



PRIX  
**FRANÇOIS GUIZOT**  
INSTITUT DE FRANCE



Prix François Guizot-Institut de France 2024

**Award ceremony**

Monday 9th December 2024, 6:00 PM, Grande Salle des Séances

## Speech of Stéphane Coste

### President of the François Guizot Association

Mr. Chancellor,

Mr. Perpetual Secretary, Mr. Chairman of the Jury,

Ladies and Gentlemen members of the jury of the François Guizot-Institut de France Prize

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends, Dear Laureat,

This sixth edition of the François Guizot-Institut de France Prize marks a key moment for the members of our association and the descendants of François Guizot.

It takes place during a particularly eventful year, 2024, which commemorates the 150th anniversary of François Guizot's passing. Throughout the year, various ceremonies have honored Guizot's legacy:

- A reflection on diplomacy held at the Quai d'Orsay.
- Discussions on memory, history, and politics during the Congress of the Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, an institution founded by Guizot.
- A celebration of his commitment to education at Val Richer, his Norman residence.
- A tribute to his role in French Protestantism at the Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français.

These festivities will culminate tomorrow at 3 PM under the Dome of the Institut de France with an exceptional ceremony, for which we extend our heartfelt thanks to the Institut.

We express our deep gratitude to Mr. Xavier Darcos, Chancellor of the Institut, for his hospitality, as well as to the jury members, particularly their president, Éric Roussel, for their dedication and

meticulous work. Thanks to them, we have the honor of celebrating Maryvonne de Saint Pulgent, recipient of the prize, for her remarkable work *La Gloire de Notre-Dame: La foi et le pouvoir*, a work of striking relevance today.

### **Congratulations to our laureate!**

Dear laureate, we warmly congratulate you on your distinction as the sixth recipient of the François Guizot-Institut de France Prize. Your book offers a fascinating portrait of Notre-Dame, revealing the symbolic power of this iconic site throughout History with a capital *H*.

It is crucial to emphasize that the restoration of historical monuments remains a complex and risky challenge. Beyond Notre-Dame, we also think of Reims Cathedral, damaged by a fire in July 2024, though fortunately its spire was preserved.

François Guizot, while neither the first nor the last to take an interest in Notre-Dame since the 12th century, played a pivotal role in heritage protection under the July Monarchy. As Chateaubriand, cited in your work, stated: “Guizot’s France is above all hungry for history.” In this spirit, Guizot initiated several major actions to build a national consciousness through:

- The expansion of primary education,
- The creation of organizations such as:
  - The Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques,
  - The Société de l’Histoire de France,
  - The Historical Monuments Inspectorate.

It was under his impetus that the restoration of Notre-Dame began, embedding this masterpiece in a sustainable heritage initiative.

### **The Legacy of François Guizot**

Beyond the Guizot-Institut de France Prize, our association undertakes numerous efforts to promote the vast intellectual and cultural legacy of François Guizot.

- The website [www.guizot.com](http://www.guizot.com), regularly updated, has become an essential reference on Guizot’s life and work.
- Since January 2020, thousands of letters exchanged between François Guizot and Princess Dorothee de Lieven, as well as other correspondents, have been made available online under the direction of Marie Dupond. These documents provide invaluable insights into European diplomatic and political relations during the first half of the 19th century.

Our mission remains unchanged: to make Guizot’s works accessible to the widest possible audience—family, researchers, and the general public.