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**Riots, Revolutions, and the Scottish Covenanters.** Charles L. Jackson.  
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REVIEWED BY: Sergey Fyodorov  
Saint-Petersburg State University, Russia

By and large, modern historical biographies are lacking in the traditional features of their classic prototype. Scholars who opt for this genre of historical research reject a chronological approach to their descriptions. Different stages of the development of their subject interest these researchers as the result of their social and cultural context, forming a personality-oriented history.

In an attempt to reconstruct the mental world of the individual, scholars endeavor to show to what extent social environment, established cultural traditions, customs, and perceptions affect human behavior in certain historical circumstances as well as the roles that individual choice and initiative play. Analyzing surviving evidence, historians view it as fragments of the discourses organized in a particular way. Such discourses are looked upon as the basis for the reconstruction of social practices, no less important for the research, which can shed light on some decisions made by the individual. Thus, a biography created in this way becomes a synthesis of not only a social and cultural analysis, but also of a textual one.

L. Charles Jackson's monograph devoted to Alexander Henderson (1583–1646), a prominent ecclesiast, theologian, and one of the authors of the National Covenant, exemplifies this trend. Understandably, Jackson avoids using terms characteristic of the new historical biography given his status as a senior minister at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Vandalia, Ohio, but his methods of working with the sources and the organizational form of the material undoubtedly bear a strong resemblance to it. Moreover, modern theological methods of interpreting the text of the holy scripture (textual criticism, exegesis, etc.) are in agreement with this sphere of historical research, successfully complementing it.

On the one hand, Henderson's "new" biography (although Jackson tends to refer to it as an "updated" biography) is structured in such a way that it can consistently reflect the three most significant aspects of his social activity: that of a theologian, a pastor, and a leading cleric who became the moderator of the General Assembly. On the other hand, it contains some sections dedicated to the analysis of Henderson's mental world, which affected his adherence to Presbyterianism and, as a consequence, to the ideals of the Covenanters.

Turning to a limited collection of sermons, pamphlets, and treaties by Henderson and his contemporaries, Jackson attempts to reconstruct the social context that determined the Presbyterian views of Henderson and his immediate circle and shaped their preferences to be typical of their environment. Reconstructed discourses of the Scottish Presbyterians and Covenanters, therefore, form the basis for the analysis of different manifestations of Henderson's social and religious activities and serve as a means

of interpreting the decisions he made. Jackson always perceives Henderson's statements contextually and his rhetoric is considered to be an organizational tool for the content.

Of special importance in Jackson's research is his desire to describe two basic concepts, ecclesiology and eschatology, that characterized the singularity of Presbyterian ideals for the first quarter of the seventeenth century and, thanks to Henderson's religious reflection, predetermined the peculiarity of Covenanters' perceptions of the most fundamental principles and prospects of Christian community.

Henderson's views on the ecclesiastical polity are similar to the ideals of early Christian communities, having an expected denial of any forms of unsanctioned interference of secular authorities into ecclesiastical matters. Henderson's ecclesiology, following ideas characteristic of Presbyterianism, also included a range of peculiar features, which mirrored his own perspective on this issue, crucial for the Reformed Church. Most of the discrepancies in Henderson's outlook, which are pointed out by Jackson, are attributed to the influence of Covenant Theology (popular among the Protestants), particularly its extensive interpretation of the covenant of redemption.

Covenant Theology opened up new horizons in Presbyterian ecclesiology, enabling Henderson to view true ecclesiastical polity not only in the context of the world history, but also in the context of sacral history. Henderson's emphasis on the covenant of redemption gave a certain shape to the Divine intentions of salvation. The covenant of redemption focused on the realization of the Divine design of man that spanned from the genesis to the personification in the figure of Jesus Christ.

Since the covenant of redemption stressed the eternal nature of Divine Providence, the Covenant Theology refused to oppose Israel because it did not see considerable differences between the nation and the Church. In the Old Testament Israel (as a nation) accomplished the prophetic mission of being considered the home of the chosen people or, in other words, the people of God. In addition, the Church, which was initially comprised of pagans and Jews, becomes a congregation of the people of God in the New Testament. Consequently, the Church did not substitute Israel but was equated to it. All the people who professed the same faith as Abraham constituted a part of those who live in accordance with the Divine Covenant.

The perceived destiny of Israel as a covenanted nation directly corresponds to the Divine Providence allotted for Scotland. The stages of the sacral history are incorporated into the past, present, and the future of the Scottish people and the Presbyterian Church entrusted to them. At the same time, only its current period (an epoch opened by the Reformation) has the capacity to put an end to the old order. The current period is the only one with the potential to fulfill the redemptory design of the last period of the sacral history, preceding the Second Coming. It is during this period that the conditions conducive for the consistent realization of the Divine design of man are created. According to Henderson, with the direct involvement of the Presbyterian Church, the epoch of the last covenant—the covenant of redemption—ends.

A particular organizational role of the Presbyterian Church during the period of sacral history preceding the Second Coming gives a distinct eschatological touch to Henderson's ecclesiology. Jackson asserts that this reveals the peculiar covenantal optimism of Henderson's theological views. Henderson's eschatological ecclesiology, which comprises an essential part of his religious beliefs, is not only pivotal in understanding the different manifestations of his social roles (a preacher, a polemicist, a moderator of the General Assembly,) but it also characterizes him as a leading cleric. He treats significant

issues such as the relationship between the Church and the state, the ideal state structure, and resistance and submission to the authorities from a religious perspective.

Jackson brilliantly illustrates Henderson's adamant position, analyzing this remarkable person's speeches, sermons, pamphlets, and treaties, and occasionally debunking stereotypes established in previous historiography. Thus, Henderson's views on the limits of the royal power remained within the principles of Covenant Theology, according to which the supreme power on earth belonged to Christ. He rejected the republican form of government not because he favored monarchy, but because the true Church was intrinsically monarchical. The resistance to secular authorities was justifiable only when they interfered into the ecclesiastical matters; he generally remained indifferent to traditional anti-tyrannical motives.

Even concepts widely used by Henderson such as "freedom" and "slavery," carried a marked religious connotation and were perceived as two different states with respect to idolatry.

Charles Jackson has written an engaging, coherent, and detailed biography of one of Scotland's prominent pastors and theologians. This book offers a fresh and valuable new perspective on the seventeenth-century religious and political thought.

