

Philosophy and Religion in Enlightenment Britain: New Case Studies



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These twelve new studies illustrate some of the techniques employed in intellectual history today. Exploring themes and issues pertaining to religion, philosophy, and their interrelations, as they exercised British thinkers in the "long" eighteenth century, they further our understanding of the period when some of the most significant works in western philosophy were written, at a time when theory and practice in science, politics, law, and theology were evolving and there was important contact with the Continent. Priority has been given to new work on primary sources. Figures examined range from Locke and Hume to relatively unfamiliar personalities, such as Martin Clifford, Henry Scougal, Samuel Haliday, and Thomas Cooper. Others treated include John Toland, Bernard Mandeville, Francis Hutcheson, Joseph Butler, Henry Home, Adam Smith, Joseph Priestley, Thomas Reid, and Dugald Stewart. Topics include the claims of biblical authority and religious experience as sources of truth; whether beliefs received on the evidence of authority (e.g. about resurrection) can be made intelligible; freedom of thought and conscience in philosophical, religious, and political contexts; shifts in the study of human nature; the claims of justice, and natural law. Contributors include distinguished and established scholars and exciting younger talent, bringing together historians of philosophy with scholars from theology, literature, history, and political science. New transcriptions of two pieces by Hume are included-a new letter illustrating his later attitude to politics and religion, and his early essay on ethics and chivalry.

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