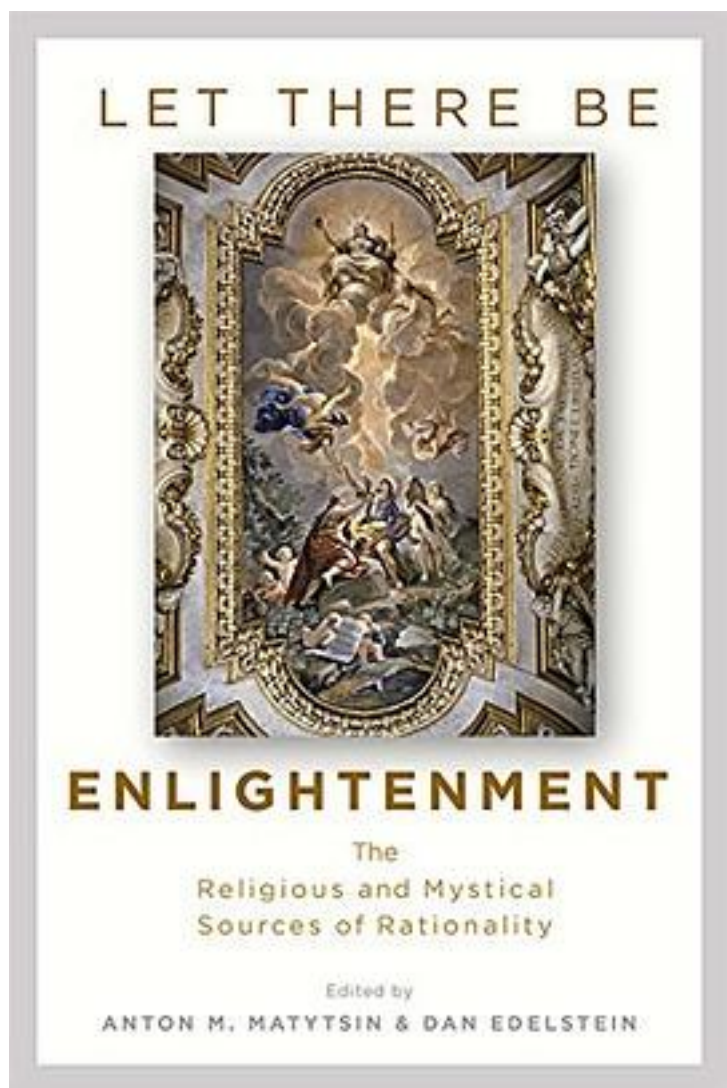


Let There Be Enlightenment



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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 Jon 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. Exploring the emergence of historical consciousness among Enlightenment thinkers while examining their repeated insistence on living in an enlightened age, the collection also investigates the origins and the long-term dynamics of the relationship between faith and reason.

Providing an overview of the rich spectrum of eighteenth-century culture, the authors demonstrate that religion was central to Enlightenment thought. The term "enlightenment" itself had a deeply religious connotation. 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.

Contributors: Philippe Buc, William J. Bulman, Jeffrey D. Burson, Charly Coleman, Dan Edelstein, Matthew T. Gaetano, Howard Hotson, Anton M. Matytsin, Darrin M. McMahon, James Schmidt, Céline Spector, Jo Van Cauter

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Anton M. Matytsin is an assistant professor of history at Kenyon College. He is the author of *The Specter of Skepticism in the Age of Enlightenment*. Dan Edelstein is the William H. Bonsall Professor of French and a professor of history (by courtesy) at Stanford University. He is the author of *The Terror of Natural Right: Republicanism, the Cult of Nature, and the French Revolution* and *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy*.

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