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1517, and all that: dating the beginning of the Reformation in Early Modern Britain and France

Prologue: When did the English Reformation happen? A historiographical curiosity and its interpretative consequences

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Texte intégral

2 In 1991 Diarmaid MacCulloch famously argued that the English Reformation happened – in the face of a persistent myth which denied it.[1] That much is perhaps now widely accepted. Quite what it was that happened naturally remains a subject of contention: too much so for a short essay such as this to make any attempt on it. Our subject here is, or ought to be, altogether more manageable.

3 Which dates we choose to assign to the English Reformation – which was not an event, but is a historians' imagined composite – is on one level a trivial or pedantic matter, but it has its own small degree of significance. For as decisions of framing when composing a photograph, decisions of periodisation in history do a great deal to determine what the eventual picture will be, by deciding what does and does not count as part of the story. Indeed, the main drama of English Reformation studies over recent decades has in part been one of periodisation. The English Reformation as A. G. Dickens presented it in the 1960s and thereafter was essentially over in 1559, tidied up so that the Elizabethan age could begin.[2] During the 1980s it became clear that this was untenable. One half of Christopher Haigh's famous formulation – fast Reformation or slow? – required that the timeframe be extended,[3] and Patrick Collinson located *The Birthpangs of Protestant England* as an essentially Elizabethan event.[4] And once you have pushed back to 1603, why stop there? The notion of a consistent 'Jacobethan' religious culture made any terminal point before 1625 look tricky, and in the 1990s, as the notion of a 'Long Reformation' became increasingly voguish, 1640 began to seem like the only, or at least the earliest possible end point. This was the working definition I adopted in my own 2013 book.[5] A 1998 volume stretched the 'Long Reformation' even

further, to 1800,[6] although that has not found many takers: on those grounds we would soon, like Zhou Enlai, be worrying that it is too soon to declare the Reformation over. But if that looks like grandiose imperial overreach, it is now common enough to fold the Civil War and Republic era into the long Reformation, a welcome assault on the conventional 1640 barrier. Since the Continental Reformation is often enough seen as stretching to 1648, and since we have learned to see the English Civil War as the last of the wars of religion, this approach seems entirely sensible. And once you have gone all the way to 1660 or 1662, it is an easy thing to venture a stride further to 1688-9 before admitting that you really are stepping into a new world.

4 If the question of when the English Reformation ended is settling down – or has at least been confined to the seventeenth century – the question of when it began, however, is much more problematic. The German Reformation has, since 1617, had a mythical start date, commemorating a mythical event (the very likely apocryphal story of the nailing of the 95 Theses) – but it is at least a widely agreed date, on which scholars may surface and grouch about how we cannot say that 'the Reformation began' that October day.[7] Depending on taste, a case could be made for beginning the story instead with the Leipzig Disputation in 1519 (which would be my own choice); the Diet of Worms in 1521; the *Protestatio* of 1529, or the presentation of the Augsburg Confession in 1530, which Georg Spalatin called 'the most significant act which has ever taken place on earth'.[8] Which is to say, those who after 2017 feel they have not had their fill of German Reformation quincentaries may console themselves with the thought of plenty more to come.

5 But which quincentenaries of the English Reformation will we, and which should we mark? The answer depends on what you think the English Reformation was. Here are some of the possibilities.

6 There was once a fashion for beginning narrative histories of the English Reformation during the fifteenth century, or even, for those who wanted to write the 'premature Reformation' of Lollardy into the main story, the late fourteenth.[9] Since English political historiography traditionally treats 1485 as a turning-point, and since the English Reformation is so often thought of as an act of state, it seems only natural to reach back to that point for the beginning of both religious and political 'modernity'. This history of the Tudor dynasty may not be exactly coterminous with that of the English Reformation, but they are close enough to be folded together.[10] Excellent narrative histories of the English Reformation still reach back before anyone in England had ever heard the name Martin Luther, but they generally now do so explicitly as prelude, not as part of the main story.[11] For a Reformation story which begins in the 1480s is destined to be a very particular kind of story: a tale of corruption and deep anticlerical forces, in which the arrival of Luther's heresies only accelerated or gave shape to a set of changes which were already under way. That is not an inherently implausible narrative, but it is one which has been left almost without defenders by a generation of research into the late medieval English Church. In the historians' autopsy of that Church, we have now pretty much ruled out slow wasting diseases as a cause of death. The patient, indeed, seems to have been in tolerably cheerful health, a few chronic aches and pains aside, right up to the point where it was first infected with a novel and virulent strain of heresy and then, very shortly afterwards, abruptly beheaded.[12]

7 The first plausible point we might want to mark as an anniversary, then – at least, if we are Protestant romantics, or if we still think that a Reformation 'from below' was at least an element of the story – is **1525**.[13] The immediate hook on which to hang this anniversary is the first attempted printing of William Tyndale's New Testament, a genuinely epoch-making event in the history both of English religion and of English literature, which also marked the emergence of a highly significant and still contested figure onto the English scene. Nor does Tyndale stand alone, for this is the first year we begin to see signs that the Lutheran infection to which a few English people had been exposed could actually take hold. It is the year of the puzzling case of Roger Hachman, the Oxfordshire man accused of heresy for stating that 'I will never look to be saved for no good deed that ever I did' but only by merely asking God's mercy: how Hachman came by such Lutheran-sounding ideas is a mystery, but a portentous one. [14] Much

more significantly, it is also the year of the first set-piece public confrontation of the English Reformation, one to which – helpfully for anniversary-hunters – we can assign the precise date which is so frustratingly obscure in Tyndale's case. Robert Barnes' Cambridge sermon on Christmas Eve of that year, which drew on Luther's postils, led to his arrest, dramatic escape and flight to Germany, and thus directly to his friendship with Luther himself. And, like Luther and the Wittenberg door, this is marked by a persistent and ill-founded myth: 'Little Germany', the tale that an embryonic gathering of English proto-Protestants formed at the White Horse tavern in Cambridge. The earliest attestation of this tale comes from John Foxe in 1563, a rather longer gap between event and testimony than in the case of Luther, the hammer and the nails, and Foxe's idealised account does not even make much pretence at verisimilitude.[15] It is in part a Cambridge myth, as that university tried to lay claim to being Ground Zero of the English Reformation: despite the fact that Oxford actually boasts the first evangelical martyrs, in the salt-fish cellar of Cardinal College in 1528. Only now is it becoming clear that Cambridge's Reformation was vigorously contested until the end of the century and beyond.[16]

8 Still, had the events of the English Reformation unfolded differently – if it had been a Reformation from below, a story of mercers and friars, scholars and sermons – 1525 would be its start date. Such an English Reformation would, of course, likely have been a modest and short-lived affair. England was one of Europe's most centralised states, with a well-developed heresy-hunting apparatus (albeit one without the sweeping legal powers of a formal Inquisition), a king who had very deliberately struck a pose of aggressive orthodoxy, and a brilliant and energetic Lord Chancellor who believed one of his most urgent duties was to use all the legal and polemical resources at his disposal to stamp out heresy. Victory in this battle would not have been immediate, but we can hardly doubt that it would have come, and that the evanescent English Reformation would have gone the way of, for example, its Italian counterpart: a might-have-been whose faint candle was kept burning only by a few exiles never able to return.

9 A 1525 start date, then, is mythical in another sense: for this is to celebrate an idealised English Reformation which did not and probably never could have happened. At best, this was England's pre-Reformation – as if the starting-gun of the German Reformation were to be sounded with the Reuchlin affair or with Luther's lectures on the Psalms. And it would of course be wholly a historical construct. I know of no evidence that anyone in 1525 believed that it was a turning-point, nor indeed that anyone identified it as such while the year was still within reach of living memory.

10 It is a valiant attempt to escape the conventional narrative of Tudor high politics, but while the notion of the English Reformation as wholly an act of state can be overdone, there is no avoiding the fact that it was a politically driven event. So one might pick out the beginning of Henry VIII's 'Great Matter' in 1527, not least because threats to emulate Germany's schismatic example were being made very early on, but again this seems too heavy with hindsight. For the first two years of the crisis, the smart money would have bet that Cardinal Wolsey would have found some way of resolving it to at least the minimal satisfaction of all concerned. A more plausible start date, then, would be **1529**, with Wolsey's first fall, the assembly of the 'Reformation' Parliament and the beginning of Thomas Cromwell's ascendancy.[17] It may not have felt transformative at the time, but it marked an unmistakable hardening of positions, and a venture into genuinely new legal territory. The fact that Bishop Fisher and two of his colleagues decided to appeal to the Pope to annul the new parliament's legislation showed that they felt a line had been crossed: this was more than merely a reheat of the jurisdictional clashes of the 1510s that had been frozen during Wolsey's long supremacy.

11 Three other arguments favour a 1529 start date. First, and perhaps most significantly, it was recognised as such by contemporaries. One of the few points when it became necessary to date the Reformation's beginning was the beginning of Mary I's reign, when she set out to unwind what had been done: and 1529, or the 'twentieth year of ... King Henry VIII', was the Year Zero to which she and Cardinal Pole decided to return, in order to find an orthodox bedrock on which they could build their renewed Catholic England.[18] Second, the centrality of Parliament to this narrative gives due prominence

to the particular legal form which the act of state we call the English Reformation would take. The novel doctrine of the supremacy of statute law was the engine with which Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell drove their Reformation forward, and has underpinned English public life ever since; and it was precisely that novel doctrine which, as Fisher plainly saw, was at stake in the new Parliament's power-grab from Convocation. Third, this procedural development was matched by an ideological one. Richard Rex has argued persuasively that at some point during the winter of 1529-30 – and perhaps sooner rather than later – Henry VIII experienced what amounted to a religious conversion.[19] Not to Protestantism, which he would never embrace, but to supremacism: a genuine, heartfelt and costly conviction that God had appointed him head (under Christ, in an easily-forgotten qualification) of the Church in England, and that it was his duty to shoulder that responsibility and slough off the usurped claims of the Bishop of Rome.

12 To take *that* conversion as the real starting-point of the English Reformation might seem to question whether we can call it a 'Reformation' at all. For Henry VIII was no Protestant. Yet he was crucially enabled by Protestants, who provided him with vital diplomatic cover and political supporters as well as with many of the building-blocks he used to construct his own ideology. 1529 would have the salutary effect of forcing us to recognise how pervasive the gravitational pull of Henry VIII's supremacism has been on post-Reformation English Christianity: such that even when the English Church wriggled free of Henry's doctrinal peculiarities to become straightforwardly Protestant, the constant of state power over it was unchallenged. Under Elizabeth I this produced a Calvinist church with bishops, and filled with ceremonial survivals simply on the queen's whim. It produced a liturgical and homiletic tradition with a great deal to say about obedience and the evils of rebellion, but a ringing silence about tyranny. Even when royal power was extinguished after the Civil War, it ensured that the new parliamentary establishment would block any attempt to set up a genuinely independent Presbyterian church. And although a series of voices from William Sancroft through John Wesley and John Keble to Hensley Henson have challenged it, the generally willing subordination of the Church of England to the state has remained one of the English Reformation's most persistent legacies.

13 If 1529 nevertheless still seems too lacking in eye-catching events to constitute a real starting-gun, an obvious alternative, much beloved of historians, is **1534** and the Act of Supremacy: the point at which, in legal terms, the English Church became a distinct entity called 'the Church of England'.[20] It is slightly awkward that the Act Extinguishing the Authority of the Bishop of Rome was not passed until 1536, but in truth this did no more than brick up a doorway which had already been locked, barred and bolted. The more serious problem with 1534, as indeed with 1529, was long thought to be that these are lawyers' answers, and that these were turning points that passed a great many English people by. It is now becoming clear that the advent of the Royal Supremacy did actually reach out into the lives of Henry's subjects more than we once imagined. It is not just a matter of changes to taxation. A serious attempt really was made to administer the succession oath to the entire adult male population, an event with enduring political significance.[21] The piecemeal changes to the liturgy, as ill-directed bishops began to grope their way towards a new pattern of worship with only studiedly vague guidance from the regime, would have been vividly apparent to a population well attuned to such niceties.[22] And the paucity of martyrs for the papacy should not necessarily lead us to assume that the general population regarded their Church's decapitation as a mere administrative rearrangement. The restoration of papal authority was very much on the agenda of the rebels of 1536.[23]

14 Yet if impact on the general population is our yardstick, it may indeed be **1536** when it became unmistakably clear that something new was afoot in England.[24] The first Henrician injunctions were significant in themselves, as was the family of rebellions usually bracketed together as the Pilgrimage of Grace, which together marked the most serious rising in England between the Wars of the Roses and the great Civil War. But the genuinely epoch-making event was the one which ties the injunctions and the rebellion together: the beginning of the dissolution of the monasteries. The dissolution has a peculiar place in the recent historiography of the English Reformation: hiding in

plain sight, its importance universally acknowledged, yet a subject on which historians persistently feel we have little fresh to say. The stale debate about premeditation versus accidental stumbling seems mercifully to have died away, but we have yet to have a new wave of serious studies of its impact. What is at least clear is that in the English folk memory, it was this event more than any other which marked the defining rupture of the Reformation for generations to come: deep into the next century, ordinary English people were distinguishing between 'abbey time' and their own era, and lamenting the looting of resources that had once, or so it seemed, belonged to local communities.[25]

15 A fair case could also be made for **1547**, the point at which the process of religious change in England became unequivocally aligned with the Protestant Reformation.[26] To frame that as the beginning of the Reformation would be partisan, but at least, two different sets of partisans would agree on it. (Not including those Anglicans who might want to root their identity above all in the Book of Common Prayer, and who would undoubtedly choose to mark the stopgap book of **1549** rather than its far more influential replacement in 1552.) Protestant rigorists and a certain strain of nationalist religious traditionalists both converged on the view that Henry VIII's Reformation should not be seen as a forerunner of the unambiguously Protestant Reformations that followed. For evangelicals who had found their alliance with Henry VIII becoming increasingly unholy, the ability finally to promulgate their doctrines unhindered was an immense relief, and a sharp line was to be drawn between their young Josiah and the inconsistent, unpredictable and murderous Hezekiah who had sired him. At the time, legal and political expediency meant that the point was rarely emphasised, but it began to be made with increasing frequency as the old tyrant receded into history – not least because so many Catholic polemicists were ready to tar the English Reformation with Henry's reputation. John Foxe was apparently genuinely uncertain as to whether Henry was now in Heaven or Hell.[27]

16 More immediately, large numbers of religious conservatives who had swallowed, or embraced, Henry's Reformation also felt that a sharp line could be drawn, and that the boy king's regents had taken them in a wholly new direction. Bishop Stephen Gardiner was the most articulate proponent of this view; the Cornish rebels of 1549, who called for the clock to be put back to 1547, not 1529 or 1534, were the most forceful. For them, the touchstone of Henry VIII's essential orthodoxy was the 1539 Act of Six Articles, one of those laws which acquired a significance entirely detached from its original purpose and only tenuously linked to its contents. The Act's original assertion, as part of a diplomatic negotiation with the Schmalkaldic League, that England would not budge on certain issues had morphed into a generalised symbol of orthodoxy – most likely because of the stipulation that the law be read aloud from every pulpit in England each quarter. It was the Six Articles, not the papacy, which many Edwardian conservatives wanted to restore. I've argued elsewhere that a broad swathe of centrist English and Scottish Christians in the 1540s and 1550s pined for something like Henry VIII's Reformation and saw 1547 as a dramatically unwelcome departure.[28]

17 In reality, however, this is a might-have-been. If Edward VI had lived, if England had consequently turned into a more or less conventionally Reformed Protestant kingdom shorn of proto-Anglican baggage, and if English Catholicism had continued on the path to helpless oblivion on which Edward's Reformation had set it – then 1547 really would look like the first year of the rest of England's life. Likewise, we can even more easily imagine the counterfactual in which the Marian restoration of 1553 came to be remembered as the point when the English Reformation was over bar the burning. But since the lottery of royal births and deaths in fact threw up a different result, we are forced to contemplate the possibility that the English Reformation really began in the year it was conventionally said to have ended: 1558, or more plausibly **1559**.[29]

18 Since this requires relegating the upheavals of the preceding thirty years to the status of mere prelude, it seems inherently implausible, especially since so much of the Elizabethan 'settlement' consisted of deliberately reviving and then freezing a particular moment within that prelude (1552, spiced with elements of 1548). Yet there are three grounds on which the case could be made.

19 First, liturgical. As I will argue at more length in a forthcoming essay, the myth that the English Reformation did not happen was nowhere more deeply rooted than in the

English Reformation's most enduring text, the Book of Common Prayer. The liturgies drawn up in 1549, 1552 and 1559 sedulously avoided any commemoration of the events of the Reformation, even as their calendars were filled with other historical events of various vintages. While their later iterations began to mark events such as the Spanish Armada, the Gunpowder Plot and the execution of Charles I, the Reformation itself – the Church's founding trauma – apparently remained an infancy that was beyond recollection. During Elizabeth's reign, however, a series of occasional liturgies did mark her own accession as a key turning point: indeed, one that from the late 1570s onwards was marked by an annual service celebrating her accession, which gave thanks that 'vpon this day' God 'diddest deliuer thy people of England from daunger of warre and oppression', opening an era of 'peace and true religion' that had endured ever since.[30] Other occasional services underlined the point: the prayers following the London earthquake of 1580 recalled England's deliverance from 'the sharpe tryall which God made of vs in the raign of Queene *Marie*' and gave thanks that since then 'we haue had a golden world'. The national thanksgiving ordered in 1586 following the Babington Plot celebrated how 'God hath continually blessed this Noble Realme of England, since the time that it hath pleased him by the hand of her Maiestie to haue the sincere trueth of the Gospel of our Sauiour planted among vs'.[31] The political purpose behind these and other, similar declarations is perhaps too transparent to be taken seriously, but this much at least does seem to be true: English worshippers during the long reign of Elizabeth who paid attention to what their liturgies told them would have learned that the *real* beginning of their Reformation was their queen's accession. Of course, this was a lesson which ceased being promulgated on her death: not least because after the third year of the new king's reign, it was crowded out by a new event which proved utterly and even maddeningly memorable.

20 If the liturgical case for 1558-9 was shortlived, the legal case was and is more enduring. For if the Church of England as an independent institution in some ways tracks back to 1534, its continuous history (the hiccup of 1642-62 aside) dates from 1559. Elizabeth's Church may have been haunted by the ghosts of its Henrician and Edwardian predecessors, but it was also built entirely anew on freshly scorched earth. As a matter of institutional history, the earlier Reformations look both like distinct events and like false starts: this was when the story really began.

21 If the Elizabethan Church's manifest debt to its predecessors is too weighty for that argument to fly – we now know, for example, that the first printed edition of the Elizabethan Prayer Book was actually assembled from print stock surviving from Edward's reign, as vivid a symbol of continuity as one could wish[32] – we might reach the same result by changing what is meant by 'Reformation'. After all, while the political struggles are eye-catching, Protestant reformers were as clear as their Catholic counterparts that real reformation was something else. It would happen in the parishes, as an evangelical preaching ministry bedded down, as a people frozen in superstition and idolatry were slowly warmed by the sunlight of the Gospel. Changing laws and liturgies was only ever a means to the end of changing lives. The significance of the work of Collinson and his successors has been in making us attend to this slow, unspectacular work, by which England insensibly became a Protestant nation, and by which its reformers could contemplate the always-impossible task of making it into a nation of Protestants. Collinson could be no more precise as to when the balance tipped than sometime in the 1570s, and even that is hardly incontestable.[33]But if that process is the English Reformation, and the rest simply the preceding skirmishes, then by far the most plausible start date is 1559.

22 Perhaps redefining the Reformation in this way seems too outrageously like special pleading. But if this dating game has had a point, that is perhaps it. Not simply that periodisation is fundamentally arbitrary, and so you pays your money and takes your choice: but that the choices we make both reflect and determine how we understand the event we are describing. If you want a spiritual Reformation in which the elusive prospect of a godly Protestant England was opened up, you will choose 1525; an act of state, 1529 or 1534; a popular upheaval, perhaps 1536; a slow transformation of a nation's character, 1559. If you have other agendas in mind, I have certainly not

exhausted all the possibilities. And if you are already weary of Reformation quincentenaries, brace yourself: this story will run and run.

Notes

1 Diarmaid MacCulloch, "The Myth of the English Reformation", *Journal of British Studies* 30.1,1991, p. 1-19.

2 A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, London, English Universities Press, 1964.

3 Christopher Haigh (ed.), *The English Reformation Revised*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 19-33.

4 Patrick Collinson, *The Birthpangs of Protestant England: Religious and Cultural Change in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1988.

5 Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

6 Nicholas Tyacke (ed), *England's Long Reformation 1500-1800*, London, Routeledge, 1998.

7 Peter Marshall, *1517: Martin Luther and the Invention of the Reformation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017.

8 Robert Kolb, "Luther, Augsburg, and the Concept of Authority in the Late Reformation: Ursinus vs. the Lutherans", in *Controversy and Conciliation: The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559-1583*, Derk Visser (ed.), Allison Park, PA, Pickwick Publications, 1986, p. 36.

9 Anne Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988. This perspective's canonical text remains the oddly misnamed James Gairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation*, 4 vols, London, Macmillan, 1908.

10 As, for example, in my *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms, 1485-1603*, Harlow, Pearson Longman, 2009, and 2nd edition London, Routledge, 2017.

11 See especially the outstanding recent contribution in this vein in Peter Marshall, *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2017.

12 As such, narrative histories tend either to treat the medieval period as a timeless prelude which was rudely interrupted by historical events (a tendency seen in Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1992), or to treat the Reformation as a violent *deus ex machina* which does not require much of a prelude at all.

13 A few historians have bitten at this hook. Ethan Shagan's influential *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002 does not avow a starting date, but the doctoral thesis on which it is based did: Ethan Shagan, "Popular politics and the English Reformation, c. 1525-1553", Princeton University PhD. thesis, 2000. The late John Fines' partly-published and much-consulted biographical dictionary of English reformers used it: John Fines, *A Biographical Register of Early English Protestants and Others Opposed to the Roman Catholic Church 1525-58*, part I, Abdingdon, Sutton Courtenay Press, 1985 (part II: unpublished). See also Alison Wall, *Power and Protest in England 1525-1640*, London, Arnold, 2000. It is more commonly found in theologically-led treatments for which Tyndale's appearance is an obvious start date: for example Carl R. Trueman, *Luther's Legacy: Salvation and English Reformers, 1525-1556*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994.

14 John Foxe, *Actes and monuments of matters most speciall in the church,* London, 1583, p. 984.

15 John Foxe, *Actes and monuments of these latter and perillous* dayes, London, 1563, p. 601.

16 Ceri Law, *Contested Reformations in the University of Cambridge*, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, forthcoming 2018.

17 Naturally, this date has been particularly appealing to political and constitutional historians, for whom it regularly marks an epoch: in addition to G. R. Elton's conviction that Cromwell was the central figure of early modern English history, see for example Mark Nicholls, *A History of the Modern British Isles 1529-1603*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1999; Alan G. R. Smith, *The Emergence of a Nation State: the Commonwealth of England, 1529-1660,* London, Longman, 1984; Lawrence Stone, *The Causes of the English Revolution 1529-1642*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972; and, from the other end, Richard Britnell, *The closing of the Middle Ages? England, 1471-1529*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1997. But avowed historians of religion have used it too: for example Susan Doran and Christopher Durston, eds., *Princes, Pastors, and People: the Church and Religion in England, 1529-1689*, London, Routledge, 1991.

18 Second Statute of Repeal, 1655 (1 & 2 Philip & Mary, c. 8).

19 Richard Rex, "The Religion of Henry VIII", *Historical Journal*, 57.1, 2014, p. 1-32.

20 Intriguingly, the date is particularly heavily used by historians of the 'British problem' or of relations between the various nations of Britain and Ireland. See for example James Murray, *Enforcing the English Reformation in Ireland: Clerical Resistance and Political Conflict in the*

Diocese of Dublin, 1534-1590, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009; Clare Kellar, *Scotland, England and the Reformation 1534-1561*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003; Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, eds., *The British Problem c. 1534-1707: State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 1996; J. Gwynfor Jones, *Wales and the Tudor State: Government, Religious Change and the Social Order, 1534-1603*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1989.

21 Jonathan Michael Gray, *Oaths and the English Reformation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013.

22 Aude de Mézerac-Zanetti, "Reforming the liturgy under Henry VIII: the instructions of John Clerk, bishop of Bath and Wells", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 64.1, Jan 2013, p. 99-111 and "L'évolution de la liturgie en Angleterre sous le règne d'Henri VIII (1534-1547)", 3 vols., PhD thesis, Paris 3/Durham University, 2011.

23 Michael Bush, *The Pilgrims' Complaint: A Study of Popular Thought in the Early Tudor North*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2009, p. 251, 254.

24 Although the date's significance is widely recognised, it has rarely actually been used for periodisation. The only significant example of which I am aware is Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Tudor Prelates and Politics, 1536-1558,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1953.

25 Andy Wood, *The Memory of the People: Custom and Popular Senses of the Past in Early Modern England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 67-71, 89-91.

26 The date is used to mark an epoch in this sense in, for example, Stephen A. Chavura, *Tudor Protestant Political Thought, 1547-1603*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2011; Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547 – c.1700*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007; John Craig, "Psalms, groans and dogwhippers: the soundscape of worship in the English parish church, 1547-1642", in *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 104-23; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 1990 and 2nd edition 2001.

27 Alec Ryrie, "The slow death of a tyrant: learning to live without Henry VIII, 1547-63", in, *Henry VIII and his Afterlives: Literature, Politics and Art,* eds. Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John N. King, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 75-93.

28 Alec Ryrie, "Paths not taken in the British Reformations", *Historical Journal*, 52.1, 2009, p. 1-22.

29 1558, 1559 and 1560 are very widely used for periodisation, but rarely explicitly to the periodisation of the Reformation as such: Laura Sangha, 'Revelation and Reckoning: Angels and the Apocalypse in Reformation England, c. 1559-1625' in *The Church, the Afterlife and the Fate of the Soul*, Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon eds., Studies in Church History 45, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2009, p. 248-257, is one exception. This periodisation is at least implicit, however, in the convergence of two substantial historiographical trends: the shift in early modern English religious history away from the Henrician and mid-Tudor period to the Elizabethan and early Stuart, and the new consensus on a long Reformation. As such the very numerous texts on early modern English religion which take 1558-60 as their start point are, in effect, presenting the preceding decades as a kind of prelude to the Reformation proper.

30 *A fourme of praier with thankes giuing, to be used every yeere, the 17 of Nouember, being the day of the Queenes Maiesties entrie to her reigne* London, 1578, (STC 16479.5), sig B1r.

31 Natalie Mears, Alasdair Raffe, Stephen Taylor and Philip Williamson, with Lucy Bates, eds., *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation. Vol. I: Special Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings in the British Isles, 1533-1688*, Church of England Record Society vol. 20, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2013, p. 149, 167-168.

32 Cyndia Clegg, "The 1559 Books of Common Prayer and the Elizabethan Reformation", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 67.1, 2016, p. 94-121.

33 Patrick Collinson, *Birthpangs of Protestant England*: *Religious and Cultural Change in the 16th century*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1988, p. ix.

Pour citer cet article

Référence électronique
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