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0521620171 - Henry IV and the Towns: The Pursuit of Legitimacy in French Urban Society, 1589-1610

S. Annette Finley-Croswhite

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Henry IV and the Towns

The Pursuit of Legitimacy in French Urban Society, 1589–1610

This book is the first serious study of Henry IV's relationship with the towns of France, and offers an in-depth analysis of a crucial aspect of his craft of kingship. Set in the context of the later Wars of Religion, it examines Henry's achievement in re forging an alliance with the towns by comparing his relationship with Catholic League, royalist and Protestant towns.

Annette Finley-Croswhite focuses on the symbiosis of three key issues: legitimacy, clientage, and absolutism. Henry's pursuit of political legitimacy and his success at winning the support of his urban subjects is traced over the course of his reign. Clientage is examined to show how Henry used patron–client relations to win over the towns and promote acceptance of his rule. By restoring legitimacy to the monarchy, Henry not only ended the religious wars but also strengthened the authority of the crown and laid the foundations of absolutism.

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For John R. Rilling and
in memory of
J. Russell Major

Primi studiorum duces et primae faces

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