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Philippe Mornay, Mary Sidney, and the Politics of Translation

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It is enough that we constantly and continually waite for her comming, that shee may neuer finde vs vnprouided. For as there is nothing more certaine then death, so is there nothing more vncertaine then the houre of death, knowen onlie to God, the onlie Author of life and death, to whom wee all ought endeuour both to liue and die.

Die to liue,

*Liue to die.*¹

In 1592, Mary Sidney published in a single volume her translations of *A Discourse of Life and Death. Written in French by Ph. Mornay and Antonius, a Tragædie written also in French by Ro. Garnier*. Although she may initially have undertaken the work for personal reasons, as she mourned the death of her brother, Philip, her decision to publish the translations, some two years after she completed them,

was motivated by recent events at court. Criticism of Mary Sidney's works has long been interested in the political dimension of her work, but scholars have only recently begun to explore more fully the transnational contexts for her literary activity.² Much of that scholarship has focused on her translation of Garnier's *Marc Antoine*. In this essay, I look at the early history of Philippe du Plessis Mornay's text, originally titled the *Excellent discovrs de la vie et de la mort*, in order to suggest not only what the work meant for its author when he wrote it in the mid-1570s, but also what additional significance it had accrued for Mary Sidney by the time she published her translation of it in 1592.

In reconstructing the meanings associated with the *Excellent discovrs*, I draw heavily upon the memoir written by Mornay's wife, Charlotte (d'Arbaleste) Mornay, and so, in important ways, this essay both depends upon and considers the work of women writers. My analysis begins with the aftermath of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre in France, an event that, I argue, proved a major impetus for Mornay's reflections on life and death. These events also informed Mary Sidney's thinking about the *Excellent discovrs*, since her own brother had narrowly escaped the massacre, and since she counted among her friends and family at least four witnesses to that event. Sidney was not the first English translator of Mornay's *Discovrs*, however, and so I also consider some of the political associations accrued by the work as it began to circulate to English readers in the late 1570s. As I shall argue here, the work never fully escaped its association, in England, with the suffering of the Huguenots in France, although it accrued additional significance, as well, by its association with writers and patrons critical of Elizabeth I's foreign policy.

Mornay's *Excellent discovrs* offers consolation for the "miseries" we endure in this life, but also offers to counsel us in what it means to live—and to die—well. From his reading of Seneca's *Moral Epistles*, Mornay argues that we are fundamentally mistaken in our fear of death, since death is what releases us from our suffering. While critics have argued that Stoicism was "not a philosophy of political resistance," I think it *did* have political implications for readers, like the Huguenots, who faced persecution and even martyrdom as a result of their deeply held religious beliefs.³ Indeed, as Seneca himself observes: "Qui a appris à mourir, a desappris de servir. Car il est par dessus toute puissance, ou pour le moins hors de la puissance d'aucune chose. Que luy chaut-il de prisons, de gardes, de verroux?" [He who has learned to die has learned not to serve. For he is above all power, or at least beyond the power of any thing. What does he care about prisons, guards, or iron bars?]⁴ The implication is, surely, that tyrants lose much of their power when their subjects no longer fear death—an idea that would have resonated strongly with Mornay and his readers following the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre. The *Excellent discovrs* does not, however, directly address the problem of tyranny. Instead Mornay's neo-Stoical tract focuses on the life of the private individual. The *Discovrs* proposes that the best way to prepare for death is to live well by avoiding the temptations of sensuality, wealth, and worldly ambition—by subjecting our passions and our appetites to reason. Conversely, to live well one must learn to die well—that is, to die willingly, neither hastening nor refusing the inevitable.⁵ In 1592, when Mary Sidney published her translation of the *Discovrs*, the work served not only as a reminder of the suffering the Huguenots had endured through decades of civil war in France but also as counsel to a queen who had, on more than one occasion, allowed her passions to cloud

her judgment in matters of foreign policy.

The *Excellent discovrs* is a work first and foremost concerned with how to prepare oneself for death: how to think about death (whether it is something to be feared or welcomed), how to be ready for it when it comes (that it “may neuer finde vs vnprovidid”), and how to live one’s life in the meantime, knowing that death may come without warning: “For as there is nothing more certaine then death, so is there nothing more vncertaine then the houre of death.”⁶ While Mornay’s tract can certainly be read without reference to the events of 1572, and indeed one is hard pressed to find any explicit mention of them in the text, the circumstances of the work’s composition suggest that Mornay’s thinking must have been shaped by his own experience of the Paris massacre and that of his fiancée, Charlotte d’Arbaleste. The archive for Mornay is unusual in that we have access not only to his works but also to a contemporary, and intimate, account of his life and thought.

In 1584, Charlotte Mornay began writing a memoir of her husband intended for the instruction of their eldest son, Philippe. This memoir, published posthumously in 1624, served as the basis for the first “official” biography of Mornay by his secretary, David de Licques, published in 1647. De Licques’ work depends upon—indeed, closely paraphrases—Charlotte’s memoir in its account of events before 1606, the year her son died (she abandoned the project soon after). The complete text of Charlotte’s memoir eventually was published in 1824 and the first English translation, by Lucy Crump, appeared just over a century later, in 1926. Since then, Charlotte’s work has proved an invaluable source for scholars of Mornay and, more recently, of Mary Sidney. Notably, it also contains a unique eyewitness account of the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre by a

Huguenot woman.⁷ Mary Sidney need not have known the text of Charlotte's memoir to be familiar with the stories it contained. The work's usefulness instead lies in what it can tell us not just about the timelines or major events of Mornay's life, but about the stories that Charlotte and her husband would have shared with family, friends, political allies.

Although we know quite a bit about the writing and publication of Mornay's *Excellent discovrs*, and about its earliest translations into English (first by Edward Aggas in 1576, and then twice more in the early 1590s), there is still much to be said about the genesis of the work, and the significance it accrued for Elizabethan readers between its first publication, in French, in 1576 and the printing of Mary Sidney's English translation in 1592.⁸ Critics of Mary Sidney's work have turned to early French language editions of the *Discovrs* in order to comment upon the style and quality of her translation.⁹ Recent work on the Sidneys and the Mornays has also turned to Charlotte's memoir or de Licques' biography for the evidence it provides of Philippe Mornay's visits to England and his longtime friendship with Philip Sidney.¹⁰ In a frequently-cited passage, Charlotte recalls that Philip Sidney was among her husband's closest friends during their time there:

His chief friends in England were Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary of State, and Sir Philip Sidney, son of the Viceroy of Ireland, nephew of the Earl of Leicester, and since son-in-law to the aforesaid Sir Francis Walsingham. Sir Philip was the most highly accomplished gentleman in England. Sometime after this date he did M. du Plessis the honour to translate into English his book on "The Truth of the Christian Religion."¹¹

Since the work was intended as a political and spiritual biography of her husband, it

should not surprise us that Charlotte is principally concerned in this passage to record the alliances he formed with influential English Protestants. Indeed, although the work also includes some autobiographical material, she says nothing of her own experience in England or the friendships she developed during the same period. Still, there is much more these sources—and not least the paratextual elements of Mornay's *Excellent discovrs*—can tell us, either directly or indirectly, about the contexts of its writing, its reception, and its translation into English. By further attending to these contexts, we can begin to see more clearly how the work might have signified for its earliest readers—what associations it brought with it when it crossed the Channel into England in 1576, or when Mornay himself gave a copy to his dear friend, Philip Sidney, the following year.

The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, which first brought Philippe Mornay into contact with Philip Sidney, was an event that quickly gained notoriety in England and across Europe, as thousands of Huguenots (or French Protestants) were killed in violence that broke out suddenly in Paris and other parts of France following the wedding of Henry of Navarre (a leading Protestant) with the king's sister, Marguerite de Valois (who was Catholic). Reports afterward suggested that the massacre, which began by targeting the Huguenots' political leader, Admiral Coligny, had been orchestrated by the king's own family—most notably the queen mother, Catherine de Medici, and her ultra-Catholic ally, the powerful Duke of Guise. Both Philippe and Charlotte Mornay had been in Paris when the massacre began on August 24th, and both narrowly survived the violence. Philip Sidney, too, had been in Paris, and had found refuge with the English ambassador there, Sir Francis Walsingham. Mary Sidney, who was just eleven years old in 1572, would learn of these events first from her brother, but also from other survivors

including, I should think, her friends the Mornays. Indeed, as I argue here, the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre must have been a topic of conversation on several occasions when the Mornays visited England in 1577-78. It was also, however, the event that prompted Philippe's reflections on life and death and shaped the *Discovrs* that he wrote, in 1575, at the behest of his fiancée. Mary Sidney would certainly have known of Charlotte's role as both patron and muse for the work, since the fact is mentioned not just in Charlotte's memoir but by Mornay himself in his preface to the 1576 Geneva edition.¹²

The *Excellent discovrs* and Saint Bartholomew's Day, 1572

This life is a perpetuall misery and tempest: Death then is the issue of our miseries and entraunce of the porte where wee shall ride in safetie from all windes. And should wee feare that which withdraweth vs from our misery, or which drawes vs into our Hauen?¹³

Written just three years after the event, Philippe Mornay's *Excellent discovrs* responds, more or less directly, to the trauma of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre. Scholarly discussion of the "surprisingly non-sectarian" work tends not to address this relationship, preferring instead to read it as a more general response to the fact that there was at the time, as Roger Kuin puts it, "a great deal of death about."¹⁴ The tract, "commonly seen as a largely neo-Stoic text, originally accompanied by translations of a few of Seneca's letters, and redeemed for Christianity only by its religious ending," was written at Charlotte's request, as we have seen, in 1575.¹⁵ Charlotte, as Kuin points out,

was no stranger to death. And while it might indeed surprise us that "a bright young widow with a seven-year old" might ask for "such a tract as an engagement present," it is worth considering the terrible violence that both she and Philippe had witnessed in Paris just a few years earlier.¹⁶

Charlotte's memoir describes in some detail how Philippe narrowly escaped the massacre, but I will describe just a few incidents here to suggest what not just what he witnessed, but also the sustained threat to his own life as he sought a way out of the city. On the Sunday, as violence broke out across Paris, Mornay's lodgings in Rue St Jacques were searched, "and he had barely time to burn his papers."¹⁷ Mornay managed to escape detection, hidden "in between two roofs," but when the "fury" resumed the next morning his terrified host, "came to him and begged him to leave, saying that he could do nothing to save him."¹⁸ By this time, "the murderers were already in his nextdoor neighbour's house, one Odet Petit, a bookseller, whom they had killed and thrown out of the window." Mornay made his escape "while the mob were busy sacking the neighbouring house," and found refuge, briefly, with a bailiff ("*huissier*") named Gerard, who was his family's "man of business."¹⁹ The next day, having passed through the Porte St Denis with the help of one of Gerard's clerks, Mornay was arrested and soon faced a "furious mob" that dragged the pair to the river and threatened to drown them.²⁰ It is not hard to see why, in the years that followed, Mornay found himself thinking about what it means to be prepared for death, "that shee may neuer finde vs vnprovidid."²¹

Charlotte, too, had been forced to contemplate the possibility that she and her child—from whom she had been separated—might not survive the violence. In the memoir, she describes how, concealed high up in an attic vault as the massacre went on

below, she heard:

the most terrible cries from men, women and children who were being murdered in the streets, and having left my child below I fell into the greatest perplexity and almost despair so that, had I not feared God's wrath, I would far sooner have flung myself down than have fallen alive into the hands of the mob, or have seen my daughter massacred before my eyes, which would have been more terrible to me than my own death.²²

If this account was written sometime after 1584, how much more vivid must the memory have been in 1575, when she and Philippe first spoke to one another of their experiences? At that time, she would also have been feeling the loss of several close family members: her first husband had died at the siege of La Charité in 1569, and she lost her father, sister, and father-in-law soon after, in 1570.²³ The *Excellent discovers* was written, moreover, at a time when her fiancé, Philippe, was engaged in military campaigns on behalf of the Duke of Alençon. Indeed, shortly after its composition in 1575, Philippe joined "a levy of mercenaries [that] had been raised...for the purpose of rescuing the Duke of Alençon."²⁴ Charlotte relates how her future husband survived several skirmishes ("he even had a shot from an arquebus in his cuirass but it did him no harm"), but was soon taken prisoner by the Duke of Guise's army.²⁵ He narrowly escaped recognition while in custody, and before long she was able to arrange for his ransom. The work he wrote for his fiancée not only offered solace for the losses she had so recently endured, but also sought to fortify her against those that might still come at any time.

Philippe Mornay and Charlotte d'Arbaleste had met in Sedan, where Charlotte

had taken refuge after escaping the violence in Paris. It was a city full of Protestant refugees. Charlotte remarks in her memoir that, "owing to the troubles in France since the massacre of St Bartholomew many noble families and many honorable gentlemen of all sorts of professions had taken refuge in Sedan."²⁶ Charlotte, who had spent time in Sedan a few years earlier, returned there in the autumn of 1572. Philippe and his brother, she writes, moved there from nearby Jametz in May, 1574, after the death of the French king, Charles IX, "so as to be more on the spot should anything result from it."²⁷ Sedan was, evidently, the place to be, and Charlotte describes her future husband actively consulting with other writers and political leaders: while there, she observes, he "received daily visits from several ministers and men of letters, and nothing of importance happened, whether concerning the troubles in France and the cause of the religion... that was not communicated to him."²⁸ Also during this time, Philippe became acquainted with the young widow, Charlotte, and, in the company of his younger brother, M. de Baunes, began to pay her regular, even daily, visits. Recalling this time, Charlotte remarks that: "the polished and honest conversation of M. du Plessis never failed to give me pleasure."²⁹ Although their thoughts were, initially, "far away from marriage," the courtship continued and the couple became engaged in June 1575. They were married, Charlotte tells us, on January 3, 1576.³⁰

Critics generally agree that Charlotte provided the impetus for Mornay's writing of the *Discours*, but how did this come about? If they were not, at first, thinking about marriage, what might they have talked about? It is difficult to imagine that their conversation did not, at some point, touch upon current affairs; Mornay's business in Sedan, and his writings must also have raised the spectre of recent events. Yet Mornay's

nineteenth century biographer, Joachim Ambert, imagines that the couple only discussed their respective experiences of the Paris massacre sometime after they were married: “A few years after the infamous Saint Bartholomew’s, Duplessis Mornay being married, recounted to his wife the dangers that he had so miraculously escaped during the massacres.”³¹ I think it far more likely that, in an environment like Sedan, where so many prominent Huguenots—nobles, professionals, religious leaders, and men of letters—were gathered, many of them survivors of the Paris massacre, Philippe and Charlotte openly discussed these events, and their responses to them, in the months leading up to their engagement. They were drawn together by shared experiences and beliefs, and from these conversations the idea for the book emerged.

Unlike the *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*, which Mornay had written earlier at Jametz, the *Discours* never explicitly mentions the massacre.³² However, those who were intimately acquainted with the history of its composition could easily have read its neo-Stoical claims that “this life is a perpetuall misery and tempest” and death “the issue of our miseries and entraunce of the porte where wee shall ride in safetie from all windes” as thinly-veiled allusions to the “miseries” or “troubles” of France. It is possible in fact to read the two works as companion pieces. The *Vindiciae* offered a political theory that responded explicitly to the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre. In it, Mornay asked “whether it may be lawful to resist a prince who is breaking the law of God and devastating God’s church” or, similarly, one “who is oppressing or ruining the commonwealth”—and if so, “by whom, how, and by what right it may be allowed.”³³ The tract argued that magistrates and nobles, persons who “hold authority from the whole people,” were authorized to raise arms against a tyrant, but private individuals,

unless commanded by such an authority figure, were not. In the event that “the nobles and magistrates applaud a raging king, or at least do not resist him,” pious individuals faced a difficult choice: “retire to another city” or, if that “opportunity to flee... has not been granted, they should renounce life rather than God.”³⁴ At the very heart of Mornay’s theory, readers came up against the problem of individual conscience—a topic that would become the principal subject matter of the *Discovrs*. Whether you were leading or following, the *Vindiciae* argued, righteous resistance required: “a mind empty of all ambition, authentic and earnest zeal, and finally conscience and knowledge, so as to prevent him being led on by error to foreign gods, or becoming over-excited by the frenzy of ambition to serve himself rather than the true God.”³⁵ Written less than a year later, the *Excellent discovrs de la vie et de la mort* took up, once more, the problem of individual conscience. In its pages, we find advice not just for nobles and magistrates, but for those individuals—including women like Charlotte—who lived in the knowledge that they might one day be required to “renounce life rather than God,” as so many of their coreligionists in Paris had done in August 1572.

Mornay’s thinking about the problem of conscience may have preceded the writing of the *Vindiciae*—it may indeed have emerged as directly from the experience of the massacre as his theory of resistance. It is well known that after his escape from Paris Mornay took refuge in England. One of those who helped him was his good friend (and Sidney’s friend), Hubert Languet.³⁶ Another, according to Charlotte’s memoir, was the English ambassador, Francis Walsingham, who provided him with crucial letters of introduction to the queen and her most prominent courtiers. While in England, Mornay spent his time actively writing and lobbying on behalf of the Huguenots; he also took

part, periodically, in diplomatic negotiations with Elizabeth on behalf of both the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Alençon. Charlotte reports that “for a while,” Mornay “spent the weary days common to refugees with his books,” writing “papers” addressed to the queen in French and Latin, and responding to the “calumnies” that were being published against “the French Protestants.”³⁷ The works of Seneca must surely have been among the books he read during this time. And Mornay’s nineteenth-century biographer, Joachim Ambert, claims—albeit upon questionable evidence—that during his stay in England Mornay also “composed a fairly large number of poems.”³⁸

Ambert offers up only three examples of Mornay’s poetic output during this time and, in the absence of corroborating evidence, all three could have been written as late as 1575. However, we do know that Mornay wrote a lengthy poem to Elizabeth I in the Spring of 1572, and it is entirely possible that he continued to write verse over the months that followed.³⁹ And it makes sense to imagine Mornay, a twenty-three year-old refugee, thinking about life and death, and reflecting upon his reading of Seneca by writing philosophically-inflected poems. Ambert calls the stanzas “remarkable for the originality of their images and, above all, for that philosophy that characterized even the smallest works of Duplessis.”⁴⁰ This is one of the stanzas to which Ambert is referring:

L'enfant trempe ses ris de larmes;

Du jeune les jeux sont alarmes,

De courts plaisirs, longs repentirs;

Un seul instant dure la liesse;

Et l'aiguillon qu'elle lui laisse,

Long-temps après se fait sentir.

[The child soaks his laughter in tears.
 The games of youth are calls to arms.
 Brief pleasures, long repentances.
 Joy endures but a single moment,
 And the sting that it leaves behind
 Is felt long afterward.]⁴¹

Readers of the *Excellent discovers* will recognize these lines from the seven-page prefatory “Ode” that anticipates and frames the tract’s argument. The orthography and punctuation have been modernized here; in the fourth line “instant” has replaced “point” and the definite article “la” the possessive “sa.” Simply add a rhymed couplet to summarize—“*Des plaisirs que la vie amaine / C’est courte ioye & longue peine* [Of the pleasures that life brings / The joy is short and the suffering long]—and we have here the third stanza of Mornay’s “Ode.”⁴² While there may be no way to prove that these lines were first conceived while Mornay was in England, they probably were written sometime before the *Discovers*.

In the *Excellent discovers*, Mornay uses the device of *amplificatio* to describe the temptations faced by a young man entering adulthood: “His passion entertains him with a thousand delights, prepares for him a thousand baits, presents him with a thousand worldly pleasures to surprize him.”⁴³ Here, through repetition and parallelism, Mornay expands upon the idea expressed so simply in his verse (and in Seneca), and underscores the number and nearly irresistible power of those “delights” or “pleasures.” But, he asks, in the end, “what pleasures are they? pleasures full of vice which hold him still in a restless feauer: pleasures subiect to repentance...pleasures bought with paine and perill,

spent and past in a moment, and followed with a long and lothsome remorse of conscience." The language of pleasure and repentance, pain and "long lothsome remorse" echoes unmistakably the stanza quoted by Ambert. Moreover, the device of *amplificatio*, evident throughout this passage, suggests that the tract was developed from the poem's more concise formulations (and not vice versa).

Whether Mornay composed those verses during his time in England, or later at Jametz or Sedan, his experience of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre must have led him to reflect on the very questions that would later inform the *Excellent discovrs*: how to prepare for the inevitable fact of death, how to meet it with equanimity and courage rather than fear, what temptations to avoid in this life, and how to find solace in dying, even when it comes unexpectedly (as it had for so many of his friends, colleagues, and coreligionists in 1572).

The Defense of Death: Mornay's work in England, 1577-1579

Mary Sidney probably first came into contact with Mornay's *Excellent discovrs* in 1577, when Philippe and Charlotte Mornay arrived in England for an extended stay. Mornay was there as an envoy for the Huguenot leader, Henry of Navarre, and as we have seen Charlotte described Philip Sidney as one of her husband's best friends during this time. Diane Bornstein argues that "Mornay probably gave Sidney a copy of his *Discovrs de la vie et de la mort*," during this visit.⁴⁴ The work would have been relatively new, still, and of interest to Mornay's English friends—not least among them fellow survivors of the Paris massacre. Mornay's tract went through several editions following its initial publication and Charlotte alludes to numerous translations that appeared soon

after.⁴⁵ In 1576, Edward Aggas produced the first English translation of the *Discovrs* with the title, *The Defence of Death. Contayning a moste excellent discourse of life and death. Written in Frenche by Philip de Mornaye Gentleman*. The work seems to have been popular with English readers, and a second printing was issued in 1577. With the tract's author living in London at the time, it seems more than likely that the relative "demerites" of the translation should have been a matter of conversation for the Mornays, for Philip and Mary Sidney, and for others in their circle.⁴⁶ Moreover, within such a highly politicized circle, which also included Walsingham (Mornay's other "chief friend" in England), Leicester, and Mary's powerful husband, the Earl of Pembroke—and given Mornay's purpose in England, which was to raise funds and support for the Huguenot cause—conversation must also have turned, with some frequency, to continental affairs, and especially the troubles in France.⁴⁷ Including the Mornays, there were four people within this circle who had witnessed, at first hand, the massacre at Paris, an event that reverberated in English politics and on the continent for years afterward. As patrons and writers, themselves, they would have been interested in the ideas Mornay was developing in his works, their provenance, and their potential power to persuade an English readership.

Like its original, the Aggas translation of the *Excellent discovrs* was dedicated to a female patron, which may suggest that this work was principally aimed at, or associated with, a female readership. As we know, Mornay's work had been undertaken at the behest of his fiancée, Charlotte, and dedicated to her; its English translation, *The Defence of Death*, was similarly gendered, although Aggas chose not to reproduce Mornay's dedicatory epistle, instead substituting his own dedication to "the most godly and

vertuous Lady, Margaret Countesse of Darby."⁴⁸ It may be that the work's association with female patronage would have made it a natural choice for Mary Sidney as she undertook to produce a new translation some fourteen years later. However, the work's association with the Countess of Derby also linked it inexorably, I would suggest, to the political controversy that engulfed England as the 1570s came to a close—a controversy that threatened Mornay's mission in England and left its mark indelibly upon the career of Philip Sidney.

The Defence of Death may have been an innocent bystander as the crisis over Queen Elizabeth's marriage negotiations with the Duke of Alençon came to a head in 1579. However, while the work appealed to Catholic and Protestant readers alike (its English patron, the countess of Derby, was a practicing Catholic), it nevertheless came to be associated with staunch opposition to the match, which would have seen England's Protestant queen married to a French Catholic prince. On the one hand, the tract's Huguenot author was intimately involved with the campaign against the marriage by Leicester, Sidney, Pembroke, and others in their political circle.⁴⁹ On the other, Aggas's patron, Margaret Clifford, "fell into disfavor" during Alençon's visit to England in 1579, "over her apparent opposition to the queen's proposed match."⁵⁰ Her objections, however, seem not to have been based on religion. At the time, the countess of Derby, granddaughter of Charles Brandon, first duke of Suffolk, and Mary Tudor, was next in line to inherit the throne, a position that would be threatened if the queen married. As Lawrence Manley puts it,

According to a report by the Spanish ambassador, "the countess of Derby and a daughter of the earl of Bedford [were] arrested for talking about" the match;

special importance attached to the countess of Derby's comments, the ambassador added, because "she and her husband are claimants to the Crown."⁵¹ The countess of Derby's fall took an unforgettable turn just a few days later, when new charges were laid against her. The Spanish ambassador reported that, "one of the charges against the countess of Derby, besides talking about the marriage, is that she tried to discover by means of witchcraft...whether the Queen would live long." He adds that "a large number" of people had been "arrested on the charge of witchcraft."⁵² Some of these, including a physician, William Randall, who had treated the countess for an unspecified illness, were executed, but the countess was spared. According to Manley, she wrote to Walsingham in 1580 to complain of "'the heavy and long-continued displeasure which her Majesty...by the accusation of some others, hath laid upon me."⁵³ Not unlike Philip Sidney, who also incurred the queen's wrath over his opposition to the match around this time, the countess of Derby was banished from court for her misdeeds; and despite continued efforts to clear her name, she never succeeded in regaining the queen's favor. In fact, as Manley observes, "Camden's notice of her death in 1596 leaves the impression that she never escaped her disgrace."⁵⁴ Thus, within a few years of its publication, readers of Aggas's *Defence of Death* would have associated the work with a patron undone by her opposition to the Alençon match.

Philippe Mornay and his friend Philip Sidney also risked their careers by opposing the queen's proposed marriage to Alençon. Given her intimate relationships with several of the most prominent Protestant opponents of the match—her brother, her husband (Pembroke), her uncle (Leicester), and her brother's future father-in-law (Walsingham)—Mary Sidney must also have been present from time to time as these

men met to discuss their strategy. According to Margaret Hannay,

The countess had been involved, at least indirectly, in the most famous of these attempts to influence the queen. Endeavoring to influence Elizabeth to support the Huguenots against the Valois, those great Protestant earls met at her London home, Baynard's Castle, to plan the letter dissuading Elizabeth from the marriage to the Duc d'Anjou. The alliance, which chose Philip as spokesman, was working closely with the Huguenots, particularly Philippe de Mornay, Sieur du Plessis Marly.⁵⁵

During the summer of 1578, however, Mornay's opposition to the marriage, threatened to bring him into disfavor with the queen, and so in July he left England rather suddenly "under cover of various matters of business in the Low Countries."⁵⁶ Charlotte records that, "the chief reason why M. du Plessis left England in a hurry arose from the negotiation for the marriage of the Duke of Alençon (Anjou) with the Queen of England."⁵⁷ She explains that, "M. du Plessis heartily disapproved of this marriage both on account of religion and no less for reasons of state," and although "the Queen did him the honour to discuss it with him confidentially," he felt it would be "wiser" to leave the country.⁵⁸

Hannay's account of these events, which suggests that Philip Sidney's letter to the queen was written "shortly after Mornay's departure," is somewhat misleading.⁵⁹ According to Charlotte, Mornay left England in July 1578; the meeting at Baynard's Castle to plan Sidney's letter took place more than a year later, in August 1579. Mornay's family had joined him at Antwerp in October 1578, and he remained on the continent until April 1580, when Henry of Navarre sent him back to England with a

fresh request for arms and money.⁶⁰ The “great Protestant earls” may well have been working with their Huguenot allies as they planned their letter to the queen—in fact Languet, a close friend of both Sidney and Mornay, commented on it in an October letter to Sidney—but they must have done so at long distance.⁶¹

Sidney’s masterful letter to the queen raises several powerful objections to the match, not least among them “Monsieur’s” religion and the threat that the alliance would destabilize England’s delicate religious balance. Sidney’s objections, founded upon “religion” and “reasons of state,” resemble those of his friend Mornay. Indeed, raising the specter of the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre, Sidney warns his queen “that the hearts of Protestants ‘will be galled, if not aliened,’ if she takes [for a husband] ‘a Frenchman, and a Papist ... the son of the Jezebel of our age,’ one whose ‘brother made oblation of his own sister’s marriage, the easier to make massacres of all sexes’.”⁶² As Hannay observes, “even Mornay could not have stated the Huguenot position more forcibly.”⁶³

Discussions of the Queen's marriage negotiations invariably raised the specter of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre, still fresh in the memories of survivors, witnesses, and their sympathizers seven years later. And as Sidney’s letter reminds us, the massacre was notoriously linked to another marriage, that of Henry of Navarre (Mornay’s employer) and Marguerite de Valois, the sister of the French king, Charles IX. The gathering of so many Protestant nobles in Paris for the celebration of the nuptials, which had promised to heal the nation’s sectarian divisions, proved fatal to many of them, as violence broke out on August 24th, the feast of Saint Bartholomew’s Day. Indeed, reports soon emerged that the massacre of the Huguenots in Paris and other

urban centers had been the result of a conspiracy by the queen mother, Catherine de Medici (whom Sidney calls “the Jezebel of our age”), and the ultra-Catholic Duke of Guise; some accounts also depicted the king himself as a willing participant in the violence. Now, seven years later, opponents of Elizabeth’s match with Alençon invoked the slaughter of Protestants by the prince's own family as one of their principal objections to this interfaith match. John Stubbs, for example, who lost his hand over an inflammatory pamphlet he wrote against the marriage, described the house of Valois as “men, that haue eaten the people of God as bread, ...& drunk the blod of noble men.” Why, then, he asks, should any good Englishman or loving subject “not fear the same daungers and cruelties from the same men to our Queene?”⁶⁴

Mornay’s *Excellent discovrs* (1576) and Aggas’s English translation, published later the same year, were not directly concerned with Elizabeth’s marriage negotiations. They were, however, works that accrued significance during this period by their association with prominent opponents of the “French mariage” and as works that (for readers like Mary Sidney, especially) recalled and responded Stoically to one of the most infamous events in recent history, the massacre of French Protestants at the behest (or at least with the assent) of their own monarch.

Personal and political contexts for the translation (1590-1592)

Between 1584 and 1590, Mary Sidney experienced a series of losses. Many critics believe that these losses prompted her to translate Mornay’s treatise—that she found solace in the philosophy her friends had embraced years before, when they, too, had lost their loved ones to illness, old age, and war. Diane Bornstein points out that Mary “completed the translation on May 13, 1590, so she must have been working on it not

long after the death of her three-year-old daughter Katherine in 1584, and the deaths of her father, mother, and brother in 1586."⁶⁵ To this already devastating list, Hannay adds the losses of Mary's uncles Leicester (in 1588) and Warwick (in 1590), along with Philip's father-in-law, Walsingham, who also died in 1590. But Roger Kuin, even as he acknowledges that "Mary certainly in the late 1580s had as much death in her life as Charlotte and may have turned to the *Discours* as an aid in mourning," suggests that "there is much more to her translation of this essay."⁶⁶ As I draw this essay to a close, I want to consider how the personal intersected with the political for Mary Sidney in the early 1590s, at the moment she decided to bring her translations into print.

When Mary turned (or returned) to Mornay's tract in the late 1580s, she would first have been struck by its preface—and not only because it brought back to her the voice of her brother's longtime friend.⁶⁷ The first, Geneva, edition of the *Excellent discovrs* bears a dedicatory epistle to "Mlle Du Plessis" that is dated December 29, 1575. Throughout the epistle, which is not reproduced in the earliest English translations of the work, Mornay adopts the language of consanguinity in addressing his fiancée, so that a modern reader might at first be forgiven for thinking he was addressing a favourite sibling: repeatedly, he refers to the young Mlle Du Plessis, who was twenty-two at the time of writing, as his "soeur" or sister, and to himself as her "frère" or brother.⁶⁸ Indeed, his first gesture is to call attention to the fact that the work was written for her, at her request: "Mademoiselle my sister," he begins, "how the title of this Book must recall for you the name of its author, who touches you more closely than anyone in the world, & the content of the writing, which was first composed for you."⁶⁹ The epistle's discourse of brotherly devotion suggests, I think, a model of companionate marriage that

seems very much consistent with the role Charlotte played—from the beginning of their relationship—in guiding, supporting, and safeguarding her husband’s work.⁷⁰ It might also have recalled, for Mary Sidney, her own brother’s affectionate dedication to her of *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, which he describes as having been “done onely for you, only to you,” because she had “desired [him] to doe it.”⁷¹ If Mary Sidney had at one time felt empathy for Charlotte Mornay, she was now, more than ever, in a position to identify with her—and not just as a writer or literary patron. Having lost her brother at Zutphen, she knew at first hand the toll that the continental wars could take.

If Mary’s reasons for translating Mornay’s work were initially personal, her reasons for publishing it were, above all, political. Several critics have argued that she published the pair of translations—the *Discourse* and *Antonius*—together as a show of support for Mornay’s embassy to England in 1592.⁷² The dating of the works (if accurate) suggests, however, that Mary completed her translation of Mornay’s tract more than a year before the Earl of Essex led his expedition to Normandy (he landed at Dieppe in August, 1591), before the siege of Rouen began, and well before Mornay’s related visit to England in early 1592.⁷³ This might be a reason to downplay the work’s political significance, but the decision to publish the translations nevertheless came at an important moment for England’s relations with Henry IV (Henry of Navarre, who faced powerful opposition at home) and the Huguenots. Taken in conjunction with the absence of any prefatory material, we might even view the dating of the text as a deliberate strategy on Mary’s part—one intended to defuse the tract’s cumulative associations with political controversy so that it might simply “speak” on its own terms. As Mihoko Suzuki observes, translations offered Elizabethan writers a certain “protection” against

“censorship and punishment,” since any criticism expressed in them did not, ostensibly, originate with the translator.⁷⁴ Mary’s biographer, Margaret Hannay, concurs, arguing that Mary was “employing a rhetorical strategy that displaced her own criticisms of the court; translation was one of the most common ways of evading censorship, and one extensively practiced by women, who were usually denied original public discourse.”⁷⁵

The absence of prefatory statements for Mary’s translation of the *Discovrs* is significant and can be interpreted in several ways.⁷⁶ Like Aggas before her, she chose not to reproduce Mornay’s own prefatory materials, which consisted of an epistle to his wife (“sister”) Charlotte and the “Ode” that I discussed earlier in this essay. But neither did she replace them with her own, as Aggas had done. Mary would have been quite capable of translating the poetry, but she seems to have felt that the work’s argument could stand on its own. To the extent that prefaces are addressed to patrons by writers seeking “protection,” such a thing would have seemed to her redundant: in this instance, she was her own patron (and in a sense, Mornay’s, too). And if prefaces serve to frame a work by making explicit the author’s or translator’s intentions, this too may have seemed unnecessary—perhaps even undesirable. Her family’s politics were well known, and so would have been her sympathy (like her brother’s) for the Huguenot cause. She also knew from experience that overt criticism of Elizabeth’s policies or behavior would not be well-received; a subtler message, delivered through a pair of unadorned literary translations, would be far more effective in this case. This way, the burden of meaning lay squarely upon the works themselves—Mornay’s *Discourse of Life and Death* and Garnier’s tragedy of *Antonius*—and their potential each to shape the reception of the other.

There are several ways to read the *Discourse* in light of Mary's experience and the politics of 1592. The text of the *Discourse* is, among other things, highly critical of courts, and of the ambition that dominates and distorts the lives of courtiers. These men, Mornay writes, some of whom attain their degree "after a long and painefull service hazarding [their lives] upon every occasion," nevertheless live (and sometimes die) "at the pleasure of the Prince, that more regards a hundred perches of ground on his neighbours frontiers, then the lives of a hundred thousand such as he: unfortunate to serve who loves him not; and foolish to think himself in honor with him, that makes so litle reckening to loose him for a thing of no worth."⁷⁷ This passage, and others like it in the *Discourse* must have resonated with Mary as she thought of her brother's frustrated career under Elizabeth, and of course his death in the service of Leicester's campaign in the Netherlands. Mary, a firm supporter of the Protestant cause, would not have felt that her brother had died for a mere "hundred perches of ground," but it might nevertheless have seemed to her that the queen had neither loved him enough nor valued sufficiently his service. As she prepared the text for publication, she may also have had in mind the obstacles faced by Mornay himself as he petitioned the queen, at the beginning of 1592, for desperately needed reinforcements for the English troops at Rouen. The problem, in 1592, was one of perspective: Elizabeth, wishing to keep one man safe, had imperiled the lives of countless others and, at a critical moment in the French wars, nearly abandoned her closest allies (just as Cleopatra had abandoned her Antony at Actium).

When Mornay arrived in England, the issue was this: Elizabeth had sent four thousand soldiers to France the previous year under the command of her favorite, the Earl of Essex. Intended to support the king at the Siege of Rouen, these troops had fallen ill

and were languishing. According to Charlotte, whose account of this embassy is quite detailed, the English lords had all agreed that Mornay's request for reinforcements was reasonable, necessary, and indeed impossible to refuse. They recognized, moreover, that refusal of the request "would bring ruin on the King of France and imperil themselves."⁷⁸ Elizabeth, however, was not to be persuaded, and it took some time to determine the reason for this. Charlotte reports, however, that it soon became clear to her husband that:

no arguments could move the Queen from her determination that no more soldiers should go to France for she feared that their dispatch would furnish the Earl of Essex, Commander of the English troops, with an excuse for staying abroad. She, on the contrary, was trying, at any cost, to get him back, by bribes, by persuasion, by threats of disgrace, all because he was the person she loved best in the whole world and for whom she most dreaded danger. That was the true reason of her refusals and delays although she gave others...⁷⁹

True statesman that he was, Mornay eventually found a way to guarantee Essex's return to England in exchange for the badly needed troops. Charlotte remarks, however—registering, no doubt, the disappointment of Mornay's friends and allies as well—that the reinforcements "would have been of much greater use if they had been sent sooner."⁸⁰

In seeking his "remedy" for the problem, Mornay had consulted his friends at court—Mary or her husband, the Earl of Pembroke, may well have been among them. That Elizabeth had let her personal feelings for Essex interfere at a moment when the fate of the Huguenots and the future of France seemed to hang in the balance must have rankled. Mary's brother had given his life for the cause of international Protestantism,

and Elizabeth, more concerned for the well-being of her darling Essex than for the fate of her co-religionists abroad, seemed poised to abandon her most important allies. It seems correct, then, to read Sidney's *Antonius* as thinly-veiled criticism, in 1592, of the queen's foreign policy. As someone close to the cause of the Huguenots, Mary's decision to publish her translations may indeed reflect her frustration at a queen who, like Antony, had allowed her personal desires so dangerously to cloud her political judgement. But if I draw here a brief analogy between Elizabeth and the Roman general, most critics argue that the intended parallel is between the queen and her Egyptian counterpart, Cleopatra.⁸¹ Suzuki argues, for example, that, "Sidney alters Garnier's original to make the Cleopatra in her work more explicitly a figure for Elizabeth." She contends, furthermore that, "this representation is more critical of the still-reigning Elizabeth than later Jacobean representations (most notably Shakespeare's) because it indicates that her rule was marred by passion."⁸² Jane Pettegree concurs, more or less, with this reading, noting that, "in January 1592, Essex was recalled in a decision uncomfortably similar to Cleopatra's abandonment of Antony and flight at Actium."⁸³ Pettegree's reading suggests that Actium stands in for Rouen, and Antony for the Huguenots, an apt analogy although not—as I've suggested above—the only analogy made possible by Garnier's work.

My principal concern here is not, however, with Mary Sidney's *Antonius*, but with its companion piece, her translation of Mornay's *Discourse of Life and Death*. As critics have long asserted, the two pieces complement and comment upon each other. If *Antonius* offered only thinly-veiled criticism of Elizabeth's behaviour in January 1592, the *Discourse* prefaced that work with its own sobering reminder of the need to restrain

one's passions and proceed, instead, on the basis of reason. Mary could of course sympathize with Elizabeth's fears for her beloved Essex, but she knew also that the lives of four thousand English troops—and the siege of Rouen itself—had hung in the balance. As a neo-Stoic work written in response to the catastrophic slaughter of France's Protestants twenty years earlier, the *Discourse* had accrued, for English readers, considerable political meaning since its first publication. In 1592, it once again raised the specter of the Huguenots' "ruin"—and with it, a significant English defeat—by the forces of continental Catholicism.

This essay develops a reading of Philippe du Plessis Mornay's *Excellent discours de la vie et de la mort* as a direct, philosophical response to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day, 1572, in order to suggest what the work would have meant to Mary Sidney when she encountered it for the first time—what associations it would have had for her, then and later, as a result of her brother's friendship (and her own) with the Mornays.⁸⁴ As I have argued here, the work may have appealed to Catholic and Protestant readers alike, but it never fully escaped its association with the cause of the Huguenots in France, or with the events of 1572. By the time Mary Sidney published a new translation of the *Discours* in 1592, the work was well-known to readers in England. The earlier translation had been associated with another controversial moment in Elizabeth's reign—another moment, incidentally, when it seemed to Sidney and others that she had placed her own desires before the well-being of her (Protestant) subjects. Mary Sidney may very well have sought to improve upon the literary qualities of the earlier translation by Edward Aggas; and she certainly used the work to establish herself, in 1592, as the natural heir to her brother's literary reputation, his friendships, and his

politics. But her decision to publish the *Discourse of Life and Death* alongside a translation of Robert Garnier's tragic play, *Marc Antoine*, also situates her work as a timely piece of political commentary—one that offered both a powerful criticism of Elizabeth's recent behavior over Essex and a simple remedy for it.

I would like to thank Carolyn Sale, David Goldstein, and the anonymous readers of this essay for *EMSJ* for their valuable suggestions (and equally helpful criticisms) during the revision process. The work was much improved, I hope, by those conversations; any errors that persist are my own.

¹ Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, *A Discourse of Life and Death. Written in French by Ph. Mornay. ... done in English by the Countesse of Pembroke* (London, 1592), E2v-E3r.

² Recent work in this area includes Roger Kuin's essay, "Life, Death, and the Daughter of Time: Philip and Mary Sidney's Translations of Duplessis-Mornay," in *French Connections in the English Renaissance*, ed. Catherine Gimelli Martin and Hassan Melehy (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013); Richard Hillman's chapter on the 'Pembroke Circle' in *French Reflections in the Shakespearean Tragic: Three Case Studies* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012), which examines the precursors in French and English tragedy to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*; Jane Pettegree's chapter on "Alternative Cleopatras," which covers similar ground in *Foreign and Native on the English Stage, 1588-1611: Metaphor and National Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 15-69; Anne Lake Prescott's "Mary Sidney's French Sophocles: The Countess of Pembroke Reads Robert Garnier," in *Representing France and the French in Early Modern English Drama*, ed. Jean-Christophe Mayer (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 68-89, and her "Mary Sidney's 'Antonius' and the Ambiguities of French History" in *The Yearbook of English Studies* 38.1/2 (2008): 216-233. As this list suggests, Mary Sidney's translation of Garnier has received more attention, recently, than her work on Mornay.

³ See Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 135. Lamb makes this observation in discussing

Gordon Braden's analysis in his book, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

⁴ Seneca, "De l'Épistre XXVI," in Philippe Mornay, *Excellent discovrs de la vie et de la mort* ([Genève], 1576), 73-74. All translations of the Seneca and the paratextual materials in this volume are mine. For the purposes of this essay, I give, wherever possible, Mary Sidney's translation of the *Discovrs*.

⁵ Mornay's thought is closely modeled on the stoicism of Seneca, whose epistles are appended to the *Discovrs*. Seneca writes, for example "Or bien mourir n'est autre chose que volontiers mourir" [To die well is none other than to die willingly] ("De l'Épistre LXII," *Excellent Discovrs*, 80); and "Vn iour nous faut-il arriuer a ce doux port, & ne le faut iamais refuser" [One day we must arrive at that gentle port, and we must not refuse it] ("De l'Épistre LXXI," *Excellent Discovrs*, 81).

⁶ Pembroke, *Discourse*, E3r. See note 4, above.

⁷ Patricia Frances Cholakian notes that Charlotte's "is a unique first-person account of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres as they were lived by a Huguenot woman. It is also interesting to note that her sister memorialist Marguerite de Valois also recorded her memories of the terrible scenes she had witnessed in the Louvre on the fateful night of August 24, 1572." See Cholakian, "Madame de Mornay (Charlotte Arbaleste de la Borde), *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay* (1595-1605)," in *Writings by Pre-revolutionary French Women*, volume 2, ed. Anne R. Larsen and Colette H. Winn (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 227.

⁸ The fact that Mornay's *Excellent discovrs* was translated into English three times within a fifteen-year period suggests considerable demand for the work in England. There were four editions and one reissue of Mary's translation during her lifetime (*The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, Volume 1: Poems, Translations, and Correspondence*, ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 229n).

⁹ See for example, Kuin; also Diane Bornstein, "The Style of the Countess of Pembroke's Translation of Philippe de Mornay's *Discours de la vie et de la mort*," in *Silent But for the Word*, edited by Margaret P. Hannay (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985), 126-134; and the prefatory "Discourse: Fidelity to Originals," in Pembroke, *Collected Works*, 220-28.

¹⁰ See, for example, Kuin; also Margaret Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

¹¹ Charlotte d'Arbaleste Mornay, *A Huguenot Family in the XVI Century: The Memoirs of Philippe de Mornay Sieur du Plessis Marly, Written by His Wife*, trans. Lucy Crump (London: Routledge, n.d.), 169. Wherever possible, I quote from this English translation of the work.

¹² Mornay, *Excellent discovrs*, 3-6.

¹³ Pembroke, *Discourse*, D2r.

¹⁴ *Collected Works*, 217. Roger Kuin also calls the work "non-sectarian" and observes that its tenets "could be agreed upon by moralists of all stripes" (Kuin, 153); his remarks on death are on the same page. Similarly, accounting for Mary Sidney's decision to translate the work, Diane Bornstein observes that "the high rate of child mortality, the

statistical odds that a woman would die in childbirth, and the many foreign and civil wars of the period, meant that women had to be constantly prepared to face their own deaths or those of the people they loved" (Bornstein, 127).

¹⁵ Kuin, 153.

¹⁶ Ibid. Kuin does not link the treatise to their experience of the massacre.

¹⁷ *Huguenot Family*, 105.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 106-7.

²¹ Pembroke, *Discourse*, E2v.

²² *Huguenot Family*, 123.

²³ Ibid., 120. Of her husband's death, she writes: "M. de Feuqueres was wounded in the leg...by the kick of a horse, and a fever supervening he gave up his soul to God to the sorrow of all honest men, leaving behind him a happy memory."

²⁴ Ibid., 146.

²⁵ Ibid., 149.

²⁶ Ibid., 139.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 140.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 141, 156.

³¹ Ambert, 71 (all translations from this work are my own). It was an experience they had in common, and Ambert immediately turns to Charlotte's own account of her survival and escape from Paris, quoting extensively from her memoir in order to give his readers "a precise idea of the particular, one might say intimate, history of this great event" (Ambert, 83).

³² *Huguenot Family*, 139. Charlotte's memoir refers Mornay writing a work "On the lawful power of a Prince over his people" while in Jametz. This is almost certainly the *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* (or, in English, *A Defence of Liberty Against Tyrants*), one of the most important works of resistance theory from this period. It was published under the pseudonym Stephanus Junius Brutus in 1579.

³³ *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos: Or, Concerning the Legitimate Power of a Prince Over the People, and of the People Over a Prince*, ed. George Garnett (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 35, 67.

³⁴ Ibid., 61.

³⁵ Ibid., 63.

³⁶ Blair Worden, in *The Sound of Virtue: Philip Sidney's Arcadia and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), notes that "Mornay's narrow (and dramatic) escape from Paris was secured by Languet." He adds that "Mornay went [first] to England, where Walsingham arranged for his favourable reception" (Worden, 53). In her memoir, Charlotte describes in some detail Languet's efforts on Mornay's behalf (see *Huguenot Family*, 131-2). For evidence of Sidney's friendship with Languet, see *The Correspondence of Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet*, edited by William Aspenwall Bradley (Boston, Merrymount Press, 1912; rpt. Kessinger Publishing, n.d.).

³⁷ Ibid., 132.

³⁸ Ambert, 70. Although Ambert draws heavily on Charlotte's memoir, there are good reasons to question claims like this one, which are not substantiated by her narrative. Ambert's contemporaries criticized his work for its inaccuracies. Reviewers felt that he had "designed a sort of medium between history and romance," placing improbable and anachronistic speeches in the mouths of his "personages," for example, and sacrificing "strict historical truth" in order to achieve his desired effect (*Gentlemen's Magazine* vol. 184 (August 1848), 171).

³⁹ *Huguenot Family*, 102-3.

⁴⁰ Ambert, 71.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Mornay, *Excellent discovers*, 10.

⁴³ Pembroke, *Discourse*, A3v. The device of *amplificatio* originates in Mornay's tract.

⁴⁴ Bornstein, 127.

⁴⁵ *Mémoires*, 90.

⁴⁶ The word "demerites" (meaning that which deserves praise—or, conversely, blame) is taken from John Florio's preface to *The Essays of Montaigne* (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), xvi. For a detailed comparison of Mary Sidney's translation with that of Aggas, see Pembroke, *Collected Works*, Volume 1, 221-228.

⁴⁷ Mornay evidently was successful in this regard: Charlotte reports that "of the hundred thousand crowns which he begged of the Queen of England" during this visit, "she agreed to give eighty thousand" (*Huguenot Family*, 168).

⁴⁸ Aggas, Aij.

⁴⁹ See Margaret Hannay, "'Doo What Men May Sing': Mary Sidney and the Tradition of Admonitory Dedication," in *Silent But of the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works*. Edited by Margaret P. Hannay. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1985, 153; and *Philip's Phoenix*, 46.

⁵⁰ Lawrence Manley, "From Strange's Men to Pembroke's Men: 2 'Henry VI' and The First Part of the Contention," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54.3 (Autumn 2003), 274.

⁵¹ Manley, 274, quoting *Calendar of State papers, Spanish*, 2:693.

⁵² *Calendar of State papers, Spanish*, 2:694; quoted in Manley, 274.

⁵³ "The Countess of Derby to Sir Francis Walsingham" quoted in Manley, 274.

⁵⁴ Manley, 275.

⁵⁵ Hannay, "Admonitory Dedication," 153.

⁵⁶ *Huguenot Family*, 171.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 170-71.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 171.

⁵⁹ See Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 46.

⁶⁰ *Huguenot Family*, 176-77.

⁶¹ Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Sir Philip Sidney, Courtier Poet* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991), 162.

⁶² Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 46, quoting Sir Philip Sidney, "A Letter written... to Queen Elizabeth, touching her marriage with Monsier," in *Miscellaneous Prose*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones and Jan Van Dorsten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 47.

⁶³ Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 46.

⁶⁴ John Stubbs, *Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf Whereinto England is Like to be Swallowed by an other French mariage* (London, 1579), C4r. If Elizabeth's is "an other French mariage," even the title of Stubbs's tract raises the specter of an earlier French marriage—that of 1572.

⁶⁵ Bornstein, 127, citing Gary F. Waller, *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke: A Critical Study of Her Writings and Literary Milieu* (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1979), 19.

⁶⁶ Kuin, 158.

⁶⁷ As Kuin remarks, "One of the commonplaces of epistolary writing was the declaration that in reading the author's letter, the addressee seemed to see him in person, and to enjoy his company as if in an actual visit"; he goes on to observe that "even we can almost hear his voice when we read" the *Excellent discovers* (Kuin, 154).

⁶⁸ Cholakian points out that, "In Madame de Mornay's day, the title 'madame' was reserved for women of the highest rank—princesses and duchesses. Lesser gentry were addressed as 'mademoiselle,' and the word 'demoiselle' designated a woman's class rather than her married status" (Cholakian, 235, note 3).

⁶⁹ Mornay, *Excellent discovers*, 3 (my translation).

⁷⁰ Catherine Randall's discussion of Charlotte's role and self-fashioning is useful here. See "Shouting Down Abraham: How Sixteenth Century Huguenot Women Found Their Voice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50.2 (Summer 1997): 429-38.

⁷¹ Philip Sidney, *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*. Written by Sir Philip Sidney Knight. London, 1593, ¶3r.

⁷² See, for example, Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 60-62; Pettegree, 32-34.

⁷³ She dated it "The 13. of May 1590. At Wilton" (Pembroke, *Discourse*, E3r).

⁷⁴ Mihoko Suzuki, "Warning Elizabeth with Catherine de' Medici's Example: Anne Dowriche's *French Historie* and the Politics of Counsel," in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 180.

⁷⁵ Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 62.

⁷⁶ Patricia Pender argues that "we should not underestimate Mary Sidney's boldness in permitting the publication of two secular translations and an original pastoral dialogue under her own name, 'without apology for her subject or her gender, and without the conventional declaration that they were published without her knowledge or permission" (Patricia Pender, *Early Modern Women's Writing and the Rhetoric of Modesty* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 119; quoting Pembroke, *Collected Works* I: 24).

⁷⁷ Pembroke, *Discourse*, B2r.

⁷⁸ *Huguenot Family*, 271.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 271-2.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 272.

⁸¹ Pettegree 15-69 (but esp. 27-34) usefully reads Mary Sidney's Cleopatra against the backdrop of "recent events" (including the decision in early 1592 to recall Essex from France), but also in relation to other tragic representations of her that circulated during this period.

⁸² Suzuki, 187.

⁸³ Pettegree, 32.

⁸⁴ Hannay has made a fairly convincing case that Mary's "own connection with [Philippe] Mornay probably was more personal than we have realized" (Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix*, 61).