

Throughout the book each chapter ends with a short Case Study of spiritual activism, either historical (for example Gerard Winstanley and the Diggers) or contemporary (such as Gehan Macleod of the GalGael Trust in Govan). These add breadth and depth to the authors' own testimony.

The final two chapters, "Tools for Discernment" and "Into the Deeper Magic", contain moving reflections on truth, humility, dreams, curse and blessing, and the *Om mani padme hum*, 'God come to my heart', engraved on a Buddhist prayer wheel that Alastair bought from a peddler near Darjeeling in February 1980 on the Hippie Trail. The stories are wide-ranging, honest, beautiful, funny and magical. 'We are on a journey that reconnects to the life-force', McIntosh and Carmichael tell us. 'To be an activist is [...] to seek to use our lives to give life' (p. 13).

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Thomas Ahnert, *The Moral Culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690–1805* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. viii + 216, ISBN 978-0300153804. £45.00

First of all, one needs to say that this book is a delight to read. Moreover, it is economical, packing more into 140 pages than some do with many more. It is written by a philosopher-historian at the University of Edinburgh with the best of both skill-sets combined, and with an almost intuitive grasp of the religious controversies of the period. Although it is short enough to be read from cover to cover, it is also a resource for dipping into, and carefully referenced, with colourful cameos (e.g. the Rankeneans in Chapter 2). Ahnert views the Moderates as those who thought rigid doctrinal orthodoxy on the one hand and religions of feeling and enthusiasm on the other were equally to be avoided. He also argues that it was the principle of the authority of the General Assembly, not that of patronage (which had been doubted as early as Francis Hutcheson), that really mattered to

the Moderate clergy. Yet his major thesis is that Moderates saw the need for supernatural revelation to come to the aid of a person if they were to arrive at true virtue. This is indeed a welcome corrective to the idea that the Moderates were ‘rationalists’. However, if enthusiasm and orthodoxy after the mid-century became one and the same thing, or occupying the same people and movements, then how can the Moderates be said to be ‘in between’?

As for doctrines, was it only the doctrine of the afterlife that mattered to them? It is suggested that Moderates or proto-Moderates like George Turnbull thought Providence could teach people to avoid vice without there needing to be a natural apprehension of the afterlife, whereas the orthodox believed ‘unless this afterlife was known from natural reason, without the assistance of revelation, pagans [...] would not be aware of their guilt, and they would not be impelled to seek out and accept the remedies offered by Christ in the New Testament’ (p. 50). Is that quite how the orthodox like John Erskine saw it? Yes, but not in the sense of the *Evangelical* orthodox for whom without conversion there could be no progress: where the torrent of sin was so wide, natural morality could not act as a stepping stone. However, Francis Hutcheson described, even proclaimed, the natural moral affections when reinforced by a revealed religion without fear, in a culture of love where the Spirit of Christ was present (not just Christian cultures), and where the afterlife could be viewed as an encouragement to persevere: the account of the Ulsterman’s theory feels like the heart of this book.

One might pause to wonder whether in avoiding those extremes there was perhaps a deficiency of living doctrine in the sense of a ‘reason for the hope within you’ and too much a ‘manners maketh the man’ approach to the Christian life, and whether this is inevitably the problem with a way of religion that seeks mostly to avoid things. Thomas Brown in a memorable phrase accused latter-day Moderates of not only serving to cool the fervid, but ‘refrigerate the tepid’ (p. 136), as if the bottle of Chablis, as it were, had been left too long in the deep freeze. As the author deftly shows, John Witherspoon, their fierce opponent (yet at times kindred spirit) among the orthodox, affirmed rational free choice as the source of the moral life, but only as and when the passions were dealt with by spiritual help. There was a sort

of determinism in the Moderate atmosphere, one given theological colour in George Hill of St Andrews' Calvinism or Christian Stoicism: things and people are as they must be.

By and large Ahnert feels happy with the term 'Moderate' (and 'orthodox', as we have seen). There is some acknowledgement of differences of opinion within that group surrounding the question of free will and the place of the intellect between the likes of Kames and Blair on one side, and those others such as Thomas Reid. Ahnert does not conclude that this was so much to create a fissure or even question whether 'Moderate' was really a useful term by the end of the eighteenth century.

It is also an interesting question why the Moderates fell apart so easily in 1805 – the presenting issue of the Leslie case, where the Moderates wanted to test the church credentials of candidates for the Edinburgh chair in Mathematics; the influence of Dugald Stewart – and how they managed to rally by the next generation. Obviously if one thinks, like Ahnert, that patronage had not been the issue for them in the 1790s, then they would not have been the ones promoting it in the 1830s. However, this seems a lacuna that the author would be well placed to fill, if he is so inclined. Where the Moderates 'went' after 1805 is something that would also bear scrutiny.

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Ashley Cocksworth, *Karl Barth on Prayer*, T&T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology (London; New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), pp. ix + 202, ISBN 978-0567655608. £65.00

Ashley Cocksworth's *Karl Barth on Prayer* endeavours to fill an underdeveloped aspect of Barth's expansive theology. At his conclusion, Cocksworth writes, 'For Barth, it is simply inconceivable to arrive at an understanding of God apart from a real encounter with the divine in prayer' (p. 175), and that '[Barth's] theology was prayer' (p. 179). Given these final claims, it may be surprising that