



The origins of the Scottish Reformation (Politics Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain MUP)

Alec Ryrie

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The Scottish Reformation of 1560 is one of the most controversial events in Scottish history, and a turning point in the history of Britain and Europe. Yet its origins remain mysterious, buried under competing Catholic and Protestant versions of the story. Drawing on fresh research and recent scholarship, this book provides the first full narrative of the question.

Focusing on the period 1525-60, in particular the childhood of Mary, Queen of Scots, it argues that the Scottish Reformation was neither inevitable nor predictable. A range of different 'Reformations' were on offer in the sixteenth century, which could have taken Scotland and Britain in dramatically different directions. This is not a 'religious' or a 'political' narrative, but a synthesis of the two, paying particular attention to the international context of the Reformation, and focusing on the impact of violence - from state persecution, through terrorist activism, to open warfare.

Going beyond the heroic certainties of John Knox, this book recaptures the lived experience of the early Reformation: a bewildering, dangerous and exhilarating period in which Scottish (and British) identity was remade.

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