

*Aspiration, representation and memory. The Guise in Europe, 1506–1688.* Edited by Jessica Munns, Penny Richards and Jonathan Spangler. Pp. xv + 201 incl. frontispiece +9 colour plates. Farnham–Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015. £70. 978 1 4724 1934 7  
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*The Guise in Europe* is a collection of essays that span almost two centuries of the Guise's involvement in European politics from the elevation of Claude de Lorraine to the title of duke of Guise, to the death of his great-great-granddaughter, Marie, in 1688. It includes essays by historians, art historians and literary scholars and offers a breadth of different interpretations of the Guise's self-fashioning in art and literature as well as an analysis of the range of Guise activity during this tumultuous period. As the title suggests, the aspirations, representations and memory of the Guise, the editors argue, is as important as the reality of their mixed achievements. These range from the heroic, in the case of Claude de Lorraine, to the ridiculous, in the case of the Neapolitan adventures of Henri II, fifth duke of Guise, *via* the ignominious, with Henri I's involvement in the Holy Catholic League. As Stuart Carroll argued in *Martyrs and murderers*, the chequered reputation of the Guise can be explained in part by the breadth of their ambitions that spanned the whole of Europe and not just France. *The Guise in Europe* is a reminder of the dynasty's involvement in French, Spanish, but also Italian, imperial and Scottish politics, sometimes in the service of the kings of France, as the dukes always made sure to emphasise, or not. The collection opens with a discussion of the Guise's crusading credentials by Robert Sturges: the Guise claim to descend from Godefroy de Bouillon was an essential component of their self-fashioning and formed part of their family history and mythology throughout the period. The penultimate chapter, by Penny Richards, explores how this legacy was passed down to posterity and is still celebrated at their castle of Joinville, as well as how the double murder of the Guise brothers at Blois in 1588 is commemorated to this day. Marjorie Meiss-Even and David Taylor, discussing the Italian taste of the sixteenth-century dukes and Van Dyck's portrait of Henri II in their respective chapters, both explore the use of material culture by the Guise to broadcast a certain image of themselves when attending court, whether in France or in exile in the Netherlands. Indeed, as is made clear in the chapters by Michèle Benaiteau, Silvana D'Alessio and Charles Gregory, the reputation and appearance of Henri II, fifth duke of Guise, was key to his pursuit of the Guise's *rêve italien*, irrespective of his military and diplomatic shortcomings in his quest for the Neapolitan throne. The Guise's formidable women are also given their due in a chapter by Jonathan Spangler comparing the beleaguered mother of the said duke, with the regency of Marie de' Medici and Anne of Austria. Finally, the chapter by Jessica Munns includes a discussion of the portrayal of another Guise woman, Marie Stuart, as well as of other famous or infamous Guises in British drama from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Together with Penny Richards's chapter about memory, this final chapter offers a rare insight in the longevity and posterity of myths and legends that were either promulgated by the Guise or by their many enemies. The book is richly illustrated with a colour insert which features paintings, monuments and engravings that were either commissioned by the Guise or erected posthumously. In this respect it is a

shame that the collection does not include a discussion of *The triumph of the eucharist* enamel commissioned by Cardinal Charles de Lorraine that is now part of the Frick collection in New York. Other than Robert Sturges's discussion of Henri I's pursuit of a heavenly Jerusalem during the wars of religion, the religious reputation of the Guise is not particularly well represented in the collection. This is perhaps a deliberate decision on the part of the volume's editors who wanted to offer another facet of the Guise than the one that they are most commonly associated with, namely their alleged fanaticism, but is strange, given their legacy. The volume should be praised for its ambition and scope: to discuss the fortunes of one of Europe's most powerful and prestigious aristocratic families from the point of view of different disciplines over two centuries. *The Guise in Europe* is a valuable addition to the historiography surrounding the Guise and offers insights into their legacy that have been neglected until now.

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*La Ligue et ses frontières. Engagements catholiques à distance du radicalism à la fin des Guerres de religion.* Edited by Sylvie Daubresse and Bertrand Haan. (Histoire.)

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In 1589 the Protestant Henri of Navarre – the future Henri IV – acceded to the throne of France, causing a profound political and religious crisis for Catholics in the kingdom. Contemporaries and many later historians have tended to cast this crisis as a struggle between *politiques* – who remained loyal to the monarchy and its new king ahead of religious concerns – and supporters of the Catholic League – who privileged religious considerations over others by asserting that only a Catholic could rule France. While one can find figures who fit comfortably into these two camps, this simple dichotomy between *politiques* and Leaguers masks a far more complex situation where Catholics, for a variety of reasons, maintained alternative positions. The interactions of Catholics with the League were shaped by religious concerns, but also by personal considerations, local and corporate loyalties and the shifting political and religious landscape in France – especially Henri IV's abjuration of the Protestant faith and the assassination of the Guise brothers and Henri III. The twelve essays in this volume examine, through case studies, the complex factors at play in Catholic society, offering a nuanced exploration of the spectrum of responses to the League. The three contributions in part I, 'Des Divisions omniprésentes des frontières mouvantes', highlight in turn the variety of positions taken by members of the clergy, the *parlement* of Paris and the nobility, many of whom shifted between sides or maintained their neutrality as they reacted to an evolving situation. The importance of local circumstances and corporate interests in shaping the interaction of groups with the League is examined in part II, 'La Primauté des solidarités locales, communitaires and corporatives', through case studies of peasant communities in Normandy and Brittany, the Cour des Monnaies in Paris and Leaguers in the Auvergne. Part III, 'À la Distance de la Ligue', explores ways in which groups distanced themselves from the League, with one essay focusing on clergy who opposed the movement,