While some eighteenth-century Britons may have believed they were living through a Reformation without end, Robert G. Ingram, in his book *Reformation without End*, contends that the Reformation did end, but perhaps later than most scholars have held. Ingram claims that most of the eighteenth century belongs more to the Reformation era than to the “modern” age, and this period was the final chapter to the religious turbulence begun in the sixteenth century and a product of the political chaos of the seventeenth century. He demonstrates this by analyzing the lives and writings of four polemic divines: Daniel Waterland (1683–1740), Conyers Middleton (1683–1750), Zachary Grey (1688–1766), and William Warburton (1698–1779).

Ingram synthesizes the continuity and change arguments made about this period. The eighteenth century was neither the secularized new state emerging from the revolution of 1688–89, nor the Anglican/state union that went unchallenged until 1832. Rather, eighteenth-century intellectuals grappled with doctrinal and historical issues that had their roots in the sixteenth century, yet they also reacted to the violent revolutions of the seventeenth century. Ingram’s polemic divines embodied both continuity and newness. He not only relies on these men’s published polemics as sources, but he also anatomizes their unpublished sermons and marginalia notes so that the reader can understand how and why they wrote.

The four polemicists were contemporaries, and Ingram devotes a separate section to each, beginning with Waterland, a Cambridge professor, who held the orthodox line in combatting eighteenth-century Deism. According to Waterland, Deism merely aped Epicureanism and promoted social disorder by leading people away from a belief in eternal rewards and punishments. Ingram admits that there were probably better writers who opposed Deism. He also admits that the movement probably died out because of its own deficiencies rather than because of persuasive polemical arguments, but he shows that Waterland harkened back to Reformation-era attacks on heresy and places the debate within the aftermath of the seventeenth-century political crises.

Ingram not only presents orthodox writers but also focuses on the heterodox cleric Middleton, demonstrating that even those who disagreed with orthodoxy nevertheless employed a similar approach. Middleton used Reformation-style devices to oppose Waterland. Ingram disputes scholars who have held that the eighteenth century saw a new mode of argumentation that did not appeal to the past. His analysis of Middleton reveals that these divines were just as interested in primitive Christianity as were sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers. Middleton may have argued against miracles, but not in the way Enlightenment thinkers did. Even in his supposed heterodoxy, Middleton was relying on long-standing traditions. While some orthodox Protestant thinkers supported his views, others were wary due to his skepticism of episcopacy. Ingram also argues that any straying from orthodoxy could harm a polemicist’s career within the church, and he explains how Middleton suffered professionally for his views.

Ingram has little esteem for Grey’s scholarship or literary abilities but presents his life and works because of his capabilities in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history. Grey maintained that history was essential to understanding truth and that even though the past might never be completely understood it is nonetheless useful in the quest for truth. He looked to the primitive church to decry the errors of Catholicism, but Ingram states that Grey mostly relied on his understanding of the previous two centuries and the troubles therein to explain why the Church of England was the correct form of Christianity. While Grey’s argumentative abilities were weak and many did not engage with him, he is useful in...
highlighting the polemicists’ appeal to the past and the seventeenth-century revolutions, which bolsters Ingram’s thesis.

Warburton (1698–1779) comes off as a transitional figure. Ingram claims that Warburton looked to the upheaval of the previous century, but in an idiosyncratic way, which may have shown the new thinking of the latter part of the century. Here the seventeenth-century philosophers influenced contemporary arguments. According to Ingram, Warburton was a Lockean, who believed that religion was necessary to keep society from reverting to a state of nature. He used Newtonian thinking to support orthodoxy as well. Ingram also argues that Warburton linked the rising Methodism to older forms of heresy rather than seeing it as a new modern movement threatening the orthodox order.

By presenting these divines, Ingram illuminates not only how their doctrinal debates were similar to those of Reformation thinkers but also how the revolutions of the seventeenth century influenced their polemical discourse. He uses unpublished sources to flesh out his argument and give context and a better understanding of the published polemics. His argument that most of the eighteenth century is a late chapter of the Reformation is intriguing and gives students and scholars of the Reformation a new framework for analyzing this religious movement. By using these four men as a lens to understand the religious and political world of eighteenth-century Britain, Ingram offers an innovative approach to the subject; however, at times he gets lost in their lives and squabbles, and his thesis occasionally gets obscured. It might have been better to approach the idea in a broader context with examples drawn from throughout the century, but overall *Reformation without End* is a great addition to the field.

Ingram concludes that the Reformation finally did end—rather abruptly—in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Ingram argues that this was due to the chronological distance from the seventeenth-century troubles and a diminishing fear of religious violence reoccurring. Then, too, the emergence of new, more pressing issues arising from Britain’s empire and what Ingram claims was the Reformation’s intellectual failure also hastened its end. Ingram’s conclusion raises interesting and provocative questions and opens up new avenues for other scholars to explore further, especially extending to a trans-Atlantic context. The book should appeal to scholars of early modern England, religious historians, and political historians as well.

Stephen S. Francis
Weber State University
sfrancis@weber.edu


doi: 10.1017/jbr.2019.149

The image of the late medieval English church has been convincingly redrawn not because researchers have broken new ground but because they have reached across, and sometimes removed, long-standing boundaries. The resilience of pre-Reformation religion has been revealed as based on cooperation and collaboration between monastic and secular clergy. Its inventive and widely popular devotional discourse has been identified in the crosscurrent between Latin and vernacular. A powerful communality, and at times a palpable agency in the face of institutional change, has emerged from the record of the transactions of elite and popular constituencies in a shared civic or parochial center or even within a monastic liberty.