

ACCORDING TO MOST SCHOLARS, the Enlightenment was a rational awakening, a radical break from a past dominated by religion and superstition. But in *Let There Be Enlightenment*, Anton M. Matytsin, Dan Edelstein, and the contributors they have assembled deftly undermine this simplistic narrative. Emphasizing the ways in which religious beliefs and motivations shaped philosophical perspectives, essays in this book highlight figures and topics often overlooked in standard genealogies of the Enlightenment. The volume underscores the prominent role that religious discourses continued to play in major aspects of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century thought.

The essays probe a wide range of subjects, from reformer Jan Amos Comenius's quest for universal enlightenment to the changing meanings of the light metaphor, Quaker influences on Baruch Spinoza's theology, and the unexpected persistence of Aristotle in the Enlightenment.

Providing an overview of the rich spectrum of eighteenth-century culture, the authors demonstrate that religion was central to Enlightenment thought. Rather than revisiting the celebrated breaks between the eighteenth century and the period that preceded it, *Let There Be Enlightenment* reveals the unacknowledged continuities that connect the Enlightenment to its various antecedents.



"Matytsin and Edelstein are perfectly placed for editing the book, and they should be congratulated for assembling the kind of all-star cast that they have, one that is genuinely international in background. Presenting the cream of recent scholarship, this volume can be expected instantly to become a central reference in Enlightenment studies."—JOHNSON KENT WRIGHT, author of *Classical Republican in Eighteenth-Century France: The Political Thought of Mably*

"This exciting collection, moving beyond recent scholarship, demonstrates, in a dazzling variety of contexts, that in the eighteenth century, faith and reason twined around each other inextricably."—DAVID A. BELL, author of *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800*



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