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**Peyronel Rambaldi, Susanna. Giulia Gonzaga: A Gentlewoman
in the Italian Reformation. Trans. Richard Bates**

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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raconter ses obsèques en France et à Rome, tout en passant sous silence les excès supposés du cardinal de Lorraine à Venise que détaille, de son côté, l'*Histoire ecclésiastique*. La Popelinière fait preuve de retenue dans l'émotion entourant les tragédies individuelles et choisit de les observer dans le cours de l'Histoire collective. Cette approche fonde l'originalité de sa démarche.

Comme pour les trois tomes précédents, les éditeurs scientifiques ont suivi l'édition de 1581 avec fidélité, qui balise, pour le lecteur non-spécialiste, l'identification des sources de La Popelinière. Les nombreuses notes critiques éclairent ainsi le contexte du récit, que vient compléter un index nominum indispensable (297–314). Malgré la présence de quelques rares coquilles (inévitables dans ce type d'entreprise éditoriale), le tome IV de *L'Histoire de France* constitue un apport important pour les études historiques de la première modernité.

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Peyronel Rambaldi, Susanna.

***Giulia Gonzaga: A Gentlewoman in the Italian Reformation.* Trans. Richard Bates.**

Viella History, Art and Humanities Collection 11. Rome: Viella, 2021. Pp. 300. ISBN 978-88-3313-763-6 (hardcover) €49.

Giulia Gonzaga: A Gentlewoman in the Italian Reformation is the anglicized title of Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi's study, which was first published in Italian as *Una gentildonna irrequieta. Giulia Gonzaga fra reti familiari e relazioni eterodosse* (2012). This new title, however, fails to capture the complex and dynamic spirit of the original, as well as that of the world that Peyronel Rambaldi seeks to recreate in her monograph. At the heart of her work is an "aim [...] not just to present the biography of a distinguished lady" but "to try to bring to light an ambience" (12). This ambience was one characterized by the political vicissitudes of the Italian Wars, as well as the burgeoning, vibrant, and increasingly dangerous religious landscape of the Italian peninsula in the sixteenth century. Via a thorough analysis of Giulia Gonzaga's extensive correspondence,

Peyronel Rambaldi reconstructs Giulia's aristocratic networks and those of the wider Gonzaga family, highlighting the ways in which Giulia strove to safeguard the family's influence and independence while remaining loyal to the Holy Roman Empire. In so doing, Peyronel Rambaldi argues that Giulia viewed her aristocratic station "as a bulwark behind which she might discover a religious experience that was not only individual, but that would be part of a genuine 'spiritual' movement" (11). Ultimately, however, this "bulwark" and the religious sentiments that were cultivated behind it were not strong enough to withstand the changes solidified by Philip II and the intensifying Inquisition of the 1560s.

Throughout the entire work, Peyronel Rambaldi deftly weaves together questions of a political and religious nature, providing the reader with a deep sense of the complexities and intricacies of sixteenth-century aristocratic life. Yet, it is fair to say that the first two chapters of the book weigh more heavily on political issues, with the latter three delving more deeply into the religious circles with which Giulia was connected. Her first chapter, for instance, casts a wide net, acquainting us with the broader Gonzaga family. Of particular interest is her focus on the younger Gonzaga sons, such as Giulia's brother, Cagnino, and her grandmother, "the 'matriarch,' Antonia del Balzo" (21–25). With regard to the former, Peyronel Rambaldi recounts an instance in which Cagnino—upset over the fact that the "imperial captain Ippolito da Correggio" had soldiers quartered on Gonzaga territory—wrote a letter to Milan underscoring the family's "noble, antique blood," by virtue of which they were "free and unburdened to obey none but the emperor" (20–21). In her discussion of Antonia del Balzo, Peyronel Rambaldi paints the picture of a determined woman (who would serve as a model for Giulia), skilled and committed to arranging profitable marriages by which the family, ideally, could extend and protect its territory and power. Through both of these cases, Peyronel Rambaldi illustrates the foundation of the aristocratic influence that Giulia would continue to try to cultivate, and which she saw as her protection throughout the Reformation.

It is in chapters 2 and 3, however, where we are given an in-depth view of the vibrant figure of Giulia Gonzaga, herself, and the complicated world in which she lived. We are able to see our protagonist, first, as the wife of Vespasiano Colonna and then as his widow. Here is the woman, praised for her beauty, who, "though only briefly [...] was [...] at the centre of a small literary court" (61). At the same time, we see a woman working to manage the family

territory in Fondi and Traetto, to arrange a marriage between her step-daughter, Isabella, and her brother, Rodomonte, and—when that marriage ended—to navigate an increasingly bitter relationship and legal fight between herself and Isabella. All of this, moreover, was happening amid the backdrop of the Italian Wars. As Peyronel Rambaldi herself remarks, the world that Giulia knew “was crumbling dramatically [...] but also feeding hopes of renewed greatness for the house of Gonzaga” (76).

It is with this liminal statement that Peyronel Rambaldi introduces the figure of Juan de Valdés who served as Giulia’s “*solicitador*” (76, 79) amid her disputes with Isabella. Moreover, for the monograph, Valdés serves as the linchpin between the book’s first two chapters and its last three, which—while still deeply engaged with political and familial issues—shift in their emphasis towards Giulia’s time, “ruling from the convent” (the title of chapter 4) and towards the religious controversies and “curiosity” (109–17) that characterized Giulia’s life, particularly beginning in the late 1530s. Through Giulia’s correspondence and networks, Peyronel Rambaldi invites the reader into what she describes as the “extraordinary religious and cultural openness of those early decades,” during which Giulia spread Valdés’s teachings within a “network of relations and protections” and served as a “reference point” for a wide variety of others drawn to the religious debates of the day (116–17). This openness, however, did not last. Also central to this portion of the book is the increasingly dangerous atmosphere of sixteenth-century Italy, for which “social privilege was no protection” (130). Nevertheless, even as the walls began to close in on Giulia and her closest confidante and religious companion, Pietro Carnesecchi, Peyronel Rambaldi stresses that Giulia, wrongly, “was still convinced [...] that these religious persecutions had political causes [...] and [...] could therefore be solved politically” (184). The final chapter of the book, in approach, mirrors the first, exploring not Giulia *per se* but rather a broader circle of friends and relations, namely Isabella Bresegna and Lucrezia Gonzaga. Through their own stories and circles, Peyronel Rambaldi sheds further light on these elite women’s involvement in the heterodox networks of the day.

Ultimately, Peyronel Rambaldi has written a rich study that masterfully reconstructs the world of sixteenth-century Italy and the social, political, and religious role played by one of its great female protagonists. Moreover, in a field where much European scholarship is available only to those with the requisite language skills, this translation is a welcome addition, not just for the specialists,

towards whom the original study was clearly aimed, but for advanced students alike.

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Rouget, François.

Ronsard et la fabrique des Poèmes.

Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 166. Geneva: Droz, 2020. Pp. 362. ISBN 978-2-600-06059-2 (paperback) 45 CHF.

This volume is one of a series of monographs that François Rouget has written on Pierre de Ronsard—and joins his many important works on the study and editing of the French poet. Rouget's *Ronsard et la fabrique des Poèmes* appears in a distinguished series of Librairie Droz, known for its publication of scholarly and critical editions and texts. Rouget adds significantly to the substantial books on Ronsard by Benedikte Andersson, Elizabeth Armstrong, Pierre Champion, Fernand Desonay, Danièle Duport, Doranne Fenoaltea, Philip Ford, André Gendre, Alex Gordon, Paul Laumonier, Bruce Leslie, Daniel Ménager, Pierre de Nolhac, Christine Pigné, Olivier Pot, Anne-Pascale Pouey-Mounou, Albert Py, Malcolm Quainton, Marcel Raymond, Margaret de Schweinitz, Isidore Silver, Michel Simonin, Dudley Wilson, and others, all of whom and more Rouget considers while making his own distinct contribution. Rouget is in good company in the past century of Ronsard scholars, and builds on this scholarship effectively. This recent book is a study worthy of the close attention of scholars—not simply of Ronsard but of Renaissance poetry, French poetry, comparative literature, Renaissance studies, humanism, culture, and the history of the book.

Rouget opens his book by stating that the reputation of this poetry was not always good: “Les *Poèmes*, que Pierre de Ronsard rassemble dans le tome III de la première [édition] collective de ses *Œuvres* (1560), n’ont pas toujours eu bonne presse” (9). According to Rouget, some of the first readers had been dazzled, blinded, stunned (“éblouis”) by, among other things, the abundance or profusion (“foisonnement”) of these poems, their thematic diversity, and an