr of happy memory. Shee ... lived with a great deal of zeale, prudence & piety, as will appeare in her

> life writ more at large, shee left many examples worthy her blood & vocation, particularly in her last grievous sickness (being indeed very terrible) which shee embraced with much patience and conformity to ye Will of God.[21]

The phrases and vocabulary echo those used to describe Thomas More's patient acceptance of his execution as recounted in the family lives, by Roper and, most tellingly, by Cresacre.

A similar association can be identified through the emergence of the common More themes in Gertrude's writing. There are the familiar allusions to the instability of fortune as in her reworking of 1 John 2:17,

> *Courted by the world, and all prosperitie.*
> What then?
> *Let fortunes wheele aduance thee aboue the skies.*
> What then?…
> *The world passes away, and the concupiscence thereof.*[22]

Material things are rejected since the perfect soul must be 'cleansed from inordinate loues towards her owne selfe' and must 'aime at … our finall end'.[23] Humility and a full abnegation of the self are welcomed throughout Dame Gertrude's writings, from her formal discourse in *The Holy Practices* to the '*Deuotions written by her in her Breuiary within the yeare before she dyed*' and, as her own death from smallpox approached, she turned increasingly to the topic of mortality and her personal fears and faith.[24] In the notes to her Breviary '*To the image of* death', she added, '*O how little* to be esteemed, or desired is all that passeth away with time', and subsequently acknowledged her own weakness in face of the 'fears and terrors which ordinarily accompany that dreadful hower [of death]'.[25] Yet, it was after her death that Gertrude's identity seems to slide inexorably towards the full More discourse, as she herself became the topic of a saint-like vita in Father Baker's *The Life and Death of D. Gertrude More* in which the trials of her soul, final sufferings and last words are described. Although only fragments of this life are extant today, it was copied by Father Leander Pritchard in his capacity as chaplain to the nuns at Cambrai (1661–9) and was scribally published with various extracts and abridgements.[26] The catalogues of books at both the Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation at Cambrai and its daughter house of Our Lady of Good Hope at Paris both evidence that manuscript copies were kept by the nuns for their own personal use. As with Thomas More, Dame Gertrude's own family contributed to the perpetuation of her saint-like image.

V

Bridget, Agnes and Anne More

Dame Bridget, Gertrude's sister, was one of the nuns who left Cambrai in 1651 in order to found the Abbey of Our Lady of Good Hope in Paris. The circumstances that impelled the exiled community to undertake this unusual step were those that had similarly disrupted their homeland: the English Civil War. By 1645 funding for the Abbey at Cambrai from England had virtually ceased, with properties being sequestered by Parliament and the royalist supporters hardly able to finance their own exiles, let alone those of a community of nuns. The English Congregation was in similar difficulties and could only advise that some nuns be placed in French convents, but the community at Cambrai were understandably reluctant to countenance such a separation. The solution seemed to be founding a new house in Paris under the auspices of the exiled Queen Henrietta Maria. Although they were initially discouraged from this enterprise, by 1651 their poverty had become so acute that there seemed to be no alternative. Consequently, Dames Bridget More, Clementia Cary and Sister Scholastic Hodson set out for Paris, a city already overcrowded with English exiles and itself suffering from internal conflict.

By 1652 a daughter house had been established and Dame Bridget More was elected as its first Prioress. A number of moves ensued until they finally found a permanent house in 1664 at Larksfield. Meanwhile, the community had come under the authority of the Archbishop of Paris and they formally left the English Benedictine Congregation in 1657. One year later Dame Gertrude's writings were published with a fulsome dedication to the Rev. Mother Bridget More,

> Reverend Mother,
> *This deuout Book comes to you of right being your natural sisters excellent Goods, and there is no other heire left to it but your deserving self* [,] *besids I know few or none do any way pretend to it, but you and your Religious flock who exactly trace by true practice (Ô Practice, divine practice the only means) the same holy paths this booke treats of.*[27]

The direct link between Bridget and Gertrude is described primarily in terms of their being 'natural sisters', but also describes how Bridget is the sole heir to both a spiritual and textual inheritance. However, the Rev. Mother Bridget More and the nuns at Our Lady of Good Hope are

depicted as alone in their interest in and continued focus on the writings of Dame Gertrude. While the discourses of the More family are called upon to reproduce the life, the text and the image of Gertrude More, any comparison with the equivalent mustering of resources to sustain the memory of her great-great-grandfather Thomas More merely affirms the difference between a young cloistered nun exiled from her home and a powerful man whose martyrdom shook the Catholic world of his day. The huge disparity must be acknowledged, but simultaneously the efforts of the More 'sisters' and their community to keep alive the memory of Dame Gertrude should be recognised for its persistence.

In reading the works of the Mores it is important to recall that the influences upon them are multiple. The sense of their familial identity was still strong and within this the demands of ancestry (Thomas More), fatherly affection (Cresacre More) and sisterly loyalty (one another) all play a part. But the demands of their family of faith, of the other women in their communities at Cambrai and Paris, of their spiritual director Father Baker and of the exiled English Congregation of Benedictines inevitably had a profound impact. The influence of Father Baker on Dame Gertrude's writings has already been discussed, and a similar effect may be detected in Dame Agnes More's choice of work for translation, Jeanne de Cambray's *The Ruin of Proper Love and the Building of Divine Love*.[28] In 1625 Jeanne had become a recluse in the church of St André at Lille and the nuns at nearby Cambrai would certainly have known about her intellectual and spiritual accomplishments. Jeanne's interest in developing a system of meditative prayer with the characteristics of early-seventeenth-century mysticism would have ensured that her writings were welcome within Father Baker's circle. Dame Agnes's translation omitted the first book and was made from the second edition of Jeanne de Cambray's French original that was published in 1627. It is impossible to know at what point she finished the translation, although it must have been complete by her death at Cambrai in 1655/6, since the single extant manuscript (now at Lille) informs us only of the translator's identity and the date the text was prepared for publication in 1691. Dame Agnes's translation follows the original quite closely and is not as distinctive within the familial discourse as her cousin's *Confessiones Amantis*. In addition, the choice of text demonstrates the influence of Father Baker rather than that of the Mores. Nevertheless, there are a number of commonalities between the phraseology of Dames Agnes and Gertrude that display traces of their familial inheritance.

The overall argument of *The Building of Divine Love* demands that the individual soul denies its material self, 'mortify[ing] all her exterior senses ... because [they] are the windows by which death enters the soul', and rejects the world as 'a dark and obscure desart ... [in which] she cannot find any contentment'.[29] But the soul sometimes feels itself full of 'dryness, aridity, desolation [and] want of sensible devotion' and Agnes translates, as Gertrude wrote, that such aridity 'is more acceptable to God than all that she can do' as it demonstrates true humility.[30] The themes of mortification and martyrdom run throughout the work accepting the need for 'watchings, fastings, haircloth, disciplines, and other austerities', as well as the inevitability of persecution and 'external torments'.[31] Agnes concludes with terms that almost replicate the phrases of Margaret Roper, the biographers and the editors of her ancestry:

> There are many souls and spiritual persons – both married persons and Religious persons – who are touched in so lively a way with this arrow of love that their lives are more angelical than human. But they are hidden from the wise of this world and persecuted by them.[32]

True to the familial discourse, Agnes's translation shifts easily from the lives of Thomas and Gertrude More (the 'married' and 'Religious' persons), through the experiences of Jeanne de Cambray and Father Augustine Baker, to the vitae of the saints and ultimately to the crucifixion of Christ. It is indicative that Dame Agnes is never described as having the fraught divisions of the soul experienced by her cousin Gertrude, since her translation through its genre, content and allusion falls fully within the compass of the 'father's spirit'.

Dame Anne More does not seem to have been called to produce spiritual texts in the way of her cousins, although it is possible that some of the manuscript works extant at Lille may be attributed to her. At present, evidence of a single letter exists that describes the death of Dame Gertrude:

> It was my good fortune to be with her for the time of her sickness, and by her when her happy soul departed. I beseech Jesus to grant me grace to imitate her innocent life, that I may have so happy a death. Truly she hath left so great edification to us, which are behind her, that my poor pen is not able to express ... Verily I have seen in her Job upon the dunghill, Lazarus with his sores, an angel in paradise, so resigned to the will of God, so willing to die, so ready to suffer more if it pleased God, so firm in confidence with humility

> in almighty God, always praying, still calling on the sweet name of Jesus.[33]

Dame Gertrude's approach to death is described as a spiritual example, while her innocence, resignation, suffering and humility suggest the image of 'an angel in paradise'. The terms by now are familiar, part of a vitae tradition that became embodied in the More family and which found a ready response in the English Catholic community at Cambrai. It is not that these descriptions are unique to the Mores, simply that they persist for 150 years within that family's writing about itself and its members. This relentless replication over such an extended period situates the Mores within their familial discourse and constructs them as an exemplar of the Early Modern familial discourse as a whole. The combination of an extended exile, self-determined enclosure, the inevitable lack of progeny, the upheavals of the English Civil War, the shifts in the English Catholic Church itself, all militated against a continuance of this discourse. By the 1660s the fragmentation which had begun in the early days at Cambrai resulted in the disintegration of the familial discourse in Paris.

VI

Conclusion

The impact of Thomas More's martyrdom produced an extended familial discourse that developed from the pious and faithful work of his daughter Margaret Roper, through the schisms of the Rastell/Heywoods, in particular John Donne, to the spiritual writings of Gertrude and Agnes More. The More family all work, in some way, to perpetuate the memory of Thomas More, and his depiction is remarkably consistent; he is represented as pure, spiritually faithful, benignly paternal, witty and, with a more complex understanding, welcoming death. These traits subsequently emerge into a discursive formation that includes wit, piety, humility, scholarship, dramatic dialogue, duty, self-denial, enclosure and martyrdom. The Mores were also consistent in producing and valuing women writers, from Margaret Roper through Mary Bassett to Gertrude and Agnes More. This female authorship was also distinctive in its creation of a mutual creativity and its ability to subjugate the self in favour of the familial. A comparison of Gertrude's acquiescence with John Donne's rebellion evidences the way in which women proved secure perpetuators of the discursive formation in contrast to the self-fashioned identities of their male counterparts. The More family negotiated both

these internal divisions and rebellions, and the explosive transformations of the state and church, retaining its intrinsic identity for 150 years. Although the persistence of the More familial discourse is not replicated in any other Early Modern family, the strategies of formation, the development of distinctive elements and the emergence of women writers recur throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

4

Representations of Relations on the Political Stage within the Fitzalan/Lumley Household

I

Family connections: The Fitzalans, Greys and Lumleys

On 13 April 1603, James I visited Lumley Castle, near Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, and while there was shown John Lumley's extensive portrait collection, each picture being accompanied by a discursive genealogical treatise on the figure portrayed. James, never a patient man in such circumstances, is said to have commented dryly:

> I did na ken Adam's name was Lumley.[1]

This preoccupation with lineage and descent was, however, by no means exclusive to John Lumley. The compulsion to locate oneself within a distinguished and long-standing bloodline was one of the dominant discourses of the Early Modern period, the More family of the preceding chapters being one of the key examples. Yet, we have been particularly fortunate with regard to Lumley's sense of his own familial identity and historical position, since two inventories (1590 and 1609) were made of his art and book collections, giving us a pretty accurate idea of what James actually saw on his tour.[2] While the statues of British monarchs and the grand paintings of Lumley's ancestors must have been expected by the King, he might well have been surprised when he came upon the portrait of 'Lady Jane Graye, executed'. The portrait of the 'nine-day queen' is catalogued alongside other female representations, including 'Lady Katheryn Graye, Married to the Earle of Hertfourd', 'the Countess of Arundell second wife to the late old Earle of Arundell', 'the Countess Arundell, wife to Phillip Earle of Arundell', 'yor Lo: first wife daughter

to the old Earle of Arundell', 'yor second wife' and 'Mary Duches of Norfolke, daughter to the last Earl of Arundell'.[3] What is immediately apparent from the inventory grouping is that Jane Grey was not classified with other members of the Tudor and Stuart dynasties, but with Lumley's in-laws; his first wife, Jane; and her father, Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel. While Grey might have been a tragic pawn to many of her contemporaries and a Protestant martyr to those who subsequently read John Foxe's account, to John Lumley she was his first wife's first cousin and, as such, deserved to be catalogued alongside her family.

The two families, the Greys and Fitzalans, were, however, very different: the Fitzalans were Catholic and politically astute, surviving the consecutive reigns of Henry, Edward, Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, while the Greys were Protestant and seemingly doomed to perverse and self-destructive choices. The inclusion of Jane Grey's portrait in Lumley's collection disrupts the expected discourses of the day, breaking down the carefully policed division between Protestant and Catholic and breaching the complex political allegiances of the court. Yet, the picture cannot have been a random inclusion in a set of family likenesses, since Jane Grey figures again within the Lumley inventory, this time not on canvas but in the manuscript play of Jane Lumley, John's first wife and Arundel's elder daughter.[4]

Jane Lumley's translation of Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia at Aulis* belongs to the meta-narrative of the Trojan War, depicting the moment when Iphigenia is supposedly sacrificed by her father, Agamemnon, in order to allow the Greeks to sail from Aulis to commence their war against Troy. The similarity between the classical play and contemporary events has been noted by the most recent of those few critics who have investigated Lumley's text. Stephanie Hodgson-Wright comments on 'the contemporary resonances of Jane Lumley's text'; Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson point out that the play bears a 'striking resemblance to dilemmas in her [Lumley's] own aristocratic patriarchal family'; and Betty S. Travitsky indicates that the characters may be 'related to some of the principal actors in the contemporary debacle.[5] The overall parallel between the Greek narrative and contemporary events is striking: in each instance a young woman, through marriage (real and pretended), is sacrificed for the greater good of her country and her father's political ambitions. By representing contemporary events Jane Lumley was participating in what had already become an accepted function of contemporary drama, especially during the reign of Mary Tudor. By the time she translated the play in the mid-1550s, religious and political allegory was a common aspect of mid-sixteenth-century drama.[6] For

Jane Lumley's contemporaries the characters would have been readily recognisable both within a familial context, as well as in terms of the dramatic discourses of the contemporary court. As such, Jane's Lumley's *Iphigenia* served as a textual culmination of the Fitzalan/Lumley discourse that pivoted around a confluence of politics, faith and familial interests. This chapter sets out to explore the initiation of that discourse through Henry Fitzalan's involvement in the overthrow of Jane Grey, thereby identifying two of the key elements in the formation of a familial discourse, initiator and the specifics of time and place. More particularly, the chapter traces the way in which the discourse was developed in Jane Lumley's writing and how her play, *Iphigenia*, served to interrogate gendered power relationships within the family context.

II

Henry Fitzalan

The beginning of the Fitzalan family narrative may be set roughly in 1549 when Henry Maltravers (Fitzalan's son) left Cambridge University before graduating, as was common among Catholic scholars, and returned home to Arundel House, London, accompanied by another young Catholic student, John Lumley, who immediately made his home with his friend's family. By 1550 Lumley had dedicated a translation of Erasmus's *Institution of a Christian Prince* to Maltraver's father, the Earl of Arundel, addressing him as an 'obedient son', implying that by this point he had already married Maltravers older sister, Jane.[7] From this point it seems that the three studious young people worked together on translations, for the inventory of the Lumley library records

> Exercises in Greeke and Latin of the lorde Matravers, the lorde and ladie Lumley, done when they were yoonge, of theire owne hande wrytinge, bownde together, manuscript.[8]

These early works by Jane Lumley, her brother and her husband suggest the quiet scholarly days of 1550 when Arundel was still accepted at Edward's court and the family were allowed to live in relative peace.

By November 1551 Arundel had been imprisoned in the Tower of London, an incarceration that was to extend to more than twelve months. Earlier that year Arundel's first wife, Katherine Grey, had died thereby severing the Fitzalans' connections with the Protestant Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk. Arundel remarried within the year, this time to Mary

Ratcliffe, whose family was noted for its staunch Catholicity. The way in which familial allegiances mirrored divisions in faith and in political groupings during the Early Modern period is exemplified in the history of Henry Fitzalan, since, through his marriage, he succeeded in alienating himself from the dominant Protestant group of Edward VI's court and reasserting his links with Catholicism. The young people of his household, Jane and John Lumley and Maltravers, could not but be affected by the rapid decline in the political fortunes of their family and there were, by then, two more scholars. Arundel's younger daughter, Mary, would have been twelve in 1551 and ready to begin a formal education. In addition, Mary Ratcliffe, Arundel's new wife, had brought the stepson from her first marriage, John, to live with them. While Arundel was in the Tower, it would have been Mary Ratcliffe who would have had immediate control over the education of the young people in her charge, and it is hardly surprising that one of the tasks she encouraged the young people to undertake were translations dedicated as New Year's gifts to their paternal benefactor. Arundel spent the new year of 1552 in the Tower of London and although he might well have been visited by his wife Mary, it is unlikely that his daughters or the young John Ratcliffe would have been allowed to accompany her. They could, however, send books.

There are no presentations extant from either Maltravers or John Lumley; by 1552 they would have ceased to participate in any classes arranged at home, being liberated by their age, gender and political responsibilities. For precisely the same reasons, it is also possible that the two young men would have been given leave to visit Arundel in the Tower and therefore had no need to send any reminder of their filial duty. The collection of extant manuscript material was produced, therefore, by Arundel's two daughters, who remained at home, and by his young stepson who was still studying. The works by these three may be classed into two groups: the formal presentation volumes and the rough drafts that are contained in Jane's commonplace book. It is possible to date and order the majority of manuscripts by correlating three pieces of evidence: first, the change in Mary's signature after her marriage; second, from the order of rough copies in Jane's commonplace book; and third from the use, by all three, of the same paper. For example, Mary's second volume of translations of Greek sententiae is prepared on the same pot and flower watermarked paper that John used for his translation of Catherine Parr's book of prayers and that Jane used for her formal presentation copy of Isocrates' oration to Archidamus, as well as for a section of her commonplace book. By tracing successive translations back, it is possible to identify the first two New Year's gifts given to

Arundel during his imprisonment. These were a translation of Isocrates' oration to Demonicus by Jane, and of a series of similitudes, which were taken from classical authors, by Mary (MSS Royal 15 A ix and 12 A iv). The gift giving was repeated in 1553, with a translation of Isocrates' second oration to Nicolem by Jane, of a commentary on Alexander Severus by Mary and of Severus's letter to the Gordian senators by John (MSS Royal 15 A ix and 12 A iv). The choice of texts for an academic exercise was sensible, for the older and more experienced Jane undertook a translation from Greek into Latin, while the younger two worked upon transmuting English into Latin. The topics were similarly suitable. Jane focused on political matters; Isocrates' first two orations offer advice to young rulers. The choices made by Mary and John were also appropriate: Alexander Severus's reputation had, by the sixteenth century, been enhanced to that of an exemplar of youthful good government, and in 1541 Sir Thomas Elyot had translated the possibly apocryphal work of Eucolpius into English as *The Image of Governance*.[9] Given that the Lumley collection included four of Elyot's works, it is probable that Mary and John were translating from Elyot's transmission, again suitable for younger scholars.[10] There is, however, a subtle, but interesting, shift between the texts chosen for 1552 and 1553. In 1552, the oration to Demonicus focuses on basic ethics, while the similitudes cover a range of commonplace pronouncements. However, by 1553, the advice to Nicolem and the example of Alexander Severus are explicitly political and directly concerned with a young king who has inherited the throne from a strong father and needs good advice from his subjects. Such a topic must have been close to the heart of the twelfth Earl of Arundel as he watched in the new year of 1553, alienated from the young king Edward whose father, Henry VIII, had been his own godfather, as well as one of his closest allies. The alteration in the subject matter of the translations undertaken by Arundel's children occurs precisely at the point when freedom and political bitterness allowed the Earl to renew his influence over their studies.

But although 1553 began badly, the year proved to be one of the turning points for the Fitzalan family, as it was for many of the English Catholic nobility. July saw a succession of three rulers: Edward who died on the 6th, Jane Grey who reigned for the legendary nine days and Mary I who was presented with the great seal by Arundel himself. The Fitzalans' ascendancy was not, however, the result of a simple turn in the wheel of political destiny or of a just recompense offered to those who had sustained what they considered to be the true faith. Rather, this familial success was brought about by the covert and exceedingly effective intervention of Arundel himself. Without his opportunistic

contrivance, particularly in one key speech, Jane Grey might have remained on the throne with all the realignments in political, cultural and spiritual history that this would have necessitated. Of course, history is replete with moments of 'what if?' and there is nothing to be gained from pursuing such a line of enquiry in Arundel's case. Yet, it is important to trace the way in which his role in national politics impacted upon his immediate family and the way that this, in turn, affected the subsequent development of its familial discourse.

In the summer of 1553 events moved with extreme rapidity. In June, Edward's attempt to prevent the succession of his sisters to the throne by declaring them illegitimate was protested against strongly by Arundel, although he ultimately signed the necessary letters. When the young King died, Arundel appeared to concur with Northumberland's desire to crown Jane Grey as queen, but at the same time he was communicating secretly with Mary. This superficial support for the Protestant contingent continued as Fitzalan accompanied Jane on her progress from Sion House to the Tower in preparation for her coronation. Given Arundel's rank it is highly likely that his wife Mary and his two daughters, Jane and Mary, would have been among the noble women who gathered to welcome the new Queen. Immediately after this event, Northumberland was persuaded, by Arundel and others, to lead the attack against the army that Mary Tudor was amassing, thus leaving the discontented nobles to their own devices. Arundel seems to have succeeded in extracting the company from the Tower where Northumberland had hoped to contain them, and they convened a meeting at Baynard's Castle during which Arundel, in a powerful and eloquent speech, urged the lords to join Mary's cause. Although this meeting was supposed to be relatively secret, attended only by those lords who covertly supported Mary's claim to the throne, Arundel's speech seems to have had such immediate political sway upon those present that its effects were rapidly disseminated throughout the city. That same evening the people of London proclaimed Mary queen, and Arundel set off on horseback to bring her the welcome news.

The events of July 1553 are recounted in an anonymous life of Henry Fitzalan, which appears as another of the Royal manuscripts in the British Library, as well as in the Lumley inventory of 1609.[11] From the dedication the author seems to have written the text shortly after Arundel's death and the whole is addressed specifically to his descendants for

> The perpetuall memorie of a Personage very honorable, and that yee who shall remaine of his bloode may the rather reioyce of so noble a Progenitor.[12]

It is likely that the work was commissioned by John Lumley who undertook the biographical account of his father-in-law that was placed on the funeral monument in the college chapel at Arundel.[13] By 1580, when the Duke finally died, the three children of his 'bloode' were dead, but John Lumley, his son-in-law, had remained close to Arundel since his early inscription 'obedient son' in the translation of Erasmus, so that the biographer's courteous misnomer is understandable. There can be no question, however, about Fitzalan's role as 'Progenitor' and this position is echoed by the way in which he initiated the familial discourse in his speech at Baynard's Castle.

Fitzalan began with an assertion of Mary's right to the throne and the importance of supporting her succession via 'just title of inheritance' and through the 'bloode royal'. Arundel then reassured the nobles that in switching allegiance they were not 'shewinge thearby youre variableness', but rather amending 'an errour'. And he warned them of the civil bloodshed that would follow if they failed to support Mary, with 'brother against brother, unckle againste nephewe, ffather in lawe against sonne in lawe, cosen against cosen'. Finally, with the full skill of Early Modern rhetorical practice, he concluded with a seemingly irrefutable argument:

> For my owne part, I se not what course can be taken more reasonable and lawfull, then for us all, joyntlye with one consent, to render obedience to our Queene, peace to the people, and libertye to our selves.[14]

The speech proved effective, convincing the English nobility that by abiding by the laws of blood descent, civil strife would be avoided. Arundel's words were backed up by a short and contrasting speech given by the Earl of Pembroke:

> If my Lord of Arundell's perswasions cannot prevaile with you, eyther this sword shall make Mary Quene, or Ile lose my life.[15]

In other words, Pembroke's lightly veiled threat of physical violence bulwarked Arundel's rhetorical 'perswasions'. Such a politically astute combination suggests that Arundel and Pembroke might well have devised their speeches in advance of reaching Baynard's. The replication of their words in a number of contemporary texts implies further that the two men had prepared a pre-written version of events, which could be readily transmitted by their supporters in order to persuade nobles

around the country, as well as foreign powers, just as they had convinced the small group of immediate addressees. A record of the speeches was sent immediately to the Pope by Monsignor Commendone, who pointedly notes the difference between the two speakers:

> The 'arguments' [in the *Life* Arundel's 'perswasions'] purporting to mean the reason, the sword [of Pembroke], the force.[16]

Arundel's speech on the importance of blood descent and the avoidance of civil war expands from the moment and place of its pronouncement across social and political history, as well as into the annals of his own family's discourse. While the manuscript life of Arundel diligently records his achievements, it also allows us to perceive the discursive formation of the Fitzalan/Lumley familial identity. In this formulation, political acumen and the preservation of peace are linked together with the Catholic faith and the foregrounding of blood ties. Before considering the replication of Arundel's speech in relation the family's textual productivity, especially to Jane's commonplace book, it is necessary to outline the immediate political impact of Arundel's words. For, the ten minutes that it must taken Arundel to rehearse his speech proved to be a watershed in the lives of the Fitzalan family.

When Mary rode triumphantly into London on 3 August 1553, Arundel was at her side and he resumed this supportive role during the coronation procession. Other members of the Fitzalan family took parallel positions of note. Mary, Arundel's wife, dressed in crimson velvet with a silver underskirt, rode on horseback next to the new Queen's litter, and Jane, his daughter, sat in the third chariot of state following the Queen's.[17] Two days earlier, John Lumley, who sat with his wife in the procession, had been created a Knight of the Bath.[18] Arundel himself was appointed to the office of Lord High Steward to the Queen's household and was rewarded with numerous other signs of her favour. Arundel's support for Mary continued after her accession: he arrested Northumberland, participated in the trial of his erstwhile brother-in-law the Duke of Suffolk and was involved in the suppression of Wyatt's rebellion against the throne. The spoils exacted by Arundel and the leading Catholic nobility after Mary's accession, however, extended beyond political preferment, and Arundel's share of the booty was proportionate to his role in securing her the throne. The form of Arundel's treasure, however, proved to be distinctive, for his interest lay not in gold and jewels, but in books and a banqueting house.

III

The Fitzalan/Lumley library

One of the most extensive and scholarly libraries in Early Modern England belonged to the Protestant Archbishop, Cranmer. At his arrest in 1553, shortly after the Queen's accession, his goods were confiscated and sold along with other property belonging to 'attainted persons'.[19] However, by the time the inventory was made in September 1553 the library had vanished. There is no record of a sale to Arundel, yet Cranmer's books ended up recorded in the Lumley inventory and subsequently in the Royal collection at the British Library. There can be no question of the genealogical descent of the texts for the succession of names, 'Cranmer, Arundel and Lumley', inscribed on the first pages of many of the books clearly denotes their history. The books would have little monetary value at the time, so it is probable that Mary simply gave them to Arundel when he asked for them. What is surprising is that Arundel should have wanted such a scholarly collection in the first place. He was renowned for his lack of academic learning and his inability to speak any foreign language at all. As the editors of the Lumley inventory point out,

> To a man of Arundel's tastes and Catholic background the poorly bound, heavily annotated and narrowly theological books of Cranmer must have held few personal attractions; but there was his son-in-law to consider.[20]

While fully corroborating the comments on Arundel himself, it must be noted that since the mid-1950s, when Sears and Johnson undertook their work, our understanding of Early Modern women's use and composition of books has altered radically. The last phrase of the quotation might usefully be emended to read, 'but there was his *family* to consider'. Arundel would certainly have privileged his scholarly son-in-law in terms of the book acquisitions, but considering his previous investment in the humanist education of all his children, Maltravers, Jane, Mary and John Ratcliffe, it is highly likely that he would have expected all of them to benefit from this rather unusual plunder. There is evidence in the form of Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia* that she not only read, but also probably translated from one of Cranmer's works, the *Euripidis Hecuba Iphigenia tragediae graece*.[21] For the Fitzalans and Lumleys, the acquisition of Cranmer's library expanded the range of their scholarly activities.

However, the books also represent two immediate developments within the familial discourse. First, collections were to become increasingly important to Arundel's heirs, of books, portraits and statuary, as has already been indicated through references to the Lumley inventory of books and James I's acerbic comments on the extensive gallery at Lumley Castle. Second, religious and political identities were closely bound to the familial policy of acquisition, so that Cranmer's allegiance and faith represent an intrinsic element in Arundel's desire to obtain his property. Jane Lumley participated in the Fitzalan/Lumley familial discourse when she chose Cranmer's volume of Euripides' plays together with his book of Erasmus's Latin translation to write an English version of the tragedy of *Iphigenia*, which simultaneously commented upon the political and religious upheavals that brought about the Archbishop's own execution. Moreover, such a neat confluence of culture and policy within the family's pattern of revenge and retaliation was by no means unique.

IV

Nonsuch

Perhaps it was its name that first attracted Arundel's attention. Or, it might have been the fact that it had been designed and built by his admired godfather and monarch, Henry VIII. Whatever the reason for his interest, after having acquired Cranmer's library, the Duke began to covet the royal palace of Nonsuch. The manuscript life of Arundel describes his interest in Nonsuch almost as an act of pious duty:

> he … did not leave, till he had fullye finished it, in buildings, reparations, paviments, and gardens, in as ample and perfit sorte, as by the first intente and meaninge of the saide Kinge, his old maister, … and so it is nowe evident to be beholden, of all strangers and others, for the honour of this Realme, as a pearle thereof.[22]

Arundel's or the subsequent visitors' approbation for the small palace cannot be questioned, for in the 120 years of its existence the building seems to have been universally admired. As John Leland wrote,

> The Britans oft are wont to praise this place, For that through all The realme they cannot show the like, and Nonesuch they call it.[23]

Small wonder, therefore, that when Queen Mary decided to demolish the house, Arundel acquired the lease for an exchange of more profitable

property in Norfolk, the Letters Patent being dated 23 November 1556. However, Fitzalan's plans to obtain Nonsuch had begun at least two years previously.

When Mary rewarded Arundel with Nonsuch, she transferred the lease for the house and lands to the Duke from its previous caretaker, Thomas Cawarden, who had been in charge of the palace since the time of Henry VIII, but, as a Protestant, had benefited particularly during the reign of Edward VI. For example, he had received attainted goods from the estate of the Catholic Duke of Norfolk who had been imprisoned in the Tower. When Mary succeeded to the throne, Cawarden at first retained his position, although he was briefly imprisoned in the spring of 1554 during the period of Wyatt's rebellion. As Master of the Revels, Cawarden was in close contact with the reigning monarch's requests for various pageants and public displays. For example, in 1552 Edward issued him with a warrant for the provision of 'Toylles' for a progress, and in July 1553, during her brief reign, Jane Grey wrote to him asking for four tents to be delivered. These letters were both written on the paper commonly used by the crown to request items from Cawarden and he often used the same paper in reply. It is distinctive, with a watermark of a glove with a five-leaf flower emerging from the second finger.[24] The Cawarden papers at the Folger Shakespeare Library show a regular flow of these requests and responses between the Master of the Revels and the reigning monarchs. By late 1554, however, the paper emerges in the Lumley collection, and an awareness of exactly how the family acquired this material plays an important part in understanding the development of the familial discourse.

As Lord High Steward of Mary's household, Arundel would have had access to the paper commonly used to write to Cawarden in his official role. But in November 1554 Maltravers and John Lumley jointly wrote to Cawarden on the glove/flower paper ordering him to supply them with costumes, 'if it be possible of allmays', for a masque they wished to put on.[25] A possible reason for the entertainment was one of the two marriages within the Fitzalan family that occurred at this time, that of Mary to Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk and that of Maltravers to Anne Wentworth. The wedding celebrations of the former couple took place early in 1555, although it is likely that some sort of pre-nuptial agreement had been reached in 1554, either just before the death of Thomas Howard, the old Duke of Norfolk or immediately following.[26] This Thomas Howard was the same Duke of Norfolk who had been imprisoned for the whole of Edward's reign for his Catholic sympathies and whose goods had been given to the Master of the Revels, Thomas

Cawarden. In a particularly Fitzalan/Lumley combination of culture, politics and faith, the two brothers-in-law (Maltravers and Lumley) wrote to the soon-to-be imprisoned Cawarden demanding that he supply them with materials for a masque, which was most probably designed to celebrate their new brother-in-law, Thomas Howard, the son of the man Cawarden had taken property from. Moreover, in a double thrust of revenge the costumes they demanded might well have employed the sumptuous cloth formerly belonging to the Duke of Norfolk. And finally, to ensure that Cawarden understood the full political import of their demand, they wrote to him on his own paper. In November 1554, as Cawarden read the letter and certainly recognised the glove with its five-point flower, he must have realised that his own ascendancy was at an end and that Arundel's extended family were beginning to exact their revenge.

By the summer of 1556, the Master of the Revels was under arrest and Arundel had already begun to take possession of Nonsuch. It was Lumley who acted for Arundel in the acquisition and occupation of the palace and he demanded vacant access to the property by August 1557. It seems that Nonsuch became the Lumleys' primary residence and Jane was to be mistress of the household from the recorded move in 1557 to her death twenty years later.

One of the few illustrations of the palace during Jane's tenure was undertaken by a Flemish artist, Joris Hoefnagel, and it clearly depicts the numerous carvings and representations that adorned the walls. If Nonsuch was internally replete with textual representation, then its exterior was amassed with figures from history, mythology and allegory. Anthony Watson, the rector of Cheam and under Lumley's patronage, ascribed these images to Arundel:

> On the right and left front, at the expense of the Earl of Arundel, built-in pictures increase its grandeur and add a new point to its brilliance.[27]

The peopling of Nonsuch was a project initiated by Henry VIII and completed by Arundel and his family. Nor does Arundel seem to have been content with covering the walls with various portraits, for the gardens of Nonsuch were likewise filled with various devices. As Watson points out, the 'wilderness' was 'neither wild nor deserted'.[28] Arundel's familial discourse extended itself beyond the manipulation of real people, through the political strategies of the Early Modern court, to the accumulation of human representations and their subsequent deployment in a show of cultural supremacy. The whole process for the Fitzalan/Lumleys was not so much the attainment of power, but the way in which artistic

and scholarly materials could be incorporated into a public statement of that power and used in a display of triumph over those who had opposed them.

Nonsuch was designed to demonstrate the superior wit of its owners in a 'non' too subtle fashion. In the gardens, apart from the expected labyrinth, guests encountered an echoic arch that magnified and appeared to respond to their words, and wandering through the gardens they might have stepped on a stone that caused a fountain concealed in a stone pyramid to drench them.[29] Within the gardens Arundel and Lumley lavished most of their attention upon a small banqueting house. Martin Biddle in his comprehensive and informative account of the gardens at Nonsuch includes a plan that reconstructs the layout.[30] The banqueting house was approached along a shaded sandy walk through the wilderness that led to the grove of Diana in which there was a statue of the goddess within a fountain. As Biddle suggests, this fountain was most probably the one recorded and illustrated in the 1590 inventory and described as 'Caryatid fountain with porphury crown'.[31] The banqueting house stood beyond the fountain and was set on a small hill so that it overlooked the grove. It was constructed as a square timber frame so that it could also be used as a pavilion in which people could sit to watch entertainments. Within this building Lumley had inscribed sententiae in praise of the goddess Diana, which were recorded and translated from Latin by Thomas Platter in 1599:

> The goddess of chastity gives no unchaste counsels; she does not counsel disgrace, but avenges it; they are the fruits of an evil mind and an evil spirit … From an impure fountain impure springs, from an unpleasant mind a sight defiled … Shade for the heated, a seat for the weary; in the shade thou shalt not become shady, not sitting grow serpent-eyed.[32]

These details remained uncertain until 1960 when an excavation of the site uncovered the first permanent banqueting house built in England.[33]

There had been a number of temporary banqueting houses, the construction of which had sometimes been overseen by Cawarden in his role as the Master of the Revels. These buildings had various functions, as W.R. Streitberger notes in his book, *Court Revels, 1485–1559*,

> The term 'banqueting house' is applied loosely to describe these multipurpose structures. They were used for dinners, suppers, banquets, and for revels.[34]

They were of various designs, sometimes encompassing a performance space within the building or constructed to offer privacy to the spectators as they watched an entertainment produced outside. Such enclosure was particularly important for women, since they could view a play performed in the public space of the garden, protected by the private seclusion of the banqueting house.

The banqueting house at Nonsuch followed the enclosed design with an additional four viewing balconies arranged at each corner. In the mid-sixteenth century alone there are records of banqueting houses being built at Hyde Park, Hampton Court, Chipping Campden, and Gorhambury, as well as the one at Nonsuch.[35] The reason for their overall royal provenance is that they were prohibitively expensive to build and therefore exceedingly valuable to those who managed to obtain one. The first recorded use by Arundel of the banqueting house at Nonsuch was as part of the lavish entertainments provided for Elizabeth I when she visited the palace in August 1559. There were banquets, a masque, a play, a view of the hunt, and music, all of which were designed to impress the young Queen. The play was performed by the Children of St Paul's, under the supervision of Sebastian Westcott, as choirmaster; Master Philips; and John Heywood the dramatist. There is, however, no reason to suppose that having acquired Nonsuch by 1557, Arundel and his family would not have used the banqueting house before Elizabeth I's visit. Although Mary had been somewhat reluctant to fund court drama, from the letter Maltravers and John Lumley sent to Cawarden it is quite clear that, by the end of 1554, the two young men were fully acquainted with the production of private entertainments. Moreover, Arundel's employment of the Children of St Paul's, who had frequently been recruited by the Catholic Mary, as well as John Heywood, whose family ties to the Mores were well known, shows that in preparing to entertain his new queen, the Duke simply employed the tried and trusted resources of the previous reign. It is highly unlikely that having acquired a much-coveted banqueting house and having at least a rough understanding of household theatre, Arundel and his family would have neglected the space with its dramatic and propagandist potential. The evidence of Jane Lumley's translation of *Iphigenia* further emphasises the dramatic aspect of the family's cultural interests.[36]

Until recently, Jane Lumley's work has been categorised as a translation exercise, even though it contains sufficient contemporary political allusions to reveal it as the work of an independent author. The play was performed successfully in the late twentieth century as a radical treatment of a script never fully intended for performance.[37] However, if the

evidence of the Fitzalan/Lumley familial discourse within its manuscript, locational, and chronological context is brought to bear on the text, then a contemporary performance of original import begins to look much more plausible. The three elements, access to a space already defined by its dramatic potential, the acquisition of a library that contained a number of plays that could be translated and the dating of Lumley's work through comparisons with those of other members of family together throw new light on Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia*.

V

Jane Lumley

Looking at the final pieces in Jane Lumley's commonplace book, the sententiae, it becomes possible to appreciate just how important the banqueting house was to her. There are two phrases, '*acerba audire tolerabilius, quâm videre*' and '*nemo poluto quest animo mederi*'. The latter sententiae is remarkably close to the sayings inscribed, at John Lumley's orders, on the walls of the banqueting house, which were translated by Platter as 'they are the fruits of an evil mind and an evil spirit . . . From an impure fountain impure springs, from an unpleasant mind a sight defiled'.[38] The use of such sententious and simplistic phrases was certainly an element of the Fitzalan/Lumley familial discourse. Mary translated two volumes of them for her father, Jane Lumley includes two in her commonplace book and John had them inscribed throughout Nonsuch, as well as on a variety of family monuments. In addition, the Royal manuscript collection at the British Library includes a book of sententiae given by 'Sir Nicholas Bacon Knyghte to his very good Ladye the Ladye Lumley' in which he notes,

> Sentences Painted in the Lorde Keparis Gallery at Gorhambury: and Selected by him owt of divers authors, and sent to the Good Ladye Lumley at her Desire.[39]

The 'Gallery at Gorhambury' was none other than Nicolas Bacon's own banqueting house. Like its counterpart at Nonsuch, it was situated in the garden and had certainly been completed with a decoration of busts and inscriptions by the time of Elizabeth's visit in 1572.[40] While it is impossible to ascertain the actual reason for Jane Lumley's 'Desire', her fascination with a parallel banqueting house decorated with sententiae is perfectly understandable. At the same time, it identifies Jane Lumley's

personal interest in the edifice and decoration of the first permanent buildings associated with dramatic performance in Early Modern England. There are, however, two further associations that occur between the text of *Iphigenia* and the banqueting house at Nonsuch.

The debate about the accuracy and literary quality of Jane Lumley's translation has been considerable, from David Greene's qualified admiration, through Frank D. Crane's damning critique, to the more recent scholarly rediscovery of Jane Lumley's work by Diane Purkiss, Stephanie Hodgson-Wright and Marta Straznicky.[41] It is, therefore, important to note the changes made by Lumley to both the Euripidean Greek original and to Erasmus's Latin translation. First, there is evidence that Lumley intended her script to be spoken aloud, if not acted, since the manuscript lists the characters under the heading, 'The names of the *spekers* in this Tragedie' (emphasis mine).[42] A reinforcement of this argument may be seen in a series of further alterations that imbue the text with a clear sense of spatial reference. For example, at the beginning of the play Agamemnon begins to regret that he has been persuaded to send for his daughter, Iphigenia, so that her sacrifice might lift the calm preventing the Greek fleet from sailing against Troy. As the King sits by 'candle lighte' writing a letter to his wife that will countermand the order, thus saving his daughter, his old servant Senex enters and agrees to bear the letter home to Greece. Agamemnon warns him not to 'staie by the plesante springes, and tarie not under the shadoinge trees'. As Senex leaves, the Chorus denotes the end of the first scene with the speech,

> What is this? me thinkes I see Menelaius strivinge withe Agamemnons servante.

At this point Senex and Menelaus enter struggling and as the letters are seized the old servant cries out, 'Helpe O Agamemnon', causing the King to rush forward and reproach his brother with the theft of the 'letters'.[43] These first two scenes provide evidence that Lumley had a performance in mind when she undertook the translation.

To begin, all the quotations above have been altered from the original Greek text and the speech given by the Chorus has been cut from 139 lines of formal poetry to a single sharp prose directive. The changes are all commensurate with a contemporising of the scene, so that the lamp becomes a candle, the scroll is described as a letter and the forest is transformed into a garden-like pleasant shade with springs. These differences fitted with the material expectations of the Early Modern audience in general, as well as expressly answering the demands of a performance at

Nonsuch in the late 1550s. Dramatic productions at banqueting houses were usually undertaken at night, so that a candlelit scene would have been a staging necessity. In addition, the 'plesante springes' and 'shadoinge trees' were common both to Early Modern pastoral convention and to the specific outdoor setting or the 'wilderness' of the gardens at Nonsuch. Added to this is the script's requirement for action. Menelaus strives with Senex and then breaks the seals of the letters on stage, an action that is specifically heralded by Lumley through the Chorus's speech. Lumley also omits the long rhetorical passages that would have been unsuitable for a public entertainment. The first scene is not so much a translation as a reworking of a Greek play to answer the necessities of an Early Modern banqueting house performance.

There is another alteration in the play, this time in the final scene, which suggests a further link with Nonsuch. At the conclusion of the play the soldiers lead Iphigenia away to be sacrificed. Almost immediately the Nuncius returns and informs Clytemnestra that her daughter has been miraculously saved by the goddess. Just as 'the whole hooste began to desier the goddes Diana, that she wolde accepte the sacrifice of the virgins blode', Iphigenia had 'vanisshed sodenlye awaye' and a 'white harte' was found lying before the altar.[44] Lumley's translation of Euripides' Greek version of the deity's name, Artemis, into the Latinised Diana is explicable both in terms of her own choice of the vernacular as well as in her use of Erasmus's Latin version of the play. However, with the additional reference to virginity, it also suggests the specific location of the banqueting house at Nonsuch. The most obvious, and perhaps only, way for the actors to exit with Iphigenia was along the gravel path leading to the grove of Diana. Although it is unlikely that the Diana fountain would have been in place, since Watson makes no specific reference to it, at the time he described the area (c. 1582), the site was already known as 'Diana her woodde' and 'A Stately Bower for Diana'.[45] A performance of the play would have been possible in 1558, which predated by just a year the known entertainment arranged for Elizabeth when the Children of St Paul's put on an unknown play.

The Children of St Paul's were regular players at Elizabeth I's court, as well as being involved in a number of entertainments before her accession in 1558. They also had direct links to Arundel's household, since apart from the 1558 play, they had sung dirges at the funeral of Jane's sister, Mary. There are, however, only two plays that we know they definitely performed, one of which was entitled *Iphigenia*, a tragedy shown at court on 28 December 1571, which E.K. Chambers records as lost.[46] It is impossible to know if Jane Lumley's play was the one used by the

Children of St Paul's. However, the evidence of the textual alterations, the presence of a dramatic space and the close dating of the play to other familial productions evidence that Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia* was written for a possible performance at the banqueting house in Nonsuch, even if that performance never took place.

VI

Iphigenia

Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia* combined the various strands of the Fitzalan/Lumley familial discourse in a more succinct form any of the texts produced by her relations. Generically the Greek tragedy enabled a coalescing of political, spiritual and familial interests in a narrative that dealt with the key events of mid-fifteenth-century England. In terms of content, it represented a link between scholarly activity and the avid desire to collect that remained essential Fitzalan/Lumley attributes for over a century. It also located these concerns in a gendered discourse, in which the role of women in their familial context, as well as in the political sphere, was foregrounded. And rather than present this assembly of various aspects of the family's discourse in the more expected literary forms for a female author, Jane Lumley chose to express them in a performable English script, while living in a house that had a functioning theatrical space. In order to understand why she undertook such a radical alteration in the form, language and content of the work, it is useful to locate her play within the wider context of household theatre. When the work is situated within the political frame of her familial discourse, as well as within the perspective of a possible staging, Lumley's *Iphigenia* lays claim to a recognisable place within the history of English drama.

The Tudor interludes and the household plays of the mid-sixteenth century have often been criticised for their failure to engage with the dominant political concerns of their day. More recent criticism has, however, outlined the way in which the plays did respond to contemporary debates in a tangential fashion quite unlike the direct challenges or subversions that became apparent in later sixteenth-century works. Critics now argue that we should not be startled by the overt support for the dominant hierarchy in most mid-sixteenth-century household theatre, since its purpose was to advise rather than confront the lord. For example, Greg Walker has noted that 'the plays represent as much a message from the household playwright to the patron as from the patron to the gathered household', so that lords were cajoled and persuaded to

'undertake far-reaching and radical political action'.[47] Moreover, Walker goes a long way towards identifying household theatre as the epitome of a familial discourse when he points out that

> When the Tudor royal or noble household, the extended family of the lord, gathered together for signal occasions such as a formal banquet or feast accompanied by an interlude and other entertainment, it was a distinct cultural event, with its own rules, codes of practice, and, I would want to stress, theoretical justification,

continuing one sentence later that

> It was also the occasion upon which the household most obviously presented itself, to itself as much as to outsiders, *as* a household, a single body with its own identity and purpose.[48]

Placed in its locational and chronological setting Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia* may be recognised as belonging to a scheme of household entertainment that encompassed dramatic performance as a 'distinct cultural event' and that served to define the 'identity and purpose' of the associated family.

As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, recent criticism of Jane Lumley's play has excavated its political allegory, linking the narrative events in the Greek text with the history of Jane Grey's nine-day reign. This comparison depends to a certain extent upon the shadowing of the real-life political figures by the fictional characters on stage. The employment of familial allegory in plays written by Early Modern women was common and particularly relevant in works which engage with a familial discourse. Lumley's drama demonstrates this double affinity. For example, there is a seemingly obvious connection between the play's titular heroine and the executed Queen. In addition, the ambitious and changeable Agamemnon may be seen to represent the Duke of Suffolk who is recorded by his contemporaries as having similar characteristics. By implication, therefore, Clytemnestra should represent Frances Brandon, Jane Grey's mother, but here there are difficulties since we know that the closeness depicted in the play between the Queen and her daughter had no parallel in real life. However, when Iphigenia is first brought to Aulis by her mother she is greeted by a chorus of women about whom Clytemnestra comments:

> This trulye is a token of good lucke that so manye noble women meate us.[49]

This could be interpreted as a simple mistranslation of the Greek since the same lines in Euripides' play are

> An omen of good I count your kindness and your gracious greeting.[50]

While Lumley's text departs from the Greek original (and Erasmus's translation into Latin), it makes perfect sense in terms of the contemporary political allegory. Jane Grey was escorted to the Tower as Queen by her mother, and she was met there by numerous noble women of whom Jane Lumley was one. Thus, in the case of Clytemnestra, we see a more complex set of allusions being made, on a historical level to Frances Brandon, but also in thematic terms to, as Stephanie Hodgson-Wright puts it, 'an idealised mother figure'.[51]

Similar half-identifications may be made between Thomas Wyatt and Achilles, both of whom attempt to save the doomed Jane/Iphigenia, and between Ulysses and Northumberland. In Lumley's play both Agamemnon and Menelaus openly acknowledge their fear of Ulysses:

> AGAMEMNON: Brother do you not feare Ulisses?
> MENELAUS: Yes trulye, for it dothe lie in his power to hurte either you or me.[52]

This directly contradicts Euripides' text and Erasmus's translation in which Menelaus asserts 'Odysseus cannot injure thee and me'.[53] If we turn to contemporary events the alteration makes sense, for it is quite clear that Suffolk (Agamemnon) did fear the all-powerful Northumberland (Ulysses). However, this still leaves us with the question of whom Jane Lumley refers to in the figure of Menelaus, the cuckolded husband of Helen.

Before excavating this final character, it is important to point out that in my analysis of Lumley's translation I have explained the changes and omissions as deliberate alterations with an interpretative signification, and not as mistranslations resulting from an inadequate understanding of Greek. Two of the earliest critics of the play, David H. Greene and Frank D. Crane, take the opposite view, the former asserting that 'Lady Lumley's translation is . . . very inaccurate' and the latter jibing that 'the translation is a childish performance, derived directly and carelessly from the Latin [of Erasmus], when the text is followed at all'.[54] Both, however, focus on limited sections of the play and neither questions their own twentieth-century concept of 'translation' as the most accurate rendition of the original possible. They fail to ask simple questions as to why Lumley leaves out certain parts, transposes speeches, chooses

one interpretation over another and, at times, completely rewrites the original so as to offer an opposing view. Which brings us back to Menelaus, for there is no other character in the play that is so 'worked upon' by Lumley in her 'inaccurate' and 'careless' translation.

The key sequence occurs when Menelaus accuses Agamemnon of betraying their cause by trying to save his daughter from sacrifice.[55] There are several changes worth noting. First, by transposing Agamemnon and Menelaus's speeches Lumley significantly improves the latter's standing and character. By implication, in Lumley's text Menelaus does have friends and treats them well. Agamemnon is, by contrast, presented as a weak, unreliable man who has been deservedly forsaken by his friends when his daughter is in jeopardy, a character and position which corresponds well with what history records of Suffolk. Second, Lumley omits the reference to Agamemnon and Menelaus having the same father, but she retains the reference to 'brother' (a point which is made repeatedly throughout this sequence). The most likely explanation for this relationship is that Lumley was aware that Agamemnon was Menelaus's brother-in-law or, if transposed onto contemporary events, Suffolk's brother-in-law, Henry Fitzalan, the Earl of Arundel. This reading of Lumley's text fits with the significant improvement made in Menelaus's character and would also explain Lumley's methodical omissions of all overt references to Helen as Menelaus's unfaithful wife. In addition, it makes sense of Lumley's slight alteration of the Greek original so that Menelaus accuses Agamemnon and 'Greece' of becoming 'bewitched of some god', since to the Catholic Fitzalans the England of 1553 might well have appeared to have been bewitched by the Protestant faith. By altering the original Greek text of Euripides, Jane Lumley was able to present the sixteenth-century political situation in a way that more closely represented her own familial affiliations.

In effect, Jane Lumley reworks Euripides in a manner that was a commonplace of household theatre during the mid-sixteenth century and turns her classical play into a close political allegory of her own age. In addition, she transmutes both narrative (the story of Helen) and character (Menelaus) in order to vindicate her own family's participation in the execution of Jane Grey, who was her first cousin. The play offers what amounts to a whitewash of Arundel's implication in the affair, and lays all the blame firmly at Suffolk's feet, or perhaps given the means of his death, at his neck. But what of Iphigenia, of the doomed Lady Jane Grey herself? There can be no doubt that even in her choice of play Lumley displays a keen sympathy for her cousin. There is no sense that Iphigenia/Jane Grey is responsible in any way for her own death; the

young women in text and reality are simply pawns within a patriarchal game of power. Nor is there any antipathy represented against another form of faith. The allusions to Diana (to whom Iphigenia is to be sacrificed) are most commonly read as relating to Mary I and through her to the Virgin Mary and Catholicism. Lumley appears to represent her cousin as a willing sacrifice for the Catholic cause. It is important to recall that Jane Lumley wrote *Iphigenia* before Foxe's *Acts and Monuments'* Protestant valorisation of Jane Grey appeared in print. Thus, like other eyewitness accounts of Lady Jane Grey's short rule, Lumley depicts the Queen as a helpless victim to be pitied, and not as the inspiring martyr she subsequently became.[56]

In this sense, Iphigenia's death becomes the focus for a set of conflicting spiritual and political discourses in which the eponymous heroine mutates continually between spiritual symbolism and political reality. But of course, given Jane Lumley's familial context, with its integrated political Catholicism, this was only to be expected. Perhaps the clearest evidence for the way in which Lumley's familial discourses pervade her depiction of Jane Grey comes from Iphigenia's comments to her parents. In an attempt to persuade her mother Iphigenia confesses:

> I muste nedes die, and will suffer it willingelye. Consider, I praie you mother, for what a lawfull cause I shalbe slaine. Dothe not bothe the destruction of Troie, and also the welthe of grece, whiche is the mooste frutefull country of the worlde, hange upon my deathe? And if this wicked enterprise of the Trojans be not revenged, than truly the grecians shall not kepe neither their children, nor yet their wives in peace: And I shall not onlie remedie all thes thinges withe my deathe: but also get a glorious renowne to the grecians for ever.[57]

Initially this speech appears to echo the Jane Grey's letter to her father and her final scaffold speech:

> Father, although it hath pleased God to hasten my death by you, by whom my life should rather have been lengthened; yet can I so patiently take it, as I yield God more hearty thanks for shortening my woeful days . . . in this I may account myself blessed, that washing my hands with the innocency of my fact my guiltless blood may cry before the Lord, Mercy to the innocent![58]

But there are manifest differences: Jane Grey blames her father for her fate, she asserts her innocence and defines her willing death solely in

terms of a spiritual sacrifice for the Protestant cause. Iphigenia, on the other hand, offers her life up for the good of her country and her people. Indeed, Lumley's 'inaccurate' rendition of Euripides' words do not recall Jane Grey's heroic comments, but evoke the Earl of Arundel's speech to the nobles of the realm when he persuaded them to abandon his niece to her fate and proclaim the legitimate rule of Mary Tudor. Arundel warned them that

> these factions would bring about the total ruin of this Kingdom, because you would see the brother against the brother, the uncle against his nephew, the father-in-law against his son-in-law, the cousin against the cousin and so on, and you will witness enmity and hatred arise within those who are of the same blood and most strictly related and of the most noble of this Kingdom. And through it the forces of this crown will fail, owing to such dissension, which will ultimately bring into the Country foreign armies, and we may expect to find ourselves at the mercy of the foreign soldiers, with our properties, our children and wives, with the complete ruin of our nobility.[59]

The Earl appeared to claim that he condoned the overthrow and ultimate execution of Jane Grey, not because he was a Catholic opposing her staunch Protestantism, but because the division of the country into warring factions would lead to the same sort of national disintegration and defeat envisaged by Iphigenia in Jane Lumley's play. One noble is sacrificed to save the entire nobility, one cousin must die to ensure that others cousins, those of the 'same blood' could exist in peace. Thus, the ritual sacrifice of Greek drama, so essentially familial, was enacted by the nobility of Tudor England, and in her play Jane Lumley makes a final affirmation that blood is thicker than faith and more subtly binding than gender.

VII

Conclusion

It is unlikely that Jane Lumley continued to write or translate as no further works are mentioned in either the 1590 or 1609 inventories of the Lumley library. The familial discourse was, however, perpetuated. John Lumley continued to collect books and portraits and statues, filling his various homes with the static representations of those his wife had brought to life in her play. Mary Fitzalan's son, Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel (1557–95), while imprisoned in the Tower of London translated

Catholic tracts and authored a variety of sectarian prose pieces, including a letter to Elizabeth I. Subsequently, his son, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (1585–1646), became a renowned collector of art, who inspired similar apocryphal stories as his cousin, John Lumley. It was noted that

> Sir Francis Bacon coming into the Earl of Arundel's garden, where there were a great number of ancient statues of naked men and women, made a stand, and as astonished, cried out, *The resurrection*.[60]

From James I's allusion to 'Adam' and Bacon's comment upon the 'resurrection' it is clear that by the turn of the century the Lumley/Fitzalan familial discourse aspired to a dynastic perpetuation of somewhat grandiose proportions. The comic tone of these comments is reinforced by the way in which Thomas Howard was known for his cult of family history and his out-of-date manner of dressing. He was, as David Howarth points out, 'an awkward and sometimes embarrassing figure at court'.[61] By the mid-seventeenth century the supreme power of blood ties had diminished and the role of the familial discourse was sustainable only through a determined effort that was often coupled with faith. Like the More family, the Fitzalan/Lumleys' spiritual beliefs ensured that familial bonds persisted beyond the lifetimes of the original household. But the cultural activities of the Mores were bulwarked with the most important Catholic martyrdom of sixteenth-century England and with 150 years of textual productivity. The Fitzalan/Lumleys' productive span of less than ten years could never hope to emulate such a familial achievement. Nevertheless, death recurs as a final uniting and perpetuating motif.

The origin of this last element in the Lumley/Fitzalan familial discourse developed during the mid-sixteenth century. The two funerals, of Arundel's daughter and of his second wife, were elaborate affairs. Both Marys were accorded lavish funerals with Jane Lumley acting as chief mourner in each case. The coffin of Mary Fitzalan, the second wife of Arundel, ended up, however, not in the church of St Clement's Dane in London with her stepdaughter, but in the College Chapel at Arundel. It seems possible that she was moved there mistakenly, being believed to be Mary Fitzalan, Arundel's daughter, since the younger Mary's grandson, Thomas Howard Earl of Arundel, asked in his will:

> If my grandmother of Norfolk's body could bee found in St Clement's church, I desire it might be caryed to Arundell, and there have some memory of her[62]

The habit of collecting within the Fitzalan/Lumley family seems to have become excessive in the case of Thomas Howard with his almost cult-like attempt to create a museum of family corpses.

Finally, Jane Lumley's own funeral was recorded in a finely painted and beautifully coloured roll.[63] It depicts the 'Corpes' being carried by eight gentlemen, with four standard bearers, and four esquires to bear the pall. The coffin was followed by other dignitaries according to their rank, as well as a series of female mourners led by the Countess of Surrey and including Lord Lumley's mother and sister. But the sumptuous preparation of the roll is at odds with the importance of the woman it celebrated. By 1577 when Jane died, the Catholic Lumleys had ceased to have power or influence at court, having been involved, with Arundel, in successive Catholic plots to overthrow Elizabeth I. Jane's actual position is indicated by the telling note that, instead of two barons, her corpse was followed by two minor knights, Sir John Selyngoer and Sir Thomas Browne. Although Arundel could supply 181 servants to follow the coffin and John Lumley could arrange for a lavish representation of her cortege, neither could disguise the fact that twenty years after Jane Lumley had triumphantly moved into Nonsuch, she had become, along with her family, an unimportant figure on the political stage of the Elizabethan court. The Fitzalan/Lumleys continued to perpetuate their failing familial discourse, but there was to be no clear textual succession from that brief moment of productivity in the mid-sixteenth century.

Although brief, the Lumley familial discourse demonstrates the key elements necessary for the construction of an individualised discursive formation. Henry Fitzalan's initiating speech, which supported Mary's claim to the throne, set the parameters of the discourse as one that combined faith and politics with self-interest. But what began as a simple mechanism for preferment combined with spiritual conviction became a more wide-ranging combination of power, revenge and cultural acquisitiveness. For Fitzalan, the simple disgrace or imprisonment of an enemy was insufficient, for he also coveted their belongings, and this drive towards an excessive display of ownership was replicated by his daughter and her husband, Jane and John Lumley, and the descendants of his other daughter, Mary, particularly Thomas Howard. The desire to accumulate text, figures, images and objects is evidenced throughout the whole of the Lumley familial self-representation: from Henry Fitzalan's obtaining of Cranmer's Library and Cawardine's tenure at Nonsuch, through John Lumley's predilection for books, paintings and statuary, to Thomas Howard's obsessive attempt to bring the corpses of his blood relatives together. This drive to collect was initiated, not by a love of scholarship

or art, but by the perception of art and literature as a means of displaying power and retaliating against perceived enemies. The pendulum swings of mid-sixteenth century politics inevitably saw the parallel fluctuation of fortunes among the Catholic and Protestant nobility, but it was distinctive of the Lumley familial discourse that not only should revenge be enacted, but that the disgraced figure should be aware of the Lumleys' triumph.

5
'As I, for one, who thus my habits change', Mary Wroth and the Abandonment of the Sidney/Herbert Familial Discourse[1]

I

The Sidney/Herbert family

A seemingly perfect example of an Early Modern familial discourse coalesces about that pre-eminent Renaissance family, the Sidneys. Together, Philip Sidney's ideal knighthood, his brother Robert's careful Neoplatonism, Mary Sidneys pious scholasticism, Mary Wroth's innovative independence and William Herbert's worldly statecraft offer a tantalising glimpse of a literary group that apparently perpetuated a successful image of homogenous identity for half a century. It is a commonplace of contemporary literary studies that the Sidney/Herbert familial group produced some of the most influential and pioneering writing of their age. The Early Modern recognition of Philip Sidney's pre-eminence has, in the twentieth century, been bulwarked by critical analyses of Mary Sidney's translations, the poetry of Robert Sidney and William Herbert, and Mary Wroth's innovative writings, which include poetry, drama and prose. Moreover, critics have increasingly recognised the way in which the Sidney/Herbert writings both share literary formulations and embed themselves within familial referents that often employ autobiographical material. This chapter draws on these earlier readings, such as Margaret Hannay's *Philip's Phoenix* and Gary Waller's *The Sidney Family Romance*.[2]

The first chapters of this book traced the development of the More and Lumley familial discourses, beginning with the necessity of initiating figures – Thomas More and Henry Fitzalan. For the Sidney/Herberts, however, a parallel description of the foundation is unnecessary, since Philip Sidney's pervasive influence on his siblings and their children is

readily accepted. For example, when Robert Sidney was a young man, his father exhorted him to imitate his older brother, Philip, since 'he ys a rare ornament of thys age', and P. J. Croft notes that Robert's poetry 'discloses many echoes of Philip's verse'.[3] Mary Sidney's reworking of Philip's prose and poetry demonstrates their closeness, as does the evocation of her in contemporary writing as beset with grief at his death, and Wroth similarly identifies herself in print as 'Neece to the ever famous, and renowned Sir Philip Sidney'.[4] Nevertheless, although nostalgic emulation might have tinged the Protestant politics of Philip Sidney's successors, they also participated fully in the issues of their own age. Thus, Robert's Neoplatonism is more pronounced than that of Philip, Mary's formal experimentalism more omnipresent and William Herbert's cavalier lyricism less serious. Of all the Sidney/Herberts, however, Mary Wroth provides the most compelling combination of loyalty and radical challenge to the primary familial discourse. As the last Sidneian vocaliser and the final inheritor of her family's literary productivity, she was in a unique position to encapsulate the familial discourse. In order to explore the ways in which Wroth reproduces the Sidney/Herbert familial writing, this chapter will focus particularly upon her play *Love's Victory*, a text which appears to present, through its form and characterisations, a microcosmic view of her family and their cultural positions. At the same time, however, it is important to recognise that Wroth was a radical and innovative writer and that, while an exploration of *Love's Victory* within the usual critical construction of her family relationships is essential, it is now necessary to excavate the play's recalcitrant and resistive elements. This chapter, therefore, sets out to recontextualise Wroth as an independent author within the history of Early Modern European literature. In particular, it traces the attempts of an Early Modern woman to free herself from the constraints of a powerful family tradition of cultural productivity and, as such, uncovers the development of fissures within the wider context of the Early Modern familial discourse and the impact these openings had upon women writers.

II

Mary Wroth

The unifying power of a familial discourse as strong as that of the Sidney/Herberts was considerable. In an almost colonialist manner it served to acquire discourses, literary forms, allegories and allusions, sweeping its constituent family members along with the overwhelming sense of cultural status and entrenching its vision within the image of a pastoral

ideal made real. As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, Wroth's work is most commonly read in a familial context; for example, in the critical accounts by Josephine Roberts, Gary Waller, Barbara Lewalski, Carolyn Ruth Swift and Margaret McLaren.[5] My own edition of *Love's Victory* participates in these formulaic identifications; for example, linking Musella and Philisses with Wroth herself and William Herbert, as well as with the earlier generation of Sidney/Herberts, Penelope Rich and Philip Sidney.[6] What has become increasingly apparent about the play is that fixed identities and any implied certainty of interpretation are undercut by the way in which Wroth reworks her familial allegory, through duplication and conflation. Although these processes might still be seen to reside within an overall compass of Sidney/Herbert allusion, Wroth's work cannot be read within the ghetto of her family's literary productivity, any more than she can be situated exclusively within the context of female literary productivity. Just as Wroth's play, *Love's Victory*, is the key site for her use of familial allegory, so it is also the dominant arena in which she abandons her family of blood relatives and moves towards a family of fellow authors. Wroth's changing allegiances encapsulate a broader shift in early-seventeenth-century cultural discourses, away from familial and towards authorial kinship.

Although *Love's Victory* is generally described as a comedy, it is more correctly characterised as pastoral tragi-comedy. This was recognised as early as 1991 when Barbara Lewalski wrote about 'Mary Wroth's *Love's Victory* and Pastoral Tragicomedy', but the full implications of this association have not been explored partly because the genre itself has remained obscure and critically derided. For example, Michael Brennan, in his edition of the play, comments only briefly on pastoral tragi-comedy, focussing more on comedy overall as a genre; Josephine Roberts suggests that there is 'no single play' which served as a source and offers a wide range of European antecedents; and Lewalski describes the genre and its history, seeing the usefulness to Wroth primarily in terms of the freedom tragi-comedy allowed to female characters.[7] While indebted to Lewalski's well-judged, but somewhat neglected, recognition of Wroth's literary indebtedness to the genre, the analysis here outlines the chronological and geographical development of plot motifs and identifies a much wider political remit for pastoral tragi-comedy in general and for *Love's Victory* in particular.

It is generally accepted that, during the Early Modern period, there was a considerable vogue for pastoral tragi-comedy in England as well as on the continent. The most influential work was Torquato Tasso's *Aminta* (1580), which was reworked in English as *The Countess of Pembroke's Ivychurch* in 1591 by Abraham Fraunce.[8] Given Fraunce's association

with her aunt, Mary Sidney Countess of Pembroke, Wroth would have been familiar with his rough translation and for her own play drew upon the text in terms of character and narrative. For example, love is personified as Cupid in both plays and serves in each to introduce the dramatic action. Both plays contain two friends, Philisses and Lissius (Wroth) being identified with Aminta and Thirsis (Tasso). Fickle and chaste affection are similarly represented through two sets of nymphs, Dalina and Sylvesta equating with Daphne and Silvia. Both plots conclude with a miraculous recovery, a device that will be dealt with in more detail at the close of the chapter. Finally, and perhaps most significantly for Wroth, Tasso initiated the trend for linking contemporary allegory with the pastoral tragi-comedy genre, enabling his successors to depict their friends (and enemies) in the fictional guises of shepherds and shepherdesses. A second Italian drama also found favour in England, Battista Guarini's *Pastor Fido* (1590), which was translated anonymously in 1602 and published with commendatory verses by Samuel Daniel.[9] Guarini's play is much darker in tone and provides *Love's Victory* with the arranged marriage sequence and the boorish character, Silvio (who becomes Rustic in Wroth's play). However, these two earlier works served primarily as the impetus for a whole range of English pastoral tragi-comedies, of which Wroth's play is merely one.

In 1605 Samuel Daniel, perhaps inspired by the translation of *Pastor Fido*, wrote and presented *The Queene's Arcadia* to Queen Anne and her ladies during a visit to Oxford. As Wroth was serving Anne at this point it is highly likely that she saw the production. Daniel's play includes a scene where the shepherdesses confess their loves to one another, as Cloris points out immediately:

> Now here betweene you two kind loving soules,
> I know there can be no talke but of love.[10]

Daniel's female group recalls Wroth's coterie of shepherdesses, who also confide their loves to one another, 'None can accuse us, none can us betray.'[11] He also includes, as in *Love's Victory*, a false poisoning device towards the end of the play, although Wroth's use of that scheme will be considered separately. *The Queene's Arcadia* was followed in 1608 by John Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess*, which included the by now commonplace apparatus of thwarted lovers as well as libertine and chaste shepherdesses; but Fletcher imported the malcontent from Jacobean tragedy and incorporated the type into his play as the 'Sullen Shepherd'. This character was to be recreated by Wroth as Arcas. Although *The Faithful*

Shepherdess was a flop when first staged, Fletcher seems to have been the first dramatist to have coined the generic term 'pastorall … tragie-comedie' to describe his play.[12] It is unlikely that the dramatists themselves were influenced by the unity of this generic term, as Gordon McMullan and Jonathan Hope point out, 'in the English Renaissance, the term covered an astonishing variety of forms'.[13] It is more likely that, rather than being bound by the constraints of a fixed literary entity, the very flexibility of the genre ensured its success. Certainly, in 1611, Ben Jonson wrote and produced the, now lost, pastoral masque, *The May Lord*, which we know Wroth performed in. In *Conversations with William Drummond* Jonson commented that 'Pembroke [and] Lady Wroth' were in it.[14] This performance by Wroth was probably the source of Jonson's poetic description of her as, 'dressed in shepherd's tiure, who would not say / You were the brightest Oenone, Flora, or May?'[15] Having acted in a pastoral drama with Herbert, Wroth could well have transposed their characters into her own experiment with the genre, although her reworking suggests an added layer of generic indebtedness. Subsequently, in 1613 Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, in the character of Autolycus, provided a further exemplar for Wroth's sullen shepherd, Arcas.[16] Also in 1613, William Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals* recreated the dominant narrative in verse form and was dedicated to William Herbert.[17] Finally, in 1614, Daniel returned to the pastoral theme in *Hymen's Triumph*, which of all the dramas mentioned here is the one that most closely resembles Wroth's *Love's Victory*.[18] There are a number of expected parallels: the two shepherd friends, Palaemon and Thyrsis closely resemble Lissius and Philisses; there is an arranged marriage; and, two characters, Phillis and Forester, are duplicated almost exactly. This makes a total of five English pastoral tragi-comedies produced within a space of nine years that most closely resemble *Love's Victory*. In order to investigate these links more closely, I intend to examine a single sequence occurring in all these works – the false death scene.

Tasso's *Aminta* and Guarini's *Pastor Fido* both have single elements of the death/recovery sequence. Aminta is miraculously saved from death, allowing him to win his shepherdess's love, so that his plunge from the cliff may be read as fortunate rather than tragic. Similarly, in *Pastor Fido*, the hero, Mertillo, welcomes death since he claims that he cannot live without his beloved Amarillis:

> … but if she die,
> As she hath threatned so to do; aye mee,
> What part of me shall then remaine alive?

> Oh death were sweete, if but my mortall parts
> Might die, and that my soule did not desire the same,[19]

By the end of the play Mertillo is happily united with Amarillis in marriage. Such narrative devices are common to many pastoral works and, as such, by introducing her own false death scene in *Love's Victory*, Wroth draws upon a well-established narrative device. More detailed similarities occur between *Love's Victory* and the later, English-authored, texts. In Daniel's *The Queen's Arcadia* the play's hero, Amyntas, takes poison because he believes his lady, Chloris, to be unchaste:

> … bychance we spide
> A little horne which he had flung aside,
> Whereby we gest he had some poison tooke.
> And thereupon we sent out presently
> To fetch Urania, whose great skill in hearbes
> Is such, as if there any meanes will be,
> As I feare none will be, her onely arte
> Must serve to bring him to himself againe.[20]

Amyntas is miraculously revived by the nymph Urania, who by her name reveals Daniel's indebtedness to Philip Sidney, in whose *Arcadia* Urania is a noble shepherdess. Through the convoluted patterns of pastoral allusion Daniel's debt to Philip Sidney is reworked by Wroth both in her pastoral romance, *Urania* and in her pastoral tragi-comedy. In the play Amphilanthus follows the same narrative course as Amyntas by drinking poison and subsequently experiencing a miraculous recovery. This narrative pattern recurs in a number of the other English texts. In Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess*, the lady, Amoret, dies, but is restored by a 'potion' administered by the river God:

> Take a drope into they wound
> From my watery locke more round
> Then the Orient Pearle.[21]

Amoret is united to her lover, Perigot, after the double motif of death and potion is explicated, although Fletcher's indebtedness to Spenser, rather than Sidney, is made clear by duplicating the name of *The Faerie Queene*'s most fully formed romantic figure. Similar devices are used by William Browne in his poem, *Britannia's Pastorals* where the hero, Philocel,

and his lady, Caelia, prepare to die as they are about to be thrown from a cliff top:

> My Fayrest Caelia! Come; let thou and I,
> That long have learn'd to love, now learne to dye …
> But we must dye my love; not thou alone,
> Nor onely I, but both; and yet but one,
> Nor let us grieve; for we are married thus,
> And have by death what life denied us.[22]

The pastoral template of death, romantic fulfilment and a 'potion' is completed in Browne's poem when the lovers are restored to life by the 'teares (so powerful since divine)' of the sea nymph Thetis.[23] The introduction of the learned and mystical female character who helps or restores the romantic couple is an important and relatively innovative feature. In Browne's text female external intervention is necessary for a positive resolution.[24] Finally, in Daniel's *Hymen's Triumph*, when the hero, Thyrsis, discovers his beloved Silvia is dead, he determines to die with her:

> Though fate would not permit us both to have
> One bed, yet, Silvia, we shall have one grave.

Rather than concluding with this gruesome image the two lovers are brought back to life and romantic fulfilment with, not unexpectedly, a magical potion:

> … she [Lamia] powers into her [Silvia's] mouth
> Such cordiall waters as revive the spirits …
> With like endeavours we [the shepherds] on Thyrsis worke
> And ministered like Cordialls unto him.[25]

By 1614, the date of *Hymen's Triumph*, any reader or audience versed in the genre of pastoral tragi-comedy would have been in no doubt that, if the two central characters died, they would soon be revived with the help of a potion. And, so it proved with Wroth's *Love's Victory*.

Although the plots, devices, characters and tropes of pastoral tragicomedy appear stiltedly loyal to the rules of the genre, it is feasible, by tracing one episode through a chronological sequence, to detect a gradual accrual of detail and a development of narrative. By excavating the lovers' death/revival/potion sequence it becomes apparent that a seemingly

static set of rules is, rather, a subtly mutating tradition. Hence, it becomes possible to date *Love's Victory* in relation to that expansion. Wroth includes the death and recovery sequences of Tasso and Guarini described above, but also adds the potion and learned lady of the later English pastoral tragi-comedies. The incorporation of almost all of the motifs places *Love's Victory* towards the end of the vogue for this genre, closest to the works of Samuel Daniel, and in particular his 1614 play, *Hymen's Triumph*. The adoption of a genre that is almost at the end of its popularity, or indeed a form that has already become relatively obscure, is characteristic of Wroth's writing, as for example, with her reworking of the late-sixteenth-century sonnet sequences in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* and the Elizabethan prose romances in *Urania*. For Wroth, such nostalgia was intimately connected to her familial inheritance and her choice of the pastoral tragi-comedy genre demonstrates a further association with the Sidney/Herbert group. Daniel's link with Mary Sidney and his role within 'Pembroke Patronage' are well known.[26] Similarly, extending the association of pastoral tragi-comedy to pastoral poetry, Wroth's play also appears to draw upon William Browne's 1616 *Britannia's Pastorals*, which was dedicated to William Herbert.

The generic associations of *Love's Victory* make it possible to offer a more precise date for composition than has been ascertained so far. Wroth's literary productivity peaked between 1614 and 1622, a period that may be bounded by Robert Wroth's death in 1614 and the completion of the second part of the *Urania* sometime after 1620. A compositional history would thus reinforce the dating already suggested by the generic links, situating Wroth's play after 1614 (Robert Wroth died on 14/3/1614, in the year of *Hymen's Triumph*) and 1618 when she turned to revising her sonnets and commencing her prose romance. This period would also make sense in terms of the familial allegory, since the birth of Wroth's first child by William Herbert in 1615 suggests that by that year she was enjoying a fulfilled relationship with her cousin.[27] The play's happy resolution, with the two lovers Musella/Wroth and Philisses/Herbert united, is in sharp contrast to the distrust and separation portrayed in the later poetry and prose. Another possible pointer to these dates is the fact that between 1613 and 1616 Mary Sidney was on the continent, at Spa, with her companion, Mathew Lister.[28] The removal of Mary Sidney from the familial group might well have given her son, William Herbert, and her niece, Mary Wroth, more freedom to pursue their illicit relationship, and it might also have given Wroth greater liberty in portraying Mary Sidney's relationship with Lister in the romantic attachment between Simeana and Lissius in the play. The only period

that allows generic, compositional and familial elements to coincide is 1614–16, and it was at this point that Wroth was able to harness the pastoral tragi-comedy form in order to represent a narrative that evaded personal tragedy.[29]

By returning to the key trope of death/miraculous recovery, in Act V of *Love's Victory*, it becomes possible to see how the familiar patterns of pastoral tragi-comedy are reworked in conjunction with the familial allegory. Musella and Philisses drink a potion they believe to be poisoned and the learned nymph, Silvesta, proclaims them dead:

> Who would outlive them? Who would dying fly?
> That here beheld love and love's tragedy?[30]

The play's possible conclusion as a tragedy is evoked through word play, and the familial allegory, in which the narrative of Wroth and Herbert's love ends sadly, is presented as eternal separation. For any audience versed in pastoral tragi-comedy, however, the true nature of the potion would have been apparent and the miraculous recovery unsurprising. In the final scene the potion is revealed to have put the lovers to sleep and they awaken when Venus's priests address them:

> Philisses, of us take Musella fair,
> We join your hands, rise and abandon care.
> Venus hath caused this wonder for her glory,
> And the triumph of Love's Victory.[31]

The quasi-marriage offered by Venus's 'priests', who ask the lovers to 'join your hands', sanctions the forbidden union through the power of love, rather than through traditional wedlock, thereby echoing the romantic, but unlawful, liaison of Wroth and Herbert. Their mutual contentment in the union is unquestioned in the play and the sadness of apparent death is transformed into a comic resolution, confirming the play to be concerned with 'Love's Victory' and not 'love's tragedy'. The final potion/death/recovery scene demonstrates that Wroth reworks the genre of pastoral tragi-comedy in terms of a close and chronologically precise familial allegory, thereby extending the Sidney/Herbert colonising of the pastoral form from prose (Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*) to drama. By excavating the parallels between *Love's Victory* and the other plays, it becomes possible to reinsert the play within the familial discourse, while at the same time demonstrating Wroth's innovative harnessing of genres, not only as a woman writer, but also as a member

of the Sidney/Herbert family. While such a reading retains validity, however, it is important to recall that in *Love's Victory* representations are not easily fixed, since conflation, multiplicity and thematic opposition are continually in play. In order to explore ways in which Wroth deviates from the seemingly transparent presentation of herself and Herbert through the magical reawakening of Musella and Philisses in the final scene of the play, it is necessary to return to the ways in which pastoral tragi-comedy developed.

III

Politicising *Love's Victory*

The representation of family and close friends in a literary form was particularly conducive to the Sidney/Herbert familial discourse, yet it is also an endemic aspect of pastoral tragi-comedy from the genre's earliest inception in Tasso's *Aminta*. However, as the genre became 'Englished' the intimate circle of referents expanded from the personal to the political, and from private nostalgia to public remonstrance, especially against the pacifist, pro-Catholic policies of James I. Recent criticism has excavated the, previously unexpected, political discourses of the pastoral tragi-comedy. For example, Sukanta Chaudhuri concludes in his revisionist work on English Renaissance pastoral that

> Protestant loyalty, satire, and Elizabethan nostalgia form a compound in a pastoral framework.[32]

Chaudhuri uncovers evidence for such political adherence in the works of a number of poets, including William Browne, George Wither and other 'Spenserians' (with the exception of Michael Drayton), and looks particularly at *Britannia's Pastorals*. For example, he traces elements of political discourse in Browne's 'Vale of Woe' sequence, where Ralegh and Essex are depicted mourning their estrangement from Elizabeth I, while a nymph depicting England sings a dirge for Prince Henry, James's elder son. Prince Henry's acknowledged support for the Protestant cause is thus linked to Elizabeth and grief at the loss of both. Indeed, the whole poem invokes the cult of nostalgia for the dead Queen and for the martial Protestant heir to the throne who had seemed, before his untimely death, to promise a return to the golden age of Elizabeth.[33]

Returning to the Vale of Woe there is yet another figure who grieves: an 'unidentified shepherdess' who Chaudhuri, drawing upon the research of David Norbrook, suggests might represent Arbella Stuart.[34] But on closer analysis the description of this shepherdess suggests a different identification:

> Within an arbour shadowed with a vine,
> Mixed with rosemary and Eglantine,
> A shepherdess was set, as faire as young,
> Whose praise full many a shepherd whilome sung,
> Who on an altar fair had to her name,
> In consecration many an *Anagram*,
> And when with sugred straines they strove to raise
> *Worth* to a garland of immortall bayes;
> She as the learnedest maide was chose by them.[35]

Both '*Anagram*' and '*Worth*' are italicised in the text, suggesting that '*Worth*' is to be read as an '*anagram*' of Wroth. With her Sidney inheritance and individual scholarly activity, Wroth could also be described as the 'learnedest maide', especially in a book dedicated to her lover and cousin, William Herbert. The representation of Wroth as a shepherdess may allude to her part in Jonson's *May Lord*.[36] Coupled with the reference to 'immortall bayes', which suggests literary achievement, the allusion to shepherdess might well be to Wroth's own pastoral tragi-comedy. Browne, through his close connections to the Herbert family, might have been aware of *Love's Victory*. This would further affirm the posited compositional date of the play as between 1614 and 1616, since Browne's poem was published by the latter year. More significantly, if the shepherdess is Wroth, and the anagram points clearly towards that identification, then Browne places her at the centre of the political discourse of Protestantism and amidst a militant nostalgia for the Elizabethan age.

There can be no question that Browne's use of the pastoral genre within a political context would have been welcomed by his patron, William Herbert. As Chaudhuri notes,

> Pembroke was already a prominent opponent of many royal policies: anti-Spanish, anti-Catholic, anti-Somerset, with strong Protestant and Parliamentary sympathies.[37]

Yet, Herbert's position at court must have remained secure; he was able to support the militaristic Protestant, almost anti-James, cause from a secure

base founded upon wealth and status. Moreover, Herbert's patronage extended to a number of writers who were able to direct their pastoral verse towards political ends conducive to their patron. As such, the inclusion of Mary Wroth, in the guise of a shepherdess, in one of the key passages concerning the Protestant cause in a text produced by an established member of Herbert's literary coterie, demands that we revisit her own pastoral writing. *Love's Victory* might situate Wroth's literary productivity within the Sidney/Herbert familial allegory and might also demonstrate her affiliation with, and knowledge of, the European tradition of pastoral tragi-comedy, but it also uncovers her engagement with a broader political discourse.

Wroth's ease with political representation is evidenced from the *Urania*, where, as Josephine Roberts notes, 'at the heart of the *Urania* lies one of the most powerful political fantasies of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe – the revival of the Holy Roman Empire in the West'.[38] Until now, however, it has been assumed that *Love's Victory* is a light and personal play, a confection that remains trapped within the confines of the Sidney/Herbert familial allegory, rather than experimenting with radical commentary upon contemporary political events. As Gary Waller comments, in *Love's Victory*, 'the political context is omitted'.[39] The closest the play has come to being identified in any way as 'political' is in its foregrounding of women, 'feminist politics … [and] female agency' as Lewalski puts it.[40] But, the genre of pastoral tragi-comedy was perfectly receptive to commentary upon contemporary concerns, and since it is clear from her use of motifs that Wroth was well read in the form, we can assume that she would have been aware of the possibility of directing her own narrative towards political issues. By considering the compositional dates and the already established identifications of some of the play's characters it becomes possible to suggest at least one politicised reading of the play.

In order to excavate the political allegory of the play, I intend to return to the motif taken from the pastoral tragi-comedy genre in *Love's Victory*, that is, the false death/potion/miraculous recovery sequence of narrative events. In the English versions of the form produced around 1614–16, particularly by Browne, Daniel and Wroth, it is important to recall that a learned lady has been added, enabling the two thwarted lovers to achieve union. In *Love's Victory* that character is Silvester, the shepherdess dressed as an Amazon, who may be identified as Lucy Harington, Countess of Bedford via her actual masquing role as an Amazon Queen. This association draws upon Josephine Roberts's careful investigations in which she represents Harington as Lucenia, who travels overseas to visit Selarina,

the newly wedded queen of Romania. In *Urania* the visit is described as follows:

> To Constantinople the King and Queen soone after went, where Selarina was with all joy … crowned queene, living as happily as ever queen did. Antissia, and Lucenia came to visit her, the other stayed and attended her daily in the court, being chiefe of the chamber.[41]

Like Lucenia, Lucy Harington travelled, in 1617, to visit a young queen who had recently been married, and she did remain there for a while, advising the Queen and acting as 'chiefe of the chamber'. That queen was Elizabeth of Bohemia, an identification that suggests that the fictional character Selarina may be linked with the political figure of the Winter Queen. Wroth uses historically evidenced information concerning Elizabeth of Bohemia in her depiction of Selarina's stately progress to her new realm and her personal enjoyment of 'prety delights' and 'hunting'.[42] Moreover, before Selarina becomes the Queen of Romania, she is the Princess of Albania, suggesting Elizabeth's royal Scottish upbringing. The famous troubles of Elizabeth of Bohemia did not commence until 1618, making Wroth's comment in *Urania* that the Queen lived, 'happily as ever queen did' viable within the compositional date of the prose romance.

But considering the historical events of a few years earlier, the roles of the young princess Elizabeth Stuart and Lucy Harington may be placed in a different context. For, if Wroth's *Urania* focuses on the political events around 1620 and, in particular, the political crisis of 1619 when Frederick and Elizabeth were crowned monarchs of Bohemia, thereby precipitating the Thirty Years War, then *Love's Victory* engages with an earlier period, when the successful union of the young couple could still be eulogised.[43] Frederick, Count Palatine, had originally arrived in England in 1612 and, despite the Queen's objections to the match – on the basis of his inadequate royal status – Princess Elizabeth appears to have developed a real attachment to her wooer. Coupled with Prince Henry's enthusiasm for a Protestant alliance, the pair's mutual affection culminated in their successful betrothal (December 1612) and marriage (February 1613). Further support for the match was provided by the pro-Protestant faction at court, which included William Herbert, as well as, Lucy Harington and Robert Sidney (Wroth's father) both of whom went with Elizabeth and stayed with her at Heidelberg until August 1613. Undoubtedly, although not a vocaliser of political discontent at court, Wroth would have been sympathetic to Herbert's and Harington's

support for the marriage, as well as to the plight of a young woman whose preferred allegiance was in danger of being thwarted. Wroth's own unhappy marriage to Robert Wroth had been forced upon her in 1604, despite her possible preference for an alliance with her cousin, and in the summer of 1614 she would only just have obtained respite at the death of her husband.[44] Finally, in the marriage negotiations Lucy Harington was a known ally to the young Queen.

By transposing the events of 1612–19 onto the play, the plot of *Love's Victory*, and in particular the false death sequence, becomes readable in a political context. The link between Lucy Harington and Silvesta has already been established, but rather than assisting Wroth and Herbert in their liaison – for which there is no concrete evidence – Silvesta's aid to Musella and Philisses may be seen as Harington's well-recorded support for Elizabeth Stuart and Frederick of Bohemia. The link between Elizabeth and Musella is suggested by the fact that both faced initial objections to their love match. The association of Philisses with Frederick may be demonstrated via *Urania* where Amphilanthus represents both the young King of Bohemia and William Herbert.[45] The lovers in play and prose romance are thus paralleled through the joint processes of familial and political allegory. Musella and Pamphilia, the respective heroines of *Love's Victory* and *Urania*, represent both Wroth (familial) and Elizabeth of Bohemia (political), while Philisses and Amphilanthus, the fictional lovers, figure the historical wooers William Herbert (familial) and Frederick (political). A key piece of the puzzle falls into place through the role of Musella's mother who protests against the marriage of her daughter and Philisses. No such maternal objection is apparent in either first or second generation Sidney/Herbert identifications, making the character of the mother appear out of place within the familial allegory. However, if read in a political context, then Musella's mother may be transposed onto Queen Anne, who was known to have objected to her daughter's choice. The successful union of the fictional couple within the pastoral frame is echoed by the 1613 nuptials of Elizabeth and Frederick. The fact that, unlike in *Urania,* the lovers do not depart on a stately progress to their realm offers further evidence for the play's composition as early within the 1614–16 time frame, since Frederick and Elizabeth left England in April 1613. Two further points reaffirm Elizabeth's common identification with pastoral: first, her well-recorded love of hunting caused her to be known as 'Diana of our shady woods of the Rhine', and second, to celebrate her residence at Heidelberg Frederick commissioned a set of famous pastoral gardens to be laid out by Solomon de Caus that were formally opened in 1615.[46] The representation of the

couple within a pastoral context is not unique to Wroth, the most telling example being Shakespeare's depiction of them in *The Winter's Tale*, which like *Love's Victory* turns a supposed death and a possible tragedy into an affirmation of new life and a seemingly miraculous recovery, thanks to an older learned woman.[47] By rereading Wroth's *Love's Victory* as a play that engages with the emergent politicisation of tragi-comedy, it becomes possible to relocate her authorial identity and literary output. Wroth certainly employed familial allegory and reworked the forms, allusions and themes already established within the Sidney/Herbert discourse, but she also challenged the boundaries of cultural kinship through her skilful deployment of wider textual referents and through her confident incursion into the most fraught political issues of the period. Correspondingly, *Love's Victory* must be read both as a culmination of and as a radical challenge to the Sidney/Herbert familial discourse.

IV

Conclusion

Mary Wroth was the most pioneering woman writer of her age; she was the first English woman to write a sonnet sequence, a prose romance and a pastoral tragi-comedy. More importantly she manipulated her literary activities so that while she participated within the Sidney/Herbert familial discourse, laying rightful claim to being its ultimate heir, at the same time, she worked consistently to undermine the confines that such a familial identity dictated – especially for women. As such, *Love's Victory* must be read as the apotheosis of familial allegory, even to the point where the characters might have been played by the very family members they portrayed. But the play is also the point at which Wroth lays down her authorial credentials, not only as a Sidney/Herbert, but as a skilled and effective playwright of pastoral tragi-comedy, shifting, as it were, from a literary discourse founded upon the inheritance of blood relations, to one being newly formed from authorial commonality. In the early seventeenth century that relocation of an authorial self was, for a woman writer, a radical manoeuvre. Similar shifts occur in the More, Cary and Cavendish families, but not for over thirty years. It is in the writings of Mary Wroth, particularly in her play, *Love's Victory*, that the pattern of Early Modern familial discourse was first challenged.

6
Sisters and Brothers: Divided Sibling Identity in the Cary Family

I

The Lady Falkland: Her Life

When tracing the familial discourses of the Early Modern period evidence of mutual authorship and influence is most commonly found through allusions and references within the texts, either in printed or manuscript form. In this way, it has been possible to trace the biographical additions of successive generations of the More family, to provide a chronological frame for the new years' gifts of the Fitzalan children, and to identify the reworkings of her family's writing by Lady Mary Wroth. However, for the Cary family there is absolute evidence for collaborative production, since five of its members contributed to a single manuscript, their composition and annotation being distinguished by their individual hands. This work is *The Lady Falkland: Her Life*, a biography of Elizabeth Cary, which was composed by one of her daughters and edited by three further daughters and one son. The manuscript version is in the Archives of the Département du Nord at Lille, and there are three published versions of the text: *The Lady Falkland: Her Life* (1861) edited by Richard Simpson, *The Tragedy of Mariam The Fair Queen of Jewry with The Lady Falkland: Her Life* (1994) edited by Barry Weller and Margaret W. Ferguson, and *Life and Letters: Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland* (2001) edited by Heather Wolfe.[1]

Given the existence of the *Life* in published form, a detailed account of Elizabeth Cary's biography is not essential here, but it is important to note the salient facts concerning her learning, originality as a woman writer and remarkable conversion to Catholicism. Elizabeth Cary (1585–1639) was the only daughter of Sir Lawrence and Lady Tanfield of Burford Priory,

Oxford. Her intellectual abilities as a young woman were considerable and she was able to read fluently in, and translate from, French, Spanish, Latin and Hebrew.[2] During her lifetime she composed the first original tragedy by an Englishwoman, *The Tragedy of Mariam* (c. 1602–4; published in 1613); possibly a composite work of historical prose and drama, *The History of the Life, Reign, and Death of Edward II* (c. 1627–8); and several works which have been lost, including a life of Tamburlaine, and poems on the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, Saint Agnes and Saint Elizabeth of Portugal. She also translated Abraham Ortelius's *Mirroir du Monde* (completed before she was seventeen), several of Seneca's epistles, and the complete works of Cardinal Perron.[3] Elizabeth Tanfield was contracted in marriage to Henry Cary in 1602 and, by 1624, they had had eleven children. Henry Cary was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1622, and it was during her time in Ireland that Elizabeth seems to have become interested in Catholicism. She returned to England and, by 1626, had undertaken a covert conversion, which being discovered, led to an estrangement from her husband. Although the couple were briefly reconciled at the time of Henry Cary's death, Elizabeth remained ostracised from most of her family and she died in impoverished circumstances in 1639. However, in the interval between her conversion and death, Elizabeth Cary managed to 'kidnap' some of her children from their older brother Lucius, who had remained a Protestant, and to convey them in secret to the continent where they were offered the protection of the Catholic Church. In 1636, the six children were dramatically stolen away by night: the four girls Anne, Elizabeth, Lucy and Maria, who took the names Clementia, Augustina, Magdalena and Mary respectively, entered the Benedictine convent of Our Lady of Consolation, Cambrai; Patrick remained two years in France before being sent to Rome; and Henry became a Benedictine monk, taking the name, Placid.[4] It was at Cambrai that one of the sisters composed the *Life*, and it was annotated by two of the three sisters at the convent as well as their brother, Patrick, when he was resident at the Benedictine Monastery of Douai.

The 'Records of the Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation at Cambria, 1620–1793' show us that the four Cary sisters took their vows over an eight-month period during 1638 and 1639: on 31 August 1638 Lucy Cary (Dame Magdalena) aged 19 and Mary Cary (Dame Maria) aged 17; they were joined in October of that year by Elizabeth Cary (Dame Augustina) aged 21 and in March of 1639 by Anne Cary (Dame Clementia) aged 24. The records also include a short biography of Lucy and an account of her death on 1 November 1650 written by one of her contemporaries.[5] This profile describes Lucy as 'an obstinate, haughty, disdainful, sneering

lady' before her conversion, after which she led 'an obedient, humble life, all ye time shee had been in religion without any regard to what she had been or what might have been in the world'.[6] Although these terms were common to accounts of conversion and profession, the change in Lucy is credited to her mother, Elizabeth Cary, 'a woman of an extraordinary piety as will appear in ye relation of her life written by a person who knew her very well'.[7] This passage is important in several ways since it uncovers a recurring narrative of near-miraculous conversion from material sin to spiritual ideal among the nuns' own self-definitions. For example, the account of the life of Gertrude More, who was a fellow member of the community at Our Lady of Consolation, is discussed in Chapter 3, where the representation of a worldly and recalcitrant young woman gradually developing into a pious, humble and obedient member of the religious community was discussed. Moreover, like the doubled tracings of worldly vanity and spiritual humility in Gertrude's life, the account of Lucy stresses that she was the daughter of 'Ld Henry Viscount Falkland, sometime Vice Roy of Ireland', but simultaneously discounts what 'she had been' in the world of familial hierarchies and aristocratic eminencies.[8] While Lucy is located within a familial discourse of inheritance and political activity, she is also placed within a gendered and spiritual discourse of convent life.

In addition to the main text of the *Life*, there are four sets of editorial commentaries, which may be identified as being made by Mary, Patrick, Elizabeth and Anne Cary that amplify, correct and sometimes contradict the original. The familial discourse of the Cary family demonstrates an almost intimate use of manuscript authorship, in that the text is used to parade a series of family claims to greater or more accurate knowledge in relation to the life of the contributor's mother. The annotations combine to provide an overwhelming sense that each sibling was better informed than the author, and probably better than one another. From Patrick's immediate emendation pointing out that his grandfather, Lawrence Tanfield, had only lodged at Lincoln's Inn and had been a member of the Inner Temple, through the repeated deletion of additional marginal annotation, to Elizabeth's peremptory, 'She was acquainted with Mr Clayton sooner', the first editors of the *Life* found much to correct.

These annotations would most likely have occurred after Lucy's death in November 1650. Patrick's contribution helps us to date the initial composition of the manuscript as composed before 1650 when Patrick left the monastery at Douai and so would have had no subsequent access to the manuscript.[9] The work must also have been written after 1643 since it notes the 'death of her two sons', which Patrick annotates

as Lucius and Lorenzo, who died in 1643 and 1642 respectively. His notes were made in the outer margin of the text and have subsequently been cropped during the binding, although the words have sometimes been copied out in the inner margin. This gives a composition date somewhere between the mid-1640s, when the text was originally prepared by Lucy, and 1650 when Patrick Cary was residing at Douai. At some point close to these dates both Mary and Elizabeth contributed their notes. Subsequently, before her departure for Paris, Anne possibly added her own elucidating comments and tidied up the text for binding. This further affirms Lucy's authorship since her death in November 1650, two months after the departure of her brother Patrick, would have allowed Anne to organise the material so that it could be preserved for posterity. The annotation serves a double purpose: it authenticates the hagiographic-like *Life* of Elizabeth Cary for public consumption, and displays an intimate knowledge in which all the siblings may claim that they knew their mother 'very well'. But did they?

II

Elizabeth Cary

For the children of Elizabeth Cary, the *Life* provides verification of their mother's miraculous conversion to Catholicism, presented in almost hagiographic form. The *Life* must be dealt with, not as a verbatim account of Elizabeth Cary's existence, but through the filter of one of the powerful religious discourses of the early seventeenth century. Criticism of the *Life* has highlighted this issue. Barbara Lewalski notes, the siblings register their mother's life 'through a distorting filter', and Diane Purkiss indicates that 'modern scholars handle this text cautiously, principally because they read it as dominated by the generic codes of counter-reformation hagiography'.[10] For example, the *Life* describes how, as Cary nursed her eldest daughter (Catherine) who died in childbirth, she saw 'a bright woman clothed in white having a crown on he[r] head; which she [Elizabeth Cary] then assuredly believed to be our Blessed Lady'.[11] This visionary experience, albeit vicarious, is followed immediately by Cary's conversion to Catholicism, and describes the severe opposition she encountered. Her friends attempt to 'persuade her that whilst it [her conversion] was yet unknown she should return [to Protestantism]', King Charles II had her 'confined to her house … no Catholic daring to come near her, her household being wholly Protestant', and her husband 'was exceedingly angry with her', his agent in England 'immediately stop[ping]

her allowance'.[12] The *Life* records the difficulties Elizabeth Cary experiences in maintaining her Catholicism openly, charts the conversions she procured and concludes that 'she did most highly reverence all the precepts, ordinances, and even ceremonies of the Catholic Church'.[13] The *Life* participates in the discourse of the Counter Reformation, in which a conversion from Protestantism and a sustaining of Catholicism in the face of opposition from family and state is presented as an exemplar to the faithful, so that they too might persevere. As Weller and Ferguson observe, the *Life* stresses the 'trials and triumphs … [of] an "exemplary" subject of Catholic conversion'.[14] Elizabeth Cary's ideal faith is further described as having an immediate impact upon her family, thereby echoing the European discourse of conversion within the familial context:

> She lived to see six of her children (by God's great mercy) Catholics and out of danger <being> living amongst their Protestant friends might have put them into, being all out of England, four of them clothed with the habit of St Benett (she much rejoicing to leave them in the number of children of such a father), a fifth having desired and hoping for the same happiness amongst the Benedictines at Paris … [and] her elder son at Rome; whom she had sent thither.[15]

The four 'clothed with the habit of St Benett' were Lucy, Mary, Elizabeth and Anne, the fifth was Henry Cary, who adopted the name Placid, and the 'elder' or sixth was Patrick Cary. The lives of Elizabeth Cary's children confirm the Counter Reformation discourse of continued Catholic conversion initiated by their mother. This is precisely the point at which the religious discourse merges with the familial, as the complex interweaving of narrative and annotation allow the Cary children to be, simultaneously, objects within the text and authorising subjects of that same work. The *Life* presents a unified, although not complete, family group who are both produced by, and produce, their own version of the Counter Reformation discourse. Conversion to Catholicism is a key aspect of the Cary familial discourse.

Critics of Elizabeth Cary's works and of the *Life* have recognised the importance of opposition linked with Cary's conversion to Catholicism when producing analyses of her oeuvre. Lewalski reads the conversion as 'a gesture of opposition and resistance, pitting her private conscience against the massed authority and pressure of family and society', which echoes Betty Travitsky's comment that 'such an independent stance by a married woman was remarkable in this period'.[16] Tangentially Purkiss, Ferguson and Krontiris identify conflicting elements: Purkiss describing

'Cary's conversion [as] … both a rebellion against and a submission to authority'; and Ferguson commenting that *Mariam* 'seems at times to mount a radical attack on the Renaissance concept of the wife as the "property" of her husband [but also seems to] … justify, even advocate, a highly conservative doctrine of female obedience to male authority;' while Krontiris identifies Cary as 'at once a rebel and conformist'.[17]

However, while critics generally agree on the rebellious and radical nature of *Mariam*, linking Cary's opposition to authority with her conversion, the accepted compositional date of *Mariam* as between 1602 and 1605 has proved problematic. Taken at its word, the *Life* proffers sufficient evidence that Cary was sympathetic towards Catholicism around the time usually accepted for the composition of *Mariam*, that is, around 1605. In order to investigate the veracity of this dating it is useful to look at a particular instance of possible Catholic allegory within the play.

Margaret Ferguson offers a possible reading of Mariam as Mary Queen of Scots, the Catholic 'victim of Protestant tyranny', citing the 'Christological aura' that Cary adds to her source text, Josephus's 'Antiquities of the Jews'.[18] Ferguson rightly points out that Mariam's death is presented as 'an allegorical version of Christ's crucifixion' and that the addition of the Butler's suicide mirrors that of Judas in the biblical narrative. In addition, Mariam sends a final message to Herod, via the messenger:

> By three days hence, if wishes could revive,
> I know himself would make me oft alive.[19]

Within the narrative Mariam simply refers to Herod, who will indeed wish that she had remained alive, but within the spiritual allegory, Cary cites Matthew 27:63–4, where Christ's resurrection after three days is described. The Christ-like martyrdom of Mariam cannot be questioned. But Cary also alters the manner of Mariam's death, for, unlike the unspecified execution ordered by Herod in Josephus, the idea of beheading is introduced: Salome suggests that she, 'be beheaded', and the messenger describes how 'Her body is divided from her head'.[20] Ferguson relates the idea of beheading to either Mary Queen of Scots or Anne Boleyn, but given the description of Mariam in the play the former seems far more likely. Mariam is depicted by Cary, again directly challenging conventional representations of the Jewish Queen, as fair,

> For on the brow of Mariam hangs a fleece
> Whose slenderest twine is strong enough to bind
> The hearts of kings.[21]

The golden-fleece-like hair and fairness of Mariam is contrasted with the 'sunburnt blackamoor' visage of Salome, representing the inner moral worth of the characters through a stereotypical dialectic: Mariam is fair and good, Salome, dark and evil.[22] Again, this reading is fully corroborated by the play's narrative context, but transferred onto a spiritual allegory the significations begin to multiply. If Mariam is Christ-like, then fair purity is an appropriate symbolic image, however, if the interpretation is gendered then the identification becomes more complicated, especially when read with the ending of the above quotation, which runs,

> … the pride and shame of Greece,
> Troy's flaming Helen, not so fairly shined.[23]

While the play represents Mariam as a Christ-like martyr, it simultaneously associates her with Helen of Troy, who was a symbol, not only of absolute beauty, but also a woman who left her husband and was stolen away by her lover, leading to the ultimate destruction of Troy and to Paris' death. Taken together, the religious martyrdom, the fair hair, the beauty, the narrative of betrayal and the final beheading confirms Ferguson's identification of Mariam with Mary Stuart. The Scottish Queen was identified by the English Catholics as a martyr, but she was also renowned for her red-gold hair and beauty, as well as having supposedly betrayed her husband, run away with Bothwell and finally being beheaded on Elizabeth I's order. Far from being a Catholic vindication of Mary Stuart through the political and spiritual allegory of the play, Elizabeth Cary combines idealisation together with a provoking and contemporaneously exacting account. And, of course, this is exactly the combination of radicalism and conservatism that critics like Purkiss, Krontiris and Ferguson identify, but here brought to bear on Cary's appraisal of Catholicism at the beginning of the seventeenth century, rather than at the point of her conversion twenty years later. There was a stark distinction between the repression of Catholics and recusants at the close of Elizabeth I's reign and the beginning of James I's sovereignty, and the tacit condoning of Catholic practices at the court of Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria. Elizabeth Cary might have been confined to her house for six weeks and deprived of financial support, but she did not suffer the fate of the earlier recusants, for whom an open profession of faith was dangerous. Moreover, Elizabeth Cary was well aware of the repercussions of this religious persecution from her own childhood.

One of the reasons why any possible proto-Catholicism has seemed unlikely in *Mariam* is that when Elizabeth Cary wrote the play she was

a young woman whose understanding of religion would most likely have been founded on her own familial experiences. The *Life* describes Lawrence Tanfield, Elizabeth Cary's father, as a stern judge, and relates the story of how, when he was a 'young lawyer', he witnessed a judge who had a Catholic priest executed. This judge was subsequently thrown from his horse, 'casting his head against a stone, where his brains were dashed out'.[24] Within the Counter Reformation discourse the death of the judge is interpreted as a just punishment against a Catholic-persecutor, but Lucy, with typical scepticism, points out that 'This same thing, it may be, might incline him [Tanfield] to be less forward to persecute Catholics (which he never was)'.[25] Although, again with the familiar sense of sibling dissent, the marginal note comments, 'Unreasonably he hath been charged with it', which is, in turn, deleted by yet another sibling annotator. There can be little doubt as to Tanfield's strict observance of the Elizabethan laws, those against recusancy as much as any others, particularly given his official position as Justice of the King's Bench (1605). In parallel, Cary's mother, Elizabeth Tanfield, wrote abjuring her daughter to forsake the Catholic faith after her conversion:

> I shall never have hope to have any comfort from you … my desiers wass I dout not but plesyng to god, to have you to lyve with your husband, and to lyve in that religeon wherin your war bred even the sam wherin by gods grace I will lyve and dye in [crossed out], as did your Dere father, but bes you respected nayther him that most good man, nor me, for if you had, you cold never have erred, nor falne into that myschef which you ar now.[26]

Elizabeth Tanfield's peremptory tone could hardly have offered her daughter any maternal or spiritual comfort with its accusations of misdemeanours and disloyalties past and present and its categorical assertion that both she and her husband 'lyve[d] and dye[d]' in the Protestant faith. Yet, Cary's mother was as adept at rewriting the familial narrative to suit her own religious convictions as were Cary's children. The author and editors of the *Life* rework the historical details of their mother's engagement with Catholicism in terms of conversion, embellishing and adorning the basic material with Counter Reformation rhetoric. Elizabeth Tanfield's righteous Protestant letter is just as collusive in its rewriting of the past familial history, although hers is the sin of omission, rather than addition. As such, it is important to investigate exactly what position Elizabeth Tanfield occupied in the development of the

Cary family discourse and what was her involvement, knowing or unknowing, in her daughter's conversion narrative.

Elizabeth Tanfield seems to have been rigorous in pursuing what she felt to be her rights, from her sense of social superiority, through her exacting treatment of her daughter, to her presumptuous erection of the Tanfield tomb at St John Baptist Church, Burford. The *Life*'s depiction of Elizabeth Cary kneeling humbly before her mother as symbolic of a strict upbringing is now a commonplace in Cary criticism. Despite Elizabeth Cary's problematic relationship with her mother, there are certain elements in the known histories of the Tanfields and, in particular, of their tomb that suggest commonalities within the familial discourse. On a simple level, it is possible to cite the oppositional and individualistic traits found in Elizabeth Cary's life and works, as having parallels with Elizabeth Tanfield's total disregard for any authority, be it municipal or religious, in the face of her own intentions. There is, however, a more suggestive link in the inscriptions on the Tanfield tomb. The couple recline, dressed in sumptuous reds and blacks with gold trim, upon a raised platform, over which is raised an ornate canopy. Two figures kneel at either end of the tomb: at their head, Elizabeth Cary and at their feet, the heir to Tanfield's estate and Elizabeth's stalwart Protestant son, Lucius Cary. There are two verse inscriptions: the first, at Elizabeth Cary's end, is dedicated to the memory of Lawrence Tanfield,

> Not this small heap of stones and straightned roome
> The Bench, the Court, Tribunall are his tombe …

although there is no way in which authorship can be ascribed. The second, which is more personal, is a four stanza elegy carved into the plinth at Elizabeth Tanfield's side:

> … In blisse is hee,
> Whom I lov'd best;
> Thrise happie shee,
> With him to rest.[27]

The poem is generally taken to have been devised by Elizabeth Tanfield, as was the rest of the tomb, and her final commentary upon her own skill as a 'Poet', 'My Harte did doe yt, / And not my witt', confirms that this composition was not undertaken by someone for whom writing poetry was a common practice. The poem would have been composed after Lawrence Tanfield's death in 1625 and before the erection of the

tomb in 1628. The text does not represent a literary influence passed from mother to daughter, but rather the late participation in a familial discourse of poetic composition that had been established by Elizabeth Cary at least before 1605 and had been adopted by her sons, Lucius and Lorenzo, in their undergraduate verse writing. What is particularly distinctive about the Cary familial discourse is the overwhelming influence of a single woman, Elizabeth Cary, in terms of faith and poetry.

There is, however, a further and more impacting link between Elizabeth Cary and her mother. The *Life* makes it clear that Elizabeth Tanfield considered herself to be socially superior to her husband.[28] Unlike Lawrence Tanfield, who had procured his own fortune as a lawyer, his wife was the daughter of Giles Symondes of Clay in Norfolk, by Katherine, daughter of Sir Anthony Lee, Knight of the Garter. It was this familial bond with the Symondes and Lees that provided the young Elizabeth Cary with her introduction to the nobility, but such connections were to have a more far reaching impact than the social climbing envisaged by her mother. For, it was precisely these extended family links that aroused Elizabeth Cary's interest in Catholicism.

III

Henry Lee and Anne Vavasour

Most biographical accounts of Elizabeth Cary acknowledge the fact that she knew Henry Lee, her great-uncle on her mother's side, but the significance of this relationship is not commonly developed. Henry Lee's sister, Katherine, married Giles Symondes and their daughter was Elizabeth Tanfield.[29] The *Life* makes no reference to Henry Lee, although Elizabeth Cary clearly knew and respected her great-uncle, since she dedicated her translation of Abraham Ortelius's *Le Mirroir du Monde* to him. The manuscript was, as Cary herself points out, 'the fruites and endevours of my yonge and tender yeares', and she goes on to express her gratitude for 'many your great favours', signing herself, 'Your ever obdiente neice E. Tanfelde'.[30] The translation was undertaken before 1602 when she married Henry Cary, since she signs herself as 'ET'. However, this can hardly have been a formal and courteous dedication since Cary specifically mentions the 'many … favours' that she has received previously from Lee. The association between the two families was well established, based on Henry Lee's continued patronage and support of his niece, Lady Tanfield and her husband, and the 'favours' continued at the time of Elizabeth Cary's marriage. John Chamberlain describes how, at the 1602

commencement at Oxford, Henry and his half-brother, Richard Lee, were set upon by 'cut-purses' who stole 'two jewels of 200 marks, which Sir Harry Lea and he meant to have bestowed on the bride, Mr Tanfelds daughter'.[31] In the end, Elizabeth Cary received cups of agate, ivory and silver from her great-uncle.[32] The reciprocity between Henry Lee and Elizabeth Cary before, and at the time of, her marriage provides evidence of a close relationship, with the older and established courtier providing support and patronage to his intelligent great-niece. If Cary could not rely upon the admiration and acquiescence of her parents for her literary endeavours she seems to have been confident of Lee's approval, as the dedication to the Ortelius translation demonstrates.

The associations with Henry Lee's household served to provide the young Elizabeth Cary with an impetus to literary activity, and they might also have provided her with a knowledge of, and perhaps sympathy for, English Catholicism. Henry Lee was certainly a Protestant, but he had strong associations with Catholicism through his wife, Anne Paget, and later through his mistress, Anne Vavasour. The Vavasour family were known to be sympathetic to Catholicism; for example, a branch of the family, the Hazelwood Vavasours, provided the centre for Catholic activity in York in the 1580s. Anne Vavasour was also directly linked to the Catholic coteries at court through her affair with Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, by whom she bore an illegitimate child. De Vere had undertaken a secret conversion to Catholicism, but in 1580 revealed this to Elizabeth I and begged for pardon, naming others involved, probably in exchange for his own speedy release from prison. Subsequently, Anne Vavasour's maternal uncle, Thomas Knyvet, challenged de Vere to a duel, in which the latter was seriously injured. But even as the strife between the Knyvets and de Vere ended, in January 1585, Anne's brother, Thomas Vavasour, challenged Oxford to a further duel, which seems to have been occasioned by the scandal of Anne's pregnancy and de Vere's accusation of the country's leading Catholics. It is unlikely that the duel ever took place, but the atmosphere of betrayal of a woman and her Catholic family, if not faith, as well as the consequent desire for revenge permeated the Vavasour/Knyvet family. Anne Vavasour was living openly with Henry Lee from the 1590s and their liaison persisted until his death in 1611. As Elizabeth Cary was certainly familiar with the milieu at Ditchley during this period, she would have known Lee's mistress. It seems unlikely that the Tanfields would have objected to this otherwise inappropriate link, since Elizabeth I had stayed with Lee in 1592 and Queen Anne was entertained by him in 1608. However, Cary's inevitable knowledge of Anne Vavasour's history

was bulwarked by the fact that they were related in a typically Early Modern Gordian-like fashion, which is almost impossible to represent on a linear family tree. Anne Vavasour's aunt, Katherine Knyvet, had been married first to Henry Paget, the brother of Lee's Catholic wife, Anne, and secondly to Edward Cary, the father of Henry Cary, Elizabeth's husband. The Protestant Tanfields were drawn into the Ditchley circle with its Catholic sympathies through those powerful Elizabethan tools, family and patronage. Elizabeth Cary's knowledge of the late Elizabethan discourse of the English Catholics, with their nostalgic valorisation of Mary Stuart, could certainly have developed through her associations with Ditchley, Henry Lee and Anne Vavasour. Whatever the Tanfields thought of such moral and spiritual influences, they could not have afforded to withdraw from the political and monetary preferment offered by Lee. A further, although later, link between Elizabeth Cary and the Vavasours was the convent, Our Lady of Consolation at Cambrai where Elizabeth Cary's daughters were professed between 1638 and 1639, and where, ten years earlier, two of the Hazelwood Vavasours, Margaret (Dame Lucy) and Catherine (Dame Catherine), had taken their vows.

Despite the *Life*'s investment in the Counter Reformation narrative of miraculous conversion and Elizabeth Tanfield's righteous Protestant assertions, Elizabeth Cary had sufficient contact with those who were sympathetic, if not full supporters, of the Catholic Church before she wrote *Mariam* to enable the construction of an informed politico-religious allegory. The very complexity of Mariam's representation, attested to so uniformly among critics, serves to confirm that, while the author might have had a clear interest in representing the Queen in Marian terms, at the same time, she had sufficient doubts to question an idealised Catholic form. Elizabeth Cary's faith was to alter from her early Protestant upbringing, through a sympathetic interest generated via Lee and Adolphus Cary, to the post-Ireland conversion of the 1620s. It is at this point that historical and textual evidence on Cary's faith diverge from the familial allegory, for the gradual and historicised development of interest, sympathy and faith sits uneasily alongside the immediacy demanded by miraculous conversion.

It is important to remember that familial allegory does not have to, nor indeed does it often, replicate historical information. A family constructs its own identity through a process of reworking and rewriting the very terms of its engendering and development. At times, this functions in terms of political propaganda, as in the case of Jane Lumley's *Iphigenia*, at others, the family itself divides into alternative versions of events, as in the gendered writings of Wroth and Herbert. For the Cary

family, Elizabeth Cary's entrenched Catholicism becomes an essential element to all subsequent writings in which her children rework their mother's life, as well as interpreting their own existence in the light of her faith. For Elizabeth Tanfield, a similar denial of early Catholic influences on her daughter becomes necessary as she distances herself from that same conversion process, defining the force of its impact through the stridency of her Protestant assertions and her omission of Lee. The *Life* is, however, the most significant of the Cary family compositions in defining a mutual discourse and it is unfortunate that it is most commonly read for the information it can provide on Elizabeth Cary in order to support possible biographical readings of the works. A number of critics find the *Life* unreliable in that it is 'distorting' and claim that it should be read 'cautiously'.[33] But such judgements only come into play if the critic is searching the text for an unbiased historical account of Elizabeth Cary's life and works. For those interrogating the dynamics of a familial discourse, the very unreliability of the *Life* provides a rich source of defining characteristics. As such, what is *not* included, or what is debated by the various contributors, becomes as important as the bare chronological events. By omitting the early Catholic influences, particularly those at Ditchley, Cary's children and mother rework the material circumstances of her early textual productions. This demands that Elizabeth Cary's Catholicism is seen as miraculous and unrelated to the past, from both Counter Reformation and Protestant factions, and represents the power of faith as an element in the Cary family discourse. Both ignore the shifting political discourses of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, focussing instead upon the centrifugal force of a single identity and its spiritual significance. Of all Early Modern family discourses, the Cary writings demonstrate categorically that a woman could, and did, direct the literary output of those in her circle, whether through emulation or rejection.

IV

Catholic conversion and the Cary family

The prime message of the *Life* is that Elizabeth Cary 'was a most sound sincere Catholic', and, as such, within the Counter Reformation narrative, worthy of emulation. In this context, the recording of Elizabeth Cary's life by her children serves as an exemplar to others and is allowed by the church's dominant desire for conversion. The description of Cary quoted above continues with, '... greatly coveting the conversion of others', demonstrating that what Cary attempted in her actual life is

simply repeated, by her children, in the textual version of the same, the *Life*.[34] The problem about this summation, however, is that Elizabeth Cary does not appear to have converted many people. Indeed, apart from her maidservant, Bessie Poulter, the only people Cary converted were her own children, one of whom, Patrick, later reverted to the Protestant faith.[35] When the *Life* records Cary's earnest attempts at conversion, therefore, the conclusion is strictly familial and refers back to the extended account of these conversions, which take up almost ninety per cent of the *Life* itself.[36] Indeed, when read as an account of the relationship between Cary and her offspring, the *Life* suggests that converting her children to Catholicism dominated all other maternal interests.

After Cary's open conversion to Catholicism, she became estranged from both husband and children, so when Henry Cary returned to England in 1629, her attempts at reconciliation initially proved fruitless:

> For having been left young by her, and not been a good while in her hands (especially three daughters) and now seeing her but when they would, as they had the whilest had from their father the care of both father and mother, so they paid to him the love and respect due to both, leaving her but a small part. (Only her eldest living daughter, who came from her later, was elder, and a less while from her, seemed to retain always more memory of what she owed her, which daughter was ever loved best by her of all her children (till the others were Catholic) and loved her better again than any of them, having showed herself very zealous in her mother's defence at her return into Ireland, which she made with her little brothers and sister, a year after her mother was a Catholic, though she were now returned to court again.)[37]

As the *Life* realistically concludes, Cary's younger children had been abandoned to the care of their father and had, therefore, transferred their affections to him. The 'three daughters' probably refer to Elizabeth, Lucy and Mary, who would have been approximately eight, six and three when their mother converted to Catholicism, being partially reunited with her in 1629 when Henry Cary, Lord Falkland returned to England. The 'little brothers', Patrick and Henry, were both under four years of age when separated from their mother. The 'eldest living daughter' refers to Anne, who would have been ten or eleven when 'she showed herself very zealous'. The *Life* fails to make reference to another 'living daughter', Victoria, who was baptised in 1620, possibly because Victoria did not convert to Catholicism and, as such, did not form part of the inner familial coterie about which the *Life* focuses. This familial emphasis

upon faith is stressed in the *Life* through the assertion that, although initially Cary loved Anne 'best', this was to change when 'the others were Catholic', with the consequent implication that it was only because the children converted that their mother showed them equal affection.

The overwhelming importance of conversion to Cary is repeated throughout the *Life*. After Henry Cary died in 1633, his widow

> Only sought to have her children with her, where they might have more occasion to come to the knowledge of the truth, and better means to follow it,[38]

which is followed by the assertion that she 'was their mother in faith as well as in nature'.[39] Indeed, when four of her daughters (Anne, Elizabeth, Lucy and Mary) did convert in 1634, they did not tell her, suggesting that familial intimacy had still not been established fully. Elizabeth Cary's main motive for abducting her children seems to have been to deliver them from the threat of being reconverted to Protestantism, or 'tormented' as the *Life* expresses it, by 'Mr Chillingworth'.[40] The *Life*, not unexpectedly given its Counter Reformation authorship, colludes with Elizabeth Cary's fears of the 'dangers' of Protestantism, but perhaps the most telling comment refers to Cary's transferring her children from her own care to that of a spiritual father. For the Catholic Carys, the conversion narrative is an essential and dominant aspect of their identity that supplants any close familial bonds of affection and love. There can be no doubt that the author of the *Life*, together with its annotators, readily colluded with their mother in constructing a familial discourse in which spiritual faith and the love of God superseded family ties and affection. At the same time, however, there remains a distinct unease with writing about a mother who left her young children, was reconciled with them primarily in order to convert them to her own faith, and finally who, through fear of reconversion, exiled them from country, family and herself. The tensions and dislocations endemic upon this combination of unity and division within the spiritual and familial discourse employed by the Carys was replicated in the works of Elizabeth Cary's offspring.

V

Anne Cary

The dialectic of spiritual and secular is a commonplace of Early Modern religious writing and has already been discussed in relation to the writings of Gertrude More. A parallel pattern emerges in the writings by, and

about, those Cary siblings who undertook an enclosed religious life. The description of Lucy, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, as initially 'obstinate, haughty, disdainful [and] sneering' before her conversion, and afterwards as 'obedient [and] humble', is a classic example of this dialectic. The description of her sister, Anne Cary, in the Paris community's House History provides evidence of the continuation of the specific importance of this form of representation to the Cary familial discourse.[41] The History records the foundation of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope in Paris in 1651 by three nuns from the Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation in Cambrai. Anne was particularly influential in establishing the new community in Paris: her previous court connections facilitated support from the exiled Queen Henrietta Maria and Abbot Walter Montague; her ability to speak French 'in perfection' provided clear and ready communication; and her scholarship allowed her to write the new constitutions necessary for the establishment of the house.[42] The conclusion of this early history of the Monastery of Our Lady of Good Hope describes the 'Character, Vertues, and Death' of Anne alongside the lives of the first prioresses of the community.[43] The usual combination of worldly identity and spiritual worth is noted immediately in the life, with a description of Anne's 'Nobility & Honourable Rank in the World' closely followed by an account of her humility and 'contempt of herself' when a religious.[44] Like her mother, however, Anne was a skilled linguist, as her proficiency in French demonstrates, and she is also praised for her 'great Wisdom', which was essential to the compilation of the constitutions.[45] The similarity with Elizabeth Cary's *Life* continues with their mutual commitment to imparting spiritual faith to others:

> Her Confidence in the Divine Providence, was very great, & she desired to imprint it in the hearts of all others.[46]

Anne's life quotes 'her own words' on the subject, in which she advocates the abandoning of 'Temporal Riches' since they 'soon fail … & like a broken reed fell to the Ground', which recalls Elizabeth Cary's rejection of worldly goods described in the *Life*.[47] These key themes – worldly versus spiritual riches and honour, linguistic skill, scholarship and wisdom, and the desire to have a spiritual impact on others – are repeated in the lives of Elizabeth Cary, Anne and, to a lesser extent, in the obituary of Lucy. There are, however, closer parallels between Elizabeth and Anne since both wrote poetry that adopts a dramatic tone and, significantly, foregrounds female roles.

Bibliographical records now extant in Paris of the manuscript books belonging to the Library of Our Blessed Lady of Good Hope in Paris list 'eight Collection Bookes' and 'The spirituall songs … in three parts' by Anne.[48] These songs are almost certainly translations of the psalms, since the Archives Départmentales du Nord, Lille, retains three loose quires of psalm translations in Anne's handwriting. The first quire contains the end of psalm 69 to psalm 78; the second quire contains the end of psalm 120 to the beginning of psalm 139; the third quire contains the end of psalm 139 to psalm 149.[49] Anne's translations are systematic and so it is likely that some translations have been lost. Indeed, the 'three parts' mentioned in the Paris list might well refer to a different set of psalms from those extant at Lille. The psalms would have been translated from the Latin Vulgate version, although they are free translations, differing considerably, for example, from those in the English Douai Bible, with which Anne would have been familiar.[50] What is immediately noticeable as distinctive about Anne's translations is the adoption of a dramatic voice, especially at the beginning of the psalm. For example, at the commencement of psalm 132 the poetic voice seems almost to be answering a previously spoken accusation, to which 'so' refers:

> No Lord thou knowest I doe not so,
> And yet thou all my soul dost know,

and this conversational tone is repeated in the following translation where God is, once again, addressed directly, 'Remember Lord ye oath I made.' The debate with God continues throughout Anne's translations, as in psalm 140 where she dramatises her own voice through the use of 'I said':

> Most holy Lord, thou art my God, I said,
> And now's thy time to help, since I have pray'd.

Yet the familiar and challenging tone is also varied with a poignant acceptance of human frailty, as in the opening of psalm 142, 'My heart just broke …'. Throughout, Anne incorporates a dramatic voice into her verse translations producing a vivid and immediate dialogue between the speaker and God. Such stylistic intervention on her part demonstrates that she was aware of early-seventeenth-century spiritual verse, but the psalm translations also show a familiarity with dramatic tone, metre and dialogue that recalls her mother's work,

The Tragedy of Mariam. Mariam's soliloquies begin with similar bursts of passion against injustice,

> How oft have I with public voice run on,
> To censure Rome's last hero for deceit,

or a bleak self-awareness,

> Am I the Mariam that presumed so much,
> And deemed my face must needs preserve my breath?[51]

It is clear from the layout of the translation of psalm 136, which differs from the biblical original, that it could have been sung or chanted. The chorus appears after the initial verse,

> His Mercys have bene ever sure,
> And to Eternity endure,

and is repeated at the end of each subsequent verse with the prompt, 'His Mercys –.' This performative aspect might be echoed in the description of Anne's verses as 'songs' in the catalogue of the Paris nuns.

Anne's verses have a further link with her mother's writing in that, like Elizabeth Cary, she demonstrates an ability to emphasise female roles and experience. The alterations to the characters of Mariam and Isabel in *Mariam* and *Edward II* respectively expand their roles and present them more sympathetically. No such major alterations are made in Anne's translation of the psalms, but she does include a significant shift of gender in psalm 71, where the speaker is supposedly King David. The predominant message of the psalm consists of praising God and asking for continued help against the enemy. Anne follows this pattern in asking for help 'in my great escape' and against 'those who know thee not', but when the speaker, 'thy Servant' is described she presents the figure as female: '*she* into thy great Armes was throwne', '*her* who God has left', and, 'Let *her* who thought thee farre off find thee neere' (italics mine).[52] This gendered shift is specific to Anne; for example, the Douai translation is not gendered, pointing out that the psalm may refer to 'King David, or anie other just person'.[53] This is informative in that the 'just' are categorised systematically throughout as Catholic and the annotations as a whole were meant to reinforce Catholic doctrine against Protestantism.[54] Read in these terms, Anne's representation of her own 'great escape' (from England) from 'those who knew thee not'

(Lucius Cary and Chillingworth) echoes the personal/spiritual themes of Elizabeth Cary's *Life* and the Cary familial discourse as a whole. The narrative of individual salvation is combined with the common Counter Reformation narrative of attaining spiritual safety within the church and reinforces public ideology with personal testament. Parallel patterns of trial, danger, escape and salvation recur throughout Anne's psalm translations, perhaps the most quasi-autobiographical being psalm 122 which reads like a graphic account of the Cary children's escape:

> Twas ye best news I wish to heare,
> My very soul stood ravisht at my Eare;
> Lets go, they said; Come lets away!
> Already we have tarry'd long enough,
> Now let our speed declare our Love;
> Why should we thus from Sion stay,
> And only be unhappy by our owne delay?[55]

The Douai Bible interprets this psalm as specifically confirming the supremacy of the Catholic Church to which 'all nations of the world doe come', once again reinforcing Counter Reformation policies, which in Cary's translation are reworked and reinforced through a familial context.[56]

Both in her psalm translations and in the House History, Anne espouses the dominant elements of the Cary familial discourse. Like other Counter Reformation Catholics, the necessity for perseverance against the threat of Protestantism and a dedication to salvation (for Elizabeth Cary more particularly conversion) is pre-eminent. In addition, the dialectic of spiritual faith and worldly goods or status is a common element in spiritual biographies and verse, not only in the accounts of Anne, Lucy and Elizabeth Cary. But more distinctive elements are also evident. Anne's scholarship and skill with languages is emphasised in the House History, as it is in her mother's *Life*, and both mother and daughter undertook translations. Dramatic language, the use of dialogue and the possibility of an envisaged performance also develop as common characteristics. Finally, the focus on female experience recurs in the works of Elizabeth Cary, through the characters of Mariam and Isabel, of Anne in her feminising of the psalms and of Lucy by choosing to write her mother's *Life*. From her early defence of her mother, Anne proved to be the most loyal of Elizabeth Cary's progeny and, as such, her perpetuation of the familial discourse is unsurprising. Not all of Elizabeth Cary's children were so accommodating and, in order to trace the impact of the familial themes

already identified, it is important to explore the way Patrick and Lucius Cary contributed to, or detracted from, the Cary identity.

VI

Patrick Cary

If the dominant thread of the Cary familial discourse was spiritual conversion then Patrick Cary represents its failure. He was the elder of the two boys who were kidnapped from Great Tew and transported to France where, with his brothers and sisters, he made a vow 'to enter a Religious life under S. Bennetts habitt'.[57] After three years he transferred to Rome where, under recommendation from Walter Montague, he joined the household of Cardinal Francesco Barberini.[58] Initially Patrick prospered and was granted various pensions by Pope Urban VIII and Queen Henrietta Maria, but with the death of the Pope and subsequent political upheavals, Patrick was left, in 1647–48, with no income and mounting debts. At this point Patrick tried to obtain secular employment in England, although his ambitions proved fruitless.[59] By 1650 he had decided to respect his earlier vow, writing to Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, who had been one of his brother Lucius's closest friends, that his ill luck

> Was for nothing else, but in punishment for my neglect of compliance wth my Vowe: and thereupon I resolved to bee clothed without any further delay.[60]

There followed a period of vacillation that may be traced through the letters exchanged by Anne, who tacitly approved of her brother's vows, and Hyde, who supported Patrick in his decision to abandon the religious life.[61] It was during this period at Douai that Patrick contributed his annotations to the *Life* of Elizabeth Cary and probably composed his own spiritual verse.[62]

Patrick's religious poems occur in a manuscript that also includes secular verse clearly composed after he had left Douai. The later works are entitled 'Triviall Ballades' and are dedicated to 'Mrs Tompkins', the daughter of Victoria Cary's husband, William Uvedale, by his first wife; they were completed by 1651. The manuscript was subsequently rediscovered by Walter Scott and the poems were first published by him in 1819.[63] The divine poems are, like Anne's psalm translations, informed by the Bible, although they are original compositions with the biblical quotes

clearly attributed. For example, the first of the divine poems concludes with a quotation from the psalms (55:6), but commences with a much more personal and direct voice:

> Worldly Designes, Feares, Hopes, farwell!
> Farwell all earthly Joyes and Cares!
> On nobler Thoughts my soule shall dwell,
> Worldly Designes, Feares Hopes, farwell!
> Att quiet, in my peacefull Cell
> I'le thincke on God, free from your snares;
> Worldly Designes, Feares, Hopes, farwell!
> Farwell all earthly Joyes and Cares.[64]

Patrick repeats the dialectic between worldly concerns and spirituality found in the writings and 'lives' of his mother and two sisters, adding a personal element in which his own 'Designes' (plans for political and monetary success), 'Feares' (that he will not succeed in these), 'Hopes' (that he will attain a secular position with an income), are abandoned as he accepts that his vow must be fulfilled, 'my peacefull Cell'. The description of these 'Worldly Designes' is distinct from those referred to by Elizabeth, Lucy and Anne since Patrick describes both the '*Joyes* and Cares' (italics mine) attendant upon a secular life. Such contradictions recur throughout Patrick Cary's religious verse, in which he envisages the torments and imprisonment of the faithful soul:

> In a darcke Cave below
> The Conquerour does throw
> His miserable vanquish'd *Foe*.
> Deepe is the Dungeon where that wretch is cast,
> Thither Day comes not nigh;
> Dampish and nasty Vapours doe him blast,
> Yett still his Heart is high.
> His prison is soe straight
> Hee cannot move at will;
> Huge Chaynes oppresse him with their waight,
> Yett has Hee courage still.
> And can I thincke I want my *Libertee*,
> When in such *Thrall*, Hee keepes his *Mind* soe *Free*?[65]

The reference at the end of the poem is to the book of Job (5:4), which provides one identification for the 'vanquish'd' Christian soul and his

'Conquerour', Satan. However, the image is a recurring one throughout the Bible and in Early Modern Christian poetry, so that Patrick could equally be drawing upon Christ's temptation in the wilderness and final crucifixion, or Spenser's description of the Red Cross Knight imprisoned in Orgoglio's dungeon.[66] The question at the conclusion of the stanza, however, implies that Patrick's own 'peacefull Cell' may be compared to the 'Dungeon' with its 'Dampish and nasty Vapours', and that he perceives the enclosed religious life as being in '*Thrall*', even though he is aware that a free '*Mind*' should be more important than material '*Libertee*'. The final stanza of the poem repeats these spiritual doubts and describes his life as 'confin'd' and acknowledges the temptation to leave his current life of, '*Restraint*, or *Griefe*, or *Feare,* or *Cold*'.[67] The ultimate welcoming of personal hardship and an enclosed spiritual life described by Patrick's mother and sisters is never achieved. The poems echo the doubts evinced in Patrick's letters to Hyde, and while they evidence his determined effort to value spiritual hardships over the 'Joyes' of a secular life, the self-sacrifice and humility described in the 'lives' of the female members of the Cary family never emerge. Interestingly, Anne referred to 'worldly desyre' in a letter to Hyde, a parallel noted by the editor of Patrick's poems, who comments that he 'had already written these verses and shown them to his sister, or more likely, that the lines reflect ideas they had lately spoken of together'.[68] Given the propensity of the Cary siblings to show their manuscript work to others within the family (the *Life* and its contributors, as well as Patrick's verse copies for Lucy Tompkins), it seems likely that Anne had seen the early devotional poetry and had indeed shared the idea of the spiritual and worldly dialectic, although from a more polarised position than that of Patrick.

Inevitably Patrick succumbed to the 'Worldly Designes'; partly, it seems, because a diet of fish did not suit him, 'the fare (for the first yeare onely fish) in some 3. monthes and a halfe, has cast mee downe into such a weaknesse that I am forc't backe into England'.[69] Whatever reason Patrick gave, he left Douai in September 1650 and took up residence with his sister, Victoria, at Wickham, the Uvedale family home. Within the space of two years Patrick had married Susan Uvedale, his brother-in-law's niece, and had reconverted to Protestantism. He remained at Wickham with his wife and first child, and it is during this time that he must have composed his 'Triviall Ballades'.[70] The secular poems are very different in content, form and tone from the divine verse: the topics are light-hearted, the verses are in the form of ballads with useful notes as to the tune which should accompany them and the tone is comic. In place of the 'Dampish and nasty Vapours' of the cell are 'The walls of

sweet *Wickham*' and the despised 'fish' has been replaced with 'Quart' pots of 'drincke'.[71] Yet even in the writing of drinking ballads – an activity Elizabeth Cary would hardly have condoned – Patrick still retains elements of the Cary familial discourse.

Having completely abandoned the spiritual for the 'Worldly' in both life and poetry, Patrick chose not to use religious themes in his secular verse. However, certain elements already identified in the writings of Elizabeth and Anne reappear in the *Triviall Ballades*, where Patrick uses dramatic language and dialogue, focuses on women, and deals with the issues surrounding translation. In one of the ballads, 'to the tune *But I fancy lovely Nancy*', Patrick names and commends each of his sisters. The poem begins with an ambiguous, 'Surely now I'me out of danger / And noe more need feare my heart', and a statement that none 'Shall subdue my Libertee'.[72] Read within the context of the poem and its generic tradition, the poetic voice fears romantic entanglements and hopes that he will always be at liberty from love. However, read alongside Patrick's divine poetry and in relation to his own history, the poem simultaneously evokes a freedom from holy orders, with a telling repeat of 'Libertee', which has been transmuted from the dark imprisonments of the spiritual writing, to the self-ironising tone of the romantic verse. The autobiographical nature of the poetry is sustained as Patrick goes on to list and describe the women of his acquaintance, beginning with

> *Anne* was once the word, which moved
> Most my heart, I'le itt avow.[73]

Veronica Delaney, the editor of Patrick's poems, identifies this '*Anne*' as Anne (Dame Clementia) pointing out that the letters to Hyde 'are witness to the strong affection between her and her brother'.[74] Such affection is placed by Patrick securely in the past ('was once the word'), and the final 'avow' might well be, given the mocking tone of the whole poem, an ironic comment upon the vow he attempted to keep with Anne's support. The next stanza refers to three '*Betteys*', or Elizabeths, noting that

> One of them is now forsaken,
> And her Sister has her Right,[75]

which probably refers to Elizabeth (Dame Augustina), although Delaney has traced a number of other possible Elizabeths. The third stanza addresses two '*Lucyes*' and, again, while there were certainly a number of Lucys in the Wickham circle, the recipient of the whole manuscript,

Lucy Tompkins, being an obvious candidate, Patrick's sister, Lucy (Dame Magdalena) might certainly be encompassed here.[76] The fifth stanza refers to two women called '*Mary*', perhaps alluding to Mary (Dame Maria).[77] Although the references are ranging in their allusions, the fact that the first four women's names equate exactly with Patrick Cary's sisters, even following the order of their ages, points towards a familial poem, in which sibling ties are both located and evaded, ultimately securing Patrick 'Libertee' from both family and the restricting spiritual lives they represented.

The subsequent ballad, to the tune of '*The Healths*', entrenches the familial referents of the collection as a whole, by praising, both William and Victoria Uvedale, the latter being described as

> Next to his chast Lady, who loves him a life;
> And whilst wee are drincking to soe good a wife,
> The Poore of the Parish will pray for her life.
> Besure her Health goe round.[78]

Victoria Cary receives the conventional praise of an Early Modern woman in that she is 'soe good a wife', which is backed up in the next stanza with a reference to her virtue, although Patrick Cary comically suggests that she might not be very skilled in 'Huswifry'.[79] Perhaps such domestic duties were not entirely welcome to a young woman who had been one of Queen Henrietta Maria's ladies in waiting and who had performed in several court masques. Although there are no extant writings by Victoria Cary, she participated in the dramatic element of the Cary familial discourse via these court performances. More significantly, she acted in Walter Montague's, *The Shepherd's Paradise* (1633), which was performed by Queen Henrietta Maria and other ladies of the court.[80] Victoria played the part of Martyro, a melancholy poet whose complex lines would have been demanding, and her intelligence is attested to by Dorothy Osborne, who writes comments that

> she was handsome Enough once or Else some Pictur's that I have seen of her flattere her very much, that, her witt together, gott her soe many servant's, that they hindered one another and her too I think.[81]

Montague's play, which is a long and somewhat stilted drama praising Platonic love, was notorious in its day, provoking William Prynne's infamous attack against the Queen.[82] More recently, the play has become the focus of feminist criticism, since it represents the first known drama to be acted in public by women in England. Victoria Cary's involvement

in the play represents, not only the familial interest in drama, but also a radical focus on female experience. Although there are no extant original writings attributable to Victoria Cary, her dramatic performance in *The Shepherd's Paradise* continued the Cary family's investment in women's independent contribution to English drama, with Elizabeth Cary being the first woman to write an original tragedy in English, and her daughter being one of the first one to act on the English stage, albeit a private one.

Victoria never converted to Catholicism and when Patrick fled the rigours of an enclosed life, he stayed with his Protestant sister at Wickham. The light poems he wrote at this time, although they evade the spiritual familial discourses of his sisters in Cambrai, suggest a continuance of familial ideas. Given Victoria's own earlier interest in drama, it is hardly surprising that Patrick should write ballads for performance and that the language of the verse should be dramatic. As with Anne's writings, the first lines of the poems suggest a clear speaking voice, which often posits a respondent or, at least, an audience. The 'Healths' begins, 'Come (fayth) since I'me parting, & that God knows when …' before continuing with the familiar praise of the drinking song.[83] The addresses are wide-ranging, but always direct, as for example, 'Fayre-One!', 'Fayre Beautyes!', 'Good People of England!', '*Jacke*!', and 'Fondlings!'[84] In parallel, Patrick includes verse dialogues, but these are as simple in form and content as the single-voice works, so that '*Jacke*' is answered with '*Dicke*'.[85] The only secular poem that demonstrates an individualistic view is 'To the tune *I'le tell thee Dicke that I have beene*', in which Cary attacks the Rump Parliament Act of November 1650, which ruled that all existing law books and texts relating to legal matters should be translated, with the new ones published in English.[86] Patrick's opening lines are typically dialogic, as he challenges the imagined, but clearly pro-Parliamentarian addressee,

> And can You thincke that this Translation
> Will benefit att all our nation,
> Though fayre bee the Pretence?[87]

But even Patrick's royalist ideology escapes serious treatment as he switches in the second verse to a coterie jibe against Walter Montague, who by 1650 was on the continent and certainly not involved in Parliamentary debate:

> But tell mee pray, if ever you
> Read th'*English* of *Watt Montague,*
> Is't not more hard then *French*?[88]

Patrick's audience, the supposed 'you' of the ballad, was bounded by the familial knowledge of those at Wickham. His address is confined to those who knew Montague's writing, and most probably to his sister, Victoria, who had performed in Montague's play, and would have been well aware of the intricacies of Montague's language, and to those who would have known of her involvement. Rather than a contemporaneous political comment, Patrick relies upon witty allusions to a past court world, which had very little relevance to the 1650 Rump Parliament. The interest in translation evokes a common Cary family theme, but the simplistic metre and rhyme scheme bear little resemblance to the linguistic skills of his mother and sister. Indeed, the stylistic sophistication of Elizabeth Cary's dramatic verse and the metrical variety of Anne's translations are neglected in Patrick's exuberant ballads, with their repetitive manner and tonal simplicity. While his secular verse participates in the Cary familial discourse, with its allusion to family members, women in general, dramatic language and translation, the lightness of tone and careless versification suggest a conscious distancing from the serious concerns of Patrick's Catholic relations. Poetically, Patrick's shift from spiritual to 'Worldly designes' denoted a dilution of literary value as he removed himself from the dominant familial concerns. Moreover, while the witty ballads suggest a less troubled existence, Patrick Cary's content was short-lived, for he died shortly after moving to Dublin, with his wife and second son, in a further attempt to revive his fortunes.[89]

VII

Lucius Cary

Of all Elizabeth Cary's children it was Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland, who proved most resistant to her influence. His brother, Patrick, might have eventually evaded the powerful impact of his mother's spiritual and ideological concerns, but Lucius appears to have escaped them altogether. This is particularly true of her commitment to the Catholic Church and her attempts to convert her children to Catholicism. After the death of her husband, Elizabeth Cary initiated long debates about religion with her children, including Lucius, which are described in the *Life*:

> Their discourse <at the table> was frequently religion … and she [Elizabeth Cary] believed this discourse being mingled with others … would draw her daughters' attentions, whose conversion she sought in all … and all of them found matter to reflect on. … (as their elder

> brother [Lucius Cary] did (who was so wholly Catholic in opinion then that he would affirm he knew nothing but what the Church told him; pretending for his being none, that though this seemed to him to be thus (and that he always disputed in defence of it).[90]

The convoluted syntax of the *Life* suggests the difficulty his family encountered in actually determining Lucius's religious affiliation, although there is a clear desire to interpret his contribution to the discussion as Catholic, 'he was so wholly Catholic'. The doubts about Lucius's faith are confirmed later in the *Life*, in a typical Cary sibling interchange of 'knowing better'. Lucy judges there was not 'any sign of hope' that Lucius was a Catholic, while Patrick's annotations, copied out by Anne offers the contradictory view, 'God be thanked, there is great hopes they both [Lucius and Lorenzo] died Catholics'.[91] Such doubts were not evidenced by Lucius Cary's non-familial associates; for example, his close friend, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, interpreted these discussions as representing Lucius's courtesy and intellectual curiosity, but with no suggestion of a real threat to his Protestant faith:

> Many attempts were made upon him by the instigation of his mother (who was a lady of another persuasion in religion, and of a most masculine understanding, allayed with the passion and infirmities of her own sex) to pervert him in his piety to the Church of England, and to reconcile him to that of Rome.[92]

Hyde goes on to point out that Lucius Cary 'declined no opportunity or occasion of conference with those of that religion [Catholicism]', and that he treated them with 'civility', but that at no time did he contemplate conversion.[93] It was Lucius Cary who offered support to Chillingworth after his protracted spiritual struggles concluded in a decisive commitment to Protestantism, and who certainly agreed to Chillingworth's attempts to bolster the Protestant inclinations of the younger Cary children when they lived at Great Tew. Lucius's continued trust in Chillingworth represents a very different view from that of the *Life*, where the cleric is described as 'a wilful deceiver and seducer'.[94] Moreover, it was the kidnapping of Patrick and Henry that finally divided the Cary family.

The *Life* contextualises the abduction of the two youngest Cary brothers in terms of a spiritual liberation from the Protestantism of Chillingworth, but for the Cary family the spiritual was inextricably bound to the personal, and the impact upon Lucius was considerable. The *Life* vacillates in its

description of Lucius, pronouncing him 'a more than ordinarily good son' for welcoming his siblings when asked by Elizabeth Cary, but also castigating him for attempting to thwart his mother when she sought to have her children restored to her.[95] When Elizabeth Cary determined to 'steal them away', Lucius is depicted as conspiring with the spying and 'skilfully inquisitive' Chillingworth.[96] The *Life* demonises Chillingworth, and Lucius, as a committed Protestant, cannot escape censure so that his role in attempting to retain his younger siblings is portrayed in terms of spiritual control rather than brotherly affection. However, it would be wrong to read this as a one-sided victimisation of Lucius produced by an overpowering Counter Reformation discourse. Hyde's account of Lucius's response to the kidnapping demonstrates that the second Viscount Falkland was equally dogmatic in his spiritual conviction:

> But this charity towards them [Catholics] was much lessened, and any correspondence with them quite declined, when by sinister arts they had corrupted his two younger brothers, being both children, and stolen from his house and transported them beyond seas, and perverted his sisters: upon which occasion he writ two large discourses against the principal positions of that religion.[97]

Hyde's emotive text demonises the Catholics, just as the *Life* attacks Chillingworth. He depicts their 'sinister arts' and describes how the Catholic community 'corrupted' and 'perverted' the Cary siblings. Moreover, while Hyde refuses to name 'them', the scandal of the abduction would have ensured that seventeenth-century readers would have immediately recognised Elizabeth Cary, Lucius's mother, as the chief 'sinister', corrupting and perverting person. Finally, Hyde judges that it was this familial rift that lead directly to Lucius's composition of 'two large discourses' against Catholicism. The 'discourses' Hyde refers to certainly include *A Discourse of Infallibility* (circulated in manuscript and published posthumously in 1646), which argues, as Kurt Weber, Lucius's biographer, sums up that

> A reasonable soul has the right to demand that the infallibility of the Church be clearly manifest.[98]

Lucius's argument may appear, at times, to be a thoughtful and scholarly intervention into religious controversy, it is however, simultaneously, an extensive attack against the Catholic Church, for the key question posed in the treatise is, as Weber points out, 'How can the

Roman Church convince a rational mind of its infallibility?'[99] Lucius's answer to this self-posed question is long and detailed but his judgement is succinct:

> To know whether the Church of *Rome* may erre, (as a way which will conclude against her, but not for her) I seek whether she have erred; and conceiving she hath contradicted her self, conclude necessarily she hath erred.[100]

Since the Catholic Church has erred through self-contradiction, it has failed to prove to the rational mind that it is infallible. Such a summary fails to do justice to Lucius's careful and well-supported arguments, but the important point of the discourse in terms of the Cary family's engagement with religious controversy is that it finally marks the boundary between Lucius and Elizabeth Cary in terms of faith.

At the end of *A Discourse of Infallibility* Lucius Cary deliberately invites responses:

> If indeed any can prove by any infallible way, the Infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, and the necessity under paine of damnation for all men to believe it … I will subscribe to it.[101]

It is hardly surprising that when the treatise appeared in a second edition, in 1660, the title had expanded to include a variety of contributions:

> *A Discourse of Infallibility. With Mr Thomas White's Answer to it, and a Reply to him; by Sr Lucius Cary, late Lord Viscount of Falkland. Also Mr Walter Montague (Abbot of Nanteul) his Letter against Protestantism; and his Lordship's answer thereunto, with Mr John Pearson's Preface … To which are now added two discourses of Episcopacy by the said Viscount Falkland and his Friend Mr William Chillingworth.*[102]

And, in addition to the extra pieces by Lucius, White, Montague, Pearson and Chillingworth, the 1660 edition also includes a dedicatory letter by the text's editor, Thomas Triplett. Thomas White's polite refutation of *A Discourse* is included, together with Lucius's *Reply*, which is most probably the second of the two discourses mentioned by Hyde. The inclusion of the other pieces is determined by their thematic link to the overall

question of infallibility and associated religious controversies. For the familial context, it is Walter Montague's 'Letter' and Lucius's 'answer' that are most interesting.

Montague's letter defending his conversion to Catholicism had been written to his father in 1635, was circulated widely at court and was published in 1641 with an answer written by Lucius Cary.[103] Montague's main argument was that a church cannot exist without a visible form and that, therefore, the Protestant Church originating with Luther could not be the true church. Lucius confutes this argument concluding that neither church had always been visible, but he turns the debate towards a rational discussion about infallibility, although his description of 'Popery' as 'an ill aire' could hardly have inclined Montague to read his arguments in an objective light.[104] The theological aspects of Montague's letter clearly prompted Lucius to respond formally, but his concerns were reinforced by the fact that Montague was related to him. This link was both through marriage, since Cary's wife Lettice was Montague's cousin, and through his own family via Sir Henry Lee. Certainly, Montague had close ties with the Cary family; Victoria had acted in his play, *The Shepherd's Paradise*, and Patrick certainly knew his work, as the mocking reference to 'th'*English* of *Watt Montague*' that was harder 'then *French*' reveals. Montague's influence with Henrietta Maria had helped Patrick obtain preferment at Rome, and Anne appealed to him when she set about founding the convent of Our Lady of Good Hope in Paris. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Elizabeth Cary intervened in the debate, writing a reply to her son in defence of Montague's conversion, which is listed among her works in the *Life*:

> When Mr Montague defended that faith [Catholicism] with his pen for which he hath now the honour to suffer … in a letter to his father (in answer to one of his, to him), which was much praised by all: her son writing an answer to it, she writ something against his answer, taking notice in the beginning of it of the fulfilling of his prophecy who said he came not to bring peace but the sword; the son being here against his father, and the mother against her son, where his faith was the question; which paper was thought the best thing she ever writ.[105]

Elizabeth Cary's reply to her son is no longer extant, although it is possible to surmise what arguments she would have made against him. For example, from the passage quoted above, it seems probable that she

would have called upon Christ's instructions to the disciples in the book of Matthew:

> Think not that I came to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother … (Matthew, 10:34–5)

In Matthew this 'variance' is explained further in that 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me' (Matthew 10:37). Christ's exhortations concur with the description of Elizabeth Cary's relationship with her children as recorded by the *Life*, in which she is described as only wanting her children to be with her so that 'they might have more occasion to come to the knowledge of the truth, and better means to follow it'.[106] As the *Life* acknowledges, Elizabeth Cary privileged faith over family. But in the description of her reply to Lucius, a further interpretation of Christ's words is added, 'where his faith was the question'. Here, the division between parent and child shifts from the New Testament directive, towards the Early Modern conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism, and the personal strife between Elizabeth Cary and her son Lucius. The argument of Elizabeth's Cary's reply probably suggested that 'the mother is against the son' because of Christ's instruction to love God before your children and because she has to defend the true church against him since he has fallen into error. While the introductions and conclusions of Lucius's various theological treatises are unfailingly courteous to his opponents, his mother was intensely confrontational, conflating personal and public discourses, even as she denied the importance of the former in comparison with the latter. There is no extant reply from Lucius to his mother's reply, although the *Life* suggests that one was intended, that 'to answer it again would be necessary to go farther and deny more than he had done in his'.[107] Certainly, the *Life* itself undertakes a further answer to Lucius, although it is focussed upon *A Discourse of Infallibity* rather than the reply to Montague,

> and another of those that had the like opinions in religion was wont to say that the great conveniency there seemed to be (according to human understanding) of an infallible guide, and the great aptness everyone had to wish there were such a thing, did make them so readily assent <in?> to believe it.[108]

And in the margin one of the Catholic siblings has inscribed, 'My Br Falkl'. In addition, Weber notes that Elizabeth Cary encouraged

a further refutation of *A Discourse*, the anonymous *A View of Some Exceptions Which Have Beene Made by a Romanist to the Lord Viscount Falkland's Discourse* (1646).[109] Lucius Cary might have evaded his mother's attempts to convert him to Catholicism, but he nevertheless participated in the dominant familial discourse – faith. Although he appears almost isolated from his mother and siblings in his pursuance of Protestantism, the spiritual conviction and determination of Elizabeth Cary are clearly present in her son, inverted as in a mirror reflection. Just as the *Life* describes Elizabeth Cary's determination to convert her children to Catholicism, so Hyde reveals that the main impetus to write Protestant theological treatises resulted from the kidnapping of Lucius's young siblings.

Even before the spiritual rift with his mother, Lucius had attempted to recreate himself as separate and distinct from his blood relatives. In some ways this is summed up by Triplett in his dedicatory preface to *A Discourse*, where he writes,

> He [Lucius Cary] … knowing well how much more glorious it is to be the first then the last of a Noble Family, (Blood without Vertue making Vice but more conspicuous) was so farr from relying upon that empty Title, that He seemed *Ipse suos geniuses Parentes*, to have *begotten* his Ancestors, and to have given them a more Illustrious life, then he received from them.[110]

In the context of the religious discourse, Triplett represents Lucius as devising his own 'Vertue' and being the 'first' rather than the 'last' of the Carys, inferring that the son's Protestantism is superior to the mother's Catholic faith. However, the trope of a parentless child finds a significant parallel in Lucius's poetry and its contemporary reception.

Before his interest in religious doctrine, Lucius Cary, like his brother Lorenzo, participated in the courtly tradition of writing verse. Evidence of Lorenzo's literary activities may be found in a mock elegy, written by John Earle, 'An Epitaph on the Living Sr Lorenza Carew', where he is described as spending his time writing,

> … verses, that doe stumble worse,
> In Coging, flattering, lying, fleering,
> Jeered by some, and others Jeering.[111]

None of Lorenzo's poetry has survived, although in tone and sophistication, a similarity with Patrick's secular verse seems likely. In contrast, Lucius was taken seriously as a poet, his name being coupled with those of Carew, Davenant and Suckling.[112] Suckling wrote of Lucius that,

although he was 'of late so gone with divinity', his poetic skill would still have allowed him to be Apollo's 'priest and his poet'.[113] Lucius was also a patron and seems to have created a community of male poets and scholars at his house, Great Tew. As Hyde notes, he gathered together

> men of the most eminent and sublime parts … who dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air, so that his house was a university in a less volume.[114]

This male community at Great Tew with its emphasis upon faith, culture and learning acts as a gendered-mirror for the female community at Cambrai with its parallel emphases upon the spirit and manuscript productivity, both scholarly and literary. Even the term 'sister' used by Anne, Lucy, Elizabeth and Mary in terms of both faith and blood is echoed by the use of 'brother' for those men who congregated about Lucius Cary. One of this group, Abraham Cowley, refers to himself and his companions as Cary's 'younger Brothers'.[115] But, whereas the women at Cambrai attribute their spiritual inheritance solely to their mother, Elizabeth Cary, the men at Great Tew claimed direct cultural descent from a father – Ben Jonson. The 'Tribe of Ben' is a well-known literary designation for those seventeenth-century poets who emulated the verse of Ben Jonson, but for Lucius such literary tribute merged inextricably with poetic themes and autobiographical content. In 'An Eglogue on the Death of Ben Johnson [sic], Between Melybaeus and Hylas', a pastoral elegy in which two shepherds lament the death of 'that glorious bard', Lucius pays tribute to Jonson who, 'did our youth to noble actions raise', although these,

> … his adopted children equall not
> The generous issue his own braine begot.[116]

Lucius's verse betrays a personal indebtedness to Jonson, which is confirmed by two epistles written to his 'father'. The first is addressed, 'To his noble Father, Mr Jonson' and is signed, 'Your Sonne and servant. Lucius Cary'.[117] The second poem is prefaced by a letter again addressed to 'Noble Father' and the poem itself presents Jonson in the same terms:

> But pardon Father for what I rehearse,
> But imitates thy friendship, not thy Verse.[118]

Of course, Lucius is adopting a rhetorical strategy in which his verse is dedicated to a 'father' and ordinarily such usage could be dismissed as a

literary device, much the same as Cowley's claim of kinship with Lucius himself. Yet, Clarendon's evidence of the closely knit male community of scholars substantiates Cowley's claim of 'brotherhood', just as Cary's well-recorded rejection of his parents and siblings proffers an understanding of his self re-creation. It is significant that, in the elegy to Jonson, there are two negative references to mothers: 'stern step-dame' and 'fierce step-dame'.[119] No simple autobiographical reading is necessary here, for the important point is that Lucius eulogises the father figure, denigrates mothers, and welcomes brothers while he neglects to mention sisters. Ironically, it is precisely Lucius's shadowing of the spiritual with the secular that brings him into a closer alignment with the writings of his brother and sisters. For Anne and Lucy the dialectic had to be confronted, but faith finally dominated, while Patrick's verse evidences the opposite conclusion, where he abandons spiritual commitment for secular pleasure. For Lucius, the same divide penetrates his writing – that 'divinity' and 'poetry' referred to by Suckling – and his faith, whereby he rejects his Catholic family for Protestant friends, remakes his parentage, supplants his mother, Elizabeth Cary, with a 'father', Ben Jonson, and transposes fellow poets as 'brothers' within their male community at Great Tew for his sisters in blood from the Catholic convents in France.

Lucius rejected the discourses initiated by Elizabeth Cary and promulgated through her daughters and initially by her son, Patrick, in terms of faith and family. But in spite of the vehemence of this denial, Lucius Cary constructed a thematic mirror of his mother's influence, through which Catholic was transmuted to Protestant and female into male. In addition, there are traces of the Cary familial discourse, which remain intact. Lucius's scholarship and his linguistic proficiency are represented in his 'life' by Hyde, just as learning and languages are present in the lives of his mother and sister, Anne. Hyde recounts how his friend had decided not to visit London until he had learned Greek,

> And pursued it with that indefatigable industry, that it will not be believed in how short a time he was master of it, and accurately read all the Greek histories.[120]

Lucius also retained an interest in translation, writing two poems praising his friend, George Sandys, on his biblical translations, where he comments,

> But so thy illustrious pen reveal'd,
> We see not plainer that which gives us sight,

> Than we see that, assisted by thy light,
> All seemes transparent now, which seem'd perplext,
> The inmost meaning of the darkest text.[121]

Similarly, Lucius demonstrates a skill with spoken discourse in his pastoral elegy to Ben Jonson, and he certainly knew of and liked the entertainments of Walter Montague, as well as those of Ben Jonson. Although Lucius Cary fashioned himself as a man without a mother, rejected Catholicism and distanced himself from brothers and sisters, the implacable force of familial concerns and the ways in which these are expressed in textual form could not be utterly expelled. The dominant Cary discourses are present in Lucius Cary's writing both via the thematic replication of opposites and in the traces of wider familial concerns.

VIII

Conclusion

This chapter began with the mutual scribal composition of Elizabeth Cary's *Life*, establishing in material terms a close-knit familial literary discourse. The mutuality of concerns, themes, genre and tone, however, extend beyond the simple document through the writings of the mother and children. On a basic level, it is clear that in a period in which female authors were uncommon, at least three of the Cary women composed original works: Elizabeth, Anne and Lucy, which in itself signals the family as distinct within their period of authorship. The works of Lucius and Patrick affirm the importance of textual production to the Cary family, while in extending this writerly identity, we could add the doggerel verse of Elizabeth Tanfield and the verses, now lost, composed by Lorenzo. Within the broad frame of literary production, certain themes emerge as consistent, both in relation to Elizabeth Cary's interests and to her children's own corresponding activities. Paramount is the investment in faith and spiritual conversion. Like their mother, Lucy, Anne and Patrick (in his devotional poems) espouse Catholicism, while Lucius offers a sharp, but mirroring, focus upon Protestantism. For the Carys this centring of religious conviction in their works is seen through the dialectic of spiritual faith and worldly designs (Elizabeth Cary, Lucy, Anne, Patrick and Lucius). In addition, parallel interests emerge which align the siblings with their mother. These include: learning and scholarship (Elizabeth Cary, Anne and Lucius); linguistic skill and an interest in translation (Elizabeth Cary, Anne, Patrick and Lucius); drama, performance and the

use of dramatic language and dialogues (Elizabeth Cary, Anne, Patrick, Victoria and Lucius); and a focus upon women and female characters (Elizabeth Cary, Lucy, Anne, Patrick and Victoria). There were, inevitably, divergences from the overwhelming influence of Elizabeth Cary; for example, Patrick reconverted to Protestantism and Lucius, supplanted his family, both parents and siblings, with a re-worked community of male friends and a literary 'father', Ben Jonson. Nevertheless, the impact of Elizabeth Cary's ideological and cultural concerns cannot be denied, providing irrefutable evidence of the way in which Early Modern women could, and did, influence other writers, albeit within a familial context. There is, however, one final parallel that links Elizabeth to her children, for just as she inspired her daughter to compose the *Life*, so are Lucy and Anne commemorated by their religious communities, and just so is Lucius eulogised by his friend Edward Hyde. Like Elizabeth Cary, the Cary siblings were not only adept in repeating and reworking their mother's discourses, but it seems that they were also, like her, able to extend that influence through their ability to inspire others to write about them.

7

Desire, Chastity and Rape in the Cavendish Familial Discourse

I

> 'Fornication in my owne defence'
> (William Cavendish, *The Country Captain*, 1641)
>
> 'Our vow will admit no such toy'
> (Jane and Elizabeth Cavendish, *Poems*, c. 1644)
>
> 'Beauty and innocency are devoured'
> (Margaret Cavendish, 'A Dialogue between a Bountiful Knight and a Castle Ruined in War', 1651)

The three quotations that head this chapter represent the remarkable shift in the Cavendish discourse during a decade in which cataclysmic changes were to influence not only individual families, but the whole country. The impact of the English Civil War on communities has been traced exhaustively and numerous biographies have attested to the personal bravery or inadequacies of those involved in the combat. This chapter traces the ways in which a single family, with its own specific literary interests, engaged with these national transformations, developing new methods of constructing identity, and, in particular, female self-representation. The quotations from William Cavendish, Jane and Elizabeth Cavendish, and Margaret Cavendish, while representative of overall authorial approach, have been isolated here because they specifically address the way in which women's sexual roles were constructed. In 1641 when William Cavendish wrote his play, *The Country Captain*, Charles I was already encountering political difficulties, but the play offers an assured sense of a stable order in which a maidservant, Dorothy,

may wish that her master would have sexual intercourse with her, and must reassure herself that this would not be 'rape', just 'fornication in her own defence'. Class systems are unchallenged and the possible illicit union between master and sexually alert maid is no more than another comic interlude in a generally bawdy play. By 1644, William Cavendish had left his daughters one of the family homes, Welbeck Abbey, while he fought a series of increasingly futile battles against the Parliamentarian forces that were to end in his final defeat at Marston Moor and subsequent exile (1645). Successively, as the Cavendish sisters were besieged and then taken captive by the Parliamentarians (1644), sexual dalliance, even if within the bounds of courtship and marriage, becomes 'a toy' that cannot be admitted while male family members are exiled and homes threatened by opposition troops. The greatest change occurs with Margaret's image of the Cavendish houses as raped women, whose 'innocency' has been lost to Cromwell's soldiers, as she viewed them during the Interregnum abandonment of the stately home (1651). The way in which this gendered representation of sexual desire radically transforms itself evidences the profound influence of that key decade upon the Cavendish family's writing. Looking back at the historicised contexts of the chapters in this book: if the Mores were influenced by the English Protestant reformation and consequent Catholic martyrdom; the Lumleys were characterised by their political and religious manoeuvrings in the unstable mid-sixteenth century; the Sidneys by cultural pre-eminence and literary colonialism in the propagandist Elizabethan court; and the Cary family by Counter Reformation narratives of conversion; then, the Cavendish familial discourse may be said to have been shaped predominantly by the English Civil War.

II

Before the War: William Cavendish

Geoffrey Trease entitled his biography of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, providing a fitting description, not only of Newcastle's own understanding of his identity, but also how the vicissitudes in his fortunes provide a template-like narrative for many supporters of the monarchy before, during and after the Interregnum.[1] Like other courtiers with a prestigious pedigree (his grandmother was the formidable Bess of Hardwick), he sought preferment and experienced the series of rejections and honours common to Early Modern court politics. In one such instance, Newcastle was appointed Lord Lieutenant of

Nottinghamshire in 1625 but as Trease notes, still 'frustrated in his desire for some conspicuous recognition'; he used the opportunity of the King's journey through Nottinghamshire on the way to his coronation in Scotland, to impress Charles.[2] The ensuing entertainment proved expensive; Margaret Cavendish in *The Life of William Cavendish Duke of Newcastle* records that the 1633 festivities at Welbeck Abbey cost 'between four and five thousand pounds'.[3] A further entertainment, this time at another of Newcastle's houses, Bolsover, was arranged for the subsequent year when Queen Henrietta Maria joined Charles on his progress through Northern England. By staging such lavish diversions for his monarch, Cavendish was simply following an established court pattern of expensive flattery of the monarch, which would, hopefully, result in reciprocation, in the form of position and honour. But these discourses of economic and political reciprocation were cloaked in the language of love and loyalty. It is significant, therefore, that Margaret Cavendish's *Life* sets out an apparent defence of Newcastle:

> And this [the cost] I mention not out of a vain glory, but to declare the great love and duty my Lord had for his gracious King and Queen, and to correct the mistakes committed by some historians, who, not being rightly informed of these entertainments, make the world believe falsehood for truth.[4]

While Margaret asserts that the origin of the entertainments at Welbeck and Bolsover was Newcastle's 'love and duty', her husband wrote frankly to Strafford that 'I have hurt my Estate much with the Hopes of it'.[5] For the Cavendish familial discourse, recognising this complex interplay between love and monetary/political concerns is essential, but Newcastle's choice of entertainment was also to have a lasting impact on the writings of his family.

Cavendish chose Ben Jonson to compose both *The King's Entertainment at Welbeck* and *Love's Welcome at Bolsover*, partly through a genuine fondness for the aging dramatist, as well as because of an admiration of the plays, which is evidenced by emulation in the Duke's own works. Cavendish wrote an elegy for Jonson, 'not [to] approue / My witt or Learneing; but my Iudgment, Loue', as well as producing character and narrative similitudes in his plays.[6] For example, the eponymous anti-hero of Cavendish's *A Pleasante & Merrye Humor off A Roge* (1655–60) evades censure at the end of the play in Volpone-esque manner by turning to the audience for forgiveness. In the epilogue to Jonson's play, Volpone asks,

> The seasoning of a play is the applause.
> Now, though the Fox be punished by the laws,

He yet doth hope there is no suffering due
For any fact which he hath done 'gainst you;
If there be, censure him: here he, doubtful, stands.
If not, fare jovially, and clap your hands.[7]

While Cavendish's *The Rogue* concludes with

Worthye spectators, though I was a Roge,
I heer presume to speake the Epologe,
For my offenses, punishte was to Daie,
Bye the Iuste Iudgmente off our Iudginge Playe,
Soe I am cleer, no punishmente Is Dewe,
To mee, Exsepte freshe crimes, Comitt a Newe,
Iff pleased, then clappe your handes, & I am freede,
Iff nott; I wishe, that I weare Hangde Indeede.[8]

In both plays the dark punishments are miraculously overturned through a construction of the audience's complicity with 'fact[s]' or 'crimes', since pleasure ('jovially' and 'pleased') is affirmed through the automatic applause at the end of the play. Francis Needham in his edition of the play argues from the location of the manuscript's recording in the Welbeck catalogue that the play was written either at the end of Newcastle's exile in Antwerp during the Interregnum, or immediately upon his return. The allusion to *Volpone* and the forgiving conclusion points towards the earlier date, certainly before the post-Restoration bitterness was established in the Cavendish familial discourse. *The Rogue*'s Jonsonian indebtedness and the censure-free conclusion indicates a play that remains nostalgically inclined towards the pre-war period with its triumphantly comic representation of supposed immorality, like Dorothy in *The Country Captain*, the Rogue commits offences in 'my owne defence'.

Jonson's dramatic entertainments, with their doubling of patronage (Jonson/Cavendish and Cavendish/Charles I), are essential to our understanding of the dramatist's influence on the Cavendish familial discourse. This analysis traces the links between the two Jonson entertainments and the formation of the Cavendish discourse rather than locating the works critically within Ben Jonson's canon. The Welbeck entertainment begins conventionally with series of songs presented to the King praising him and naturalising this welcome through the character Love who claims,

It is the breath, and Soule of every thing,
Put forth by Earth, by Nature and the Spring,
To speake the Welcome, Welcome of the King.[9]

Having thus established the entertainment as an inevitable demonstration of natural love, rather than engineered to obtain preferment, the antimasque is introduced with two archetypal figures, Accidence and Fitz-Ale who, rather than give obedience to Charles state categorically that they have 'nothing to say to the King, till we have spoken with my Lord Lieutenant', that is, Cavendish.[10] The comic inversion of authority is suited to the antimasque and, at this point, would not have offered any offence to a monarch accustomed to the order-disorder-order structure of the Early Modern court masque. What is significant for Cavendish's understanding of his own discourse is that he is positioned in the antimasque, alongside Accidence, the verbose grammarian and Fitz-Ale the drunkard. Indeed, the antimasque builds its blatant lack of reverence with innuendo; for example, 'Saint Anne of Buxton's boyling well', which might allude to the spa at Buxton, until it is juxtaposed two lines later with 'Satan's sumptuous arse', implying a second sexual meaning.[11] This is affirmed as a rustic wedding ensues with the bridegroom Stub in a 'yellow Canvas Doublet, cut' and the bride, who was 'drest like an old May-Lady' with their 'Countrey wit', emphasised by further bawdy allusions, such as to 'Stub his Stem'.[12] This combination of lower class rustic comedy with its inversion of authority and celebration of sex, food and drink is predictably closed off by the return of the masque proper in the form of a Gentleman, who calls upon the performers to 'Give end unto your rudeness', and to remember that the King is 'your parent'. The King's authority is reasserted and the antimasque condemned since

> Sports should not be obtruded on great Monarchs,
> But wait when they will call for them as servants.[13]

But this is, of course, precisely what Cavendish has *not* done. Rather than wait to be 'call[ed]' the entertainment at Welbeck was initiated by the Duke in order to influence the King. Like the antimasque figures with which he is positioned, Cavendish has presented a 'sport' that was not required and must now publicly acquiesce to the hierarchy that it has 'obtruded on'. For Cavendish, the entertainment serves both to naturalise his service to the King and offer a comic containment of his own impertinence in staging an unrequested performance. Charles in turn is constructed by the masque as accepting the 'welcome' given as his due and adopting a patriarchal role in accepting rule and responsibility for all his subjects including Fitz-Ale, Stub, and, therefore, Cavendish himself. But these overt discourses sit uneasily alongside the very existence of the entertainment and its self-aware antimasque, and more especially,

with the way in which Cavendish allows the Jonsonian comic disorder to be so closely associated with the strategies of his own ambition. The immediate response of the King is not recorded, although Cavendish was offered no preferment as a result of the Welbeck entertainment, instead being asked to provide another costly show the following year. *Love's Welcome at Bolsover* was a less lavish entertainment and is distinctly unchallenging in terms of theme, although the staging was to provide the Cavendish family with a device that they reused in their own plays, as cupids drop from above suspended on wires.

For all his lavish expenditure and obsequious flattery, Cavendish's efforts at preferment proved negligible and it was not until 1638 that he was granted the governorship of the young prince Charles.[14] But, if the political impact of Jonson's masques, especially that at Welbeck, proved relatively insignificant, the importance of these works on the Cavendish familial discourse was considerable.

Several key elements in Jonson's entertainments re-emerge in the writings of the Cavendish family. First, the interest in and manipulation of the discourse of patronage, in which love is naturalised and paternal responsibility contrasted with a comic inversion of authority. Second, the use of 'countrye wit' and the development of rustic, lower class characters that add a vital and bodily contrast to the upper class figures with their focus on ideal love. Third, an ability to shift the spoken dialogue from formal courtly language to crude dialect, in which the latter is often privileged over the former. Fourth, the use of stage machinery with an active understanding of the mechanics of production. The impact of Jonson's plays was immediate, for within the next two years, Cavendish composed his own entertainment, 'a Countrie maske, a Christmas toye' for his 'Sweet Daughters'.[15] The only extant version is a draft written in Cavendish's hand, with three revisions to the antimasque song, and a new ballad to the tune of Bessy Bell.[16] The entertainment is entirely dominated by the antimasque, with its central character, a Welsh vicar and a chorus of artisans. The only reference to the masque proper gives the stage directions to the mechanicals to 'goe oute dansinge' after which Cavendish writes, 'When the mayne maske is finished / Then the vickar muste Coume In In great Haste & saye this to the Ladie maskers'.[17] Cavendish's understanding of the 'mayne maske', as the courtly dance with no dialogue, is hardly Jonsonian, but does align with the later Caroline masques. The shift of the masque form away from framing ideal towards a series of comic interludes is undoubtedly echoed by Cavendish, but his primary delight seems to be in representing the self-opinionated Welsh vicar with stock phrases such as 'Looke you' and the

substitution of 'p' for 'b' as in 'Prayns' for 'brains'.[18] The plot and characte risation are borrowed from Jonson, but the complete disregard for any 'virtue' reconciled or not to 'pleasure' and the gratuitous insertion of the ballad, are all Cavendish's own. As he points out, the masque is a 'toye', a frippery meant to entertain his wife, Elizabeth, and his three daughters Jane, Elizabeth and Frances. The Christmas masque does not serve within the sphere of familial influence to extend the more complex themes reworked by Cavendish's daughters, but it does provide evidence of a continuous line of dramatic performance at Welbeck and Bolsover that was initiated by Jonson's entertainments and subsequently colonised by the Cavendish family as an essential aspect of their own self-representation. Within the familial discourse it is not Cavendish's description of his masque as a 'toye' that is important, but that he wrote it at the request of his daughters and that they instigated a written copy of the text:

> You knowe, I was nott nice or coye,
> Butt made a Countrie maske, a Christmas toye,
> Att your desiers; Butt I did nott Looke
> You woulde recorde my follies In a Booke.[19]

For Cavendish, however, this was only one of the first 'follies' to be set in a 'Booke'.

Before his involvement in the English Civil War and the closing of the theatres William Cavendish wrote two dramatic works for public performance, *The Country Captain* (c. 1641) and *The Variety* (c. 1642), as well as a series of dramatic fragments in manuscript.[20] Cavendish's full authorship of the former play has been questioned since it was misattributed by A.H. Bullen in his *A Collection of Old English Plays* (1883) to James Shirley, although H.R. Woudhuysen's 1999 edition argues persuasively from manuscript and internal references that the play was composed by Cavendish.[21] The resemblances to Shirley's work are manifest; for example, the successful wooing and reform of Lady Huntlove's arch and witty Sister recall the scornful Carol's 'taming' in Shirley's *Hyde Park* (1632).[22] Certainly, Cavendish would have been familiar with Shirley's work and the dramatist's use of stock figures, such as the country-loving squire and the fantastical city gentleman, both of whom appear in *The Country Captain*, a link that is further evidenced by the fact that Shirley dedicated *The Traitor* to Newcastle in 1638. But Cavendish's free use of character and plot, together with the blatant reworking of dialogue, has already been demonstrated in relation to Jonson, and there is no reason to suppose that the Duke would have felt any more scrupulous about

using Shirley's material. Rather like the eponymous Rogue, Cavendish simply takes what he wants and, through the process of gleeful dramatic enjoyment, expects his audience to forgive him. Such intimacy with another's writing might imply that Cavendish was already adept with the mutuality necessary for the productivity of a familial discourse, but there are three reasons why this is not entirely the case. First, the hierarchical certainty of noble patronage was still in place at the beginning of the 1640s enabling a certain freedom with borrowing; second, Cavendish's pre-war writings are replete with the commonest of dramatic types, suggesting a wide range of allusions; and most importantly, third, while Cavendish unrepentantly pirated ideas from more skilful and professional authors, his daughters' and wife's writings are more independent. Like Dorothy the maid, whose imagined sexual indiscretion is excused as a 'defence', so Cavendish's dramatic writing is constructed to evade the moral censure of copying or stealing another's work or even presenting an entertainment unasked, since the pleasure of the performance becomes its security.

Apart from Cavendish's particular lack of moral focus and parallel faith in the overriding certainties of social standing, the two plays provide the basic elements of the familial discourse they founded. Both dramas include the stock characters employed by Cavendish, such as the older lady with her amorous dalliances and personal foibles and the young lady whose sharp wit is finally overcome through courtship and a suitable marriage. These central roles are set alongside the subplot personae, such as the French dancing master, the foolish captain and the pert maid. All types recur in the dramatic writings of Jane, Elizabeth and Margaret Cavendish. Yet, the tone in these later works shifts markedly, and this is particularly evident in the way that sexual encounters are described.

In *The Country Captain,* Sir Richard and Lady Huntlove are visiting the 'towne', although with very different responses: she enjoys the attentions of the 'yong gallants' who 'write Verses upon the handle of [her] … fanne', whereas he wants to get back to his own estate and the 'sport in killing my owne Partridge and Pheasant'.[23] But Lady Huntlove is determined to stay in town in order to pursue an affair with Francis Courtwell and, when her husband rises early and leaves her 'to kill a brace of hares, before you thinke tis day', she decides to follow 'an other hunt' with her lover.[24] Inevitably, Sir Richard returns and his wife, mistaking him for Courtwell, begs for quietness since 'this rashness will undoe my fame for ever shoulde he returne'.[25] The farce-like scene being set, Lady Huntlove comes up with an ingenious narrative to deceive her husband and protect her 'fame'. She places the incriminating words overheard by

her husband in the context of a rape nightmare.[26] Lady Huntlove's inventive narrative is designed to entertain through the impossibility of the plotline, through the comic juxtapositions of serious crime (rape) and common fripperies ('to strangle him with a Lute string'), and through the audience's delight in the gulling of an over-protective husband. But this bluff comic discourse is entwined with more subversive and dangerous codes that undermine the audience's complicit laughter. To begin, Lady Huntlove's 'Ravisher' is 'a king of Blackamores' evoking a threatening otherness in which a white woman is threatened with rape by a black man. Her husband cannot fully defend her since he does not possess a phallic sword to counter the rape and can only threaten an emasculated artistic revenge via the lute string. The Blackamore King is not intimidated by such an ineffective threat and retaliates by throwing an arrow, with its symbolic connotations of Eros and Cupid, which if Sir Richard had not 'wak'd' her would have killed Lady Huntlove. In narrative terms the lady has encountered erotic desire and she would certainly have submitted to Francis Courtwell had not her husband returned and prevented the liaison. But Courtwell's transformation into a black king with an intent to rape Lady Huntlove is excessive and the nightmare vision becomes an exaggerated representation of the breakdown of social order and moral values, which ironically is threatened by her own sexual promiscuity. The dream is reminiscent of both Othello's' strangling of Desdemona and Oberon's punishment of Titania as she dreams she is in love with an ass, and Shakespeare is named in Cavendish's play.[27] However, *The Country Captain* is no *Othello* and rather than precipitate a tragedy, Cavendish veers away from the very unease he has uncovered. Questions of female sexual identity and the constraints upon it are reduced to a discussion of how Sir Richard's 'Stable has been rob'd … and my roane Nagg … vanished', which acts reductively, by its trivial tone, by introducing the common symbolism of unruly horses representing unbridled female passions, and finally by commodifying Lady Huntlove as another 'roane Nagg'.[28] In *The Country Captain* all uncertainties are suppressed and the play's final resolution sees the reconciliation of the Huntloves and two marriages, the romantic alliance of the witty Sister to Master Courtwell and the comic union of the pert maid to the foolish Underwit.

There is a parallel sexual sequence and subsequent containment in *The Variety*, where the same stock characters are involved in amorous intrigues. The two generations are represented by the older Lady Beaufield and her suitor, Sir William, and by the romantic leads, Lucy, Lady Beaufield's daughter, and Master Newman, her suitor. The occupations of town ladies are satirised in much the same way as Lady Huntlove; their 'Academy'

discusses the 'female sciences' of make up ('Mercury to change their skins like snakes'), adornments ('Ribbands … Frangepane Gloves … Linnen') and subterfuge ('When time, which is the moath of beauty, creeps upon you … have so many leaves and curtaines before your windowes').[29] Similarly, the dialogues between Lucy and Newman parade the same town wit, as those of the Sister and Courtwell, with Lucy realising that her show of disdain, while fashionable, might have alienated Newman, 'I could dispence with modesty to find him out'.[30] But Lucy's prediction that she will lose her 'modesty' becomes a material event in the play in a manner that she does not expect, for Simpleton, the stock country gentleman, tries to rape her. At the beginning of Act V Simpleton confides to his servant:

> I am resolved, since faire meanes cannot prevaile with Mistris Lucy, to steale her away … when I have her at my Countrey-House, Ile take in her maiden towne.[31]

Encouraged by his master's obvious pun on maidenhead, James offers supportive advice,

> The Coachman is a lusty fellow too, and will help to clap her abroad; the curtaines being close she cannot be heard …[32]

But James betrays Simpleton to Newman who, as Lucy is about to be bundled into the coach crying 'Help theeves', strikes down Simpleton, allowing Lucy to run off.[33] Up to this point the thwarted rape narrative remains within its romantic boundaries, allowing the hero to rescue the heroine from attempted violence, but with no actual harm done to her honour or reputation. However, Cavendish pursues the rape motif when Simpleton bribes the judge in an attempt to revenge himself,

> My Mother is worth six thousand pound, if you will promise to make her a Lady, and doe your best to hang the Gentleman, you shall be my Father in Law.[34]

Like the judges in *Volpone*, Cavendish's Justice is ready to be bought, indicating that, 'I understand the matter perfectly' and he accuses Newman of murderous assault, at which point Lucy bursts in to rescue her lover:

> Sir, you are one that should doe Justice; where is my poore friend? Bee not so much dejected, you did but rescue me sir from dishonour … Wher's Simpleton? I may accuse him for a Rape.[35]

Unexpectedly, the Justice dismisses the others and when alone with Lucy tells her that she is 'the root and cause of this misfortune' because of her 'native beauty' and that 'hee would have ravished you no doubt, with your owne consent'.[36] This is an archetypal assessment of female sexuality, where a woman's beauty is assumed to incite ungovernable male lust and her protestations are not to be taken seriously since she would in the end 'consent'. In more recent parlance, Lucy was 'asking for it' because of the way it looked and that when she said 'no', she really meant 'yes'. Compounding such dismissive accusations, the Justice himself, during the dialogue, draws nearer and nearer to Lucy until he kisses her and warns her to 'be gentle', that is to submit to him.[37] At this point, in a second rescue scheme, Lady Beaufield, Lucy's mother enters, and at her offer of 'credit' (money) and assurance that 'she is a Lady' (class), the Justice undertakes a Jonsonian volte face, pardons Newman, accuses Simpleton and adopts a suitably deferential attitude to Lucy.[38] As in *The Country Captain*, Cavendish foregrounds a rape sequence, examines dismissive attitudes towards women, and suggests, through the satire on the Justice, the deficiencies in contemporary social codes. But, again like the earlier play, *The Variety* evades any resolutions with the pre-Civil War twin panaceas of class and money. The concluding scene focuses on marriages in both the main and sub-plots with Lucy's forgiveness of Simpleton, 'I freely pardon him'.[39] There can be no doubt that Cavendish was aware of the way in which his society colluded with the construction of sexual inequality between men and women, and explored the way in which rape could be used to represent a challenge to the dominant hierarchy (Lady Huntlove's dream) or to uncover common prejudiced views against women (Lucy and the Justice). At the same time there are no actual rapes in the plays, no woman is injured, all women appear to marry happily and/or for monetary gain, and the comic tone reduces any possible ambiguities to the level of a bawdy joke. But Newcastle's world, in which class, money and comedy could buy forgiveness and ensure sustained social and gender hierarchies, was about to collapse.

III

The Civil War: Jane Cavendish, Elizabeth Brackley and Welbeck Abbey

In stark contrast to the comic celebrations of bodily pleasures in William Cavendish's dramas, images of death, darkness and containment permeate the writings of his two daughters, Jane Cavendish and Elizabeth

Brackley. This is hardly surprising since their canon was composed primarily during the siege and capture of their home, Welbeck Abbey, and while their father and brothers were involved in fighting for the King's cause. Like other Royalist women, the Cavendish sisters remained closeted within their stately homes and castles, which served both as protective bastions against the Parliamentarian forces and as prisons from which escape to a war-free site or the continent often seemed, and was, impossible. Between 1643, when the campaigns began – especially after Cavendish's final departure from Welbeck in January 1644 – and the sisters' removal in November of 1645, Jane and Elizabeth revived and reworked the forms, themes and settings employed by their father in his work, producing two dramas. While Jane's separately authored poetry has a wider compositional remit, the specific references to capture, occupation and war place the two plays within a distinctly Civil War context.

The works composed at Welbeck are found in two manuscript versions: the first consists of 84 poems, a masque and a play (the Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson Poet 16), and the second, which has 76 poems and the masque, was designed as a presentation volume (the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale, Osborn Shelves MS b.233).[40] The poems are written by Jane Cavendish alone, although both sisters contribute to the dramas, with the marginal initials 'JC' and 'EB' noting occasional separate authorship. Both manuscripts are in the hand of John Rolleston, Newcastle's secretary. Internal evidence allows the tracing of some chronological elements in terms of composition. For example, the initial poems were written after October 1643 when William Cavendish was created Marquis of Newcastle, a title given to him in the first transcribed verse of the manuscript, while the final composition date must be before November 1645 when the authors left Welbeck. Further evidence for gradual, although not sequential, development is the title page of the Oxford manuscript, which was first written out as 'Poems Songs and a Pastorall', but at some later point the 'and' has been crossed out, and an addition, 'and a Play', made at the end. Although much of this title page is printed in capitals, the hand is certainly not Rolleston's, suggesting that the original plan may have been drawn up in late 1643 or early 1644, before Newcastle's exile and the consequent possibility of Rolleston's return to resume his post as secretary. Given these broad dates, it is not surprising that most of the poems make direct reference to the war or to the grief occasioned by the parting of families and friends, although a few are 'characters' and could have been written at an earlier date and simply collated to produce a 'Selected Works' by Jane. For example, the first poem refers to Newcastle's 'happy

sword … [which]..conquer'd your foes', which must postdate 1643, while others, such as, 'On a Noble Lady' and 'The Cure', focus on the common peacetime themes of female virtue and jealousy.

Some of the poems provide more direct clues to a possible date of composition. 'Passions Delate' begins with 'Griefe' and 'sadnes' which is dispelled in the last line, for when, 'hee is landed safe, & then shee'l live' which probably refers to Newcastle's safe crossing to the continent and exile in July 1644 and Jane's relief and 'delight' at that news, while 'On the 30th of June to God' celebrates Cavendish's victory against Fairfax on that date in 1643. Jane refers to other relatives, as in 'On my deare mother the Countess of Newcastle' which commemorates the death of Newcastle's first wife, and in 'The quinticence of Cordiall', which provides textual evidence that both Jane and Elizabeth remained at Welbeck during their father's absence, since Jane describes Elizabeth's presence as 'Balsam to my braine' until their father returns. Members of the household are also described; the description of the 'carefull' Captain Ogle initially locates him as a member of the Welbeck household, although a later one refers to his courage against the 'Enemy' and subsequent 'death'. Other poems are replete with the language of warfare, with 'garrison', 'conditions', 'souldiers', 'Generall', recalling the numerous reports and letters that chronicled the war itself. The final poem of the collection, 'Hopes Still', which immediately precedes the pastoral drama, concludes by begging Newcastle 'Come into England Lord', and to send for his daughters. In terms of dating, therefore, Jane's poetry is useful in identifying the Civil War parameters since some poems refer directly to historical events.

There are, however, variations between the two manuscripts that have been identified by Alexandra Bennett, who notes that the Oxford MS includes eight different poems, as well as adding *The Concealed Fancies*.[41] Bennett concludes that the inclusion of the play with its references to captivity and a focus upon freedom means that the Yale manuscript was prepared before the Oxford and probably before the surrender of Welbeck in August 1644, meaning that the later additions would be composed after Newcastle's exile. The additional poems evidence her argument: 'The discursive Ghost' and 'The Speakeing Glass' both refer to Cavendish's exile, and 'Loves conflict' describes a letter to Jane from her father again suggesting exile. In addition, 'A Songe' closely parallels the description of courtship in *The Concealed Fancies* as it condemns marriage as a divisive rather than a uniting institution. Other additions are 'The angry Curs' which describes Elizabeth's possible removal from Welbeck, suggesting that during the brief liberation of the house by the

royalist forces it was suggested that she joined her husband, rather than remaining with her sister, Jane, and the poem addressed to Mr Haslewood that must have been addressed to John Haslewood, Major of Horse, who joined Newcastle's company in June 1643. The final addition, *The Concealed Fancies*, was most probably written, as Bennett suggests, between August 1644 and the brief liberation of Welbeck in 1645, since it contains several scenes which depict the circumstances of three ladies and of some men after the capture of their castle by the Parliamentarian forces. Of all the works collected in the Oxford manuscript only *The Concealed Fancies* shows an awareness of captivity, marking it as both the most 'realistic' and the most mature of the jointly produced inscriptions.[42]

The main critical focus on Jane Cavendish's and Elizabeth Brackley's Civil War texts suggests that it was precisely the act of enclosure that drove the sisters to write and that the Civil War served, paradoxically, to liberate the female voice. The besieged Welbeck functions as an ambiguous familial space that was threatened and taken in material terms, but which simultaneously freed it for projected dramatic use. Ros Ballaster points out that 'the brief space … the Cavendish sisters appear to have been carving out for themselves in the very act of writing the play while their family home was seized, liberated and retaken … is affirmed as a space peculiar to and peculiarly powerful for women'.[43] While this chapter draws upon earlier criticisms, the thematic patterns and generic constructions that permeate the writings of Jane and Elizabeth cannot be explained entirely in terms of a wartime context, since they revive, rework and develop many of the elements of their father's oeuvre. William Cavendish's work initiates the themes of patronage, class and sex, together with an interest in character types, linguistic shifts and stage machinery, and these elements reappear in the writings of both sisters in their Welbeck texts. While the Civil War propelled Jane and Elizabeth into literary productivity with all the ramifications for female creativity that this implies, at the same time, it appears to have shifted the impetus for dramatic writing from Cavendish to his daughters and fashioned a familial discourse.

The most obvious perpetuation of Cavendish's literary interests is generic; like their father, Jane and Elizabeth collaborated in producing dramatic works, *A Pastoral* and *The Concealed Fancies*. Like Cavendish, Jane and Elizabeth dextrously employ the possibilities of character and language in order to satirise their own social milieu. This is particularly evident in the ironisation of besieged Royalist women, through the presentation of three cousins in *The Concealed Fancies*, who discuss how they acted as 'delinquent[s]' when taken captive. Although there is a

close link between the authors and the characters in the play, the three 'cousins' represent the three Cavendish sisters (Jane, Elizabeth and Frances) and Ballamo (*bellus*, charming; *amor*, love) denotes Welbeck (happy river), Jane and Elizabeth chose to negotiate captivity through writing, rather than banal playacting.

The plays negotiate this shift from the characters' accepted ladylike behaviour to the authors' liberating of a female voice via a Cavendish familial strategy. The two prologues to *The Concealed Fancies* set up a well-established formula of contained misrule, invoking 'blush[es]' and denigrating the play's lack of a 'plot', but the epilogues question such assumptions.[44] At the conclusion of *A Pastoral* Jane's final speech removes her from the fictional world of the play with a self-aware acknowledgement of her roles as 'Captive' and 'Sheppardess', and she resumes the identity of daughter to William Cavendish, beginning her epilogue with, 'My Lord it is your absence ...' At the same time she emphasises her role as a successful female writer, who is 'a Witt' and who wishes to emulate her father, 'bee your Daughter in your Penn'. Similarly, Elizabeth's epilogue begins with grief over Cavendish's absence, acknowledges her dramatic role as a shepherdess and claims that she will be 'crown'd with hight of bliss' if her father likes the play.[45] *The Concealed Fancies* replicates this duality, with requests for parental approval, 'if you like you will me cordial give' set alongside a Volponesque assumption of approval, with smiles from the ladies and doffed hats from the gentlemen of the presumed audience.[46] The self-deprecation of the prologues is abandoned at the conclusion of the plays, with both sisters claiming successful authorship, although still within the confines of paternal approval. The evocation of a Jonsonian conclusion, in which the sins of the play's activity are forgiven through the pleasure of the audience evidences the perpetuation of a familial indebtedness to Jonson, but more particularly to *The King's Entertainment at Welbeck*, which Jane would have seen. It also recalls Cavendish's own manipulation of this Jonsonian device in his attempt to gain preferment from Charles I. In Jane and Elizabeth's plays, Charles's role is taken by their father, whose paternal authority, like the King's, enables him to excuse the presumption of his daughters as they breach the codes of accepted female behaviour, by writing plays. The discourse of patronage, used adeptly by Cavendish, is reworked by Jane and Elizabeth through the rhetorical strategies of paternal responsibility and love. But there is a distinct difference between Jonson's masque and the Cavendish sisters' plays, for the former performance was enacted before Charles, whereas the latter was not, and could not, be performed before Cavendish.

If there is one overriding element in the joint and individual compositions of Jane and Elizabeth during their captivity at Welbeck, it is the overwhelming sense of loss at the exile of their father, and it is precisely this absence that is foregrounded at the beginning of the two epilogues in *A Pastoral*. The two pieces elide the difference between absence and presence as grief over lack is mutated into a presumption of active response. The conclusions to the plays thus provoke a breakdown between the expected formulations of paternal patronage and the actualities of the Civil War. Consequently, while the plays evoke a familial discourse in which Cavendish approves the unruly activities of his daughters and protects them from censure by means of his class, at the same time the texts acknowledge that a privileged security could no longer be expected by an exiled aristocracy and in a country in which so-called unruly activities were no longer contained. In the face of such loss, the claim that illicit behaviour can be condoned, in other words, 'fornication in my owne defence', ceased to be tenable, and the material circumstances of Jane and Elizabeth's writing could 'admit no such toy'.

There can be no question of William Cavendish's influence on his daughters and of the importance his own writing had upon their works, but while it is important to trace the similarities, it is also essential to negotiate the specific changes in the Cavendish familial discourse provoked by the Civil War years. This shift may be seen in the family's employment of patronage tropes, and it is also apparent through other themes and forms initiated by Cavendish's writing, such as the use of types, the evocation of lower class or 'country' wit and the fluidity of linguistic shifts from courtly to rustic language.

The stock types in both *A Pastoral* and *The Concealed Fancies* appear to replicate those of Cavendish's pre-war plays. Arch and witty heroines are paired with young courtiers in *The Concealed Fancies*, where Luceny and Tattiney, the daughters of Lord Calsindow, are wooed, respectively, by Courtley and Presumption. Through the familial allegory it is possible to identify Luceny and Tattiney as Jane and Elizabeth, and their father as Calsindow (an anagrammatised form of Newcastle), but at the same time it is important to remember that the characters in Jane and Elizabeth's plays have strong fictional counterparts in *The Country Captain* and *The Variety*. In Cavendish's earlier play, the gentleman wooer is called Courtwell, suggesting Courtly in *The Concealed Fancies*, while in his later play, the witty female lead is called Lucy, paralleling Jane and Elizabeth's character Luceny. Other types used by all three Cavendishes include foolish older ladies (Lady Huntlove from *The Country Captain*/Lady Tranquillity from *The Concealed Fancies*), inappropriate clownish suitors

(Simpleton from *The Variety*/Corpolant from *The Concealed Fancies*), comic French characters (Galliard from *The Variety*/the engineer governor alluded to in *The Concealed Fancies*), arch maidservants (Nice in *The Variety*/Pert in *The Concealed Fancies*), and foolish captains (Underwit from *The Country Captain*/Action from *The Concealed Fancies*). Unlike Cavendish's stock types critics have shown that some characters in *The Concealed Fancies* may be linked to real people, as with Jane and Elizabeth's fictive counterparts in the plays. At the same time, the characters' similarity to the stock types depicted in Cavendish's writing suggests that familial discourse offers an alternative reading that privileges textual echoes, rather than fixed identifications. For example, the linking of Lady Tranquillity with Margaret Cavendish, Newcastle's second wife whom he met in exile, has been proven unlikely, and while Welbeck was liberated by Major Jammot in 1645, the engineer governor of *The Concealed Fancies* is mocked for his language as is Monsieur Device in *The Country Captain* and Galliard in *The Variety*. The Cavendish's familial discourse draws upon the coterie requirements of country house drama, but at the same time it is committed to the perpetuation of stock characters that were more common to public performance. In the history of Early Modern women dramatists, this shift to the actualities of staged productions is significant and Cavendish's influence on his daughters' writing is clearly in evidence in their shared construction of characters.

Although most of Jane and Elizabeth's stock types show little development from Cavendish's plays, there is a distinct difference between the main female characters, particularly in *The Concealed Fancies*. Like Cavendish's works, Jane and Elizabeth conclude their comedy with reconciliation and marriage: Courtley and Luceny are united, as are Presumption and Tattiney, and Corpolant and Lady Tranquillity. Yet, the sisters add a final comic scene in which the two fictional siblings reappear to discuss the experience of wedlock from a female perspective, challenging the accepted Early Modern assumption that 'husbands are the rod of authority'.[47] The difference with Cavendish's female characters is striking; Lucy at the end of *The Variety* is not only contained within her marriage to her suitor, Newman, but forgives Simpleton for attempting to rape her. In parallel with their claims to a respected authorship, Jane and Elizabeth extend the remit of their stock heroines so that they are able to evade the closure of marriage with a perceptive analysis of female experience after wedlock. The final scene of *The Concealed Fancies* stages not the nuptials of Cavendish's works, but the foregrounding of sisterly affection. The happy couple of conventional Early Modern comedy is replaced with two women who satirise men and marriage. Moreover,

the close links between the Cavendish sisters and their fictive counterparts allow a further correspondence to be drawn between Jane's poetic pleas in 'The angry Curs' that her sister should remain with her, and the actual continuance of Elizabeth at Welbeck, rather than a removal to her husband's home, Ashridge.

Jane and Elizabeth's indebtedness to their father's influence follows a pattern in which the base elements of the familial discourse, patronage and stock characters, are adopted and yet extended through claims for female authorship and independence within marriage. And these shifts are located at the precise moment in the dramatic texts where the exigencies of the Civil War cease to be contained through the absence of the father and demanding a mutual dependency between the two sisters. This individuality is also evident in Jane and Elizabeth's confident shifts from courtly to rustic discourse, and in their utilisation of 'country' wit.

Both *A Pastoral* and *The Concealed Fancies* contain two sets of characters, those belonging, or attached to, the upper classes, and those who may be categorised as lower class or rustics, and in each case the speeches are given in the appropriate discourse. *A Pastoral* has two sets of scenes; the first consisting of two 'Antemasque[s]' and the subsequent ones forming a pastoral masque in which shepherds and shepherdesses adopt the courtly language usual to the genre. The drama opens with an antimasque of witches, again suggesting Jonsonian influence, in which there is a traditional inversion of order as the hags claim that 'our mischeife [has] made warr' and the use of formal language suited to allegorical figures. The next antimasque depicts 'Two Country Wives' and two rustics, Rye and Hay, whose concerns and language are appropriate to their class and occupations:

> Hen: I have lost my melch Cow
> Pratt: And I have lost my Sow.[48]

The masque proper sets the scene in a typical pastoral romance environment as the shepherdesses take their place in a 'Groto' or 'sad Shee Hermetes Cave'.[49] The reason for the sadness soon becomes apparent as the shepherd Per. indicates,

> Your Fathers absence makes you always owne,
> Your self, though hansom, still to bee alone.[50]

The courtly language of the pastoral figures is underlined by the familial allegory in which the shepherdesses may be identified with Jane and

Elizabeth, as the initialling of their speeches in the margins of the manuscript confirms. The sisters employ a similar variation of linguistic tempo through class in *The Concealed Fancies*, where the most obvious parallel is with the two lady wits, Luceny and Tattiney who are fictive counterparts for Jane and Elizabeth. Lower class characters are also used in *The Concealed Fancies*, such as Jack the kitchen boy who cannot pronounce the name 'Lady Tranquillity' and Care, one of the maids, with her colloquial oaths, 'Marry gep, with a vengeance!'[51] A parallel ironising of the upper class reaction to the war is evident in the depiction of the two male captives, Action and Moderate, who represent respectively the swearing and drinking penniless Cavalier and the careful landowner. The scene's comic tone is undercut, for while Action might rail against a window that is not big enough to 'piss at', Moderate reminds him that such bravura 'may hang you'.[52]

There is an indebtedness to Cavendish, whose use of language similarly encompasses both noble and lower class discourses. For example, the manuscript works collected at the Portland Library include four pieces intended for a pastoral drama, which contain parts for both courtly shepherds and shepherdesses and 'a Companye off Clowns with towe Countrey wenches', as well as the Christmas masque discussed above with its comic artisans.[53] Servants are most commonly inserted in comic interludes, as in *The Country Captain* when Lady Huntlove's plans for an adulterous affair are assisted by her maidservant Dorothy, who claims,

> Our Captaine o'th traind band has been offring
> To chaffer Maidenheades with me …'[54]

and interprets these activities as, 'fornication in my owne defence'. Finally, the courtly and witty language of the stock characters of wooers, ladies and attendants compounds the overall shared facility of all three Cavendish authors to move seamlessly from wit to bawdy allusion, from romantic love to sexual innuendo and from formal language into city or country colloquialism.

There is a significant addition to the speeches made by Jane and Elizabeth's characters, however, for both noble and rustic figures emphasise loss and a sense of incipient danger. For William Cavendish, evoking rustic colloquialisms remains contained within the security of a rigid class structure, but for Jane and Elizabeth they are set alongside the realisation that these very same 'comic' servants might well betray them. While the young gentlemen in Cavendish's plays find their cavalier

bravado condoned and resolved in advantageous marriages, the same stock types in Jane and Elizabeth's works find their ladies reluctant to accept wedlock while the war continues and their own actions in that war punishable by death. In each of the key elements of the Cavendish familial discourse, the securities of the pre-war years is undercut by uncertainty, loss and danger. But perhaps the most distinctive difference between Cavendish and his daughters is the way in which they deal with illicit sexual encounters.

For William Cavendish sexual adventures are part of a comic narrative in which even rape may be contained through bawdy innuendo and the comedic resolution of marriage. Jane and Elizabeth never incorporate the darker elements of rape, such as those envisaged by Lady Huntlove in her erotic dream description or the experiences of Lucy as she fends off both Simpleton and the Judge. Given the Early Modern codes of gender behaviour this was inevitable, yet the sisters do refer to the extra-marital liaisons between upper class men and maidservants. In *The Concealed Fancies*, Toy, Lady Tranquillity's gentlewoman, explains to Pert, another servant, how Lord Calsindow loves her and not their mistress.[55] Pert, however, is well-versed in the bawdy language of comedy, asking Toy,

> But hark you Mistress, what would you do with a lady that understands the world, and if she were married would say to her husband: 'Prithee, take my woman. Faith, I'm weary of your husbandly loved conversation.' What would you do then?[56]

Toy responds that she would always please herself, paralleling Cavendish's character Margaret who claims 'fornication in her owne defence'. But Pert persists,

> Faith, but I know some ladies, that will be so much of the wench with their husband, that thou would prove at best but a cold mouldy pie, and this in plain English is true.[57]

While Toy might expect to enjoy the pleasures and rewards of an illicit sexual liaison with Lord Calsindow, Pert presents a spirited defence of wives who would connive with their husband's adultery because they were 'weary of … husbandly loved conversation' and of those women whose sexual desire allowed them to be both wife and 'wench'. Cavendish might well have condoned such behaviour in his dramatic characters, but Jane and Elizabeth, while discussing illicit sex, sharply condemn Toy. Interestingly, they might well have intended to speak

this interchange themselves since, another of the poems in the collection, by Jane, addresses Elizabeth as 'The Pert One, or otherwise my Sister Brackley'.[58] The part of Pert in the play may have been taken by Elizabeth, implying that Jane would have played Toy. The freedom demonstrated by the sisters in their open description of adultery evidences the way in which they challenged the conventional behaviour expected of Early Modern women. But at the same time, it is important to recognise that the play blames Toy and not Calsindow. Jane and Elizabeth might have enjoyed a certain degree of independence, but they remain bound within their period's ideological perspectives, in terms of both gender and class.

By the autumn of 1645, the Cavendish familial discourse had been both sustained and developed by Jane and Elizabeth Cavendish as they adopted the genre, characters, language and sexual comedy of their father's works. In each case, Cavendish's certainty in the power of class and money to contain any possible misrule is undercut by his daughters' shift towards absence, loss, and death, themes which are, in turn, firmly located in their Civil War experiences. It is hardly surprising, considering their immediate circumstances that in *A Pastoral* the shepherdesses declare their intention to refuse the advances of their swains since

> Our vow will admit no such toy,
> For absent friends give us no joy.[59]

Moreover, while in *The Concealed Fancies* Lord Calsindow returns at the end of the play to condone his daughters' marriages, the final comedic conclusion in which all characters pair off is precluded. At first, such a resolution appears possible for Calsindow on seeing Toy suggests,

> All here I married see,
> Excepting you and me;
> Now Madam, I will take
> Your woman for my mistress mate.[60]

Yet, with another echo of the Jonsonian masque, an angel enters demanding that Calsindow embraces virtue and takes a wife 'That's truly virtuous and fair', and the play ends with the rejection of Toy:

> Then, Toy, you may be gone, for I'll be true,
> My conscience bids me not to look of you.[61]

In a final reworking of Cavendish's libertine plays, Jane and Elizabeth make their father's fictional self, Calsindow, renounce the very sexual

liberties that his characters claim in a final rejection of these amorous 'toy[s]' in the figure of the pert maid, Toy. William Cavendish served as the initiator of his family's discourse and his daughters, paradoxically liberated by their Civil War experiences, shifted the basic certainties of the group's self-representation. In the works of the Cavendish sisters, form, character and language are manipulated in order to question the gender and class assumptions of their father's work. And, in a final potent expression of female independence, through the fictional representation of Cavendish as Calsindow, they make their father question his complacent assumptions about women and their sexual identities. The writings of Jane and Elizabeth Cavendish evidence the way in which female authorship began to challenge the dominant patriarchal structures of literary kinship. This shift was reinforced in the works of their stepmother, Margaret Cavendish.

IV

After the War: Margaret Cavendish

By 1646 William Cavendish was exiled on the continent, his daughters removed from Welbeck and the Newcastle homes themselves empty or destroyed. By this time William Cavendish had joined Henrietta Maria and Prince Charles in Paris and it was here that he met Margaret Lucas who was to become his second wife and, in her turn, another of the Cavendish women writers. Lucas, like the Cavendish sisters and other Royalist women of the Civil War had to negotiate combat, imprisonment and exile. In her autobiography, *A True Relation of My Birth, Breeding and Life*, she comments:

> But not only the family [Cavendish] I am linked to is ruined, but the family from which I sprung by these unhappy wars … these unhappy wars forced her [Lucas's mother] out, by reason she and her children were loyal to the King; for which they plundered her and them of all their goods, plate, jewels, money, corn, cattle and the like – cut down their woods, pulled down their houses, and sequestered them from their lands and livings. In such misfortunes my Mother was of an heroic spirit.[62]

The experiences of the Lucas family echo the betrayals and dangers envisaged by Jane and Elizabeth. Margaret Cavendish had personal experience of these events and, with hindsight, was able to deploy a full

realisation of the dangers in her writing. This difference between the pre- and post-war expectations of Royalist women is dealt with in a poem written during her return to England in 1651 in an attempt to recover Cavendish's property from the Sequestration Committee.

In 'A Dialogue between a Bountiful Knight and a Castle Ruin'd in Warr' Margaret provides a conversation between the knight, Charles Cavendish (William's brother), who had accompanied her to England, and Bolsover Castle, which is personified as a distressed lady. The most striking shift from the writings of the existing Cavendish familial discourse occurs in the sexual references; in Cavendish's work sexual activity is always welcomed, while in Jane and Elizabeth's work women may remain chaste. In Margaret's poem the Castle presents her conquest in terms of a rape, describing how her 'Right's [have been] o're-power'd', how her 'Beauty and Innocency are Devour'd', and how the penetration of her walls, earlier described as a 'Girdle' by the male garrison with their 'Guns … Pistols … [and] Bullets' have made 'passages' and left her 'Destroy'd'.[63] Although the writings of the three Cavendish women are separated by only seven years, the Civil War discourse had shifted from a combination of loss and hope to much darker vision of violation and destruction. The castles of Welbeck and Bolsover which serve as the site for this ideological shift move from the ideal pastoralism of Jonson and William Cavendish in the 1630s, through the besieged threats experienced by Jane and Elizabeth in the 1640s, to the plunder and destruction that Margaret witnessed in 1651. As the Knight so aptly comments 'how great is thy change'.[64]

By focussing on the recurring use of illicit sex it is possible to trace the changes in the Cavendish familial discourse, Margaret continually reworked these rape or near-rape scenes, particularly in her prose romances. In 'Assaulted and Pursued Chastity' (1656) the noble heroine, Miseria, is exiled from her home because of 'a plaguey rebellion; killing numbers with the sword of unjust war' and shipwrecked in the Kingdom of Sensuality, where she is sold to a 'bawd'. The bawd attempts to prostitute Miseria to a married Prince, but as he gets 'ready to seize on her', she shoots him with a pistol.[65] Although Miseria escapes from the Prince, a further abduction plot, this time the King of Amour captures the Queen of Amity, underlines the significance of rape within Margaret's treatment of romance narratives.[66] 'Assaulted and Pursued Chastity' served as a precursor to Margaret's more ambitious and confident prose romance, *The Description of a New World Called The Blazing World* (1666) where, as Kate Lilley points out,

> Once again the genre of the imaginary voyage is linked to a plot of abduction and sexual assault.[67]

In this later work an unnamed lady is abducted by a merchant who intends to rape her, but is thwarted when his ship is blown to the North Pole and he and all his men are 'frozen to death, the young Lady only, by the light of her beauty … remaining alive'.[68] In each instance rape is avoided, but the threat of possible violation is underlined. Such evocation of sexual desire has been the focus of criticism: for example, Rebecca D'Monte argues that 'Margaret Cavendish's plays deliberately make a spectacle of the female body … by displacing the body within the narrative … thereby problematising the relationship between seduction and spectacle'.[69]

Margaret's plays show a similar pursuance of the Cavendish familial discourse.[70] In *The Convent of Pleasure* (1668), the same stock types are deployed, with noble figures (one is even called Monsieur Courtly) balancing the lower class comic characters such as Monsieur Take-Pleasure's serving man, Dick.[71] The noble ladies, led by Lady Happy, denounce men as 'the troublers of women' and decide to seclude themselves in a pastoral Utopia, 'to gather fruit and reap the corn' that is reminiscent of Jonson's Welbeck entertainment.[72] The men plan to enter this 'convent' disguised as women, voicing their intent with the expected bawdy innuendo; for example, Facile points out that he could 'make a pretty shift, to wash some of the ladies' night-linen' in which 'shift' puns upon a woman's undergarment and a sexual attempt.[73] Lady Happy and her suitor, the Prince, who enters the convent disguised as the Princess, represent the courtly stock types, although Lady Happy is a serious and knowledgeable lady, quite unlike the witty young women in the plays of Jane, Elizabeth and William Cavendish. The most significant development is in the depiction of illicit sex in a 'play that is acted within the scene, the PRINCESS and the LADY HAPPY being spectators'.[74] This drama consists of a series of very short scenes that depict the wrongs done by men to women. Lower class women complain of beatings and adultery, a middle class woman is told her husband has run off with the barmaid, a noble lady tells how her husband has spent all his money 'amongst his whores, and is not content to keep whores abroad, but in my house, under my roof, and they must rule as chief mistress', an old woman narrates how her daughter has had an illegitimate child, and a young lady is warned that unless she consents to sex, 'he will have you against your will'.[75] The catalogue of abuse and sexual assault is categorical and there is no alleviating humour, as in Cavendish's plays, or ultimate acceptance of virtue as in the works of Jane and Elizabeth. In *The Convent of Pleasure* Margaret reworks the rape discourse in order to represent a world in which the certainties of class and privilege that allowed Dorothy to claim 'fornication in my owne defence' or Toy to be dismissed are sharply undercut by a commonality of gendered experience.[76]

While *The Convent of Pleasure* presents the most graphic depiction of female travails, many of Margaret's other plays depict illicit sex as injurious to women. These scenes often echo Cavendish's comic allusions to prostitutes and the wooing of maidservants, but in Margaret's plays there is always an overtone of moral inappropriateness. In *Loves Adventures* two gallants suggest taking ladies 'to a Bawdy-house', and prostitutes themselves, even though they are made promises, are threatened with 'the Correction-house … to be punished.[77] Sexual assault occurs in *The Several Wits* as Monsieur Importunate attempts to kiss Madamosel Caprisia, 'Nay faith, now I have you, and I will keep you perforce', with a more serious evocation in *The Unnatural Tragedy* as a brother rapes his sister and a more comic representation of the old Mother in *The Presence* and in *The Sociable Companions* where a lady is said to have 'been taken away by force'.[78] Even suitors who plan to marry their ladies plan to keep mistresses openly, as in *The Lady Contemplation*, where Lord Courtship is advised to 'accustome her to your wayes before you marry her; let her see your several Courtships to several Mistresses, and keep wenches in your house; and when she is bred up to the acquaintance of your customes, it will be as natural to her'.[79] Lords openly kiss their wives' maids: in *Loves Adventures* Lady Ignorant complains, 'What Husband? Do you kiss my maid before my face'; in *The Bridals* Sir John Amorous commands his wife's maid to be his 'Whore', pointing out that she will still 'be good enough for the Butler afterwards'; and in *The Unnatural Tragedy* Madam Bonir dies after her husband has been repeatedly unfaithful with her maid, Nan, and his behaviour is pointed out to her:

> I wonder at your patience, that you can let *Nan*, not only be in the house, and let my Master lie with her, for she is more in my Masters chamber than in yours; but to let her triumph and domineer.[80]

Because of men's licentiousness, gentlemen are expected to be infected with venereal disease, as in *The Presence*, where Madamoisel Wanton points out, 'he is not a Courtly nor well-bred Man that has not a spice of that Disease'.[81] Finally, even women who have already been seduced are subsequently betrayed, as in the tragedy, *Death's Banquet*, where Lady Incontinent accuses Lord de l'Amour,

> Have I left my Husband, who was rich, and used me well? And all for love of you! And with you live as a Wanton! By which I have lost my esteem and my honest reputation, and now to be forsaken, and cast aside, despised and scorned![82]

The use of allegorical names directly informs the reader of the moral evaluation of the characters; Monsieur Importunate loses his lady to Monsieur Generosity, Lord Courtship is reformed by Lady Ward, Sir John Amorous is punished, Lady Ignorant learns to value chastity, Lady Incontinent is rejected, Madamoisel Wanton is chastised, and while Madam Bonir dies, her husband is punished with a second, shrewish wife. The characters of Margaret's plays fall into the same stock types as those of William, Jane and Elizabeth, with the courtly gentlemen and the intelligent ladies they woo, but the pre-war hierarchies and the Civil War doubts are replaced with a dark certainty of, as the Castle points out, 'Beauty and innocency … Devour'd.'[83]

In her literary works, Margaret both participates in and alters the Cavendish familial discourse, undercutting the light-hearted bawdy of her husband's writing and paralleling the rejection of illicit sex by Jane and Elizabeth, through representations of the realities of sexual assault and the implications for these upon women's lives. By taking sex as a trope it is possible to perceive that Margaret writes with hindsight and rather than focus on successful or unsuccessful wooing (as in the writings of Cavendish, Jane and Elizabeth), she remarks upon consequences. As such, she develops the Cavendish discourse from pre-war certainty, through Civil War instability, to a recognition, and acceptance, of post-war reality. While this is evidenced in her descriptions of sexual activity, it is also manifest in the other elements of the familial discourse, patronage linked to writing, characterisation, language and class.

One of the most significant elements of a familial discourse is its initiating figure and for the Cavendishes this was undoubtedly William, who as father to Jane and Elizabeth encouraged their writing and served as an – absent – audience for their plays, and who as the older husband of the young Margaret Lucas indulged her desire for difference. Jane and Elizabeth's Civil War texts are caught between respecting paternal influence and stressing their own freedom to write, but while Margaret offers similar complimentary prologues to William, she proceeds to subsume him within her own massive textual output.

Like Jane and Elizabeth, Margaret prefaces her works with dedications to Cavendish. At the beginning of *Plays Written by the Thrice Noble, Illustrious and Excellent Princess, The Marchioness of Newcastle*, she notes:

> And as for this Book of Playes, I believe I should never have writ them, nor have had the Capacity nor Ingenuity to have writ Playes, had not you read me some Playes which your Lordship [Cavendish] had writ … so I have your applause I desire no more.[84]

A similar dedication appears in Margaret's *Life* of Cavendish. Like Jane and Elizabeth, she denigrates her learning and literary ability in comparison with that of her husband, demonstrating appropriate Early Modern female modesty. Yet, Margaret Cavendish can hardly be considered modest, a judgement attested to famously in her own age as well as in more recent criticisms and biographies. From Pepys' desperate attempts to see her, through Woolf's judgement that 'she succeeded during her lifetime in drawing upon herself the ridicule of the great and the applause of the learned', to the feminist critical reappraisal that she 'was devoted to personal excess' and a 'pursuit of literary fame and reputation [that] was vigorous and startlingly self-conscious', the force of Margaret's character cannot be questioned, even if this includes both approbation and condemnation.[85] If taken in conjunction with the Cavendish familial discourse of patronage and paternal hierarchy, these estimations of Margaret produce a dualistic reading in which she both claims deference and demonstrates superiority. The *Plays*, for example, contain fourteen dramas, some of which have two parts, and all of which contain prose discourses on the various moral, political and philosophical matters Margaret wished to hypothesise on. Yet, among these there are occasional pieces written by Cavendish, prefaced usually with 'My Lord Marquess writ these following speeches'.[86] Rather than an example of mutual literary production, like that of Jane and Elizabeth with their initialled speeches, these are small insertions of set witty dialogues and songs that in no way question the dominant authorship of the whole. Such consumption of one familial author by another is also apparent in *The Blazing World* where Cavendish and Welbeck are written into the narrative and constructed through the Platonic lens of Margaret's ideological perspective.[87] Indeed, even her *Life* of Cavendish seeks to encapsulate and enumerate every aspect of his life; she not only outlines his mere biography, but adds a series of lists, such as the garrisons he commanded during the Civil War, descriptions of every aspect of his life, including his diet and exercise regime, and a whole book on 'Discourses gathered From the Mouth of My Nobel Lord and Husband', although it is hardly surprising that she adds to this latter, 'with some few notes of mine own'.[88] For the Cavendish familial writing this domination provokes a significant shift from Cavendish's own employment of the discourse of patronage with Charles I, through Jane and Elizabeth's development as independent women authors during their father's exile, to Margaret's inversion of gender hierarchies, imbuing her voice with a textual authority that exceeds her husband's. Although, this was never an unambiguous position, as Sophie Tomlinson rightly notes that, while

her works leave, 'us in no doubt of the apotheosis of the female hero, the nature of the gains won for women through her endeavours are rather more fragile'.[89]

Margaret's ambiguous challenge to the dominant male discourses of the Restoration does, however, demonstrate a similarity with Jane and Elizabeth's use of independent female characters, as in the post-marriage epilogue of *The Concealed Fancies*, although Margaret offers a more radical interpretation. The honourable and learned ladies of her literary works are lauded, admired and respected by the other characters and they succeed in amicable and happy marriages with suitably noble husbands. The list is interminable: from the Empress and Duchess of *The Blazing World*, to the assorted ladies and princesses of the plays.[90] The setting for these noble ladies, whose narratives often resemble that of Margaret herself (a young ingenuous court lady marrying a successful older nobleman), had to be sufficiently grand. It is significant that the pastoral discourse evoked successively in the Cavendish family's writing is disparaged by Margaret:

> To Cover Noble Lovers with the Weeds
> Of Ragged Shepherds, too Low Thoughts it breeds.[91]

Not only are the rustic characters lost, but also so too are the easy linguistic shifts between courtly and lower class discourse used by William, Jane and Elizabeth. Although Margaret does use pastoral occasionally, as in *The Convent of Pleasure* and in her poetry, the language is formal and does not allow for the comic exuberance of the earlier Cavendish works. When sexual innuendo is used, it is constructed as part of the moral juxtapositions of the plays, usually representing male licentiousness in contrast to a virtuous female ideal. Margaret's plays overall lose the comic dexterity of the Cavendish discourse, negotiating the themes of character and language in order to express a more serious and moral tone.

This shift may be evidenced by the positioning of Margaret's poem, 'The Allegory of Shepherds is too Mean for Noble Persons', alongside her post-Civil War poetry, which includes, the dialogue between 'a Bountiful Knight and a Castle'. These poems draw upon Margaret's experiences when she returned to England in 1651, as well as commenting upon the exigencies of war. 'The Fort or Castle of Hope' depicts actions taken against a siege,

> Hope hearing Doubt did a great Army raise
> Upon the Castle, where she was, to Seize,

> For her Defence she made that Castle strong,
> Plac'd Pieces of Ordnance the Wall along;
> And Bulwarks Built at every Corners end,
> A Curtain long the Middle did Defend.[92]

The poem is almost a depiction of Bolsover at the commencement of the war before the subsequent destruction that leads Charles Cavendish (the Knight) to note the 'great … Change'. Margaret's knowledge of the necessary fortifications to withstand a siege is detailed and her use of vocabulary is accurate. The 'pieces of ordnance' refers to the single large guns used as part of the artillery, the 'bulwarks' are bastions that stand out from the main walls, while the 'curtain' is the part of the rampart that lies between two bastions. Similarly, the battle between the forces of Hope and Doubt is described realistically and the dying depicted with gruesome precision, 'Their Knees pull'd up lest th'Bowels out should come', and 'Some underneath their Horses Bellies slung'.[93] Perhaps the most poignant evidence of the material accuracy of Margaret's description of post-Civil War England is the elegy for her dead brother, Charles Lucas, 'Upon the Funeral of my Dear Brother, Kill'd in these Unhappy Warrs'. As has already been noted, Lucas was executed after the capitulation of Colchester in the second Civil War of 1648; Fairfax demanded that while he agreed for the royalist troops to go freely, the superior officers were to surrender, 'without certain assurance of quarter'.[94] Lucas was shot and buried in an unmarked grave. Margaret's elegy, therefore, enacts the funeral that Lucas was not accorded and simultaneously acknowledges the reality of his burial:

> The Birds, as Mourners on my Tomb shall Sit,
> And Grass, like as a Covering Grow on it.[95]

The frank acceptance of the realities of the Civil War, of warfare itself, of the bloody outcome of battle and the rude burial of the dead, categorise Margaret as a post-war author. As Marta Straznicky concludes in her chapter on Margaret's dramatic works,

> For Cavendish, an exiled noblewoman with intense royalist principles, writing and publishing plays for a readership was in every conceivable respect a political act.[96]

The existing Cavendish familial discourse had, therefore, to be mutated by Margaret in order to engage with the actuality and politicisation of

her experience: Newcastle's certainties, and Jane and Elizabeth's doubts in terms of paternal patronage, stock characters, language and illicit sex, were changed by Margaret into bleak bitterness and determined resistance.

V

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the Cavendish inheritance and its associated discourses, encompassing William, Jane, Elizabeth and, finally, Margaret. It has also excavated the marked continuity of thematic and generic elements in that familial discourse: allusions to Jonson and the entertainments at Welbeck and Bolsover, the contained challenges to paternal and patriarchal hierarchies, the vivid shifts of language from courtly to rustic voices, the display of stock characters from both upper and lower classes and a persistent return to the representation or discussion of illicit sexual behaviour. But, unlike the other familial discourses discussed in this book, the Cavendish family are distinct not only because of a set of defining characteristics, but the way in which they were able to mutate these referents in relation to material circumstance. For Cavendish, Jane, Elizabeth and Margaret, the impact of the English Civil War was unavoidable and each responds to the series of radical shifts experienced, as the certainties of the pre-war years were overturned by the war, as they experienced the dangers and fears of participating in that war, and as they finally came to terms with the unalterable changes in society that became manifest during the Interregnum and the Restoration. More than any other family discussed here, the Cavendishes serve as a paradigm for the experiences of others of their class and gender, and, as such, the Cavendish familial discourse resides firmly within both personal and political spheres. The continuity of influence must, therefore, be set against the material upheavals of the war, and it is precisely this axis that determined the mutating nature of the Cavendish familial discourse.

Conclusion

I

This book set out to trace the ways in which the individualised familial discourses of the Mores, Lumleys, Sidney/Herberts, Carys and Cavendishes engendered strategies of representation that formed an identifiable set of relations. The excavation of each family's distinct identity revealed a set of cultural practices that served to unite literary productivity within the group. At the same time, the familial discourses discussed here demonstrate key similarities that extend beyond the quirks of kinship. Initiating figures and family bonds may be identified and located within specific historical contexts. A pattern of initiation, development, mutation and disintegration of the discursive formations is consistently present. The way in which women negotiated with the power structures within the familial circles evidences the ways in which female authors found expression. Finally, the evidence uncovered here demonstrates that familial discourses are limited in material and chronological terms and that, by the end of the seventeenth century, women writers had ceased to be so closely bound by ties of blood.

The elements necessary for the formation of a familial discourse are the presence of a key initiating figure, a set of power relations within the family that allow the development of the discourse and a defining material context in which the group interacts with the dominant ideologies of time and place. In the Early Modern family the most influential figures are predictably male. Thomas More's and Philip Sidney's domination of their families' cultural heritages is a critical commonplace. Other paternal initiators are not as expected; for example, Henry Fitzalan who rejected any scholarly activity encouraged his family to engage with a humanist educational agenda through book-collecting,

translation and dramatic composition, and William Cavendish who was a derivative dramatist helped facilitate the original and individualised playwriting by his daughters and second wife. This book has identified only one female initiator in Early Modern England, Elizabeth Cary, whose prolific and unique writing impacted upon her family's spiritual and literary sense of identity. The formation of a familial discourse did not depend upon the presence of a brilliant innovative author, although in the cases of the More, Sidney/Herbert and Cary families this undoubtedly helped sustain lines of influence. Rather, there had to be a commitment to textual productivity and scholarly endeavour that extended beyond schoolroom activities to a wider dissemination and a more specific engagement with contemporary ideologies.

The material context of the familial discourse's emergence and sustainability is essential to the formation of an identifiable system of mutual representation. The families discussed in this book produced writings that are located at the most significant points of change and disruption in Early Modern England – the Reformation and Counter Reformation, Elizabethan expansionism and the English Civil War. Without these pivotal social moments the Mores would not have combined in a unique familial enterprise to sustain the memory of Thomas More, the Lumleys would not have transformed political and spiritual revenge into a cultural proclamation of ascendancy, the Sidneys would not have been able to colonise key Early Modern European literary genres, the Carys would not have fissured along spiritual and sibling lines and the Cavendish women might never have written at all. These families do not, however, reproduce the dominant political arguments and strategies surrounding historical events. It is essential to recognise that familial writing engages with, interprets and offers challenges to the dominant ideologies. This dialogic process was accessible because although familial discourses develop within an identifiable set of relations, they also act as sites of contestation for precisely those definitions.

Acceptance and contestation are integral to familial discourses and may be identified in relation to the key defining factors as well as in the works produced by the groups. The writings of the families discussed in this book evidence commonalities, of form, genre, language, style, themes, even vocabulary. The members of these groups, however, were not always supportive of, and submissive to, the familial enterprise. In the More discourse Margaret Roper's and Gertrude More's submersion of individual identity into the dominant paternal agenda must be set alongside John Donne's textual immersion in, but simultaneous rejection of, his familial inheritance. The Lumleys, Sidney/Herberts as well as

the Cary and Cavendish siblings demonstrate a limited challenge to the power structures of familial influence; in each case the initiator's literary dominance remains in place (via genre, language and theme), but challenges exist within that overall directive. In this way, Jane Lumley reworked her father's political discourse in order to question gendered assumptions, Mary Sidney edited her brother's psalms and prose romance, Anne Cary transformed her mother's Catholic evangelicalism into politicised comments, and the Cavendish sisters, Jane and Elizabeth, changed the bawdy eroticism of their father's comedies into an interrogation of the sexual roles of Civil War women. Finally, contestation emerges into a radical questioning of power structures within Early Modern families and society in the writings of Mary Wroth, Elizabeth Cary and Margaret Cavendish. These women were immersed within their individualised familial discourses, but they also engaged with discursive formations beyond the groups' boundaries.

By tracing the way in which Early Modern families enabled women to write, this book argues that women did benefit from a 'Renaissance'. The humanist education espoused by the Mores, Lumleys and Sidney/Herberts certainly provided the basic literary skills necessary for scholarly undertakings. Spiritual schisms enabled women, as well as men, to claim authority from God, as do all the Cary family. The social upheavals such as the Civil War offered increased responsibility and independence to women like the besieged Cavendish sisters and their exiled stepmother. This evidence of an independent subjectivity, however, must be set alongside those women writers who submitted to the dominant patriarchal power structures of their familial coteries. Margaret Roper merged her identity into that of her father, Gertrude More welcomed the annihilation of the self, Jane Lumley justified her father's political subterfuge and the Cavendish sisters wrote for an audience of one – their father. Of those women who did challenge the dominant male authority of the Early Modern family, Mary Wroth withdrew her work from publication, Elizabeth Cary was alienated from family and court and Margaret Cavendish was mocked for her authorial idiosyncrasy. By excavating Early Modern familial discourses this book has shown how the power structures within family groups could facilitate women's writing, but it also acknowledges that there was no easy or clear access via the family to an independent authorial identity. Early Modern women's writing existed within familial discourses at points of contestation that were, in turn, embedded within material contexts and gendered power structures. It was the confluence of this familial contestation with the social, political and spiritual upheavals of Early Modern England that

generated textual production. Familial discourse did enable women to write, not because of a sheltered and nurturing environment, but because of the gaps in the patriarchal boundaries that appeared when the ideological apparatus became fractured through external disorder.

II

This book began with a serious definition taken from an erudite scholar, but it concludes with a joke, or rather, several jokes. When researching the writings of family groups a certain degree of familiarity with their distinctive ways of writing and thinking becomes inevitable, but these major ideological commitments, or arguments about such convictions are combined with knowledge about the commonplaces of family life. As the chapters progress – from the Mores, through the Lumleys, Sidney/Herberts and Carys, to the Cavendishes – small pieces of shared humour and the characters they involve became apparent. For the Mores, it was the joke about the nose, and Jasper Heywood, the flamboyant Jesuit, who alienated everyone, Catholic and Protestant alike, and fighting with his brother, Ellis, over the ownership of one of More's teeth. The Lumleys were mocked for their acquisitive collecting of paintings, statues and even corpses. The comic allusions in the Sidney/Herbert family are not as readily apparent, being cloaked in allegory and distinctly gendered, but Penelope Rich is gently mocked by the second generation for her love of more than one man. For the Carys, there is Patrick's dislike of fish and Victoria's disinclination to be a housewife. Distinctly less comic, although certainly derisive, was the locals' scorn at the Tanfields' (Elizabeth Cary's parents) social climbing; indeed they were so unpopular in Burford that even several centuries later their effigies were burned ritualistically every year. In the Cavendish family, the most obvious elements of 'humour' are the satirical attacks against Margaret Cavendish, on her dress, her writing and her character. But there is a gentler and more familiar humour in the Cavendish familial discourse: William often jokes with his daughters in his letters to them, accusing Frances his youngest daughter of not writing very well and calling Jane his 'monkey'. And so, this analysis of women writers and familial discourse in the English Renaissance ends, not with a sententious summation, but with a nose, a tooth, paintings, statues, corpses, fickle love, fish, rebellion against housewifery, burned effigies, eccentric clothes and a monkey, because these things are, after all, what families are about.

Notes

Introduction: Women writers and familial discourse in the English Renaissance

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4. William Perkins, *Christian Oeconomie*, trans. Thomas Pickering (London: Felix Kyngstone, 1609).
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6. *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 110 and 152.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
8. Joan Kelly Gadol, 'Did Women Have a Renaissance', in *Women History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly Gadol* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 19–50.
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10. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 6.
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12. Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 54 and 58.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 177. George L. Justice and Nathan Tinker (eds), *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 11. See also: Margaret J.M. Ezell's path breaking work on women's uses of manuscript writing and circulation in *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) and her essay, 'The Posthumous Publication of Women's Manuscripts and the History of Authorship' in Justice, *op. cit.*, pp. 121–36.
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1 'Though a temporall man, yet your very spirituall father': The Roper/Basset line and the lives of Thomas More

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2. *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More*, ed. Elizabeth Frances Rogers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), pp. 538–9.
3. William Roper, *The Life of Sir Thomas Moore knighte*, ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), pp. 28 and 99. Early English Text Society Vol. 197.
4. Thomas Stapleton, *The Life and Illustrious Martyrdom of Sir Thomas More*, ed. E.E. Reynolds and trans. P.E. Hallett (New York: Fordham University Press, 1966), p. 215.
5. Richard L. DeMolen, '*Precatio Dominica in Septem Portiones Distributa* … Translated into English by Margaret More Roper', in *Erasmus of Rotterdam. A Quincentennial Symposium*, ed. Richard L. DeMolen (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1971), pp. 93–124. Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), vol. 29, p. 173.
6. DeMolen, *op. cit.*, pp. 101 and 103.
7. Harpsfield, *op. cit.*, p. 78; Richard Marius, *Thomas More: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), p. 226.
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11. Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–9.
12. Goldberg, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
13. William Rastell (ed.), *The Works of Sir Thomas More Knyght, sometyme Lorde Chauncellour of Englande, wrytten by him in the Englysh tonge* (1557), ed. K.J. Wilson (London: Scolar Press, 1978), p. 1434; MSS versions at Bodleian MS Ballard 72 fol. 86 v. and BM MS Royal 17 D xiv fol. 404 r.
14. R.W. Chambers, *The Continuity of English Prose* in Harpsfield, *op. cit.*, p. clxii.
15. Rastell, *op. cit.*, pp. 1438–9.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 1439.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 1441. See also: Peter Ackroyd, *The Life of Thomas More* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1998), pp. 5–6.
18. Rastell, *op. cit.*, p. 1441.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 1441.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 1443.
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27. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
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29. Rastell, *op. cit.*, p. 1350.
30. Harpsfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 83 and 334. Harleian MSS 1860 British Museum.
31. Thomas More, *Omnia, quae hucusque ad manus nostras pervenerunt, Latina Opera …* (Louvain: Ioannen Bogardum, 1566).
32. Mary Basset, *St. Thomas More's History of the Passion*, in Rastell, *op. cit.*, p. 1404. See also in Mary Basset, *St. Thomas More's History of the Passion*, ed. P.E. Hallett (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1941), p. 134, and *The Complete Works of Thomas More* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), vol. 14, Part II, ed. Clarence H. Miller, pp. 1077–165.
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36. *Ibid.*, pp.149–50.
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2 'Sory coumfortlesse Orphanes': The Rastell/Heywood line

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(London: William Rastell, 1533); *The Debellacyon of Salem and Bizance* (London: William Rastell, 1533) and *The answere to the fyrst parte of the poysened booke* (London: William Rastell, 1534). John More, *A sermon of the sacrament of the aulter made by a famouse doctoure called Fryderyke Nausea in Almayne and lately out of latyn translate into englysh by John More* (London: William Rastell, 1533), and *The legacye or embasaie of prester John unto Emanuell, Kynge of Portyngale* (London: William Rastell, 1533).

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9. Rastell, *op. cit.* (1978), p. v. See also: Leland Miles (ed.), *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965).
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13. John Heywood, *The Spider and the Flie* (London: Tho. Powell, 1556).
14. Bolwell, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
16. Edward More's poem, *A Lytle and bryefe treatyse, called the defence of women* (London: John King, 1560), exemplifies the More tradition of lauding female achievement and particularly that of the More women who defended their families, homes and manuscript materials during the raids and imprisonments of 1543 (fol. Biiir).
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39. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–3.
40. More, *op. cit.* (1965), p. 186.
41. *John Donne*, ed. John Carey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 283.
42. Donne, *op. cit.* (1984), p. xxxiv.
43. John Donne, 'Satire III', in *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*, ed. A.J. Smith (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 161–4.
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3 'Worthy of their blood and their vocation': The More/Cresacre line

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5 'As I, for one, who thus my habits change', Mary Wroth and the abandonment of the Sidney/Herbert familial discourse

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