

剑桥政治思想史原著系列（影印本）

CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

阿斯特尔政治著作选

Astell

Political

Writings

Edited by

PATRICIA

SPRINGBORG

中国政法大学出版社

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ASTELL
Political Writings

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剑桥政治思想史原著系列

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在政治理论领域，“剑桥政治思想史原著系列”作为主要的学生教科丛书，如今已牢固确立了其地位。本丛书旨在使学生能够获得从古希腊到 20 世纪初期西方政治思想史方面所有最为重要的原著。它囊括了所有著名的经典原著，但与此同时，它又扩展了传统的评价尺度，以便能够纳入范围广泛、不那么出名的作品。而在此之前，这些作品中有许多从未有过现代英文版本可资利用。只要可能，所选原著都会以完整而不删节的形式出版，其中的译作则是专门为本丛书的目的而安排。每一本书都有一个评论性的导言，加上历史年表、生平梗概、进一步阅读指南，以及必要的词汇表和原文注解。本丛书的最终目的是，为西方政治思想的整个发展脉络提供一个清晰的轮廓。

本丛书已出版著作的书目，请查阅书末。

CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE
HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

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Dedication

This volume is dedicated to those who by their inspiration and assistance made it possible, especially Christine Ambrose, Dick Ashcraft, Conal Condren, Ros Conyngham, Kathy Dempsey, Jim Farr, Lindsay Gardiner, Mark Goldie, Philip Hamburger, Bridget Hill, Isobel Horton, Ann Kelly, Shareen Matthews, John McCrystal, Carole Pateman, John Pocock, Maria Robertson, Lois Schwoerer, Quentin Skinner, Johann and Margaret Sommerville, Patricia Harris Stäblein, Robert, Ziyad and George Springborg. The institutions to which I owe such a debt include the Department of Government, Fisher Library and the Vice-Chancellor's Publication Fund of the University of Sydney; the State Libraries of New South Wales and Victoria; the Australian Research Council; the Folger Shakespeare Library; the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C.; the Rare Book Collection of the Library of Congress; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; and the Brookings Institution. Last, but not least, it is dedicated to the memory of Mary Astell herself, a seminal political theorist, philosopher and theologian, for too long sunk in obscurity.

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Facsimile title-pages of the first editions of *Reflections upon Marriage*, *A Fair Way with the Dissenters* and *An Impartial Enquiry* are reproduced by kind permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

It was my intention, by providing for Mary Astell the sort of critical edition with which canonical theorists are typically furnished, to accord her the status that is only her due. Any faults in the presentation of this edition that may remain are entirely my own. My husband, Robert Springborg, and sons, Ziyad and George, have been exemplary in the support they have shown for this, among my projects the one that most clearly represents a public service. It is dedicated to them all and to the memory of Mary Astell, who died poor as she lived, and of whom few personal traces survive, in the form of manuscripts, or even a likeness of a once-celebrated woman.

Note

(*q.v.*) following a name indicates an entry in the Biographical notes.

Introduction

Mary Astell's life

Born on 12 November, 1666 to Peter Astell, a member of the Company of Hostmen at Newcastle upon Tyne, and his wife the former Mary Errington, Mary Astell is an unlikely candidate for the role of England's first feminist (Hill, 1986). Her father, although described as a gentleman, began as an apprentice to the Company of Hostmen, which enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the cartage of coal and grindstones. He did not complete his apprenticeship until Mary was eight years old and died when she was twelve, leaving the family debt-ridden. In the 1660s and 1670s 83 per cent of North Country women, and in the 1680s and 1690s 72 per cent, were illiterate; as calculated from signatures to court records, unable even to write their names (Cressy, 1977, 1980). Mary Astell, lacking formal education, found a family mentor in Ralph Astell, curate of St Nicholas church, Newcastle, author of 'New-castle's heartie Congratulations' to the King, the poem *Vota Non Bella* (1666), which had established his Royalist credentials. According to George Ballard, the eighteenth-century source on contemporary learned women, Astell mastered French, gained some knowledge of Latin and 'under his [Ralph's] tuition made considerable progress in philosophy, mathematics and logic' (*Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, p. 382).

From her uncle Mary Astell may also have learned her Tory (*q.v.*) politics. A Royalist family tradition had been attested in the epitaph for her grandfather, William Astell, which, after recounting his sufferings for Charles I (*q.v.*), declared his reward union in

death, not with his God, but with his master – ‘Triumphant Charles he’s gone to see’ (Smith, 1916, 5; Kinnaird, 1979, 69, n.63). With few exceptions, the gentry of the North in any case tended to Royalism and even in some cases Catholicism (Hill, 1986, 5). Mary Astell’s mother, Mary Errington, was from an old Catholic gentry family of Newcastle (Estcourt and Payne, 1885, 180; cited Perry, 1986, 39), which may well account for Mary’s relative leniency towards Popery, compared with Presbyterianism (*q.v.*) her bent for Neoplatonism in the ecstatic tradition and her Jacobite (*q.v.*) sympathies.

In worldly terms Mary Astell’s was a rather uneventful life, broken in its scholarly solitude by the period of political pamphleteering from 1697 to 1709, then lived out quietly to its close in 1731, when she died of breast cancer. At twenty years of age she had left Newcastle for London, and there she lived, mainly in Chelsea, a single woman associating with a small group of like-minded intellectual women, High Church (*q.v.*) prelates and their wives. These included Lady Catherine Jones (*q.v.*), daughter of the Earl of Ranelagh, Paymaster-General of the Navy, who was her patron. The correspondence between John Norris (*q.v.*) and Mary Astell, the *Letters Concerning the Love of God* (1695), is dedicated to her; and she is also the addressee of Mary Astell’s *magnum opus*, *The Christian Religion as Profess’d by a Daughter of the Church* (1705). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (*q.v.*), to whose *Embassy Letters: The Travels of an English Lady in Europe, Asia and Africa* (1724, 1725), Mary Astell added a Preface, Lady Anne Coventry and Lady Elizabeth Hastings were among the titled women of her acquaintance; while Elizabeth Elstob, Anglo-Saxon scholar and correspondent of George Ballard and the learned Bishop Francis Atterbury (*q.v.*), with whom Astell corresponded, numbered among the scholars who were also Chelsea neighbours (Hill, 1986, 7–9). At the height of her political activity Mary Astell belonged among the clientele of the Tory print shop of her publisher, Richard Wilkin, at the King’s Head in St Paul’s Church Yard. It is reported that she received a number of important guests at the Chelsea house where she lived, and that when she had no inclination to receive them, ‘she would look out at the window and jestingly tell them (as Cato did Nasica), “Mrs. Astell is not at home,” and in good earnest keep them out’ (Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, p. 385).

From her earliest writings Mary Astell showed herself to be a competent theologian, engaging ecclesiastics and known religious writers of her day. The first of her ecclesiastical correspondents, William Sancroft (*q.v.*), Archbishop of Canterbury and later nonjuror (*q.v.*), was also her earliest patron, assisting her when she first arrived in London, perhaps financially, as we know from the prefatory letter to the *Collection of Poems* (1689) Astell dedicated to him (Hill, 1986, 183–4). The exchange of letters between Mary Astell and the Cambridge Platonist (*q.v.*) John Norris, rector of Bemerton, begun in 1693, so impressed her correspondent that he undertook to have them published, warning of ‘a diffidence in some who from the excellency of these writings may be tempted to question whether my correspondent be a woman or not’ (Norris, 1695, in Hill, 1986, 191). John Evelyn, in his *Numismata: Or a Discourse of Medals, Antient and Modern* (1697, p. 265), listed her among other learned women he had omitted from his catalogue, absolving himself as follows: ‘nor without the highest ingratitude for the satisfaction I still receive by what I read of Madam Astell’s besides what lately she has proposed to the virtuous of her sex, to show by her own example what great things and excellencies it is capable of’ (cited by Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, p. 387).

Among prominent people Astell won immediate fame, or notoriety, as the case may be, for her *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest* (1694), a call for a female educational academy along Platonist lines and her first major published work. Bishop Gilbert Burnet (*q.v.*) had no objection to women’s education in principle, but he did intervene to warn Princess Anne (later Queen Anne (*q.v.*)) against supporting Mary Astell’s proposal for a women’s academy because of the language in which it was couched: ‘a Monastery or if you will (to avoid giving offence . . . by names which tho’ innocent in themselves have been abus’d by superstitious practices) we will call it a Religious Retirement’. Burnet feared that the language of *A Serious Proposal* smacked too much of a Catholic nunnery, and would bring disrepute as being Popish (Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, p. 383).

Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, echoed concerns about the unladylike forthrightness of Astell’s general style in a letter to Dr Smalridge that is quite revealing of both his and Astell’s charac-

ters. Ballard (p. 387), quotes it at length, with his own comment in parentheses:

I happened about a fortnight ago to dine with Mrs Astell. She spoke to me of my sermon (which I suppose by what follows, is that which he preached and afterwards printed, against Bishop Hoadly's (*q.v.*) *Measures of Submission*) and desired me to print it; and after I had given the proper answer, hinted to me that she should be glad of perusing it, I complied with her, and sent her the sermon the next day. Yesterday she returned it with this sheet of remarks, which I cannot forbear communicating to you, because I take them to be of an extraordinary nature, considering they came from the pen of a woman. Indeed one would not imagine a woman had written them. There is not an expression that carries the least air of her sex from the beginning to the end of it. She attacks my very home you see, and artfully enough, under a pretence of taking my part against other divines, who are in Hoadly's measures. Had she had as much good breeding as good sense, she would be perfect; but she has not the most decent manner of insinuating what she means, but is now and then a little offensive and shocking in her expressions; which I wonder at, because a civil turn of words is what her sex is always mistress of. She, I think is wanting in it. But her sensible and rational way of writing makes amends for that defect, if indeed anything can make amends for it. I dread to engage her, so I only wrote a general civil answer to her, and leave the rest to an oral conference. Her way of solving the difficulty about swearing to the Queen is somewhat singular.

Mary Astell showed rare political acumen, as Bishop Atterbury notes, for which she was to become equally celebrated in her day. John Locke (*q.v.*) owned Astell's *Reflections upon Marriage*, as the catalogue of his library attests, and like most of his contemporaries also attributed to her the works of Judith Drake (Harrison and Laslett, 1971, items 1104, 1105 and 1914). Mary Astell was subjected to the rough and tumble of Grub Street by the greatest polemicists of her day, Jonathan Swift (*q.v.*), Daniel Defoe (*q.v.*) and Richard Steele (*q.v.*); an honour she could perhaps have done without. Daniel Defoe confessed himself to be an admirer – a sentiment that was not reciprocated. He emulated her educational work, *A Serious Proposal*, which became a model for his own 'An Academy for Women' in *An Essay upon Projects* (1697). Bishop Berkeley thought

her ideas in the *Proposal* worth plagiarizing in the *Ladies Library* which Steele edited, to the extent of some one hundred pages; and Steele redoubled the insult by making her the object of satire in the *Tatler*, nos. 32 and 63 (Norton, 1961, 59–60; Perry 1986, 100). The attack on *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) in *Tatler*, no. 32, from White's Chocolate-house, 22 June, 1709, had initially been attributed to Swift or Addison, his amanuensis (Nichols, *Tatler*, 1786, II, 449 ff.). But this was impossible given that Swift had not yet returned from Ireland and could not therefore have collaborated with Addison at this point. Astell herself, in the Preface to the 1722 edition of *Bart'lemy Fair* (p. A2a) exposed the satire as the work of Steele, appearing 'a little after [the first edition of] the Enquiry [*Bart'lemy Fair*] appear'd' and as a response to it.

Astell, who was satirized in the *Tatler* as 'erect[ing] a monastery or religious retirement', was similarly satirized on the stage, for instance as the prototype of a character in Mrs Centlivre's play, *The Basset Table* (1760; see Norton, 1961, 59–60). For women did not spare her either. Aphra Behn made fun of her. Lady Damaris Masham (*q.v.*), daughter of the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth (*q.v.*) and Locke's confidante, thought her metaphysics to have dangerous implications, leading 'to as wild an Enthusiasm [*q.v.*] as any that has been yet seen; and which can End in nothing but Monasteries and Hermitages; with all those Sottish and Wicked Superstitions which have accompanied them where-ever they have been in use' (*A Discourse Concerning the Love of God*, p. 120). Masham, like Defoe and Steele, sought to salvage Astell's proposal for female academies with her own educational project, set out in her *Occasional Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life* (1705). Commentators believe that this work was directed to answering Astell's 1705 rebuttal of Masham's earlier *Discourse Concerning the Love of God* (1696) in *The Christian Religion* (see Hutton, 1993, 36–7). But if, as the Preface states, Masham's work published in 1705 had been written two years earlier, this could only have been accomplished by last-minute textual interpolations. It is more likely that Masham is responding to Astell's *A Serious Proposal, Part II* (1697), in which Astell mounts a vigorous rebuttal of critics of her original project, and specifically Masham, while setting out to destroy the entire system of Masham's patron, Locke.

Astell, Tory historiography and Whig natural rights

Mary Astell, probably under commission from her printer, Richard Wilkin, wrote three Tory tracts. The first two, *Moderation truly Stated* (1704) and *A Fair Way with the Dissenters* (1704), were associated with the Occasional Conformity (*q.v.*) Bill, introduced in the first weeks of Anne's reign, to deprive Nonconformists (*q.v.*) of the subterfuge of occasional attendance at Church of England services in order to qualify for office. The third, *An Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of Rebellion and Civil War in this Kingdom* (1704), was occasioned by White Kennett's (*q.v.*) sermon commemorating the death of Charles I (*q.v.*) on 31 January, 1704. Kennett ranked with Benjamin Hoadly and William Fleetwood as among the most significant Whig (*q.v.*) bishops of the age (Goldie, 1978, 46, 206). The publication of his contentious 1704 commemorative sermon stirred a reaction in print to which Astell's *An Impartial Enquiry* belongs, entering the Tory canon as a classic.

That Mary Astell's defence of monarchy in the Age of Anne should have taken the form of *An Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of the Rebellion and Civil War* a half century earlier is not surprising. Goldie (1978, 192) remarks:

The baleful presence of the great rebellion hung over a generation whose fathers had experienced it at first hand. It stalked through the pamphlets, diaries were full of anecdotes of the Interregnum; and the cult of the royal Martyr flourished.

'Forty-one' was a catch-cry in the Restoration Tory armory for the first Stuart shipwreck of the state caused by the Civil War, the execution of Charles I and the establishment of the republic in 1649 (Skinner, 1972; Goldie, 1978; Scott, 1988). Parallels were commonplace between 1641 and the Exclusion Crisis (*q.v.*) of 1679–81 in which Shaftesbury (*q.v.*) and the Whigs attempted to prevent James, Duke of York (later James II), from inheriting the throne. The Allegiance Debate of 1689, which addressed the tangle of conflicting oaths undertaken to the Commonwealth, to the Stuarts, and, subsequently, to William III, saw the republication of texts originally associated with the regicide of Charles I in 1649. These were parallels that Astell, following her authority on the history of the Rebellion, Lord Clarendon (*q.v.*), drew in her pamphlet *An Impartial Enquiry*. Prompted by the publication of White Kennett's memorial

sermon on Charles I's death, it convicted the Whig bishop for damning with faint praise 'the Royal King and Martyr', depicted in Tory iconography 'as a mythological but appealing figure' (Skinner, 1972, 85).

Astell's text has diverse targets, drawing strong parallels between the constitutional crisis of 1641 and the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–81 (p. 15), looking forward to the continuing problems posed by the Pretender and anticipating Whig exploitation of Jacobitism. White Kennett's speech, like so many tracts of the day, spoke of one revolution in terms of another. Astell's rebuttal did likewise. It rehearsed popular Tory views on the unholy alliance of revolutionary doctrines in the Roman Catholic and Calvinist (*q.v.*)/Whig traditions, containing a particularly zealous version of the Tory litanies of Popish and Presbyterian defenders of popular sovereignty (Goldie, 1978, 22–3). Astell emphasized the degree to which Presbyterians inflated fears of Popery and the French alliance to keep alive the spectre of the Pretender, destabilize the monarchy and fuel the fires for their own causes of popular sovereignty and consent. For, from the Engagement Controversy (*q.v.*) of 1649 and the Exclusion Crisis of 1679 to the death of Anne in 1714, the greatest problem was stability: to persuade the people that the revolution ushered in by the Civil Wars of the 1640s was finished (Skinner, 1972, 79). The problem with the Whigs, in Astell's eyes, was that they – Algernon Sidney, Locke and Defoe among them – had sought to persuade people that it was not finished, fomenting a state of emergency for party political purposes. The debate over Occasional Conformity and the legitimacy of Dissent turned on these issues.

The plethora of conflicting oaths of allegiance produced in the seventeenth century created a specific problem of loyalty (Goldie, 1978, 74). More generally it called into question the principle of hereditary right. On these questions the great constitutional debates were waged, summarized in the battle between Sir Robert Filmer (*q.v.*) and Locke. The Engagement Controversy of 1649 had been waged over allegiance to the regicidal Commonwealth. Those who in 1689 were required to swear allegiance to William and Mary had earlier solemnly sworn fealty to James II and to the Restoration oaths which renounced the taking of arms against kings 'upon any pretence'. The Abjuration Oath included in the Act of Settlement of 1701, which guaranteed the Hanoverian succession, renounced