

*Jacques Cujas (1522–1590): Jurisconsulte Humaniste.* Xavier Prévost.

With Anne Rousselet-Pimont and Jean-Louis Thireau. *Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 541. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2015. xvi + 590 pp. \$122.76.

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Jacques Cujas, a renowned scholar of the sixteenth century (still famous for the street and hotel named after him in Paris near the Sorbonne), was born in Toulouse in 1522, where he studied ancient literature and the law and where he began his career teaching Roman law for seven years. Failing to get a permanent chair, he went in 1554 to the university in Cahors, where he stayed for less than a year before going to Valence. It was in Valence that he began publishing his learned works. The death of François Le Douaren in 1559 permitted him to return to Bourges, where faculty conflicts in 1566 led him to go to Turin, then in 1567 back to Valence, and then finally in 1575 back to Bourges and, briefly, to Paris. During the religious wars he also held the post of counselor to the Parlement of Grenoble, to the presidial of Bourges, to the Duke of Savoy, and to the Duke of Alençon; he also began to publish and republish his works on civil law.

Cujas gained his fame as a legal humanist of the French school (*mos gallicus*), as distinguished from the Italianate Bartolists (*mos italicus*), who continued to practice Scholastic jurisprudence. Following Petrarch, Valla, Bude, and Alciat, the legal humanists treated the texts of Roman law not as sources of legal authority but from a grammatical, or literary, and historical point of view, in effect introducing the idea of evolution into the accumulation of Western jurisprudence. He published editions of the primary sources of Roman law, including sources written before the collections of Justinian, and his works also reflect the sources of medieval jurisprudence. Down to the nineteenth century, Cujas was the subject of extensive scholarship; the present work is an attempt to restore Cujas to his place in the contemporary historical field. The author wants to “decipher” the writings of Cujas not only as legal erudition and methodology, but as “legal science.”

This book is a learned, technical, and very detailed commentary on the life and works of a very learned and technical commentator and practitioner. Over 100 pages are devoted to Cujas’s life, professorships, and editions, reeditions, and Italian translations of his works down to the nineteenth century, along with discussions of his extrauniversity positions, his two marriages, and his religion. Over 200 pages are devoted to Cujas’s “juridical humanism” and to his devotees and critics, and almost 150 pages are devoted to his practice and various surrounding legal issues. All of this is accompanied by extensive documentation and bibliography of printed and archival sources (including

sixteen titles of the reviewer) and four separate indexes. If any work can be described as definitive, this is surely worthy, especially as an erudite reference tool — though its audience is another question.

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