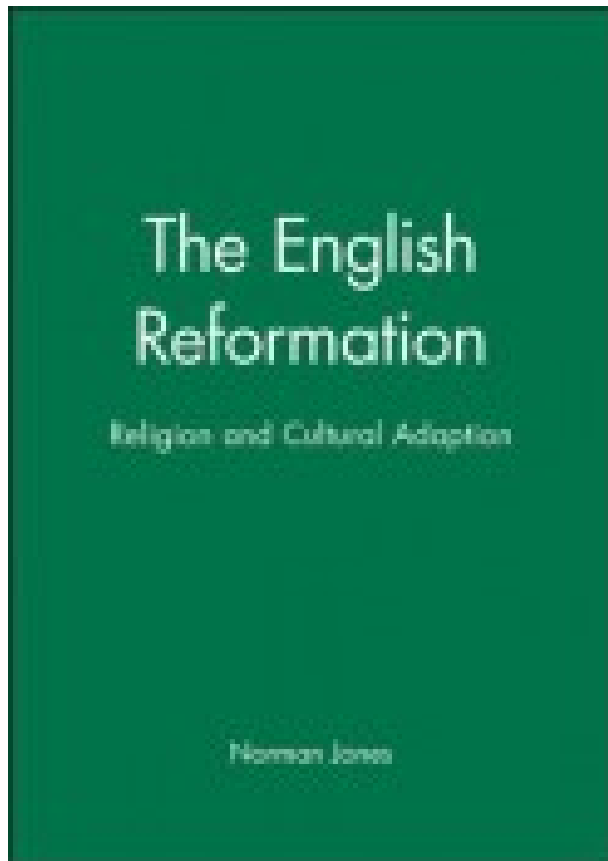


The English Reformation



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Recent debate over the English Reformation has turned around how Catholic the nation was before the Reformation. Most scholars now believe that there was little popular support for the change in religion imposed by Henry VIII. And yet, by the end of Elizabeth's reign England was clearly Protestant.

It had abandoned much of its late Medieval culture and replaced it with a new formulation. The book explores how the English, over three generations, adapted to the religious changes and, in the process, radically reconstructed their culture. Using personal histories, the author explores how individuals and the institutions in which they lived and worked, such as families, universities, towns, guilds, and Inns of Court, refashioned themselves in the face of the rapid social, ideological, political and economic changes brought about by the Reformation. Tracing these responses across three generations, the author emphasizes the way generational interaction and self interest interrelated to adapt to new circumstances, creating, by the late sixteenth century, a multi-theological culture that exalted nationalism and valued the individual conscience.

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