

Guizot and Europe

*Introduction delivered on Thursday, March 14, 2024 at the Quai d'Orsay, as part of the commemorations of the 150th anniversary of the death of François Guizot*

*by Stéphane Coste,*

*President of the François Guizot association.*

Madam Secretary General,

Mr Director of Archives,

Mr Yves Bruley,

Dear members of the François Guizot Association,

Dear descendants of François Guizot,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great honor that I make this speech today as President of the Association François Guizot.

It's a return for us, since in 2004, in the presence of Michel Barnier, we inaugurated the installation of a portrait of François Guizot in the Salon des Congrès on the first floor. It was Guizot who launched the construction of this building in 1844.

Twenty years on, we are commemorating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of this exceptional man's death with a series of prestigious themed events throughout the year.

These celebrations offer an opportunity to explore Guizot's fascinating life and manifold contributions, while assessing the legacy he left to modern France. By exploring the different facets of his career, from his historical writings to his political commitment, it is possible to better understand the profound impact of this man on his time and beyond.

Born under Louis XVI, died under Mac Mahon, François Guizot (1787-1874) left his mark on the political, intellectual and spiritual life of France for over sixty years.

His political career is closely linked to the July Monarchy, where he held key positions, notably that of Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1840 to 1847, marking his significant and innovative impact on the diplomatic scene of the time, and in particular on relations between France and Great Britain.

He favored compromise peace in Europe over the glory of France and the risk of war that would follow.

We are most grateful to the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, and in particular its Archives Department represented by Nicolas Chibaeff and Laurent Torres, for their invaluable help in making this event a success. We would also like to thank Yves Bruley for his talk on "Guizot and Europe", which follows. It is highly topical in view of the challenges facing Europe.

Thank you for your attention.

Stéphane Coste