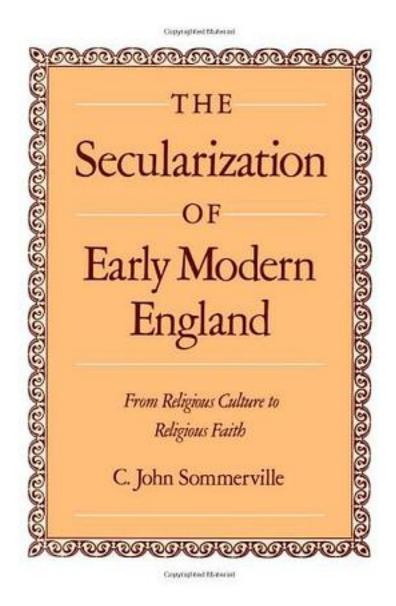
The Secularization of Early Modern England



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著者:Sommerville, C.John

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In this provocative work, Sommerville examines the onset of secularization in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England, exploring how and why various aspects of life - art, language, work, play, technology, and power - became divorced from religious values. The work helps modern readers understand what life was like in an age in which religion suffused society and was as basic to thought as the structure of language. Sommerville argues that secularization began earlier in England than many historians believe - even before Henry VIII's seizure of power over the church in the 1530s - and that it advanced in concert with the Protestant Reformation. As more aspects of daily life were divorced from religious values and controls, religious culture was supplanted by religious faith, a reasoned (rather than an unquestioned) belief in the supernatural.

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目录:
The Secularization of Early Modern England_下载链接1_
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