overlooked an opportunity to incorporate existing scholarship beyond the recent studies of these murals that would have lent textual support to an argument based largely on visual evidence.

Despite these shortcomings, however, Jackson’s engaging prose and well illustrated interpretative analysis of these convento mural programmes will undoubtedly appeal to Latin-American historians and art historians, as well as to religious specialists and those interested in indigenous history. The excellent colour illustrations also make this a useful teaching tool in the classroom, and will enhance any course on the Mendicant Church in Colonial Mexico. Unfortunately, readers will probably be distracted by the surprising number of copy-editing errors blighting the text, captions, and footnotes.

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Jules Racine St-Jacques’ doctoral thesis on the origins and elaboration of French Protestant political thought in the years between the first edition of Calvin’s Institutes (1536) and the publication of the French translation of the Vindiciae contra tyrannos (1581) is here presented as an ‘essay’ (pp. 16, 192) in three parts, based around a core of eighteen ‘justificatory texts’ (p. 19). Its primary objective is to trace the evolution of Huguenot ‘discursive strategies’ (p. 111) through three periods, each corresponding to an elaboration of a different type of strategy. The first period (part 1: 1536–59) is dominated by the position adopted by Calvin. The second (part 2: 1559–68) concentrates on that of the French upper nobility. The third (part 3: 1564–81) examines the more theoretical propositions of the so-called ‘Monarchomachs’. In examining the evolution between each part, Racine St-Jacques is concerned to balance the ‘externalist’ (reflexive, pragmatic responses to circumstances and events) and ‘internalist’ (deductions and conclusions derived from propositions—theological, juristic and scholastic—already arrived at) elements at work. His analysis is carefully nuanced at each stage, generally underlining, in relation to the texts in his corpus, the conclusions which other scholars in the field have arrived at. So, in the first part, he examines the various breaches which Calvin allows in the rampart of Paulinian obedience to the powers that be, which, when interpreted by the contemporary readers of this ‘master of chiaroscuro’ (p. 60), turned into ‘ambiguous thought’ (p. 58). The arguments developed by the upper French nobility are different, subsumed into a more politically articulated case in the 1560s. That case was aimed principally against the ‘foreigners’ (the House of Lorraine; Italians) who had supplanted the traditional nobility’s place as the natural advisors of a young king, who had thereby become unnaturally turned against them. Concerned to defend the Crown and the role of the Estates General in the appointment of members of the council of state during a period of extended royal tutelage, only after 1572 did their arguments turn into a direct critique of the king himself (p. 178). This was the complex inheritance upon which the more theorised ‘Monarchomach’ thought was constructed, although the author regards the various treatises in that canon as sufficiently distinctive one from another not to justify that term, preferring instead to call it (obscurely) a ‘théorie alter-monarchiste de la résistance’ (p. 197).
In sum, this is a study which brings no truly new sources into play in discussing problems which have already been amply discussed in a historiography which the author scrupulously annotates. It does not reflect on the polemical forces and strategies at work in the production of the various pièces de circonstances which constitute its source-material, nor on the international context which (especially in the Netherlands) would turn out to be crucial. The author brings out, however, the latent radicalism of French Protestant political thinking in the 1560s, eventually crystallised by the events of the St Bartholomew massacre of 1572.

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David Scott Gehring’s book is the first complete study we have of the relations between Queen Elizabeth I and the princes of the Holy Roman Empire. That alone makes it noteworthy; what makes it important is its impressive range, depth and texture as a study of the history of confessional diplomacy. Gehring’s thesis is that the components of Elizabeth’s government—queen, councillors, ambassadors and experts—were fully and consistently in sympathy with the Protestant powers of ‘Germania’ and Denmark. They saw in the princes natural allies in their anti-Catholicism. But if there was clear common interest, there was also considerable difficulty. The long-hoped-for confederation or league of a military alliance between England and the German powers was never realised because the diplomatic picture over decades was much too complicated. Hesitation, ambition, energetic diplomacy, money, domestic policy, dynasty, confessional confusions, the contexts of religious civil war in France and Spanish power in the Low Countries, accident and happenstance—all of these pushed and pulled at what would have been, in ideal circumstances, a powerful and purposeful alliance. What Gehring shows in his book, in close and fine detail, is the patterning of all this in the years between 1558 and 1592. We finish it with a sense of the importance of Anglo-German relations; this is a necessary counterbalance to the more usual emphasis in the scholarly literature on Elizabeth’s policies towards Spain, France and the Low Countries.

Gehring presents us with some striking themes and episodes. We find, in the mission of Johannes Spithovius to Elizabeth’s court in 1559, hopes for a settlement of religion shaped by Lutheran interests. Gehring has a keen eye for the importance of Spithovius, who, once a pupil of Philip Melanchthon at Wittenberg and a teacher in Copenhagen, was one of Princess Elizabeth’s tutors between 1549 and 1554. We can assume that it was thanks to Spithovius that the queen was able to tell an ambassador from Württemberg in 1564 that, though she did not speak German, she understood the language well. We have a strong sense from the book of the personnel involved in Anglo-German diplomacy. Naturally, there was the queen, Lord Burghley, the Earl of Leicester and Sir Francis Walsingham: Elizabeth remains rather a mystery, Burghley broadly conservative in his approach, Leicester and Walsingham more strident and interventionist—this is the usual story. But, for Gehring, German policy was