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978-0-521-17265-3 - Religion and the Early Modern State

Edited by James D. Tracy and Marguerite Ragnow

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Religion and the Early Modern State

Views from China, Russia, and the West

How did state power impinge on the religion of the common people? This perennial issue has been sharpened as historians uncover the process of confessionalization or acculturation, by which state and church officials collaborated in ambitious programs of Protestant or Catholic reform, intended to change the religious consciousness and the behavior of ordinary men and women. For England, in particular, the debate continues as to whether a reformation in this broad sense, up and down the social ladder, was in the end able to prevail over the stubborn resilience of ancient habits and beliefs. In the belief that specialists in one area of the globe can learn from the questions posed by colleagues working in the same period in other regions, this volume sets the topic in a wider framework. Thirteen essays, grouped in themes affording parallel views of England and Europe, Tsarist Russia, and Ming China, show a spectrum of possibilities for what early modern governments tried to achieve by regulating religious life and for how religious communities evolved in new directions, either in keeping with or in spite of official injunctions.

James D. Tracy teaches in the history department of the University of Minnesota. He is the author of *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War* (Cambridge, 2002) and *Europe's Reformations, 1450–1650*. He is the editor of *City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective* (Cambridge, 2000), *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and Global Trade, 1350–1750* (Cambridge, 1991), and of the *Journal of Early Modern History*.

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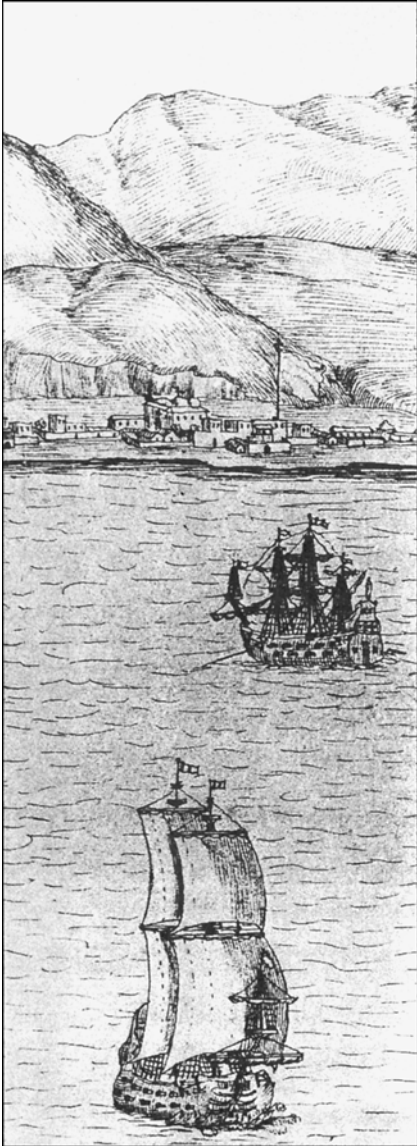
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JAMES D. TRACY

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Center for Early Modern History,

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In honor of
STANFORD E. LEHMBERG
on the occasion of his retirement
from the University of Minnesota

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Stanford Lehmborg, at the lych-gate of St. Clement's Episcopal Church, St. Paul, MN, where he was organist and choir director for many years. Photo by Mike Long.

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Preface

STANFORD E. LEHMBERG, HISTORIAN

ALTHOUGH officially a student of Christopher Morris at Cambridge, Stan Lehmborg was really the first Ph.D. of the dean of Tudor historians in the second half of the twentieth century, Sir Geoffrey Elton, if indeed it is not closer to the mark to speak of the two as fellow laborers at that early stage in both their careers. Like Elton, Lehmborg made his mark on Tudor history by importing the methods pioneered by medievalists in the study of English history, replacing the heavy reliance on printed sources characteristic of earlier generations of historians of the sixteenth century, including Elton's teacher Sir John Neale, with the gospel of original documents and their careful exploitation. In part, Lehmborg's and Elton's careers ran parallel in their emphasis on political and administrative history, but in an equally large part they diverged in two significant ways: the importance of ideas and of religion. While Elton was never entirely comfortable in – or persuaded of the centrality of – either domain, not even in the case of his hero Thomas Cromwell, Lehmborg made them both very much his own.

This process began with Lehmborg's first book on Sir Thomas Elyot, best known for his *Book named the governor*, which Lehmborg edited at the same time for Everyman. In the early sixties, it was daring to work on Elyot, in part because Pearl Hogrefe had already laid claim to him, in part because intellectual history was fading fast. And it has always been dangerous for historians to venture into biography. None of this deterred Lehmborg, no more than it did when he later added a major study of the Elizabethan minister Sir Walter Mildmay. In tandem with these works, Lehmborg published a series of articles on early Tudor humanism, especially its relation to nascent Henrician state religion. A similar concern with the exercise of authority, especially over religion, came through in a pair of ground-breaking articles, one on the use of parliamentary attainder in Henry VIII's reign and another on the exercise

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of the royal supremacy through the king's vicegerent, his chief minister Cromwell.

Lehmberg's most important work, like these early biographies and articles, comes in pairs. First, at Elton's urging, were two volumes on the Henrician parliaments from 1529 to Henry's death, excluding the earliest ones for which insufficient evidence survives. (One of Lehmberg's Ph.D. students would nonetheless complete a thesis on this topic, especially Cardinal Wolsey's role.) *The Reformation Parliament, 1529–1536* (1970) adopted a novel approach to this well-known turning point in English history by treating all of the parliament's work, not just the cataclysmic legislation ushering in the break with Rome, and all of the parliament, that is, including the House of Lords, which in the past usually had been ignored completely, as well as the southern convocation of the clergy, which met in conjunction with parliament. Eschewing the statistical analysis of parliamentary behavior then in vogue, Lehmberg chose a basically narrative approach, supplemented with analysis of the membership. A second volume, *The Later Parliaments of Henry VIII, 1536–1547* (1977), completed the legislative history of this turbulent reign. Both books adhered fairly closely to the now under pressure Eltonian line that the 1530s saw a revolution in English history, engineered by Cromwell. Perhaps more important, if almost subconsciously, the volumes on parliament demonstrated how a medieval occasion for taking counsel, the literal meaning of parliament, gradually became an institution with a self-conscious identity founded in procedure, helping to explain Elizabeth I's epic struggles with her parliaments as well as the English Civil War.

These books have a permanent place in the study of Tudor history as they have already helped to reorient the study of parliament as demonstrated in the work of Jennifer Loach, Michael Graves or Norman Jones, and David Dean. Perhaps nearer to Stan's heart and likely to be even more enduring, is his second duo, two studies of the English cathedrals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: *The Reformation of Cathedrals: Cathedrals in English Society, 1485–1603* (1988) and *Cathedrals under Siege: Cathedrals in English Society, 1600–1700* (1996). Here again, Lehmberg extended the medievalists' work into a period about which very little had been known, linking the well-studied medieval cathedrals to the magisterial work of Norman Sykes and other works on the eighteenth-century English church. Following much the same approach as in the books on parliament, Lehmberg tried to get at how these great churches worked. He assembled a massive prosopography of all cathedral clergy, ransacking the archives of every cathedral in England in the process. Focusing once more on institutional change, including a

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fascinating investigation of cathedral finance, Lehmborg yet made room for a good deal of attention to perhaps his first love, cathedral music and musicians, as well as writing by the clergy. His abiding passion for his adopted church comes through in both, perhaps especially in the lavish illustrations, many of which he provided. Finally, in both volumes, Lehmborg pioneered for professional historians the now very important study of funeral monuments. The conclusion of the second volume is tinged with melancholy in the judgment that the cathedrals had lost a great deal of ground by the year 1700.

His is an imposing if somewhat elegiac corpus of work. It may yet be that Stan had his most important impact as a teacher of both undergraduate and graduate students. A gripping lecturer who always had time for questions and made himself easily approachable, he achieved great renown on the first score. His lunches with particularly favored students are legendary. He fostered many an incipient interest in Tudor England into nearly his own intense involvement with it. The collapse of the job market for Ph.D.s, which coincided almost exactly with Lehmborg's move to Minnesota, limited his success in maintaining the university's proud tradition of international leadership in his field, stretching back to Wallace Notestein at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Stan managed to attract good students and make them better. He treated them all with the same affection he showed for his undergrads and, perhaps most important, allowed them sufficient latitude to make their own mistakes on the way to finishing their degrees (and after!). This is a rare quality among teachers of graduate students and another mark of Stan's stature as a historian, secure in his own work and the knowledge that he has contributed a great deal to the study of state and religion in early modern England.

Thomas Mayer
Augustana College, 2002

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