



Jacobean Grand Tour, The: Early Stuart Travellers in Europe

Edward Chaney, Timothy Wilks

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Although the eighteenth century is traditionally seen as the age of the Grand Tour, it was in fact the continental travel of Jacobean noblemen which really constituted the beginning of this institutionalized phenomenon. As soon as James VI of Scotland united his crown with England's as James I, he signed a peace treaty with Spain which rendered travel to Catholic Europe both safer and more respectable than it had been since before the excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570. The first post-Reformation ambassador, Sir Henry Wotton, was established in Venice and immediately began hosting his compatriots en route to Rome and beyond.

This book examines the political and cultural significance of the encounters that resulted, focusing in particular on the tours of the scions of two of England's greatest, and newly united, families: the Cecils and the Howards. In doing so, it also examines the various ways in which Protestants and Catholics experienced the aesthetic and intellectual stimulus of continental travel and how their cultural experiences formed the essential ingredients in what became the Grand Tour.

The cultural, political and specifically religious experiences of these adventurers had an effect on British history that is impossible to overestimate, with the influence most strongly evident in the art, architecture and furniture styles of the Jacobean period. Edward Chaney and Timothy Wilks here provide a fascinating narrative of the travels of the Jacobean noblemen in search of continental adventure.



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