

剑桥政治思想史原著系列（影印本）

CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

# 国王詹姆斯政治著作选

## King James VI and I

### *Political*

### *Writings*

Edited by

JOHANN P.

SOMMERVILLE

中国政法大学出版社

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CAMBRIDGE TEXTS IN THE  
HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT



KING JAMES VI and I  
*Political Writings*

James VI and I united the crowns of England and Scotland. His books are fundamental sources of the principles which underlay the union. In particular, his *Basilicon Doron* was a best-seller in England and circulated widely on the Continent. Among the most important and influential British writings of their period, the king's works shed light on the political climate of Shakespeare's England and the intellectual background to the civil wars which afflicted Britain in the mid-seventeenth century. James' political philosophy was a moderated absolutism, with an emphasis on the monarch's duty to rule according to law and the public good. Locke quoted his speech to parliament of 1610 approvingly, and Hobbes likewise praised 'our most wise king'. This edition is the first to draw on all the early texts of James' books, with an introduction setting them in their historical context.

# 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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## Preface and acknowledgements

In recent years there has been a substantial growth of interest in the history and literature of Jacobean England. Amongst the most important texts produced in that period were the writings of King James VI and I himself. Harvard University Press published *The Political Works of James I*, edited by Charles Howard McIlwain, in 1918. That volume has become quite a scarce book. Moreover, an examination of the text which McIlwain printed reveals a number of peculiarities. In James' longest work, the *Basilicon Doron*, marginal comments or summaries which were included in early editions were omitted by McIlwain. He based his edition of James' writings on a single source – the king's *Workes* of 1616 – and he introduced a good many misreadings into that version. For instance, on a surprisingly large number of occasions he strangely read the long 's' of seventeenth-century script as an 'f'. In consequence, such non-existent words as 'trustieft', 'Papifts', 'feueritie', 'iustneffe', 'aduife', and 'feruants' are scattered through his edition.

The present volume is intended to present more accurate texts of James' writings than McIlwain made available. Where appropriate, the *Workes* of 1616 has been used as copy-text, but in every case it has been compared with other early versions of the king's writings. McIlwain made no attempt to track down James' sources. I have traced the sources of most direct quotations, but have not tried to verify or decipher all the references in James' writings. To do so would have increased the size of this book substantially. Many of the references occur in *Basilicon Doron* (which cites 110 classical works in its margins), but they are often too imprecise to be verified (a good discussion of



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these references is in Craigie 1944-50, 2: 93-105). Unlike McIlwain's book, the present edition includes a glossary – which gives the meanings of obscure words used by James – and select biographical notes identifying some of the people whom the king mentions. It also provides translations of all non-English passages.

For reasons of space, two of the works included by McIlwain have been omitted here. These are *A Premonition to all Christian Monarches, Free Princes and States* of 1609, and *A Remonstrance . . . for the Right of Kings, against Cardinal Perron*. The *Remonstrance* was first published in French in 1615. The later English translation was not made by James, and the original French was written by Pierre Du Moulin, though it undoubtedly expressed the king's views. Both the *Premonition* and the *Remonstrance* are important works, but their central arguments against papal political claims were already set out in *Triplici Nodo, Triplex Cuneus. Or an Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance*, which was first published in 1608, and which is reprinted below. McIlwain included no works belonging to the last years of James' life. The present edition contains texts of two important late writings: *A Meditation upon the 27th, 28th and 29th Verses of the 27th Chapter of Saint Matthew* (1619), and *His Maiesties Declaration, Touching his proceedings in the Late Assemblie and Conuention of Parliament* (1622).

It is now more than seventeen years since I began to work on Jacobean political thinking. In those years I have learned much from more friends and scholars than there is space to thank here. My understanding of James and his ideas has been particularly influenced by Paul Christianson, Tom Cogswell, Richard Cust, Sir Geoffrey Elton, Peter Lake, John Morrill, Linda Levy Peck, Conrad Russell (Earl Russell), and Quentin Skinner. I am very grateful to Dr Peter Blayney of the Folger Shakespeare Library for bibliographical advice about James' writings and especially about *Basilicon Doron*. The staffs of the British Library, Cambridge University Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and Memorial Library here in Madison deserve thanks for their courtesy and efficiency. Especial thanks are due to the National Endowment of the Humanities and to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin-Madison for providing me with funding which made possible my researches at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

In the introduction and notes to this edition, dates are old style unless otherwise indicated, but the year is taken to begin on 1 Janu-

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ary; an exception is that Jacobean books are sometimes referred to by the date given on the title-page rather than the date of publication (for example the *Workes* of 1616 is frequently mentioned; it is dated 1616 on the title-page, but was actually published early in 1617). Square brackets in the notes indicate editorial material. This edition follows the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts on which it is based in matters of spelling, punctuation and capitalisation. Indentations after headings have been retained. Material in the margins of the original editions has been transferred to notes. The sources which have been used for each of the works printed below are listed in the first note to that work. In addition, readings from the 1619 Latin *Opera* (STC 14346) are occasionally given in the notes. In James' text, contractions have been silently expanded. Books referred to in editorial matter were published at London unless otherwise indicated.

## Abbreviations

B.L.	British Library.
Boderie	Antoine le Fèvre de la Boderie, <i>Ambassades en Angleterre</i> , 5 vols., [Paris], 1750.
Bowyer	<i>The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer 1606-1607</i> , ed. David Harris Willson, Minneapolis 1931.
C.J.	<i>Commons Journals</i> .
Craigie 1944-50	James Craigie, ed., <i>The Basilicon Doron of King James VI</i> , 2 vols., Scottish Text Society, third series, vols. 16 and 18, Edinburgh 1944-50.
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports.
L.J.	<i>Lords Journals</i> .
PP10	<i>Proceedings in Parliament 1610</i> , ed. E. R. Foster, 2 vols., New Haven 1966.
Rushworth	John Rushworth, ed., <i>Historical Collections</i> , 7 vols., 1659-1701.
S.R.	<i>Statutes of the Realm</i> , ed. T. E. Tomlins et al., 11 vols., 1820-8.
SRP1	<i>Stuart Royal Proclamations volume 1: Royal Proclamations of James I</i> , ed. James F. Larkin, C.S.V., and Paul L. Hughes, Oxford 1973. References are to proclamation number.
STC	<i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, &amp; Ireland and of English</i>

*Abbreviations*

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- Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, first compiled by A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, second edition, revised and enlarged, begun by W. A. Jackson and F. S. Ferguson; completed by Katharine F. Pantzer, 3 vols., 1976-91.
- Willson 1944-5 David Harris Willson, 'James I and his literary assistants', in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 8 (1944-5), 35-57.
- Winwood Sir Ralph Winwood, *Memorials of Affairs of State in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I Collected Chiefly from the Original Papers of Sir Ralph Winwood*, ed. E. Sawyer, 3 vols., 1725.
- Wormald 1991 Jenny Wormald, 'James VI and I, *Basilikon Doron* and *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*: the Scottish context and the English translation', in Linda Levy Peck, ed., *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, Cambridge 1991, 36-54.

## Introduction

James VI and I was one of the most influential British political writers of the early modern period. His *Basilicon Doron* was a best-seller in England and circulated widely on the Continent (the details are discussed in Wormald 1991, 51–2). It was translated into Latin, French, Dutch, German, Swedish and other languages (a list of early translations in Craigie 1944–50, 2: 153–78, 188–90, includes thirty-eight items). The book was frequently quoted by political writers. So, too, were James' other works, and especially his speech to parliament of 21 March 1610. John Locke quoted this speech at length and approvingly. He referred respectfully to James as 'that Learned King who well understood the Notions of things' (*Two Treatises of Government*, second treatise, section 200). Thomas Hobbes likewise praised 'our most wise' King James (*Leviathan* chapter 19, final paragraph). Despite the major differences in their political thought, both Hobbes and Locke were able to praise James, for the king combined absolutist principles with an emphasis upon the monarch's duty to rule according to law and in the public good. The king's political philosophy was a nuanced, moderated absolutism. To understand his principles it is useful to look at the circumstances in which he developed them.

In 1566 Mary Queen of Scots gave birth to James. A year later she abdicated in her son's favour. This abdication had been forced upon her by powerful nobles allied with Protestant preachers. The queen tried to recover her throne in 1568, but her supporters were defeated and she fled to England. There she was placed under house arrest and in 1587 was executed for plotting against the English queen, Elizabeth. In his early years, King James was educated by

George Buchanan, one of the most famous classicists of the age. Buchanan was also an outspoken critic of royal absolutism. Like the leading Scottish reformer John Knox, Buchanan argued that a people may take up arms against a ruler who fails to promote the true religion. He held that in Scotland wicked kings had commonly been called to account by their subjects – a theme that featured strongly in his lengthy Latin history of Scotland (*Rerum Scotticarum Historia*, 1582), and in the pithy dialogue *De Jure Regni apud Scotos* (1579). Both these works were dedicated to James.

When the king grew up, he came to reject the ideas of Buchanan, Knox, and like-minded authors. He also took steps to combat the claims of such presbyterian leaders as Andrew Melville, who held that James was accountable to the church in moral and religious matters. Modern scholarship on Scottish history has emphasised the political competence of the adult James VI. The king efficiently and systematically increased royal power at the expense of the nobility and of the presbyterian church. In 1603 he inherited the crown of England on the death of Queen Elizabeth.

Mary Queen of Scots had been married to King Francis II of France. Her mother was Mary of Guise. In the later sixteenth century the Guise family took a leading part in the civil wars which afflicted France for more than thirty years. They advocated the rigid enforcement of Roman Catholicism, and the violent suppression of Protestantism. In the course of these wars, both Catholic and Protestant theorists came to argue that it was legitimate for the people to take up arms against a monarch who ruled tyrannically – for example, by failing to support the true religion. Catholics also sometimes claimed that the pope had the authority to intervene in the affairs of states, and to depose heretical monarchs. In 1585 Pope Sixtus V interfered in French affairs by excommunicating Henry of Navarre, the Protestant heir to the throne. Pius V issued a bull deposing Elizabeth I of England in 1570, and a number of Catholics plotted to assassinate her in the following years. In France, both Henry III and Henry IV (the former Henry of Navarre) were murdered by Catholic fanatics. A group of Catholic gentlemen plotted to blow up James and parliament in the famous Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

James' early experiences in Scotland alienated him from the thinking of such men as Knox and Buchanan. He also vigorously rejected

Catholic theories which legitimated the use of force by subjects against their sovereigns. Like many of his contemporaries, he looked to strong monarchical power to prevent religious civil war and maintain order. He held that kings possess a monopoly of political power, which they derive from God alone. Active resistance to monarchs is always sinful. If our king commands us to do things which contravene the law of God, we must disobey him, for we should always obey God rather than man. But if the monarch calls us to account for our disobedience, we should meekly accept whatever punishment he inflicts upon us. Kings, James argued, had a duty to rule in the public interest and (except in cases of necessity) to abide by the law of the land. But no one had the power to coerce them into performing these duties.

In 1598 the first edition of *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies* was published. It came out anonymously, but the fact that it appeared from the press of Robert Waldegrave, the king's printer, served to indicate royal authorship or at least endorsement, and the book was known to be by the king long before it was included in James' collected *Workes* of 1616 (Alberico Gentili, *Regales Disputationes Tres*, 1605, 18–19). *The Trew Law* warned against the 'Sirene songs' of people who praised or excused rebellions (p. 62). In Scotland, said James, ignorance of true political principles had long been responsible for 'endlesse calamities, miseris, and confusions' (p. 63). His purpose in writing was to 'lay downe . . . the trew grounds' of political duty 'without wasting time vpon refuting the aduersaries' (p. 62). He made it clear which adversaries he had in mind, inveighing against 'seditious preachers in these daies of whatsoever religion, either in this country or in France' (p. 71), and convicting the French Catholic League of responsibility for a 'superstitious rebellion' which had resulted in 'the great desolation of their whole country' (p. 82). Basing his case on Scripture, reason and history, the king argued that subjects must obey their monarch's 'commands in all things, except directly against God' and that they could never actively resist him (p. 72). *The Trew Law* is commonly seen as the most vigorously absolutist of James' writings. But it already placed considerable stress on the duties of rulers. A prince, he said, 'cannot iustly bring backe againe to himself the priuiledges once bestowed by him or his predecessors vpon any state or ranke of his subjects' (p. 80). Moreover, 'a

good king will . . . delight to rule his subjects by the lawe' (p. 75). Monarchs, in short, should honour their commitments and abide by their laws.

It was also in 1598 that James completed his most famous work, the *Basilicon Doron*. This book was written in Middle Scots. The original manuscript, in the king's own hand, still survives (B.L. Royal MS 18. B. xv). Seven copies of an Anglicised version of the work were secretly printed by Waldegrave in 1599, and distributed to James' relatives and friends. Even before the book was printed it had come to the notice of the presbyterian minister Andrew Melville, who had seen a copy of the manuscript. He very much resented some of the king's remarks about the Scottish presbyterian clergy, and disagreed with James' claim that monarchs are empowered to supervise the affairs of the church within their realms. Melville drew up a list of eighteen objections to *Basilicon Doron*. These criticisms were presented to the ecclesiastical synod of Fife in September 1599 by John Dykes. Before the synod could formally censure the book, James intervened, ordering the arrest of Dykes – who fled into exile. In England, some people took exception to passages in the book which seemed to suggest that the king desired vengeance against those responsible for his mother's execution, and also to a number of James' comments on puritans. In 1603 a revised edition of the work was published with a long preface in which the king responded to both of these objections (further details on the points made in this paragraph are in Craigie 2: 6–17).

*Basilicon Doron* is a book of advice purportedly written for James' son and heir Henry, to whom it was dedicated. Advice books for princes were a conventional literary genre in the sixteenth century and earlier. The king was certainly familiar with a good deal of this literature, from which he borrowed freely (a fuller discussion of the literary antecedents of *Basilicon Doron* is in Craigie 2: 63–87). Enlightening his four-year-old son was probably not his only purpose in writing the book. One possibility is that he wrote it mainly for his own amusement (Wormald 1991, 49). Another notion is that he hoped from the first that the work would be widely read. In the preface to the 1603 edition he records how the book circulated 'contrary to my intention and expectation' (p. 4), but in corrupt texts; so he was forced (much against his will) 'to publish and spread the true copie thereof, for defacing of the false copies that are already spread'



(p. 5). It was a commonplace in James' day for authors to allege that they had been forced reluctantly into publication – and so to indicate that they were not motivated by love of fame or lucre. The king had two added incentives for making this kind of claim. First, some people thought it beneath the dignity of a monarch to publish books (in his preface to James' *Workes* of 1616, James Montagu, Bishop of Winchester, found it necessary to rebut this suggestion at length – sigs. b2b-c4a). Secondly, it is arguable that the king wanted to convince himself and others that his books were demanded by the public because of their literary merits (and this would help explain why the *Trew Law* and later *Triplici Nodo* were published anonymously: James hoped the works' contents would be enough to win them public approval).

*Basilicon Doron* is a book of practical advice rather than abstract theory. It assumed the principles of the *Trew Law* without bothering to prove them. It took for granted that the king alone was to make all final decisions on foreign and domestic policy, and it laid particular emphasis upon his supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs. Much of the advice which the king gave was intended to strengthen the position of the monarchy in Scotland. He repeatedly attacked presbyterian thinking because he held that it undermined the authority of the monarch, and he criticised heritable sheriffdoms for much the same reason (p. 29). Though James did not mention Machiavelli, he was careful to reject Machiavellian teachings, for instance insisting that one king should keep the promises he makes to others (p. 32). He referred to neo-stoicism – which had recently become fashionable through the efforts of Justus Lipsius and others – only to condemn it. As in the *Trew Law*, James stressed the duties as well as the powers of kings. A good king, he said, would think that 'his greatest contentment standeth' in the prosperity of his subjects, and would regard 'the common interesse [i.e. interest]' as 'his chiefest particular [interest]' (p. 20). A tyrant, on the other hand, would pursue his own advantage at the expense of his subjects' welfare, 'by inuerting all good Lawes to serue onely for his vnrulie priuate affections' (p. 20). Even against tyrants, rebellion was unlawful, but it was very likely to occur (p. 21), and God was certain to inflict harsh punishment upon wicked rulers (p. 21).

More than twenty years after penning *Basilicon Doron*, James planned to write another work on 'the office of a King' (p. 232). This