Tudors: the history of England from Henry VIII to Elizabeth I, Peter Ackroyd (book review)

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The second book of Ackroyd's projected six-volume history of England dives headfirst into its subject matter—with Henry VIII's ascension to the throne. Ackroyd (London: The Biography) covered the roots and earlier years of the Tudor dynasty, including Henry VII's reign, in his previous volume, Foundation. Readers wanting the author's views on the Tudors as a whole should take note. He interweaves his narrative of the Tudor monarchs here with a detailed exploration of the religious reformations and upheavals of the era, sparked by Henry VIII's break with the Roman church and destined to have tremendous and long-lasting effects on English history and culture at all levels.

VERDICT A weightier and more focused read than Leanda de Lisle's study, below, this work should be of particular interest to those seeking an in-depth look at the religious changes of the Tudor period and the complex and often violent ways in which religious upheaval intertwined with politics.—Kathleen McCallister, Univ. of South Carolina Libs., Columbia

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