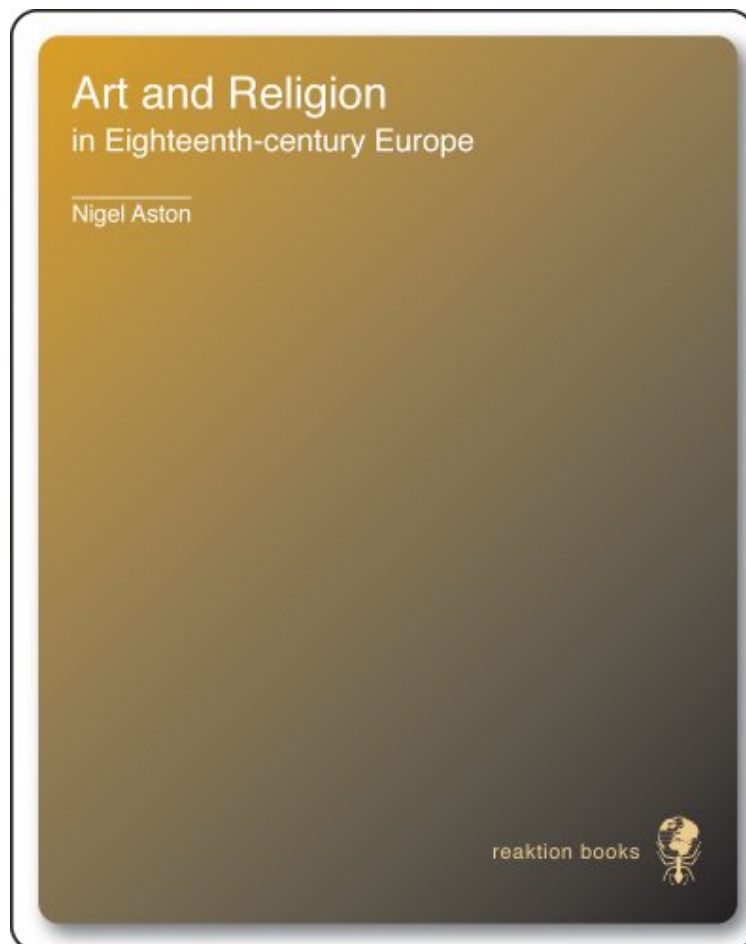


Art and Religion in Eighteenth Century Europe

Nigel Aston

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Eighteenth-century Europe witnessed monumental upheavals in both the Catholic and Protestant faiths and the repercussions rippled down to the churches' religious art forms. In this major new study, Nigel Aston chronicles the intertwining of cultural and institutional turmoil during this pivotal century. The sustained production and popularity of religious art in the face of competition from increasingly prevalent secular artworks lies at the heart of this book. Religious art staked out new spaces of display in state institutions, palaces and private collections as well as taking advantage of state patronage from monarchs such as Louis XIV and George III, who funded religious art in an effort to enhance their national projects and monarchical prestige. Aston explores the motivations of private collectors and how they exhibited their artworks, and analyses changing Catholic and Protestant attitudes toward art. He examines purchases made by corporate patrons such as charity hospitals and religious confraternities, and considers what this

reveals about the changing religiosity of eighteenth-century Europe. An in-depth historical study, *Art and Religion in Eighteenth-century Europe* will be essential for art history and religious studies scholars alike.

"*Art and Religion in Eighteenth-Century Europe* is an important book about a much-neglected subject, and it is my sincere wish that art historians read it. It reveals not only the importance of religion to eighteenth-century society but also the potential of art to contribute to that importance. Aston has given art historians his view of a large, intricate, and mostly still-uncharted field of immensely rich material."