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978-1-107-00559-4 - The Cambridge Companion to Edmund Burke
Edited by David Dwan and Christopher J. Insole
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO EDMUND BURKE

Edmund Burke prided himself on being a practical statesman, not an armchair philosopher. Yet his responses to specific problems – rebellion in America, the abuse of power in India and Ireland, or revolution in France – incorporated theoretical debates within jurisprudence, economics, religion, moral philosophy, and political science. Moreover, the extraordinary rhetorical force of Burke's speeches and writings quickly secured his reputation as a gifted orator and literary stylist. This Companion provides a comprehensive assessment of Burke's thought, examining the intellectual traditions that shaped it and the concrete issues to which it was addressed. The volume explores all his major writings from his early treatise on aesthetics to his famous polemic, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. It also examines the vexed question of Burke's Irishness and seeks to determine how his cultural origins may have influenced his political views – from his attitudes on religious toleration to his complicated response to Empire. Finally, it aims both to explain and to challenge interpretations of Burke as a romantic, a utilitarian, a natural law thinker, and founding father of modern conservatism.

DAVID DWAN is a lecturer in English at Queen's University Belfast. He is author of *The Great Community: Culture and Nationalism in Ireland* (2008) and has written a range of articles on intellectual history and modern literature.

CHRISTOPHER J. INSOLE is senior lecturer in theology and ethics at the University of Durham, U.K. He is the author of *The Politics of Human Frailty: A Theological Defence of Political Liberalism* (2005) and has written articles on Burke, Kant, philosophy of religion, epistemology, and intellectual history.

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Britain; Britain and the American Revolution; and British Pamphlets on the American Revolution.

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JENNIFER PITTS is a professor of political science at the University of Chicago. She is the author of *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* and the editor of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Writings on Empire and Slavery*.

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Citations to Burke's texts are generally given parenthetically, although some additional references are included in notes to the chapters. References to *The Annual Register* are given by year and page number, or to the manuscript reference in the case of the Fitzwilliam Burke Papers. Otherwise references are to volume and page number.

AR	<i>The Annual Register</i> .
C	<i>The Correspondence of Edmund Burke</i> , (ed.) Thomas Copeland and others, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958–78).
CD	<i>Cavendish Debates</i> , (ed.) Sir Henry Cavendish, <i>Government of Canada: Debates of the House of Commons in the Year 1774 on the Bill for Making More Effectual Provision for the Government of the Province of Quebec</i> (London: Ridgway, 1839).
N	<i>A Notebook of Edmund Burke</i> , (ed.) H. V. F. Somerset (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957).
NRO	Fitzwilliam Burke Papers, Northampton Record Office, Northampton.
PH	<i>The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803</i> , 36 vols. (London: T. C. Hansard, 1806–20).
Works	<i>The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke</i> , 8 vols., Bohn's British Classics (London: Bohn, 1854–89). Used for texts that are not yet available in WS.

METHOD OF CITATION

WS *Writings and Speeches*, (ed.) Paul Langford et al., 8 vols. to date (I–III, V–IX), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981–).

For ease of reference to other editions, the full titles of all works, letters, and speeches referred to in this volume from C, WS, and Works, are provided below:

From WS:

WS, I: 65–128	<i>The Reformer</i> 1748
WS, I: 129–184	<i>A Vindication of Natural Society</i> 1756
WS, I: 185–320	<i>A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful</i> 1757
WS, I: 321–331	<i>Fragment: An Essay towards an History of the Laws of England</i> c. 1757
WS, I: 332–552	<i>An Essay towards an Abridgement of the English History</i> (1757–?)
WS, II: 45–50	Speech on Declaratory Resolution 3 February 1766
WS, II: 51–53	Speech on Enforcement of Stamp Act 7 February 1766
WS, II: 54–57	<i>Short Account of a Late Short Administration</i> 1766
WS, II: 61–64	Speech on Townshend Duties 15 May 1767
WS, II: 67–73	Speech on Address 24 November 1767
WS, II: 94–100	Speech on Address 8 November 1768
WS, II: 102–218	<i>Observations on a Late State of the Nation</i> 1769
WS, II: 228–230	Speech on Middlesex Election 15 April 1769
WS, II: 241–322	<i>Thoughts on the Present Discontents</i> 1770
WS, II: 343–349	Speech on Jury Bill 7 March 1771
WS, II: 406–461	<i>Speech on American Taxation</i> 19 April 1774
WS, II: 463–465	Speech on Massachusetts Bay Regulating Bill 2 May 1774

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WS, III: 183-219	Second Speech on Conciliation 1775
WS, III: 288-330	<i>Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol</i> 3 April 1777
WS, III: 344-346	Speech on Fox's Motion 2 December 1777
WS, III: 373-374	Speech on Repeal of Declaratory Act 6 April 1778
WS, III: 431-435	Notes for Speech on Dissenters Bill April 1779
WS, III: 481-551	Speech on Economical Reformation 11 February 1780
WS, III: 588-601	Speech on Duration of Parliaments 8 May 1780
WS, III: 626-634	Speech at Bristol Previous to Election 6 September 1780
WS, V: 41-123	<i>Policy on Making Conquests for the Mahometans</i> 1779
WS, V: 140-142	Speech on Bengal Judicature Bill 27 June 1781
WS, V: 144-189	<i>First Report Select Committee: 'Observations'</i> 5 February 1782
WS, V: 194-333	<i>Ninth Report of Select Committee</i> 25 June 1783
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WS, V: 378-451	<i>Speech on Fox's India Bill</i> 1 December 1783
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- WS, IX: 434–482 Tracts Relating to Popery Laws 1765
- WS, IX: 496–503 Speech on Foreign Troops in Ireland 15 February 1776
- WS, IX: 506–517 *Two Letters on the Trade of Ireland* 23 April and 2 May 1778
- WS, IX: 543–563 *Letter to Thomas Burgh* 1 January 1780
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C, IX: 161–172	Burke to the Rev. Thomas Hussey post 9 December 1796
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- 1730 Burke born in Dublin (1 January; 12 January, NS).
- 1735–40 (?) Lives with mother's relatives in the Blackwater Valley, County Cork.
- 1741–44 Attends Abraham Shackleton's school at Ballitore, County Kildare.
- 1744 Enters Trinity College, Dublin (14 April).
- 1748 Graduates from Trinity College, Dublin (February).
- 1750 Moves to London to study law at the Middle Temple.
- 1753 (?) Drafts *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*
- 1755 Abandons his study of law to seek a literary career.
- 1756 Publishes *A Vindication of Natural Society* (18 May).
- 1757 Marries Jane Nugent (12 March). Publishes *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (21 April).
- 1758 Richard Burke born (9 February). Burke signs contracts for an *Essay towards an Abridgment of the English History* (25 February; subsequently abandoned; a fragment was published in 1812) and an *Annual Register* (24 April).
- 1759 (?) Accepts position as private secretary to William Gerard Hamilton.
- 1759 First volume of the *Annual Register* published (15 May).

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- 1761–4 Returns to Ireland for two periods (August 1761–Spring 1762; September 1763–Spring 1764) as secretary to Hamilton, who had been appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.
- 1762 (?) Begins *Tracts Relative to the Laws Against Popery in Ireland* (later abandoned; the surviving portions published in 1812).
- 1765 (?) Breaks with Hamilton (before February 1765).
- 1765 Becomes private secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham, First Lord of the Treasury (11 July). Through the influence of Lord Verney, elected to the House of Commons for the borough of Wendover, in Buckinghamshire (23 December).
- 1766 First speech in the Commons (17 January). Publishes *A Short Account of a Late Short Administration* (4 August). Goes into opposition with Rockingham.
- 1768 Buys a house and 300-acre estate at Beaconsfield, in Buckinghamshire (April).
- 1769 Publishes *Observations on a Late State of the Nation* (8 February).
- 1770 Publishes *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (23 April).
- 1770 Elected London agent for the New York Assembly (21 December; Burke accepts the position early in 1771).
- 1773 Visit to France (January to March).
- 1774 Delivers *Speech on American Taxation* (19 April; published 10 January 1775). Elected MP for Bristol (2 November).
- 1775 Delivers *Speech on Conciliation with America* (22 March; published 22 May).
- 1776 American Declaration of Independence.
- 1777 Publishes *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (5 May).
- 1778 Publishes *Two Letters on the Trade of Ireland* (12 May).
- 1780 Delivers *Speech on Economical Reformation* (11 February; published 17 February). Dissolution of Parliament

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- (1 September). Seeks reelection at Bristol, but is forced to withdraw. Through Rockingham's influence, elected for the borough of Malton, in Yorkshire (9 December).
- 1781 Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown (19 October).
- 1782 Lord North resigns (20 March). Rockingham forms a new ministry; Burke appointed Paymaster-General of the Forces (27 March). On the death of Rockingham (1 July), the King appoints Lord Shelburne as First Lord; Burke therefore resigns (11 July).
- 1783 Shelburne's administration defeated in the Commons (18 February) by a conjunction between the supporters of Lord North and Charles James Fox. The Fox–North Coalition (nominally headed by the Duke of Portland) formed; Burke again becomes Paymaster-General (2 April). Delivers his *Speech on Fox's East India Bill* (1 December). The Fox–North coalition is defeated in the House of Lords (17 December). The Coalition is dismissed (19 December), and William Pitt becomes Prime Minister.
- 1784 Parliament dissolved (25 March). In the ensuing election, Pitt secures a majority. Burke re-elected for Malton (1 April).
- 1785 Delivers his *Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts* (28 February; published 23 August).
- 1786 Composes 22 'articles of charge' against Warren Hastings, the East India Company's Governor-General of Bengal 1772–85 (April–May).
- 1788 Trial of Hastings opens (13 February). Burke leads with a four-day speech (15, 16, 18, 19 February). In October, the King is taken ill, initiating the 'Regency Crisis'. Burke speaks frequently in the debates in the Commons.
- 1789 The King unexpectedly recovers, ending the 'Regency Crisis' (February). The storming of the Bastille (14 July).
- 1790 Publishes *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1 November).
- 1791 *A Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* published (April, in French; May, in English). Public breach with Fox on the floor of the House of Commons (6 May). Publishes

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- An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (3 August).
 Writes 'Thoughts on French Affairs' (posthumously
 published in 1797).
- 1793 France declares war on Great Britain (1 February). Burke
 writes *Observations on the Conduct of the Minority*
 (September; unauthorised publication, 13 February
 1797) and 'Remarks on the Policy of the Allies' (October;
 posthumously published 1797).
- 1794 Delivers the concluding speech at the trial of Hastings (over
 nine days, May–June). Retires from Parliament (25 June).
 Death of Richard Burke, Jr. (2 August).
- 1795 Hastings acquitted on all charges (23 April). Burke awarded
 a pension (August). Writes on the food crisis (December; a
 garbled text published as *Thoughts and Details on Scarcity*
 in 1800).
- 1796 Publishes *A Letter to a Noble Lord* (24 February).
 Publishes *Two Letters ... on the Proposals for Peace with
 the Regicide Directory of France* (20 October; pirated text
 published 19 October as *Thoughts on the Prospect of a
 Regicide Peace*).
- 1797 Burke dies (9 July).