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Interpretations of Locke

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To Sandy Stewart, †John Stephens, and Ralph Waller,
friends who helped me along the way

And to Betty,
dearest friend, beloved companion

Preface

This volume brings together eleven studies on the Christian philosophy of John Locke. Most of them are not new: five were previously published; three others were delivered as lectures or addresses and now appear in print for the first time. The origin of each of these studies is disclosed in a footnote at the beginning of each of these chapters. Three of the chapters are entirely new.

None of the studies previously published or delivered appears in its original form. I have revised them all, in some instances substantially. I have also tried to make this set of studies, each conceived and executed on a different occasion, cohere in a single book whose chapters develop a common theme and follow generally along a single line of argument. I have revised and rearranged them all with this end in view. This has been a pleasant task and less difficult than I first imagined it would be, for it seems, in retrospect, that I have been aiming at the same goal in all of them: to recover the mind of John Locke. What I present here, then, is original work on Locke in a form that may be taken as authoritative, at least for the time being, for it is my hope that what is presented here may not only be instructive, but may also open pathways that lead to new discoveries about Locke's mind that will necessitate revision of prevailing opinions, mine and others'.

I am grateful to Sarah Hutton for suggesting that a collection of my studies on Locke would be of interest to scholars, for providing me with the opportunity to produce one, and for giving me encouragement and support along the way. Her generosity and good will have put me immeasurably in her debt.

There are many others to whom I am indebted: Michael Ayers, Peter Anstey, Stanley Bates, Jim Berg, Melanie Bigold, Dan Brayton, Jane Chaplin, Marina Frasca-Spada, Mark Goldie, Douglas Hedley, Kareem Khalifa, Sue Killoran, John Milton, Paul Monod, John Rogers, Paul Schuurman, Paul Sigmund, Luisa Simonutti, Lesley Smith, Christopher Star, Tim Stanton, Richard Yeo, and John Walsh. There are others, I am sure, that I have overlooked.

Grateful acknowledgment is given to Middlebury College for grants from its faculty emeritus research fund, and for providing me with a study in its magnificent new library, to the Principal and Fellows of Harris Manchester College, Oxford, for never failing hospitality and friendship, and to the Andrew Mellon Foundation for awarding me a Mellon Emeritus Fellowship, which has sustained my research for nearly 4 years.

Thanks to the Keeper of Western Special Collections, the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, for permission to include transcriptions of the following manuscripts: Locke 16. 25 (Locke's interleaved English Bible): transcriptions of a selection of notes by Locke from the writings of Nicholas Gibbon (Ch. 2); MS Locke c. 43, 'Adversaria Theologica', pp. 1–7 (Ch. 3); MS Locke c. 27, 'Dubia circa philosophiam orientalem', fos 75–7 (Ch. 10).

Middlebury, VT Victor Nuovo
19 July 2010

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Abbreviations

Boyle, *Works*	*The Works of Robert Boyle*, ed. Michael Hunter and Edward B. Davis, 14 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto: 2000).
Conduct	John Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, ed. Paul Schuurman (Keele, 2000).
Correspondence	*The Correspondence of John Locke,* ed. E. S. de Beer, 8 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976–1989). Citations are by volume and page; in a few instances they are cited by volume and letter number. Letter numbers run consecutively throughout the collection.
Education	John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, ed. John W. and Jean S. Yolton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).
Essay	John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding,* ed. Peter Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). Citations are by book, chapter and section, followed by pagination according to Nidditch, e.g. *Essay* I. iv. 8 (87).
Law of Nature	John Locke, *Essays on the Law of Nature*, ed. and tr. W. von Leyden (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1954).
LL	John Harrison and Peter Laslett, *The Library of John Locke*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971). Books contained in Locke's library are cited by the catalogue number of the work cited, e.g., *LL* 123.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, (Online edition, 2005)
Paraphrase and Notes	John Locke, *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*, ed. Arthur W. Wainwright, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

Reasonableness	John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity as deliver'd in the Scriptures,* ed. John C. Higgins-Biddle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).
Toleration	John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Toleration and other writings on Law and Politics*, *1667–1683*, ed. J. R. and Philip Milton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006).
Tolerantia	John Locke, *Epistola de Tolerantia*, ed. Raymond Klibansky, tr. J. W. Gough (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).
Two Treatises	John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).
WR	*John Locke: Writings on Religion*, ed. Victor Nuovo (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

Introduction

The three topics named in the title of this book: Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment, are not meant merely to describe the contents of the various chapters it contains. A narrative is implied in their selection and arrangement, and embedded in the narrative is an argument, whose proof is offered in the several chapters that follow. The narrative is a familiar one: its theme is the transition during the early modern period of European intellectual history from religion to enlightenment. The argument is that the intellectual sources of this development derive from antiquity. By 'enlightenment' I mean philosophical enlightenment, or the emergence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of Enlightenment philosophies. In some places, the term enlightenment will be assigned a social rather than a philosophical sense, to apply to those emerging liberal policies that limited the power of government and churches, thus preventing them from interfering in private individual life. More on this will follow.

The argument is inductive and cumulative. It consists of interpretations of Locke that, taken together, show how meandering the course from religion to enlightenment was. These interpretations also have another goal, of equal importance, to understand the mind of John Locke. Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment were currents running through his mind and flowing out from it. That outflow is his intellectual legacy. What I hope to show is how these currents follow not separate channels but constantly intermix, which accounts for the meandering, producing complexities and ambiguities in his thought and expression, and sometimes confounding his interpreters. It is not my purpose, however, to perplex, rather it is to discover the richness of Locke's thought – indeed to celebrate it, for Locke's learning is a wonder to behold, rich, variegated, but coherently philosophical – to identify the varieties of intellectual traditions that find expression in his writings and to explain their presence, and then to fix his place in the intellectual history of his era and, more broadly, in the history of philosophy.

Regarding Locke's legacy, explaining how he became the 'father' of the English Enlightenment will prove not to be a simple matter. It may be that he is its most probable father, but it is just as likely that he would not have claimed the child.[1]

[1]Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World* (New York: Norton, 2000) 481.

Christianity. That Locke was a Christian, and a very serious one besides, is no longer a matter of controversy. I trust that there is sufficient evidence presented in this volume to refute any lingering tendency to deny it. Still, the nature of Locke's Christianity and the part it played in his philosophical work remain matters of uncertain definition. I trust, then, also, that the several chapters about to be presented will, in different ways, help to clarify these things also. A principal claim made here is that Locke was a Christian philosopher and a philosophical Christian as well. Philosophy and Christianity were woven together in his thinking to produce subtle and always interesting patterns of thought and expression.

In the opening chapter, I argue that that the primary content of Locke's Christian philosophy involves a correlation of a unique Protestant version of Christianity, grounded upon the Bible and giving priority to the New Testament, with the new natural philosophy epitomized in the work of Robert Boyle. This correlation is personified in the character of the Christian Virtuoso, whose features are evident throughout Locke's intellectual life. In the exposition of this character I will attempt show how subtly these two domains were joined by the ingenuity of the virtuoso, whose explorations into nature and the Bible and the method of them work together to form a unitary point of view and conviction.

The next five chapters study the nature and scope of Locke's Christianity. My purpose in all of them is not merely to expound his Christian opinions but to determine their place in his philosophy and to assess the formative role they played in his thought. Chapter 2 is a narrative of Locke's theological projects during last decade of his life and of their products, most notable of which are *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*. Locke's manuscript remains are considered here also, especially the 'Adversaria Theologica' in which he developed a personal program of theological study that included speculative questions not ordinarily associated with Locke. The penultimate section of this chapter provides a convenient transition to Chap. 3. It gives an account of Locke's *Discourse of Miracles*, written in 1702 but published posthumously. Here he makes the remarkable claim that a proper understanding of the evidential force of miracles establishes faith in divine revelation with a degree of assurance that rivals the certainty of cognition, and that, accordingly, a Christian can look upon biblical accounts of divine revelation with an unshakable assurance, as an 'infallible' source of truth.

Chapter 3 is an attempt to fill an important lacuna in Locke scholarship. It concerns his recognition of the divine authority of the Bible and how he came by it. There seems to be an incongruity in Locke's acceptance of the divine authority of Scripture, because he nowhere appears to have justified it. In fact, I argue, Locke did do this repeatedly, but in a way easily overlooked. Locke's proof that the Bible is divine is cumulative, one that recurs throughout his writings on religion and is integral to his biblical hermeneutics. He supposed that biblical interpretation, properly practiced according to critical, historical principles, has evidentiary force concerning its origin. This theme is touched upon also in the succeeding two chapters.

Chapter 4 has two purposes. The first is to provide an exposition of Locke's Christology, which, on examination proves to have been richer and subtler than is

commonly supposed. Locke's is a solidly based biblical Christology that I characterize as basically 'messianic', which is to say it emphasizes the cosmic historical and dynamical and mythical aspects of Jesus Christ and his mission. I argue that these features of Locke's Christology are determinative of his worldview. The second purpose looks beyond Locke's theological writings to discover Christological moments in his philosophical writings and assesses overall the place of Christology in his thought.

Chapter 5 examines the hermeneutics of *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*. Locke believed that among the Apostles, St Paul had received a unique endowment. His mind had been infused with the whole Christian revelation, which found expression in his letters. Because of his learning and keen intellect, his mind was a fit vessel for this act of divine superaddition. Locke supposed that the task of a Christian interpreter is to retrieve St Paul's meaning in his letters; the same goal is pursued in his interpretation of messianic secrecy, that is, the reluctance of the Messiah to declare his identity. Here it is the mind of Christ that he seeks to understand. Locke's hermeneutics is shown to be not only an endeavour to understand a text by retrieving the intentions of an author. It has a religious goal also: to perfect one's faith – which, it turns out, for Locke, is the same as enlarging reason, to direct it towards a perfect or consummate state epitomized by St Paul. This might be called the crowning achievement of Christian virtuosity.

Chapter 6 presents the text and translation of a manuscript containing Locke's notes on the Christian Kabbalah, or more particularly, on a treatise entitled *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae* (*An Outline of Christian Kabbalah*), which represents an attempt to appropriate the Jewish Kabbalah for Christianity. Against the panorama of a narrative of fall and redemption, a variety of theological issues are considered by Locke: the soul of the Messiah, the fall and perseverance of angelic beings, the difference between matter and spirit, and the soul's metaphysical journey of descent and ascent. A historical introduction precedes the text. Locke compiled these notes sometime either in the late 1680s or, more likely, in the early 1690s. In spite of his doubts about the Kabbalah, expressed in the title, he went on to appropriate significant parts of it.

Antiquity. That the sources of the philosophical enlightenment were derived from antiquity is not a controversial claim. The next three Chaps. 7–9 show how Locke appropriated these sources and to what extent they had an enlightening effect on his mind. I use two criteria to determine philosophical enlightenment, both involve a repudiation of voluntarism. The first views God as pure intelligence, as *nous* or divine reason; the second is moral autonomy, the doctrine that right reason or the knowledge of the good are sufficient to determine the will. In both cases the idea of the will of God is rendered otiose.

All three chapters prove beyond a doubt that Locke appropriated significant parts of Platonism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism, but not always and not primarily with an eye towards philosophical enlightenment in the sense used in this volume. Chapter 7 makes him out to be a religious not a philosophical Platonist. He used Platonic ideas as instruments to extend the scope of his mind and to make it more

receptive of revelation. Chapter 8 shows how Stoic ideas are embedded in Locke's principal doctrines concerning knowledge, the will, law of nature, and universal providence, but only to an extent that he was able to render them compatible with his Christian beliefs. As its title suggests, in Chap. 8 we find Locke on the attack. This is not surprising because Epicureanism involves the denial of the divine creation of the world and divine providence in any form, general or particular. It also denies mankind a preeminent place of in the natural world. It denies teleology, except in a restricted evolutionary biological sense. However, Epicureanism was also instrumental in the development of the new science, or experimental natural philosophy, both with respect to its theory of atoms and mechanism and its experimental point of view. Epicurean physics was something that every Virtuoso was required to know. Locke was no exception. Access to this was largely through Lucretius' great poem, *De rerum naturae*, which not only argued for a consistent and thoroughgoing materialism, but which also provided a sublime vision of nature operating without God, which was the more dangerous because of the fascination it evoked. Hence the curious ambivalence in seventeenth century attitudes towards Epicurean physics. It is obvious that Locke was repelled and attracted by it. In his endeavour to defend Christian theism against Epicurean materialism, we once more catch a glimpse of Locke the Platonist, or rather, that peculiar ambiguous character of Plato's *Sophist*, the reformed giant.

Enlightenment. The final two Chaps. 10 and 11 are about Locke's Enlightenment and his legacy. They are assessments of the extent in which Locke himself may be regarded as enlightened, and of his legacy as a founder of the English Enlightenment.

In Chap. 10, I argue that a religious motive is uniformly present in Locke's political thought, although it finds expression in a variety of ways and is often mixed almost helter-skelter with secular arguments, yet never displaced by them. This religious motive, which is Christian and exclusivist, seems anti-Enlightenment. Yet Locke was a strong proponent of religious toleration, of the right of individuals to choose their own religion, free from domination by state or church. Religious liberty is surely a liberal idea, and liberal ideas, whatever their focus, are characteristically enlightening. Liberty to travel or to trade, liberty of speech or assembly, liberty of the press: these are all enlightening, because they subvert dogmatism and therefore free the minds of individuals to think in open fields. Religious liberty has a similar effect. Moreover, it is arguable that defending these sorts of liberty is an expression of an enlightened mind. And if so, we may infer from this that Locke's mind was indeed enlightened. I prefer to call this sort of enlightenment 'institutional', in contrast to philosophical enlightenment, which is my main concern in this book.

Philosophical enlightenment is the main theme of Chap. 11, but Locke is not its protagonist. The place of honour is assigned to Catharine Cockburn. An explanation is in order. Catharine Cockburn was a philosopher well versed in Locke, and in many respects she shared his sentiments, especially concerning toleration. She wrote publicly although anonymously in his defence. She also published work defending Samuel Clarke. She wrote from a philosophical position that was her own, and what is noteworthy about her writings is that the criteria of philosophical

enlightenment are clearly expressed in them and always prominent. The overpowering will of God is diminished if not absent from her thinking. She was an autodidact who was deeply read in Roman philosophy, and in such moderns as Grotius, Locke, and Clarke, and in British moral philosophy generally. She showed great loyalty to Locke. She traversed many of the intellectual paths that he did. Yet it was she rather than he who more unequivocally exemplified Philosophical Enlightenment in England. What this suggests is that the achievement of enlightenment, philosophically regarded, was not something Locke achieved all by himself and certainly not unambiguously. Rather, philosophical enlightenment was achieved more decisively and unambiguously by others who followed in Locke's train. They had a clearer purpose and a firmer resolve. Such was Catharine Cockburn.

Chapter 1
A Portrait of John Locke as a Christian Virtuoso*

> This above all, to thine own self be true and it must follow as the night the day thou canst not then be false to any man[1]

Introduction

Anyone who has read John Locke's account of personal identity will remember that he equated it with consciousness of self over time whereby an individual owns its actions and passions past and present. He labels individuals who do this 'persons'. 'Where-ever a Man finds, what he calls *himself*, there I think another may say is the same *Person*.'[2] In addition he observes that 'person' is a forensic term, because individuals own not only their bare actions, but the merit or demerit of them also. This applies only to 'intelligent Agents capable of Law', that is, capable of following a rule. They personify the rule of law. On this account, a certain rule or measure of thought and action becomes an integral a part of one's own self (which develops over time), to be sure a normative part. Its presence is detected in the feelings of satisfaction and shame that attach themselves to memories of things past, and to the aspirations of hope and the fear of condemnation that arise when we reflect upon them.

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* This chapter is a revised and enlarged version of a keynote address delivered at the Tercentenary Conference on John Locke held in Brisbane, Australia in June 2004.

[1] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I. 3. 79–82. For a plausible interpretation of these lines that fits the theme of this paper, see Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 3. Trilling characterizes the age in which Locke lived as an age of sincerity, which he defines as an endeavour to achieve congruence between one's public avowals with one's internal beliefs. Like all moral norms, it was often touted rather than obeyed, and its avowals were therefore frequently suspect. An age of sincerity is also likely be an age of suspicion. The two go together, and their conjunction is not a reason to discount the seriousness of its practitioners, of which the Christian virtuoso is a type, to achieve it.

[2] *Essay*, II. xxvii. 26 (346).

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Being true to one's own self, forensically considered, involves the practice of honest self-examination according to an internal standard. Truthfulness in all other respects is akin to it, for this forensic practice is a kind of discerning; a person is truthful who takes care that what it says conforms to what it knows to be true. Care is another intrinsic aspect of personality, for persons endeavor to conform their actions to law out of a concern for their happiness. It is supposed that one's happiness depends upon it also, for honesty in all one's judgments about one self is a condition of divine favor, without which happiness is impossible. Locke believed that this law is not a natural endowment, engraved on the mind, ready to be read when needed. Rather it is something to be sought after in honest pursuits of truth. Rightly understood, it is an eternal rule of right, rooted in divine goodness, but like all else that we come to know or believe, natural or revealed, our acceptance is the result of experience and judgment, whereupon it is stored in the memory, revived in the mind and applied to our actions in reflective or deliberative moments that span our waking life. Over time, these practices cast the self into a particular shape and character. Hence, it would not be impertinent to inquire about the rule-governed character that Locke applied to his own self. What kind of person did John Locke take himself to be? I answer, a Christian Virtuoso.

My intention, however, is not merely to identify and describe what I take to be Locke's character, but to offer it as a means to gain access to what he intended in his writings and to gain a proper understanding of them. I begin by offering an account of the character a Christian Virtuoso in its context, as it was conceived and lived by Robert Boyle, who, even if he was not the originator of the idea, reflected on it, wrote about it, and exemplified it before Locke's very eyes. Next, I recount some biographical facts about Locke that give credibility to the claim that he came to recognize his calling as that of a Christian Virtuoso. Finally, I use this portrait as a means of gaining insight, through his writings, into Locke's mind and his own thoughts, from whence, I believe, it should be possible to reconstruct, or rehearse, his authorship, or, to employ a Lockean expression, to retrace his path as he 'let loose his thoughts and followed them in writing', interpreting Locke's writings by consulting Locke himself.[3] This way of proceeding has this in its favor: it follows a method that Locke himself employed in interpreting St Paul, one that he expressed confidence could be applied to any literary work: reading a work through as many times as it takes to grasp its purpose and scope, determining its proper parts, and then relating parts and whole in an endeavour to comprehend its meaning.[4] I cannot do justice to such an undertaking here, especially in the case of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, which surely must be given priority in any attempt to

[3] *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Epistle to the Reader (6) 'This, Reader, is the Entertainment of those, who let loose their own Thoughts, and follow them in writing'. The subsequent clause may be appealed to as justification for this approach. I have elaborated on this process in my 'Locke's Hermeneutics of Existence and his Representation of Christianity' forthcoming in Luisa Simonutti, ed. *Conscience and Scripture. Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics* (Dordrecht: Springer, in preparation).

[4] See my 'Locke's Hermeneutics'.

understand Locke's entire intellectual project. Rather, I will select places in Locke's great work that I believe best convey a sense of the whole. If my readings in these instances ring true, then what is offered in the final stage of this paper may serve as preliminary proof of the plausibility of my claim about Locke's character and its use as a principle of interpretation. What follows may be taken as an initial run around a hermeneutical circle.

The Character of a Christian Virtuoso

In the seventeenth-century England, the term virtuoso denoted an experimental natural philosopher. 'Christian Virtuoso', then, signified an experimental natural philosopher who was also a professed Christian. But the term, which appears to have been coined by Robert Boyle, was intended to mean something more than the juxtaposition of these two practices in a single life. Its adoption and use was meant to affirm that Christianity and virtuosity were not merely compatible, but also mutually beneficial and sustaining. The Virtuoso is able to progress farther in natural philosophy because of his Christianity, and his understanding of the Christian revelation is rendered more comprehensible and sure by his virtuosity.

Virtuosi were usually gentleman, who had the leisure and the wherewithal to engage in pursuits after truth. They were professed lovers of truth, who had become addicted to the cognitive delights that accrued from experimental practice, of trial and discovery whereby nature was forced to disclose her secrets. Accordingly, they willingly subjected themselves to the discipline and hard labor that its pursuit required, not deterred by the fact that experimental methods required that they engage in the common practices of tradesmen that were, customarily, beneath their dignity. Consistent with their love of truth, they cultivated an impartiality of judgment and, consistent with a practice that yielded its results piecemeal, they assumed an attitude of intellectual modesty; they cultivated a patient curiosity about the underlying structure and causes of things, and a docility that prepared them to accept results of well-conceived experiments even when they were unexpected and seemed paradoxical. Thus, they developed what Boyle described as 'a well grounded and duly limited' docility that focused upon bare facts situated in plausible hypotheses suited to them; they endeavored to sustain an openness of mind and a readiness to accept what nature discovers to the attentive observer through repeated experimental trials. This is a mental attitude unburdened of theoretical presuppositions and dogmatic preconceptions, open to the reception of naked empirical truths even when they are contrary to received opinion or what is taken to be common sense.

Nature's prime secret—which was not then supposed to be very secret—is her authorship. Experimental natural philosophy makes its practitioners cognizant of the design of things that testifies to the wisdom and power evident in natural things and the processes that produce them. It gives rise to natural theological belief in a divine providence that from the beginning has determined the course of natural

events, and that operates consistently for the benefit of creatures, especially mankind, so that goodness is added to the list of divine attributes discoverable by trying nature. Repeatedly demonstrated natural theological beliefs joined to the characteristic docility of the Virtuoso makes him receptive to the characteristically unexpected disclosures of revelation, which in turn elevates his mind beyond the bounds of sense, makes him aware of transcendent benefits that follow the train of discovery, most importantly, immortal bliss and cognitive perfection in the world to come.

The discovery of revealed truth is enhanced by the Christian's virtuosity. Scripture is tried in a manner not unlike nature, its disclosures as it were forced out by relentless exegesis whose results then enlarge reason not unlike the way in which experimental practice enlarges reason by leading it to discover unanticipated truth.

The pursuits of a Christian Virtuoso require that he forego many common gentlemanly pursuits: worldly ambition and sensual delights and, if need be, a settled place in the world—in that respect, his style of life differs little from that of a Christian pilgrim and blends easily with it. He eschews flights of speculative fancy and favours common tangible truths found out by methods and practices that once seemed suited only to vulgar trades. Out of dedication to intellectual pursuits the Christian virtuoso will prefer to remain celibate and, accordingly, chaste. This attitude is sustained by a sincere Christian piety that subordinates worldly ambition to the pursuit of heaven.

The Origin of the Character and Its Idea

The expression 'Christian Virtuoso' was given currency by Robert Boyle. It is the title and theme of a long and characteristically unfinished work in which he was intermittently engaged for over two decades. The origin of the work is clouded in uncertainty. It is an apologetic work justifying the vocation of Christian virtuoso. It is a deeply personal work. Boyle was challenged from both sides: the clergy worried that the practice of natural philosophy, because it directed his attention away from God, the ultimate cause, to secondary causes, would weaken his acceptance of theism and even more of the supernatural truths of Christianity, and by virtuosi, who regarded his Christian pursuits as eccentric and inconsistent with serious natural enquiry.[5] In his preface, Boyle writes that he had written it many years before its publication, but he doesn't tell us just how many. The earliest surviving manuscripts relating to *The Christian Virtuoso* date from the 1670s; the editors of the modern collected edition of Boyle's writings conjecture on the basis of surviving manuscripts that Boyle began writing it early in that decade. One of these dated

[5] Robert Boyle, *The Christian Virtuoso*. *The First Part* (1691), Boyle, *Works*, xi, 283.

1675 is identified by the initials 'CV'. Early in the next decade, Locke reviewed a version of the work, and wrote some critical notes on it. He refers to the text simply as 'Boyle… his treatise 1681', which suggests that the manuscript he had was without a title.[6]

But the idea of a Christian Virtuoso, if not the name, surely predates this. Most likely the character came before the name, and the idea of it grew out of vocational conflicts that are reported in his early works.[7] Its origins date back at least to 1662, when the Royal Society was incorporated, for the term, Virtuoso, was then used to signify a practitioner of the new experimental natural philosophy, a participant in the scientific revolution, and, by extension, it was applied also to members of the Royal Society. One of the concerns of the early apologists of the Royal Society was to demonstrate the compatibility of the natural philosophical work of its members with the Christian Religion. Boyle's book accomplishes just that, and this apologetic purpose puts it in the same class with Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* (1667), Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1665), and Joseph Glanvill's *Plus Ultra* (1668). Boyle wrote other works during this period for a similar purpose: *The Style of the Scripture* (1661) *The Usefulness of Natural Philosophy* (Parts I and II.1, 1663) and *The Excellence of Theology* (first published 1674, but composed, 1665), all of them designed to demonstrate that the practice of natural philosophy and of Christianity were not only compatible but mutually sustaining. There are verbal and thematic affinities between these works and *The Christian Virtuoso*, enough of them to justify the probability that the idea of *The Christian Virtuoso* if not an early draft of it existed a decade or more before the manuscript remains that we now possess.[8] Even if this were not so, Boyle's way of life was already then taken as an exemplar of what a Christian Virtuoso was supposed to be.[9]

The full title of Boyle's book is as follows: *The Christian Virtuoso: shewing*, *That by being addicted to Experimental Philosophy*, *a Man is rather Assisted than Indisposed, to be a Good Christian*. Since being a Virtuoso involves having a certain cognitive stance along with certain skills of reasoning, Boyle's strategy is to

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[6] '*Boyle*. Observations on his treatise 81', MS. Locke c. 27, fols. 67–68.

[7] Robert Boyle, *Some Considerations Concerning the Usefulness of Natural Philosophy*. *The First Part* (1663), Boyle, *Works*, iii, 213; see also *The Excellency of Theology*, Boyle, *Works*, viii, published in 1674 but written a decade or more before; also *Some Considerations About the Reconcileableness of Reason and Religion*, Boyle, *Works*, viii, published 1675 but also written at least a decade earlier.

[8] Composing works and laying them by for later examination by associates and eventual publication was Boyle's common practice. See, e.g., Edward B. Davis, '"Parcere Nominibus", Boyle, Hooke and the rhetorical interpretation of Descartes', in *Robert Boyle Reconsidered*, ed. Michael Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 157f.

[9] Locke expressed such an opinion of Boyle in his 'Advertisement' to Boyle's *General History of the Air*, Boyle, *Works*, xii, 5. See also Sir Peter Pett 'notes on Boyle' in *Robert Boyle*, *by Himself and His Friends* ed. Michael Hunter (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1994), 54–83, and Gilbert Burnet's funeral sermon printed in the same volume.

show how this cognitive stance and accompanying skills are also conducive to being a Christian.

What then is the stance and what are the skills of the Virtuoso? His theater is the world of experience. Merely Speculative truths and metaphysical dogmas are of no concern to him. His commitment is to the accumulation of knowledge in natural histories rather than the systematic construction of it. Hypotheses provide order and explanation, but even ones of great generality and explanatory power, such as the corpuscular hypothesis, are of limited scope.[10] The study of mathematics is recommended because it does not pretend to any other truth than its own, and because it is instrumental in refining the virtuoso's deductive skills and of use in the interpretation of facts. Boyle describes the virtuoso's cognitive stance as 'a well grounded and duly limited, Docility'. A well-grounded docility is one that is founded upon experience and it is duly limited when it restricts its judgments to those whose meaning and truth is derived from it. This docility is shaped by the experimental philosopher's 'temper of mind' and of the way that he philosophizes. His 'Temper of mind' is a sincere and undiscriminating love of truth. The Virtuoso is 'addicted to Knowledge Experimental', which is to say, he has dedicated his life to a tireless pursuit of it.[11] He never has enough. Like a lover he is enamored of all the qualities of his beloved, and so is irresistibly drawn after truths of all varieties, even minor, ordinary truths, in themselves seemingly of no account, mere matters of fact. He delights in everything that an open and attentive mind receives through the senses; his addiction extends even to unpleasant things, to putrid and repellent perceptions. The virtuoso's undiscriminating love of truth is a sort of training in impartiality. He 'is accustom'd both to Persue, Esteem, and Relish many Truths' that neither cause him immediate sensory delight, or 'gratifie his Passions', or satisfy his worldly Interests. They 'only entertain his Understanding with that Manly and Spiritual Satisfaction afforded it by the attainment of Clear and Noble Truths, which are its genuine Objects and Delights'. These 'Clear and Noble Truths' are the rewards of the virtuoso's docility, which is better imagined as intelligent receptivity than mere passivity. It is as though the pleasure of small truths were given by providence as a guarantee and anticipation of a fuller satisfaction that awaits the virtuoso as he endeavors to interpret them, to fit them into well formed hypotheses, for which they serve as confirmation or proof, for the Virtuoso's disposition is an active one and, as I have noted, tireless and, at its best, always ingenious and ingenuous. With 'a Serious and Settled application of Mind'

[10] According to the corpuscular hypothesis, gross material bodies are made up of indiscernibly small corpuscles (tiny bodies) that vary in size, shape and bulk and whose divinely appointed ways of cohesion and motion determine the properties and operations of their perceptible grosser counterparts. For a survey of corpuscularism during the 17 C, see Daniel Garber, et al., 'New Doctrines of Body and its Powers, Place and Space', *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, ed. Michael Ayers and Daniel Garber, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1998), i, 552–623. On corpuscularism in Boyle, see Peter Anstey, *The Philosophy of Robert Boyle* (London: Routledge, 2000), 2f. and passim.

[11] *The Christian Virtuoso*, Boyle, *Works*, xi, 291.

the virtuoso devises 'intricate and laborious Experiments' or trials, by which the 'mysteries of nature' are slowly brought to light. Moreover, with the aid of ingenious instruments, which are the productions of a lowly mechanic art, the virtuoso enters into the 'Recesses' of things, measures the effects of their operations and begins to apprehend their underlying causes and structure. In this way the Virtuoso discovers real and unanticipated truths of nature, truths that previously might have seemed to the imagination beyond the scope of reason or even contrary to it. These are, to be sure, mysteries of mere physical nature, but the satisfaction that comes with the discovery of such unexpected earthy truths prepares the mind for a greater satisfaction that will come with the disclosure of the more sublime truths of revelation. Finally, through the method of experimentation the Virtuoso cultivates the skills of sagacity and judgment, skills that are employed to decide fitness and weight of facts as evidence. Thus the virtuoso is a skilled assessor of facts, not only of his those gathered by himself but of those purveyed by others, for Boyle is insistent that experience must be enlarged if the commonwealth of learning is to increase. Hence the virtuoso depends upon and therefore must cultivate the skill of appraising the testimony of others. He becomes a sort of critical historian of facts. His docility with respect to factual news, however, is not supposed to degenerate into mere credulity.

The cognitive stance and skills of the Virtuoso are supposed to be conducive to Christianity in several respects.[12] First under nature's tutelage the Virtuoso acquires 'a firm Belief' in the existence and attributes of God and of his providence.[13] His perceptions of the remarkable contrivances of nature make him all the more cognizant of the wisdom and power of an intelligent designer, and they educe a sense of gratitude and obligation. Such natural religion is the propaedeutic of revealed religion, for nature's instruction makes her docile pupils aware of their cognitive limitations even as she enlarges the scope of their imaginations. Thereby she instills a curiosity to consider things that may lie beyond her boundaries, and entices them with anticipations or analogies of them. Second, because the truth of the Christian religion is founded on certain historical matters of fact, the Virtuoso, who is a connoisseur of facts and of testimony concerning matters of fact, is well prepared to

[12] The cognitive stance of the Virtuoso, which I emphasize here, also has a rhetorical aspect to it. This should not be surprising, for the virtuoso who publishes his opinions 'to the world' can hardly avoid a rhetorical strategy, especially if he has classical learning and, hence, a ready skill to do so. Steven Shapin explores this rhetorical and self-promotional aspect of the Christian Virtuoso in *A Social History of Truth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Shapin's method has its limitations. He equates the role of the Christian Virtuoso and his discourse with a public posture and a convenient rhetorical device intended to gain public credibility. Although he acknowledges Boyle's sincerity, he gives it little weight. Michael Hunter's 'The Conscience of Robert Boyle' (in his *Robert Boyle, 1627–1691: Scrupulosity and Science*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000, 58–71) is an important corrective. However, Hunter views Boyles fits of conscience, his scrupulosity, as dysfunctional, and makes Boyle into an obsessive-compulsive, perhaps overlooking that these characteristics are aspects of his virtuosity.

[13] Boyle, *Works*, xi, 297, 298.

assess the authenticity of testimonies concerning divine revelation and the facts in which they are incarnate. Finally, the docility of the virtuoso, which disposes him to the enlargement of his mind with ever new and unforeseen facts of nature, also disposes him to accept, on sound testimony, that there have been miraculous occurrences, and the due limitations of his docility open his mind to the probability that there are things that exist beyond the range of ordinary natural experience. Since these limitations are factual and not metaphysical, it remains possible that a mind nourished on earthy facts can be enlarged beyond its terrestrial limitations. Locke's remark about reason and revelation may be cited as an apt summary of the process described above.

> Reason is natural *Revelation*, whereby the eternal Father of Light, and Fountain of all Knowledge communicated to Mankind that portion of Truth, which he has laid within the reach of their natural Faculties: *Revelation* is natural *Reason* enlarged by a new set of Discoveries communicated by GOD immediately, which *Reason* vouches the Truth of, by the Testimony and Proofs it gives, that they come from GOD. So that he that takes away *Reason*, to make way for *Revelation*, puts out the Light of both, and does much what the same, as if he would perswade a Man to put out his Eyes the better to receive the remote Light of an invisible Star by a Telescope.[14]

Being a Christian Virtuoso has also a broader moral aspect, which may more easily be comprehended by considering what the Virtuoso is not. He avoids the way of the Libertine and the Sensualist, both contemporary types of gentlemen. A libertine, in Boyle's usage, is primarily a free thinker, someone who recognizes no intellectual authority but his own reason and who has concluded that, reason being the highest authority, there can be no mysteries in the world, nothing that cannot be discovered and clarified by his own rational lights.[15] The term is synonymous with 'Deist'.[16] A Sensualist is a voluptuary and a sybarite, someone whose curiosity is addicted to ever more novel and gratifying sensual adventures, and who does not scruple to mix the more refined with the crude. Hence, the Senualist desires indiscriminately 'Fame or Mistresses, Baggs or Bottles'.[17] The two types sometime combine in the Sensual Libertine.[18] The Christian Virtuoso is supposed to be

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[14] *Essay*, IV. xix. 4 (698); see also Locke, *Education*, 244f.

[15] *Christian Virtuoso*, xi, 306.

[16] Ibid., iii, 301. Free thinkers such as Charles Blount (1654–93) and John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester (1647–80), known to Boyle, may have suggested these characters to him.

[17] *Usefulness*, Boyle, *Works*, iii, 278.

[18] On the other hand, Boyle recognized that some free thinkers objected to Christianity because it fell short of pagan nobility. A short work appended to the first published edition of *The Christian Virtuoso* offers a refutation of the claim of a libertine, an advocate of atheism and materialism, that the virtue of magnanimity, that is nobility of greatness of mind, was more likely to be cultivated by a libertine than by a Christian. In response, Boyle contends that Christianity promotes all of the pagan virtues: among them courage, liberality, patience, a contempt for all that is base, as well as a readiness to forgive, impartiality with respect to persons and indifference to worldly goods, and humility. *Greatness of Mind Promoted by Christianity*, Boyle, *Works*, xi, 347, 365 and passim.

equally indifferent to fame and finery and bawdy delights; his goals in life are better realized if he remains chaste and celibate.[19]

Finally, we must look more closely at what is involved in calling Christian Virtuoso a gentleman. As already remarked, a gentleman has the leisure, the material wherewithal and the proper cultivation that would seem requisite for the role. Boyle also believed that a gentleman has greater credibility in the commonwealth of learning. This is not because his standing in society makes him more virtuous and therefore more worthy of trust. The ordinary gentleman is more likely to be drawn to fame and mistresses, or to the vulgar excesses of the hunting lodge or the casino. What lends credibility to the Gentleman is just the fact that his station in life makes it unnecessary for him to follow any calling. Being a Virtuoso, then, is for him a pure vocation and not a living. Because he is under no necessity to be a Virtuoso, he is free from the 'Temptations to Partiality' to which we would reasonably expect him to be subject if his vocation were also his 'Trade' or 'Interest'. It should be noted that, according to Boyle, the Virtuoso derives his credibility not from a social fact: that as a gentleman he lives by a code of honor that requires truthfulness, but from a situational fact: that he has the leisure and the wherewithal to choose a vocation that is not in his gentlemanly interest.[20] It is now time to bring Locke into the picture. This disinterestedness gives his theological judgment greater credibility than that of the clergy.

Locke: The Making of a Christian Virtuoso

From the Winter of 1655/56 until April, 1668, Robert Boyle lived in Oxford on the High Street, where he maintained his residence and laboratory in a house owned and occupied on the ground floor by Mr. Crosse, an apothecary. There he became the center of a circle of Virtuosi, among them Robert Hooke and Richard Lower, who like Locke belonged to Christ Church, and Christopher Wren.[21] By the mid-1660s, Locke most surely belonged to this group, and thereby came under Boyle's influence.[22] During this still unsettled time, Locke was in search of a vocation suitable for a gentleman, one that would provide him with a living, for his family, although armigerous, was not so well endowed that his life choices could be altogether free. In those troubled and uncertain times, just before the Restoration, a military career offered opportunity and security, but

[19] For an account of Boyle's celibate disposition, see Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*, 164f. See also Michael Hunter, *Scrupulosity and Science*, 17f.

[20] Robert Boyle, *The Excellency of* Theology, Boyle, *Works*, viii, 8.

[21] Iain Pears' historical novel, *An Instance of the Fingerpost* (London: Penguin, 1997), offers a faithful picture of Oxford and the activities of Boyle's circle.

[22] M.A. Stewart, 'Locke's Professional Contacts with Robert Boyle', *The Locke Newsletter*, 12, 1981, 20f. See also *Correspondence*, i, nos. 97, 101.

Locke found it repugnant.[23] He considered medicine with some encouragement or at least assistance from his father.[24] Locke evidently found this an attractive calling, and this in turn may have led him to seek entry to Boyle's circle. The Church was another option. The positions Locke held at Oxford during the early 1660s, and his early manuscripts provide solid evidence that he was engaged in intellectual activities that would take him in that direction.[25] It is not hard to imagine him taking that course and ending up a learned Bishop in the manner of John Wilkins, or of his contemporary and later antagonist, Edward Stillingfleet. Locke's competence in theology and his mastery of biblical languages and history equaled if they did not surpass that of the most eminent luminaries of the Church of England. Locke considered becoming a clergyman, but, as he tells it, he would incline to it only if he had reason to hope of attaining to such eminence. From his correspondence with John Strachey and Elinor Parry, and from her brother John Parry, we learn that Locke was offered ecclesiastical livings and the promise of advancement. He declined these overtures, and two letters written on the same day to John and Elinor Parry provide us with the best explanation we are likely ever to have for his reluctance to become a clergyman. He expresses doubts about his fitness to perform the clerical duties, and he worried about entering a profession from which there would be no return should he fail to achieve distinction. To Elinor Parry he wrote: 'I'm sure I cannot content myself with being amongst the meanest possibly the midlemost of my profession, and you will allow care and consideration is to be taken not to engage in a calling wherein if one chance to be a bungler there is noe retreat.'[26] There may have been other reasons for Locke's refusal, reasons of the heart, which I shall presently come to, but none that render this one insincere. The letters to the Parrys are dated 15 December 1666. Almost exactly 1 month earlier, on 14 November 1666 Locke had secured a dispensation from Charles II that allowed him to retain his studentship at Christ Church without entering holy orders.[27] Another option was to enter public service, to become a courtier. This finally was the course that Locke took, although as John Milton has recently proposed, his entry into public service with Shaftesbury may have been more a matter of chance than design.[28] In 1675, Locke served as secretary to Sir Walter Vane and traveled to Cleves on

[23] Locke to John Locke, sen., c. 9 January 1660, *Correspondence*, i, 136, 'Armes is the last and worst of refuges'.

[24] This is De Beer's plausible conjecture, *Correspondence*, i, 136n. and nos. 91, 97.

[25] E.g., John Locke, *Two Tracts on Government*, ed. Philip Abrams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 'Infallibility', *WR*, 69–72.

[26] *Correspondence*, i, 305.

[27] See De Beer's headnote to no. 163, *Correspondence*, i, 214; also John Strachey to Locke, 18 November 1663: Strachey advised against accepting an ecclesiastical living, arguing that Locke's intellect is too versatile to be confined to the cares of the clerical office and that he would soon grow impatient with it, *Correspondence*, i, 215.

[28] John Milton, 'The Unscholastic Statesman: Locke and the Earl of Shaftesbury', paper read at the John Locke Tercentenary Conference, St Anne's College, Oxford, 3 April 2004.

an embassy to the Elector of Brandenburg. Immediately following this he declined the opportunity of joining an embassy to Spain.[29] He returned to Oxford. However, in 1667 he joined the household of Anthony Ashley Cooper, later Lord Shaftesbury, having met Shaftesbury the previous year. On account of this association Locke's worldly fortune rose and fell with the fortunes of his patron; after 1688, they rose again and never faltered. His living with Shaftesbury and his standing with the Whig succession, left him with the leisure and the means to pursue the pure vocation of a Christian Virtuoso, of a scholar and lover of truth, although intermittent with service on the Board of Trade, which also brought him wealth and influence in high places, but did not distract him from his intellectual pursuits. The successive editions of the *Essay* and his writings on Christianity are monuments of his intellectual labor during the long last decade of his life.

A word of caution is needed here. There is no evidence of a decisive moment in Locke's life when he chose to be a Christian Virtuoso. His way into it was gradual but continuous. Moreover, what he accomplished along the way was as much if not more a result of his own genius than of any influence, which is why mere intellectual history must be supplemented by philosophical exposition if his achievement is to be properly understood. In any case, at the end of his life, there is no doubt that he came to view his life as one lived according to a certain character. His epitaph, which he wrote, asks 'what kind of man he was'? and answers that he was 'A scholar by training', who 'devoted his studies wholy to the pursuit of truth', and who sincerely aspired to the moral perfection prescribed by the Christian gospel.

I have mentioned Boyle's influence on Locke. How did it occur? We know that Locke assisted Boyle in his natural philosophical researches, and his correspondence with Boyle after both had left Oxford shows that Locke continued in this role, or at least made protestations of his readiness to do so. A notebook from this period show that he read extensively in Boyle's writings: one notebook contains numerous citations from Boyle's *Usefulness*, *Physiological Essays*, and *The Style of Scripture*.[30] The titles reveal that Locke was interested in Boyle's theological as well as his natural philosophical opinions. Other works and manuscripts cited in his notebooks at this time are of the sort that Boyle would have recommended to an aspiring Christian Virtuoso. There are numerous citations of Hugo Grotius' writings in this notebook, especially *De Veritate Religionae Christianae*. Boyle valued this book so highly that he had it translated into Arabic as a means of propagating the Christian religion in all the lands where that language was read and spoken.

Another notebook contains extensive notes from a manuscript version of Thomas Barlow's *De Studio Theologiae*, an annotated bibliography of divinity

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[29] Locke to John Strachey, 28 February 1666, *Correspondence*, i, 263. See also Maurice Cranston, *John Locke*, *A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1957), 81–87.

[30] MS Locke, f. 14 passim.

intended for students.[31] Barlow (1607–91) who was Bodley's librarian at the time, and later Bishop of Lincoln, served as a spiritual and theological advisor to Boyle. It is plausible that the manuscript from which Locke took his notes, which, incidentally, is not among Barlow's papers in Oxford, was provided him by Boyle, to whose library he seems to have had access. One item in particular among Barlow's list is worth noting, given the theme of this paper. It is a book by Faustus Socinus, the great Protestant heresiarch, entitled *De Auctoritate Scripturae Sacrae*, 'concerning the authority of the Holy Scripture'. In his book, Faustus outlines a strategy for proving the authority of Scripture, one that Barlow, whose orthodoxy was beyond questioning, considered superior to any other attempted, and which he strongly endorsed. It is an elegant strategy and just the sort that would commend itself to the experimental philosopher. It proceeds from the premise that whoever believes the Christian Religion is true, cannot reasonably doubt the authority of Scripture. This strategy works only if the truth of Christianity can be decided apart from the credibility of the biblical testimony, only if the excellence of its doctrine provides it with an almost self-evident divinity. Locke believed this to be the case. The consequence of this method reduces the task of authenticating Scripture to a set of ad hoc responses to particular problems and doubts concerning the authenticity of Scripture: for example, whether the different gospel accounts can be harmonized into one consistent historical narrative, or whether the authors of the Gospels and Acts are trustworthy witnesses of the events they report, and whether purported prophetic and messianic places in the Old Testament have been fulfilled in New. Locke's two major theological works, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul* are instances of the use of this strategy. The strategy seems tailor-made for a Christian Virtuoso.

During the period following their departure from Oxford until Boyle's death, on 31 January 1691, Locke maintained periodic professional contact with Boyle. The infrequent letters between them exhibit a mutual respect and propriety; they could call each other 'friend', but they were probably not familiars.[32] A project begun when both were in Oxford but not completed until shortly after Boyle's death bridges the entire period and is evidence that their relationship was maintained by their common virtuosity. I refer to Boyle's *General History of the Air*, published in

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[31] The text is divided into two parts, the first with theological books, the second with books in the liberal arts. These are titled 'Analecta Sacra' and 'Bibliotheca' MS Locke e. 17, pp. 23–42; 44–71; with the exception of p. 23, the first page, the manuscript is in the an unidentified hand. Barlows's bibliographies were published posthumously in his *The Genuine Remains of that learned prelate, Dr. Thomas Barlow* (London: John Dunton, 1693) and subsequently in Thomas Barlow, Αυτοσχεδιασματα, *De Studio Theologiae*, ed. William Offley (London: Leon. Lichfield, 1699). A manuscript version very nearly the same as the one in Locke's notebook is in the library of St John's College, Cambridge, MS K. 38. This has been transcribed and published as 'A Library for Younger Schollers', ed. Alma De Jordy and Harris Francis Fletcher, *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature*, vol. 48 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961). It is probable that Locke's copy of this manuscript derives from a copy originally in Boyle's library in Oxford, to which Locke had access; see Locke to J. O., early August 1660?, *Correspondence*, i, 151.

[32] *Correspondence*, iii, 354; iv, 320–22.

1692 under Locke's editorial supervision. The theme of the book is atmospheric conditions and their physical consequences. The data that it contains had begun to be gathered in the 1660s. It contains information gathered by Locke in 1666.[33]

Locke and Boyle were also bound together by mutual friends, who shared common interests with them ranging from literary and theological to scientific and technological. Francis Mercury van Helmont and Benjamin Furly were already known to Boyle before Locke came to know them during his exile in Holland.[34] Nicholas Toinard, whom Locke met while he was in France from 1675 until 1679, was introduced by him to Boyle and all three shared information. James Tyrrell is another and Thomas Sydenham and David Thomas.

I conclude this brief narrative with some reflections on Locke's celibacy accompanied by some thought on the likelihood of his lifelong virginity. We know for a fact that Locke never married. From reading his correspondence, we gather that he had an amorous disposition and that he enjoyed flirtatious conversation with women.[35] We also know from his correspondence that on two occasions in his life marriage became a real possibility for him. There were, at least, two women in Locke's life whom he might have married. One was Elinor Parry, the daughter and sister of Irish Bishops, the other Damaris Cudworth. In his relation with both the prospect of marriage or the physical consummation of their affection came into view. Locke refused marriage to Elinor Parry, for it would have required that he leave Oxford, be ordained, and take up a living. Her brother, John, who had just recently become Dean of Christ Church, Dublin, wrote him on 2 December 1666 to invite him there to seek his fortune in the Irish Church and promising that 'in a litle time I am confident I shall see you very handsomely provided for'.[36] Locke saw in this offer also a design to bring him closer and into more regular contact with Elinor. He seems to have been troubled by Elinor's encouragement that he accept her brother's invitation, even though she had throughout their friendship, for 7 years, expressed her own dislike for the clerical life.[37] The implication is that by accepting her brother's invitation, Locke would have found himself doubly entrapped.

His love affair with Damaris Cudworth took a different turn.[38] What was at issue was the purity of their relationship. Damaris Cudworth was the eldest daughter of

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[33] In Boyle, *Works*, xii, and xi–xxiv *passim*.

[34] See Chap. 10.

[35] Locke to a lady, *Correspondence*, i, 65; see also Locke's correspondence with Anne Evelegh (*Correspondence*, i, no. 63 et seq., Elinor Parry, *Correspondence*, i, no. 48, et seq., and with Damaris Cudworth).

[36] *Correspondence*, i, 301.

[37] 'I find my self more and more indebted to your kindnesse, which could make you for my sake consent that I should take a calling which you your self are not very fond of and in resolutions against which you have been this 7 years confirmeing me, and which before 7 years more be over you will fine twas neither want of reason or affection made me refuse.' *Correspondence*, i, 305.

[38] On the love affair between Locke and Damaris Cudworth, no one has written with more learning and sensitivity than Mark Goldie in *John Locke and the Mashams at Oates* (Essex: Parish of High Laver, 2004).

Ralph Cudworth (1617–1688), foremost of the Cambridge Platonists.[39] They met in London in December 1681. Locke was captivated by her, not only by her physical presence and charm, but also and especially by her intellect and her conversation. In their correspondence they represented themselves to each other figuratively as characters from a golden age: he is variously named Philander, a lover, or more poignantly, Damon, a shepherd and unhappy lover; she is Philoclea, a heroic princess.[40] In his letters Locke playfully called her his 'governesse', which is to say 'princess'. He proposed a philosophical friendship, for it was her mind he loved above all, and she agreed. It was not long before Locke's resolve weakened, and his desire for her had become warmly amorous. Matters came to crisis in January 1683. There is among Locke's papers a pair of poems, one written by Damaris and the other by Locke. Here she is Clora, a shepherdess, he is Damon. Clora gently rebukes Damon for giving way to desire. Damon protests, but in the end submits to her overpowering will.

> Your cold disdain bids me no longer live
> Your friendship bids me hope all you can give
> Pray tell me Clora by what art you will
> Preserve your Friend and yet your Lover kill
> Then with a sigh closeing what he had said
> Upon her bosome dropd his drooping head[41]

Eight months later Locke fled to Holland. Their correspondence continued. Damaris, however, married Sir Francis Masham. It was, she thought, a prudent thing for her to do. This did not end their love affair. What followed is well known. In 1689 Locke returned to England and resided in London. Not long after, he became a guest and then a permanent resident at Oates, the Masham country house. There his intellectual pursuits were overseen by her.[42] On 28 October 1704 he died. At his request, he had been dressed and carried into his study. There he was seated in a chair. Damaris was attending him, and reading from the Psalms. He expressed some discomfort and asked her to pause. Then raised his hands to his face, closed his eyes, and died.[43]

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[39] Cudworth named his daughter well: Damaris is one of two person's named among St Paul's converts following his sermon on the Areopagus of Athens; the other was Dionysius the Areopagite. On Damaris Cudworth as philosopher see the important studies by Sarah Hutton, who offers a careful account based on all available sources in 'Damaris Cudworth, Lady Masham, Between Platonism and Enlightenment', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, i/1 (February, 1993), 30–54; and Luisa Simonutti, 'Dalla Poesia Metafisica alla filosofia Lociana. Damaris Cudworth, Lady Masham' *Donne Filosofiae e Cultura nel Seicento*, ed. Pina Totaro (Rome, 1999), 183–209.

[40] The locus classicus for Damon is Virgil *Eclogue*, viii. Philoclea is a main character of Sidney's *Arcadia*.

[41] *Correspondence*, ii, 575.

[42] For a description of Damaris as an intellectual companion and alter ego, see Locke's open letter to Samuel Bold, in the preface to *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1697), A1v.

[43] Cranston, op. cit., 480; for a less dignified account of Locke's last moment, see Roger Woolhouse, *John Locke, a Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 469.

Locke chose to remain celibate, and his reasons for this were vocational and philosophical. Did he remain chaste? We'll never know. There is no evidence that he did not, or that he was inclined to follow in the usual ways of a gentlemen seeking erotic enjoyment. He kept no mistress. All the evidence suggests that he preferred to devote his idle hours to intellectual pursuits rather than to 'Mistresses, or Baggs or Bottles'. In any case, this pure lover of truth self-disclosed author of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, continued to engage in pursuits fitting for a Christian Virtuoso, because this is what he sincerely aspired to be. Sincerity, after all, is implied by the idea of the Christian Virtuoso: sincerity in its searches after truth and in the pursuit of heaven.[44]

Christian Virtuosity in Locke's Essay

The search after truth and the pursuit of heaven are basic themes in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, to which I now turn. The title page of the second and subsequent editions of the *Essay* bears the name and status of its author: John Locke, Gentleman. The Epistle to the Reader addresses persons who buy and read books, who are likewise gentle persons.

> I here put into thy Hands, what has been the diversion of some of my idle and heavy Hours: If it has the good luck to prove so of any of thine, and thou hast but half so much Pleasure in reading, as I had in writing it, thou wilt as little think thy Money, as I do my Pains, ill bestowed.

Notice that Locke is recommending to members of the gentle class a useful way to spend their leisure hours, namely in intellectual pursuits, and he presents himself, with appropriate modesty, as an example. Writing his book was a 'diversion', 'entertainment', 'Sport', or 'amusement'. Writing and reading *An Essay* is represented as something one does to pass the time. It pleases, and yet, paradoxically, it is also laborious, the hours spent are heavy. He has been engaged in serious pursuits, which cost him much in pain and effort. Later on in the Introduction to the first book, Locke describes the task he has set himself, to inquire into the human understanding, as requiring 'Art and Pains' and 'Labour', like the eye attempting to catch itself seeing.[45]

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[44] In his commentary on 1 Cor. 7: 25, 37, Locke correctly interprets St Paul's use of the term παρθένος to signify virginity as a state of life suitable for men as well as women; see *Paraphrase and Notes*, i, 202–4.

[45] In *Education*, 258. Locke advocates rigorous diversions: 'Nor let it be thought that I mistake when I call these or the like Exercises of Manual Arts [viz. gardening, husbandry, carpentry] *Diversions* or *Recreations:* For *Recreation* is not being Idle (as every one may observe) but easing the wearied part by change of Business: And he that thinks *Diversion* may not lie in hard and painful Labour, forgets the early rising, hard riding, heat, cold and hunger of Huntsmen, which is yet known to be the constant Recreation of Men of the greatest Condition.'

Next we should note the appropriate expression of modesty by the author that compares the Virtuoso's delight in pursuing truth with the pleasures of hunting. It is as elegant as it is instructive.

> He that hawks at Larks and Sparrows, has no less Sport though a much less considerable Quarry, than he that flies at nobler Game.

The source of the delight in such activity derives from the understanding itself, whose cognitive pursuits yield the greatest pleasure even when efforts are modest and its achievements small. Herein, in the activity itself of mind, lies the source of the sentiment of love of truth.

> Its searches after Truth, are a sort of Hawking and Hunting, wherein the very pursuit makes a great part of the Pleasure. Every step the Mind takes in its Progress towards Knowledge, makes some Discovery, which is not only new, but the best too, for the time at least.

And further on, he enlarges on 'the Hunter's Satisfaction'

> Every moment of his Pursuit will reward his Pains with some Delight; and he will have reason to think his time not ill spent, even when he cannot much boast of any great Acquisition.

The Virtuoso's quarry is not just for his own consumption and pleasure. By becoming an author he shares it with his readers, who if they read attentively become active participants in this high entertainment. The quarry becomes theirs along with the pleasure of catching it. But every reader, by himself, must supply the meanings of the words written on the page from the fund of his own experience, a fund that is enlarged and made sufficient by the reader's own resolve 'to find and follow Truth'. Writers or authors 'let loose their own Thoughts, and follow them in writing'; readers engage in a 'like Diversion' by making 'use of their Thoughts in reading'. To succeed in this labor, however, a reader must intuit the mind of the Virtuoso and must 'follow truth'.

Strictly speaking, the inquiry, of which the *Essay* is a sort of final report, is not itself a work of experimental natural philosophy, nor of Christian theology. But it is clear that it is intended to prepare the ground for both. In this connection, in the Epistle to the Reader, Locke describes himself, again with proper modesty, as a mere scholar and underlaborer, not a 'Master of Knowledge' nor one of the great 'Master Builders' of the new science as are Boyle, Sydenham, Huygens and Newton. Beyond clearing away the rubbish of innatism and scholastic dogma, his task is to provide a comprehensive natural history of the mind whereby its sources, powers, and limitations are clearly made out. This, I think, is the best characterization of the *Essay:* a natural history of the mind that is in the service of natural, moral and theological inquiry. This natural history proper is presented in Books II and III of the *Essay*. In carrying out this task, the two aspects of the Christian Virtuoso's character, his commitment to an empirical experimental method and his moral and theological concerns, converge. This can be illustrated by reference to another well-known passage of the *Essay*, one in which, I think, the author also presents himself to the reader.

> 'Tis of great use to the Sailor to know the length of his Line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depths of the Ocean. 'Tis well he know, that it is long enough to reach the bottom, at such Places, as are necessary to direct his Voyage, and caution him against running upon the Shoals, that may ruin him. Our Business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our Conduct. If we can find out those Measures, whereby a rational Creature put in that State, which Man is in, in this World, may, and ought to govern his Opinions, and Actions depending thereon, we need not be troubled, that some other things escape our Knowledge.[46]

And at this point, Locke returns to the origin of the *Essay* itself:

> This was that which gave the first *Rise* to this Essay concerning the Understanding. For I thought that the first Step towards satisfying several Enquiries, the Mind of Man was apt to run into, was, to take a Survey of our own Understandings, examine our own Powers, and see to what Things they were adapted. Till that was done I suspected we began at the wrong end, and in vain sought for Satisfaction in a quiet and secure Possession of Truths, that most concern'd us, whilst we let loose our Thoughts into the vast Ocean of *Being*, as if all that boundless Extent, were the natural, and undoubted Possession of our Understandings, wherein there was nothing exempt from its Decisions, or that escaped its Comprehension.[47]

The image of the sailor and his plumbline is both metaphorical and metonymous. It represents the principal activity of the experimental philosopher gathering knowledge about the physical world through ordinary sensibility refined and enlarged through instrumentation. It is a homely example, and reflects the Virtuoso's relation to ordinary mechanical arts. One is reminded here of Robert Hooke's programmatic remarks in his preface to *Micrographia*, a work with which Locke was surely familiar.[48] But reference to 'the vast Ocean of *Being*' and to its unfathomable depths takes us beyond a mere terrestrial sea, which no matter how vast and deep is not infinite. It is this metaphorical use that anticipates the conclusions of Book IV of the *Essay*, where the predominant theme is not the celebration of a new natural science but the founding of morality and theology and the Virtuoso becomes a moral philosopher and theologian. I think that the image of the linesman is not just a metaphor in general of the Christian Virtuoso, but of Locke himself.

In a letter to his friend, the Dutch theologian Phillipus van Limborch, Locke observers that on this very day (3 December 1689) the printing of the first edition of the *Essay* was completed; he characterizes the occasion in metaphors reminiscent of Caesar's when he crossed the Rubicon and marched on Rome: 'jacta est alea' (the die is cast), 'et jam magnam aequor navigo' (and I am embarked upon a great sea).[49]

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[46] *Essay*, I. i. 6 (46).

[47] *Essay*, I. i. 7 (47).

[48] London, 1665. I have not searched Locke's manuscripts for a reference to it. He possessed a copy of the first edition of it; *LL* 1488.

[49] Locke to Van Limborch, 3 December 1689, *Correspondence*, 735. The translation is mine. According to Suetonius, *de Vita Caesarum*, *Jul*. 32, when his decision was made to cross the Rubicon, he said 'jacta esto alea' (let the die be cast!). My source is Lewis & Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879).

That Locke made the connections between himself and Caesar and the sailor with his plumb-line may not seem as evident to others at it seems to me, but since this episode is all about risk, I will risk asserting it. Locke was taking several risks in publishing his book: the usual ones of an author: that his book would appear and not be noticed, or, if noticed, misunderstood, or generally poorly received. More importantly, I think, he added metaphysical risk to the ordinary risks of being an author. We must remind ourselves that the ocean is a symbol of the sublime, the immeasurable heights and depths that surround philosophical thinking and that are a terror as well as a source of fascination to it. Locke imagined himself making his way through this unlimited vastness. By publishing his book, it was no longer a solitary way, which if he failed would not be noticed; rather he was presenting himself as linesman 'to the world', to use an expression for the reading public then commonplace, as the guide of all independent thinkers who would lay out for them a safe channel through the hazardous sea of intellectual pretense and dogmatisms that would falsely ground the small vessel of the mind and prematurely end its journey. One is reminded here of Bacon's characterization of himself as a 'Trailblazer'. However, the trail Locke would blaze was not intended to lead to a new Atlantis, but to the New Jerusalem.[50]

Let me explain, the *Essay* may be seen as both natural history of the mind and a practical guide on its proper use. It follows the practice of the Virtuoso. My concern here is not with the method but its goal, which is described in Book IV of the *Essay*, especially in Chaps. iii and xvii. A convenient summary of these is offered in another work, written about the same time that Locke was completing the *Essay*. I quote it here. As I read it, note the movement and counter movement of Locke's representation of natural philosophy, how its speculative prospect is deflated only to prepare a way for Christian virtuosity to make proper use of it.

> *Natural Philosophy*, as a speculative [i.e. theoretical] Science, I imagine we have none, and perhaps, I may think I have reason to say, we never shall be able to make a Science of it. The Works of Nature are contrived by a Wisdom, and operate by ways too far surpassing our Faculties to discover, or capacities to conceive, for us ever to be able to reduce them into a Science.

In *Essay* IV. iii., this is spelled out in greater detail. We lack the power of vision to see into the real nature of things and determine how they work, how even the things that we unmistakably see cause us to see them as we do. Our best hypothesis, the corpuscular hypothesis, makes demands on us that we cannot deliver. Our experimental methods produce knowledge, but it is merely useful, never scientifical knowledge.[51] This is the sort of knowledge that the linesman possesses.

The lesson we are to learn from this, however, is not that we should limit our science to providing for our material well being and terrestrial happiness and forget all else. As often as he writes about the limitations of our physical knowledge,

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[50] Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, ed. Graham Rees and Maria Wakely (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 170–71.

[51] *Essay*, IV. iii. 25, 26; also III. vi. 9.

Locke mentions, almost in the same breath, God and Spirits.[52] He even proposes an 'enlarged' non-standard sense of the term 'natural philosophy' to include the study of spirits as well as material bodies.[53] To continue with the previous passage:

> *Natural Philosophy* being the Knowledge of the Principles, Properties, and Operations of Things, as they are in themselves, I imagine there are Two Parts of it, one comprehending *Spirits* … and the other *Bodies* …

and he adds that he thinks that the study of spirits should be given priority over the study of material bodies and their makeup, although, here also it should not be supposed that it is regarded

> as a Science that can be methodized into a system and treated upon Principles of Knowledge; but as an enlargement of our Minds towards a truer and fuller comprehension of the intellectual World, to which we are led both by Reason and Revelation.[54]

When it comes to science, there are only two disciplines that Locke concludes qualify for this designation: mathematics and morality.[55] The former has only a limited heuristic utility, the latter, a deductive science of morals grounded on our certainty of the existence of God, which Locke also believed to be eminently demonstrable, is a bridge to the realm of Spirit. It conveys into the consciousness of the person an idea of a perfect justice and of the possibility of perfection of a life lived in conformity with it and the prospect of eternal goodness which will transform the ocean of being into an unlimited source of never-ending intellectual delight.

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[52] *Essay*, III. vi. 3, 11, 12; IV. iii. 6, 17, 23.

[53] *Essay*, IV. xxi. 2.

[54] *Education*, 245.

[55] On the science of morality: see *Essay*, III. xi. 16; IV. iii. 18; also IV. xii. 8, where Locke refers to the proposition that morality is capable of demonstration as a 'Conjecture'.

Chapter 2
Locke's Theology, 1694–1704*

> There is indeed one Science (as they are now destinguishd) incomparably above all the rest where it is not by Corrruption narrowed into a trade or faction for meane or ill ends and secular Interests, I mean Theologie, which conteining the Knowledg of god and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow creatures and a view of our present and future state is the comprehension of all other knowledg directed to its true end, i. e. the honour and veneration of the Creator, and the happynesse of man kinde. This is that noble Study which is every mans duty and every one that can be called a rational creature is capable of. The workes of nature and the words of Revelation displai it to mankinde in Characters so large and visible that those who are not quite blind may in them read and see the first principles and most necessary parts of it and from thence as they have time helps and Industry may be inabled to go on to the more abstruse parts of it and penetrate into those infinite depths filld with the treasures of wisdom and knowledg.[1]
>
> Or supposing that Hippocrates or any other booke infallibly conteines the whole art of physick would not the direct way be to study read and consider that booke weigh and compare the parts of it to finde the truth, rather than espouse the doctrines of any party; who though they acknowledg his authority have already interpreted and wiredrawn all his text to their own sense the tincture whereof when I have imbibed I am more in danger to misunderstand his true meaning than if I had come to him with a minde unpreposessed by doctors and commentators of my sect, whose reasonings interpretation and language which I have been used to will of course make all chime that way and make another and perhaps the genuine meaning of the author seem harsh straind and uncouth to me.[2]

Introduction

What follows is a narrative of John Locke's theological reflections and judgments, expressed in pertinent writings beginning with 'Adversaria theologica' (1694), and ending with *Of the conduct of the understanding* (published posthumously in 1706). I hope to show that these reflections and judgments follow a continuous line of enquiry and discovery that has its own integrity and may, therefore, be considered on

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*This chapter was previously published in *English Philosophy in the Age of Locke*, ed. M. A. Stewart (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 183–215.

[1] *Conduct*, 193.

[2] *Conduct*, 222–3.

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-0274-5_2,

its own, notwithstanding that Locke might have been at the same time influenced by other motives, for example, political and economic ones, or concerns about reputation. Narration seems to me a more appropriate method of expounding on Locke's theology than a systematic presentation of it, for Locke's thoughts on theology were not all expressed as considered opinions, nor did he manifest a tendency to give assent where Scripture or reason did not require it. His thoughts on theological themes varied from suppositions to queries to preferences to clear and certain judgments. These differences in propositional attitude, to use current jargon, would be lost in a mere systematic account. As will be seen, Locke did conceive of theology as a system, but also, at the outset at least, as one whose markers described fields of enquiry rather than parts of a dogmatic scheme. During this period, the field of enquiry that most commanded his attention was Christianity as presented in the New Testament. As he progressed, Locke made two very important discoveries: one, that to be a Christian and a beneficiary of the covenant of grace, it is necessary to accept only one, albeit complex proposition, that Jesus is the Messiah; the other, that Christianity is essentially a moral religion.[3] When I say that Locke discovered these things, I do not mean to suggest that he did not think these things or even know them before. What I mean is the sort of occurrence that happens once in a while in a scholar's life, when something long accepted but only partially understood appears in a new enquiry to have much grander significance than was formerly supposed, and becomes the subject of mature and definitive formulation. I believe that this is just what happened during this last decade of Locke's life and will attempt to show how it took place.

Theological Stock-Taking: 'Adversaria Theologica'

In December 1694, writing to Philippus van Limborch, Locke acknowledged receipt of Van Limborch's *Theologia Christiana* and remarked that the gift was timely, 'for I think that I should now have leisure enough to devote myself for the most part to these studies.'[4] Chronologically, the letter coincides roughly with one of Locke's commonplace books that he entitled *'Adversaria Theologica* 94'.[5] This book was part of the moiety of his library that Locke bequeathed to his cousin,

[3] In my continuing studies of Locke, it has become increasingly clear to me how this discovery is joined with another: the mutuality of reason and revelation. Near the close of *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke reviews the advantages to mankind of a Messiah and most prominent among them is that Messiah restored universal morality. What was supposed to be reason's domain, was taken over, refined, and given back to it by revelation in a form that reason could recognize and confirm. An extended discussion of this mutuality is provided in my 'Locke's Hermeneutics of Existence and his Representation of Christianity', see above, Chap. 1, fn. 3.

[4] *Correspondence*, v, 237; the translation is mine.

[5] MS Locke c. 43 (*LL*, 25). I shall normally omit '94' in citing the title of this work. I interpret the number to signify the year when the notebook was set up for use, for want of any evidence to the contrary or a better explanation of its meaning, but I do so with proper caution; see J. R. Milton, 'The date and significance of two of Locke's early manuscripts', *Locke Newsletter* 19 (1988), 47–89, at 50; idem, 'John Locke's medical notebooks', *Locke Newsletter* 28 (1997), 135–56, at 137, 154. The full text of this notebook is printed with annotation in *WR*, 19–34.

Peter King. King's descendant, also Peter King, mentions it in his biography and also offers a selection of its contents.[6] The volume was not among the Locke manuscripts that came to the Bodleian Library in 1943, and access to the complete text of 'Adversaria theologica' became possible in the twentieth century only with the rediscovery of Locke's library and the provisions taken to make what remains of it available to scholars.[7] King's brief introductory comment does not explain the origin or circumstances of Locke's notebook. His selection gives prominence to Locke's consideration of Socinian issues concerning the divinity of Christ and of the holy spirit, and these heterodox themes have been taken as the frame in which 'Adversaria theologica' should be interpreted.[8] Setting aside for the moment questions concerning Locke's heterodox preferences, I shall suggest another meaning of the Adversaria, one that takes into consideration all of its content.

'Adversaria Theologica' is a folio notebook bound in unfinished leather, consisting of some 1030 pages, many of them blank. That title is written on the inside of the cover of the book, where Locke has also inscribed its shelf mark, 13.29a. Locke was not the only user of this notebook and was probably not the first. The volume also contains notes on the law of nature written in James Tyrrell's hand and entered into what is now the back of the book. Perhaps this was one of the books Locke gave to Tyrrell for safe keeping during his exile in Holland.[9] Whatever the case, Locke must have received the book from Tyrrell, inverted it, and set it up for his own use. On the first seven pages he inscribed a list of topics. He made 14 more entries intermittently on the next 39 pages. Pages 1011–9 contain an index of terms. All of the entries are in Locke's hand; none of them is dated. If, in his letter to Van Limborch, Locke's reference to "these [theological] studies" was to the work done in this book, then we may fix the date when he began using it to around December 1694. From the list of topics and the entries made, it does not appear that Locke's purpose in using this book was to prepare himself to write *The Reasonableness of Christianity.*[10] Only 1 of its 14 entries reappears in that work.[11]

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[6] *The life of John Locke,with Extracts from his Correspondence, Journals, and Common-place Books,* new edn, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), ii, 186–94. King included 'Electio', another entry from 'Adversaria theologica', among selections from 'Adversaria 1661' at pp. 98–9.

[7] See *LL*; also, *A Summary Catalogue of the Lovelace Collection of the Papers of John Locke in the Bodleian Library*, ed. P. Long (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Bodleian Library, 1959).

[8] See, for example, J. Marshall, *John Locke: Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 394–5; M. Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 75.

[9] There is no mention of it in James Tyrrell's 1691 catalogue of Locke's books in his custody, in MS Locke, f. 17. However, the origin of the book as distinct from its use is of no concern here.

[10] I take this opportunity to withdraw a previous comment on this letter in my Introduction to the Thoemmes 'Key Texts' edition of Locke's *Reasonableness* and its *Vindications* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997), vii. There I assumed that Locke was referring to preparations for the *Reasonableness,* an assumption which I now believe is mistaken.

[11] Compare MS Locke c. 43, pp. 40–41, 'Lex operum. Rom III. 27' and 'Lex fidei Rom. III 7', with *The Reasonableness of Christianity, WR*, 98–9.

Other entries address topics that are considered in the *Reasonableness*—articles of faith necessary for salvation, the condition of Adam before and after the Fall, and the expiatory nature of Christ's death—but the coincidence is no more than topical.

After making these entries, Locke must have decided to put his notebook to a different use. The remainder of the volume is set up as a notebook for a study of the apocryphal books of the Bible. However, he did not proceed very far on this new course of study. There is only one entry, on Baruch 6: 31. The theological adversaria as such, therefore, take up only the first 46 pages, plus the index pages, of the book that bears the title.

Around the end of 1694, then, Locke began a programme of theological study. Judging by the long initial list of topics and the capacity of the book devoted to this task, he planned to pursue a wide-ranging enquiry. Between December 1694 and May 1695, Locke's interests narrowed considerably and came to focus on the question of justification and of the faith that justifies, the central themes of *The Reasonableness of Christianity,* which was published in August 1695. This programmatic change may be the reason why he gave up using his notebook. An explanation of how this change occurred must begin with a look at his original plan of study.

Locke's topical program outlined in 'Adversaria Theologica' shows the breadth of his curiosity and of what he took to be the extensive scope of theology.[12] Indeed one must look hard to discover what is left out. Under the general heading 'man' (*Homo*), he includes "understanding", "will", "freedom", and "the senses", which covers most of the content of the *Essay*. Only the theory of signs is missing. No provision is made in this scheme for the practical arts or the theory of government, but a place is provided for the political duties of mankind.

The broad scope attributed to theology here differs from the place assigned to it in earlier lists of commonplaces. For example, an entry entitled 'Adversaria' in an earlier notebook of 1677–8 locates theological topics under 'things that are remembered' in contrast to 'what is known', and describes them as 'opinions and traditions'.[13] Most other adversaria or lists of commonplaces are more respectful of the epistemic dignity of theology, yet they invariably present it as just one among the sciences, of equal standing perhaps with others, but with no special dignity.[14] How much significance we should attach to these differences is uncertain. Do they reflect

[12] See below, Appendix A, for Locke's list of topics.

[13] MS Locke f. 15, p. 122.

[14] See Locke, *Political Essays,* ed. M. Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), for a convenient listing with excerpts, esp. 'Adversaria A', 215; 'Adversaria B', 265; 'Adversaria C', 287. However, cf. also 'Knowledge A', 250. The titles are Goldie's. It may be argued that the differences between 'Adversaria theologica' and these others are a function of circumstance. Since Locke was designing a theological adversaria, it is understandable that he would not represent theology as one science among others. However, the comprehensive nature of the list weighs against this explanation.

a change in Locke's attitude, a change coincident with his decision to devote his leisure to theological studies, and one that required a revaluation, as it were, of all the sciences in the light of theology? Locke's description of theology in *Of the Conduct of the Understanding,* written towards the close of the period, as 'one science (as they are now distinguished) incomparably above all the rest', may provide a clue to the meaning of this change. Here he seems to be saying that, although theology is in current scientific discourse listed as one among the sciences, it is 'incomparably above all the rest', because it comprehends 'all other knowledge directed to its true end'. If Locke believed this in 1694, then it is not surprising that, when he applied himself to theology, he should show it the highest respect, as would be due a study whose source is an infallible book that contains the whole of divine truth suitable for mankind.

The main topics listed in 'Adversaria theologica' may be gathered under five general heads: (1) God; (2) the spirit world, including angels and human and animal souls; (3) matter and the visible world; (4) the nature and history of mankind—innocence, fall and redemption, Christ, the holy spirit, revelation; (5) ethics, or the duties of mankind considered with respect to their objects.

The topics gathered under 'God' *(Deus)* are noticeably few. Locke mentions only three divine attributes: omnipotence, omniscience, and kindness or benevolence, indicating perhaps that at that moment he did not intend to spend much time on natural theology. The first two topics suggest a readiness to consider the speculative question whether from eternity God is one or three. If so, then it is curious that Locke did not at this point also want to consider the divinity of Christ and the holy spirit. These, it should be noted, appear later. Perhaps Locke believed at this time that questions concerning their divinity should be addressed only in the context of their roles in the history of salvation. Indeed, except for the first and last general heads, 'God' and 'the duty of man', all of the remaining entries fit more or less into a scheme of sacred history; that is, of creation, fall, punishment, and redemption, which is the special domain of revealed religion. For example, under 'spirit' (*Spiritus*) Locke lists not only the nature, species, faculties, and powers of spirits, but also their origin, fall, offence, and punishment. 'Christ' and 'the holy spirit' are placed after consideration of Adam's sin and its consequences, which marks the beginning of their respective roles in the history of salvation. Questions, whether they are man, God, or angel, are considered only in this context. Locke's theological program is clearly not Athanasian, but it is, with certain anomalies, arguably biblical. Moreover, this postponement of the question of Christ's divinity until he makes his appearance in the history of salvation most likely does not show that Locke was tending towards a denial of Christ's divinity or pre-existence. As I shall show, subsequent entries in the Adversaria tend towards acceptance, and in the *Paraphrase,* Locke explicitly asserts Christ's pre-existence.

Locke's location of 'the human soul' and 'the souls of animals' is also curious. He locates them just after 'spirit' and before 'matter', 'the visible world', and 'man'. It looks as though he meant to consider them as beings separate from their more familiar material situations and pre-existent to them. While there are no headings under 'the soul of animals' (*Anima brutorum*) that might give us a clue to

Locke's intentions there, under 'human soul' (*Anima humana*), one finds, as one might expect, considerations of its mode of origin: either by traduction, the propagation of the soul of the child from the parent, or by creation. But one also finds, just before this, places for the soul's pre-existence and its revolutions, considerations that seem alien to the biblical narrative.

They did not seem so to Christian Kabbalists. Among these, and well known to Locke, was Francis Mercury van Helmont. His theory of the revolutions of the soul, which is presented and defended on biblical grounds in *Two hundred queries… concerning the revolution of the souls,* is not just fanciful metaphysics; it is an ingenious attempt to prove the justice of God. It is an anti-Calivinist work. Like *The Reasonableness of Christianity,* its central theme is justification. In contrast to the exclusivism and determinism of the Calvinist scheme, Van Helmont represents Christianity as a moral religion whose benefits are offered over time equally to everyone. Revolution is just a means to this end. It may have been just this aspect of Christian caballistic hermeneutics that prompted Locke to consider its theories.[15]

The question of the antiquity of the visible world surely belongs here, especially in the light of Locke's preference to do theology within the frame of sacred history. One cannot help but wonder what theological significance he attached to the magnitude and quality of matter or to the solar system. There should be no surprise that Locke includes ethics interpreted as the duties of man within theology, but the division of the subject is curious. Instead of the usual division of duties to God, others, and oneself, Locke lists 16 subjects of moral consideration: God, good and bad spirits, the state, magistrates, parents, spouses, freemen, kin by marriage, masters, servants, heads of households, family members, neighbours, mankind in

[15] *Two hundred queries moderately propounded concerning the doctrine of the revolution of humane souls, and its conformity to the truths of Christianity* (London: Robert Kettelwell, 1684), published anonymously. There is a copy of this book in Locke's library, *LL* 2472. Locke's theory of personal identity is not inconsistent with the theory of the revolution souls. His extensive account of personal identity, *Essay,* II. xxvii. 6–29, first appeared in the second edition of 1694, and was completed shortly before the period covered here. The reference in section 14 to 'a Christian Platonist' is more likely to Joseph Glanvill or Henry More than either to Van Helmont or Von Rosenroth. Perhaps it refers specifically to Glanvill's *Lux orientalis*, published together with More's notes in *Two choice and useful treatises* (London: James Collins and Samuel Lowndes, 1682), *LL* 2516. Text and notes are paginated separately. (See *Lux orientalis,* 15; More's *Annotations,* 16.) Among other caballistic items in Locke's library or among his manuscripts are the following. There is a set of notes in his handwriting on Christian Knorr von Rosenroth's *Kabbala denudata* (1677). The notes are inscribed on a folded quarto sheet (endorsed 'Cabbala 88'). The sheet has been glued on to the front flyleaf of one of two copies of this book preserved in Locke's library (the two copies are *LL* 558 and 558[a]). On another sheet attached to this one is a set of notes, also in Locke's hand, on Volkelius's *De vera religione* (1642). Neither has been catalogued among Locke's papers and no mention is made of them by Harrison and Laslett (*LL* 558). For another summary of cabbalistic doctrine, see 'Dubia circa Philosophiam Orientalem', MS Locke c. 27, fols. 76–7. This is a set of notes on Rosenroth's *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae* (1684), and contains two initialed entries. The first, entitled 'Spiritus', is a comment on Col. I: 16. The second occurs under the heading 'Animarum praeexistentia'. See also, Chap. 6, for a transcription of the text of Locke's 'Dubia' with translation and introduction.

general, and oneself.[16] Judging from this list of commonplaces, one may conclude that Locke's theological interests at this time did not focus on any single issue; rather, they ranged widely while keeping mostly within the boundaries of sacred history. They were not restrained by any orthodoxy or, for that matter, by metaphysical preference.

Although all 14 entries in the Adversaria fall under one or another of the heads of Locke's topical list, their scope is much narrower and they are, of necessity, more focused.[17] In pursuing them, it does not appear that Locke was following a new agenda, although, as already noted, Peter King's selection and presentation of them may give the impression that he had a Socinian agenda.

Perhaps it is the visual way in which some of these entries are set up, as opposing sets of evidence, that creates this impression. In the Trinitarian entries of 'Adversaria Theologica', Locke collected opposing arguments on facing pages so that they could be viewed synoptically. King exaggerates this style, gathering the evidence pro and contra in unequal columns on a single page, so that the whole looks like a score sheet waiting to be tallied. The use of a disputational form in commonplacing was unusual but not without incident in Locke's note-taking. There are at least three other instances in his manuscripts where he juxtaposes opposing propositions on a theological theme in columns on the same page. The first is an entry in 'Adversaria 1661'. It is dated 1692 and collects propositions from Scripture in opposing columns under the headings of 'Grace' and 'Nature'.[18] A second manuscript dated 1695 juxtaposes biblical passages on the themes of life and death.[19] A third undated manuscript juxtaposes propositions pro and contra on the divine authenticity of oracles. In the third instance, the propositions are drawn from Fontenelle's *Histoire des oracles* (1686).[20] These instances are particularly pertinent because, in each case, the arguments pro and contra that Locke cites are drawn from a single source; in the first two instances from Scripture, in the third from Fontenelle's book. In all three, the disputational form seems to have been used as a convenient way of taking notes from a work that presents arguments supporting contrary positions. Any more significance to be attached to Locke's use of this format must derive from other circumstances.

John Marshall interprets these juxtapositions in the 'Adversaria Theologica' as evidence of Locke's strong preference for Socinianism, which, he supposes, had a formative effect on the design of *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. He bases his interpretation of them on the fact that almost the only works cited in it, other than

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[16] Duties to bad spirits require special comment. One would not expect that such duties derive from the law of nature, but they do have some legitimacy in the light of the circumstances of sacred history. "Bad spirits" are the rulers of this world who have some worldly claim even on the redeemed. See Romans 13: 1; also Locke's comment on it in *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 588. Ancestors also were connected with pagan civil authority and were assigned a special place in the cabbalistic hierarchy of spirits. See M. Goldish, 'Newton on Kabbalah', in *The Books of Nature and Scripture,* ed. J.E. Force and R.H. Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), 89–103.

[17] See Appendix B. The titles of the entries are Locke's; the numeration is mine.

[18] MS Film 77, p. 6.

[19] MS Locke c. 27, fol. 116.

[20] MS Locke c. 27, fol. 246.

Scripture, are Socinian, and on other facts that he takes to be pertinent; for instance, that at about the time of these entries, which also coincided with a new Trinitarian controversy, Locke began to acquire many Socinian books for his library and must have read them, for they are cited frequently in other manuscripts purportedly from this period, and, finally, that Locke was intimate with persons who were known Socinians.[21] This interpretation depends also on Marshall's claim, since withdrawn, that Locke had in fact composed a Socinian work, for private circulation only, entitled 'Some General Reflections on the beginning of St. John's Gospel'.[22]

The remaining evidence for Marshall's charge against Locke, which, it should be noted, he may by now have modified, is circumstantial and selective. Moreover, he does not appear to have given sufficient attention to the contents of the Adversaria. Had he done so, he would have observed that Locke did not limit his options to orthodoxy or Socinianism; that in at least one instance, on the question of the pre-existence of Christ, he appears to have rejected the Socinian position; and that in any case Locke abandoned the Adversaria after making only a few entries, and began work on the *Reasonableness*. Marshall's single-minded conviction of Locke's Socinianism seems to have made him insensitive to the deep anti-Calvinist motives in this work, which are already evident in the Adversaria. That the *Reasonableness* is a fellow-travelling Socinian work, which is the way Marshall characterizes it, was also believed by John Edwards on much the same grounds, viz. that Locke fails explicitly to affirm orthodox doctrine.[23] This is not a very compelling reason when considered in the light of the explicit argument of the *Reasonableness* and its express purpose.

I come to the Adversaria entries themselves. They can be divided thematically into three parts: Trinitarian questions (entries I, 4–6) questions concerning the nature of the human soul and the condition of mankind after Adam's fall (7, 9–10), and soteriological questions (2–3, 8, 11–14). The four Trinitarian entries consist of sets of opposing arguments. The first set is of arguments concern the Trinity in general; the second treat the divinity of Christ (or, more precisely, they ask 'whether Christ was the supreme God'); two more entries follow on the mere humanity of Christ and the divinity of the holy spirit. Almost all of the arguments, pro and contra, or to be precise, all except one, have been drawn from works by John Biddle, 'the father of English Unitarianism' and first English Unitarian martyr.[24] As will be obvious to

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[21] Marshall, *John Locke,* Chaps. 6–8, passim.

[22] Marshall, 'Locke and Socinianism', *Locke Newsletter*, 27 (1996), 147–8.

[23] Edward's charges against Locke and his book are stated in the following books: *Some Thoughts Concerning the Several Causes and Occasions of Atheism* (London: J. Robinson and J. Wyat, 1695), 104–22, and *Socinianism Unmask'd* (London: J. Robinson and J. Wyat, 1696), these works now bound together and reprinted, New York 1984; *The Socinian Creed* (London: J. Robinson and J. Wyat, 1697); *A Brief Vindication of the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith* (London: J. Robinson and J. Wyat, 1697). A detailed account of Edwards's charges against Locke and Locke's responses to them is provided in my introduction to *John Locke. Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, forthcoming, 2011).

[24] In composing these entries Locke drew from two of Biddle's works: *A confession of faith touching the holy Trinity, according to Scripture* (London, 1648), and *An answer to the grand objections of the adversarie, touching the supposed omnipotence of the holy spirit* (London, 1648). See H.J. McLachlan, *Socinianism in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), Chap. 10.

anyone who looks at these entries in the Adversaria, the anti-Trinitarian arguments preponderate; but this should not be surprising, since they are all taken from an anti-Trinitarian work. It was Locke who excerpted these arguments from Biddle and arranged them in a disputational format, without in every instance citing his source.

Two observations should be made about these entries. First, in the light of all that Locke has written about the need to weigh evidence on both sides of an issue, it is unlikely that he would have based any theological judgment on the arguments drawn from a single author, especially from one who was notoriously sectarian. Secondly, it is unlikely that Locke believed that a mere numerical preponderance of arguments would be sufficient to decide any issue. Consider the fifth entry, whether Christ was or was not a mere man. Here, there are about seven proofs for the affirmative, all drawn from Biddle, compared with only one for the negative. The negative argument is the only one among these so-called anti-Trinitarian sets that is not taken from Biddle. It states that Christ is not mere man, 'because his spirit was in the ancient prophets i Pet I. 11'. The argument here is that if Christ's spirit pre-existed the human birth of Jesus, then he was not a mere man, for the spirits of mere men do not exist prior to their birth. This entry is endorsed by Locke with his initials.

What does Locke's endorsement mean? At the very least, it means that Locke supplied the proof in favor of pre-existence. More is implied, however. Locke's argument is made directly against Biddle. To explain, Biddle's doctrine of the holy spirit must be recalled. He believed that the holy spirit was the loyal and righteous counterpart of Satan in the hierarchy of spirits. Locke's argument cites 1 Peter I: 11, which, on Locke's interpretation, contradicts this.[25] There, the spirit of the prophets is not depicted as the supreme good angel, but the spirit of Christ. What did Locke mean by "the spirit of Christ"? The context requires that it be some part of the being of Christ that justifies acceptance of his pre-existence, that is, a pre-existent part.

Did Locke suppose that this single argument outweighed the seven on the other side? To conclude this would be assuming too much. Suffice it to say that here he was expressing a preference for the pre-existence of Christ on the evidence of Scripture.

This leaning towards the pre-existence of Christ should be kept in mind when considering the second Trinitarian entry, whether or not Christ is the supreme God. Considered by itself, three outcomes are possible. Affirmation of the proposition that Christ is the supreme God (or is one member of the supreme Godhead) yields orthodox Trinitarianism. Denial of it leaves open two alternatives: Arianism, the doctrine that Christ is divine in a subordinate sense, a created god; and Socinianism, the doctrine that Christ was a mere man, who has been exalted to divine dignity. Suppose Locke denied the main proposition: then his preference for pre-existence would have made him lean towards Arianism, if indeed he considered the issue in these clear-cut terms. There is little evidence that he did, and even less that he was pursuing a Socinian agenda or an Arian one, or that he was motivated by sympathies for one or the other.

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[25] See Biddle, *Confessions on Faith*, 24. See also Locke's interleaved Greek New Testament, *LL* 2862 (Locke 9.40), 142, for Locke's comment on 1 Corinthians 14: 32, which cites Biddle on the spirit of the prophets.

In one entry at least, on the question concerning the immateriality or materiality of the soul (pp. 32–3), the disputational form counts for nothing, for as it turns out there is no opposition in the evidence cited. On this issue, Locke expresses not only a preference, but seems to have made up his mind. He decided that the question whether the human soul is material or immaterial is not suited to lead us to an understanding of what sort of beings we are, and that to understand our nature we are well advised to rely on Scripture rather than on reason.

This entry consists of two parts. The first provides proofs excerpted from Scripture, another from Episcopius, arrayed on facing pages, pro and contra. There follow two numbered items on each side. Each of these items is endorsed with Locke's initials. The first pair of items consists of opposing propositions that could be used to construct arguments supporting their respective sides:

> 1. We cannot conceive one material atom to think nor any systeme of Atoms or particles to think JL[26]

In support of the materiality of the soul, is the following:

> 1. We can conceive no moveable substance without extension, for what is not extended is no where i e is not.[27]

Locke, however, does not leave them in opposition, but combines them and draws a skeptical conclusion which he enters on the materialist side:

> From this and the opposite we must conclude there is something in the nature of Spirits or thin{g}king beings which we can not conceive. JL

Item 2, on the side of immateriality, is a long exposition of relevant texts taken from the New Testament. It is immediately clear that this item is meant also to serve as the corresponding entry on the side of materiality; for looking across, one reads: "2. Vid the other page".

Locke writes that in the New Testament and more especially in St. Paul, the distinctions between soul and body, material and immaterial, do not apply. In the New Testament generally, ψυχή or *soul* 'signifies only the animal life & thought in this present world without reference to any material or immaterial being or substance wherein it resides'. St Paul speaks of animal and spiritual bodies, implying that matter is capable of animality and spirituality. Moreover, he teaches that there are three sorts of body: insensible matter, a thinking being whose body is corruptible, and a thinking being whose body is incorruptible. With respect to the resurrection,

> the Apostle makes noe distinction here [I Cor. 15] of soule & body material & immaterial as if one died & the other continued living the one was raised & the other not but he speaks of the whole man as dyeing & the whole man as raised.

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[26] The argument for immateriality would proceed as follows: since the human soul thinks, it is inconceivable that it is a system of atoms or particles; hence, it must be immaterial.

[27] The inference here is that since the human soul moves, it must be extended, and, hence, material.

He observes that nowhere does St Paul even imply that 'there is in us an immaterial immutable substance distinct from the body'. In conclusion, he writes that the expression 'resurrection of the body' is an interpolation, that it is nowhere mentioned in the New Testament, which rather 'every where' speaks of the resurrection 'of the whole man'.

Finally, there is a set of entries concerning salvation. Not all of the entries are signed. Locke's entry concerning the law of works and the law of faith is unsigned, but because he incorporated it into *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, we may take it as his. The entry entitled 'Satisfactio Christi Neg:' (p. 43) cites another English unitarian writer, Stephen Nye. Nye, representing the 'unitarian', that is, Socinian position, emphatically denies here that Christ's suffering was meant to satisfy God's justice or be a condition of his mercy towards us. Yet he allows that some expiatory sense may attach to it, without making clear what this may be. He connects Christ's suffering with his messianic office. Christ suffered for his own sake, that is, for the rewards destined for a Messiah willing to suffer an ignominious yet innocent death, and, for our sakes, to win the power of his office and thereby lead us to salvation. This entry should be read together with the entry entitled 'Redemtio & Ransom', which also, while not endorsing the doctrine of satisfaction, accepts the propriety of speaking of Christ's death as redemptive and as a sacrifice that is pleasing to God. Neither entry is signed, but as will become clear in the next two sections, Locke interpreted the death of Christ in much the same way.

Last in this series of soteriological entries is a signed entry about the Calvinist doctrine of election (p. 44). The case made against it here is moral and epistemic. Locke believes that the doctrine is pernicious, because it leads those who accept it 'into praesumption & a neglect of their dutys being once perswaded that they are in a state of grace, which is a state they are told they can not fall from'. It fails epistemically, because there is no criterion by which to distinguish true and false faith. They have the same content, and both the elect and the reprobate experience the same frailties of belief. Contrary to this, Locke claims that the only difference between a true and false believer, *ceteris paribus*, is that the one perseveres while the other does not. But the only assurance of perseverance is having persevered.

What distinguishes these three soteriological entries is that they are all anti-Calvinist. All three more or less anticipate positions taken in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. Indeed, a combination of these positions covers much of the content of that book. It seems plausible that these entries mark the moment when Locke's thinking became more focused and led him away from his original program to a new agenda.

The Reasonableness of Christianity

On 10 May 1695, Locke wrote again to Van Limborch and once more referred to his theological studies. The program of study described in this letter is limited to two topics: the establishment of the new covenant and the doctrine of the gospel (*fœderis*

novi status et evangelii doctrina), so far as these things can be found out from an impartial reading of the New Testament. He remarked about his discovery of the clarity and simplicity of the gospel. This discovery, founded on a close and careful reading of the New Testament, came as a revelation that seemed to him clearer than the noonday sun. He was most certainly persuaded, by this and by the manner of its disclosure, that no sincere reader of the Gospels could be in doubt about what the Christian faith consists of. He proceeded to describe how he had written all this down, so that he could contemplate at leisure how coherent and well founded it was.[28] Locke did not say here that he set out to write a book, although it seems most likely that what he then wrote down eventually was worked up into *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

It remains to explain, as plausibly as possible, how Locke was led to this discovery and thence to write the *Reasonableness*. At the outset, it should be observed that the major themes of the *Reasonableness* are mentioned in the Adversaria. Under the heading of 'Christus', it is noted that Christ redeems both those who believe what is required for salvation and those who are saints, that is, those who do what is required for salvation. Other themes are Adam's sin and its consequences on his posterity, the necessity of revelation, and the distinction between law and gospel. In designing the Adversaria, Locke was preparing himself to consider these questions, but only as topics for commonplacing and general study. What is needed is some motive or design that would initiate a change of attitude and narrowing of focus, that would transform Locke from a mere enquirer to a theological author, and cause him to draw these themes together into a single argument. Dissatisfaction with current systems of theology, a reason given in the preface to the *Reasonableness*, is too vague. I have already suggested that the change has some relation to Locke's anti-Calvinism. Locke's letter to Samuel Bold, which he put in the preface to *A Second Vindication of The Reasonableness of Christianity*, lends credibility to this hypothesis. According to Locke, it was just one of those things, a matter of chance that his thought came to focus on the question of justification. During the winter of 1694–5, 'the noise and heat' of the new antinomian controversy between Presbyterians and Independents, occasioned by the republication of the sermons of Tobias Crisp,[29] caught his attention, and he was gradually drawn by this 'into a stricter and more thorough inquiry into the question about justification'.

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[28] *Correspondence*, v. 370. On the revelatory character of Locke's experience, see my comments in 'Locke's Hermeneutics of existence and his representation of Christianity', fn. 44.

[29] Crisp, a puritan divine who supported the Parliamentary side during the English Civil War, was born in London in 1600 and died there in 1643. For a brief account of his life and thought, see C. Hill, 'Dr Tobias Crisp', *Collected Essays of Christopher Hill*, 3 vols (Amherst: University of Massachusetts press, 1985–6), ii. 141–61. On the second antinomian crisis, see my *John Locke and Christianity* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997), 111–48. Antinomianism is a Calvinist heresy. Antinomians were strong advocates of the doctrine of free grace. Like most other Calvinists, they believed that divine grace, by which the elect receive forgiveness and eternal life and other spiritual blessings, is given freely and without condition and that the divine decrees, by which the elect are chosen, have been made in eternity. They concluded from this that faith and obedience can be neither conditions nor evidence of divine grace. The latter conclusion earned them the name 'antinomian', which, since they did not advocate lawlessness, is rather an odious label than a proper description of their doctrine or their mode of life.

> The Scripture was direct and plain, that 'twas Faith that justified, The next Question then, was what Faith that was that justified; What it was which, if a Man believed, it should be imputed to him for Righteousness. To find out this, I thought the right way was to Search the Scriptures; and thereupon betook my self seriously to the Reading of the New Testament, only to that Purpose....
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> The first View I had of it seem'd mightily to satisfie my mind, in the Reasonableness and Plainness of this Doctrine; But yet the general Silence I had in my little Reading met with, concerning any such thing, awed me with the Apprehension of Singularity; Till going on in the Gospel History, the whole tenour of it made it so clear and visible, that I more wonder'd that every body did not see and imbrace it; than that I should assent to what was so plainly laid down, and so frequently inculcated in Holy Writ, though systems of Divinity said nothing of it.[30]

The tone in which this tale is told is reason to hesitate accepting it as true. Yet I think it is not reason enough. Rather, it is Locke's understatement of his attitude towards the controversy over justification among Dissenters that should be suspected. That controversy, which proved a still virulent relict of the religious controversies of the Interregnum, would most likely not have been met with calm by Locke. It may, indeed, have supplied the motive that led to the addition of the chapter on Enthusiasm to the fourth edition of the *Essay*.[31] The intellectual context of this particular controversy was Calvin's doctrine of election and predestination. Crisp had argued that since the divine decree of election was an eternal decree, its effect, the salvation of the elect, was already decided before their repentance and faith, and hence not conditioned on them. Locke's entry on election in 'Adversaria Theologica', noted above, may have been an initial response to this controversy. It seems highly plausible, then, that the antinomian controversy rekindled Locke's anti-Calvinism and focused his theological enquiry. *The Reasonableness of Christianity* provides ample evidence of Locke's anti-Calvinist stance: the denial of original sin, of satisfaction, belief that the individual is insensible after death and remains so until the resurrection of the dead, scepticism about the real nature of the soul, rejection of the doctrine of election and the necessary perseverance of the saints.

One more thread needs to be woven into this narrative. Coincident with the antinomian crisis was a less virulent but no less serious controversy concerning the necessity of revelation, otherwise known as the Deist Controversy. The principal mover of this controversy was Charles Blount, whose writings, many unpublished until after his death, were in circulation during these last two decades of the seventeenth century.[32] Locke connects the two controversies in *The Reasonableness of*

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[30] *A Second Vindication of The Reasonableness of Christianity* (London: A. & J. Churchill, and Edward Castle, 1697), A7r–8r.

[31] *Essay*, IV. xix; this is probably at least an overstatement, for further study has led me to the discovery of other motives behind this chapter, see my article, 'Enthusiasm', *The Continuum Companion to Locke*, ed. S.J. Savonius-Wroth, Paul Schuurman, and Jonathan Walmsley (London: Continuum, 2010), 142.

[32] On Blount (1654–93), see my article in *The Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Philosophers*, ed. J.W. Yolton and others (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999), also *John Locke and Christianity*, xxxiii–xxxvi, 149–53, and my article 'Deism', *The Continuum Companion to Locke*, 135–7.

Christianity. He views them as complementary. Calvinism, with its doctrine of arbitrary decrees and its exclusivism, made God out to be an abhorrent tyrant and thereby subverted the intent of the gospel and, what is more, became the cause of infidelity and atheism. Deists reacted against this doctrine and, preferring morals over mystery, they claimed to find the religion of nature adequate. Locke was convinced of the insufficiency of natural religion, because its principles lacked certainty and because it did not make explicit provision for human frailty. He also believed that much that passed for natural knowledge was learned from revelation.[33] His discovery that the gospel was a clear and simple doctrine, accessible to ordinary understanding, unambiguous in its assurances, reasonable, and certain, gave him the means to avoid the consequences of Calvinism and Deism that he believed unacceptable. Locke's claim in the first *Vindication* that he wrote his book as an appeal to Deists and others offended by the doctrine of satisfaction brings the narrative to a close.[34]

The great importance that Locke attached to his discovery warrants a closer examination of it. The terms of disclosure that he employed should not be taken to signify any claim to an original revelation. His discovery is rather an instance of what he described elsewhere as traditional revelation; that is, the assurance that comes from the testimony of an original revelation.[35] The simplicity and clarity of the disclosure applies, then, not to some supernatural or privileged light, but to the accessibility of the content of the revelation to a rational enquirer. This may be taken as one sense of the 'reasonableness' of Christianity. Its fundamental doctrine can be understood by any rational being, even one of limited parts.

This doctrine surpasses the common knowledge of God as a being infinitely wise, powerful, and good, by revealing that he is the sort of being who enters into covenants with rational creatures and, in particular, with mankind, and that he can be relied upon to keep his word. The conditions of these covenants, like the covenants themselves, are basically moral. In the sacred history that Locke recounts, the two principal covenants are the covenant of works and the covenant of faith. The former requires perfect obedience to the divine law, which, so far as it is a moral law, is identical to the law of nature and, therefore, at least theoretically discoverable by rational enquiry. This law of righteousness is such that it must be perfectly observed. This rigorist interpretation of the law applies as well to God, who, when

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[33] *Reasonableness*, I55; *WR*, 199.

[34] *A Vindication of The Reasonableness of Christianity* (London, 1695), 9; *WR*, 214.

[35] At *Essay*, IV. xviii. 3, Locke distinguishes between original revelation, which he distinguishes here as 'that first Impression, which is made immediately by GOD, on the Mind of any Man, to which we cannot set any Bounds', and traditional revelation, 'those Impressions delivered over to others in Words, and the ordinary ways of conveying our Conceptions one to another'. The distinction is problematic, for those to whom individuals who receive an original revelation must convey it include themselves, if they would understand it. A manuscript that belongs to this period, entitled 'Revelation, Its several ways under the Old Testament', dated 1696, offers a descriptive list of modes of original revelation drawn from the Old Testament. These include a variety of modes of communication: by voice, inspiration, apparition, dreams, signs, and suchlike. In these instances, the revelation itself would have involved an accommodation to human understanding. See MS Locke c. 27, fols. 138–41.

judging his creatures, must not overlook the smallest offence. Whoever keeps this law perfectly gains the right to eternal happiness. It is unclear from the account in the *Reasonableness* whether Locke believed that even after Adam's sin, when the human race became mortal, this right could still be claimed by anyone who lived a morally faultless life, or whether the efficacy of this right also had to be restored by the work of Christ. In any case, it would have been an idle question to him, for he was sure that, human frailty being what it is, perfect righteousness is practically impossible. The covenant of faith takes human frailty into account. Here, then, is another sense in which Christianity is reasonable. It offers advantages that no other religion, natural or otherwise, can provide. Surely it is reasonable to seek advantages that relate to the main business of life.

Christianity still retains obedience to the moral law as a requirement to receive the benefit of the divine promise of eternal bliss. Indeed, as a lawgiver, according to Locke, Jesus prescribed a more perfect obedience, not only of actions but also of intentions. But this requirement is no longer rigorously applied in judgment if certain other conditions are met. So long as we repent our moral failures and sincerely strive to keep the law, the covenant of faith requires only that we accept some *credendum* to become beneficiaries of the covenant. Faith, then, is acceptance of a proposition that relates to the original revelation, the proposition that Jesus is the Messiah.

Locke's claim is that the discovery of this credal requirement is unavoidable when one looks in the right places. The right places are those parts of sacred Scripture where the gospel is preached, namely, the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. His exegetical decision seems altogether warranted, even today, if one desires to discover the content of the original teaching of Christianity. And it should be noted that Locke did not fail to use the best exegetical instruments: reliable texts, dictionaries, historical commentaries. His notion of faith, as the acceptance of a proposition, seems equally justified as a proper response to a sermon addressed to a rational audience.

What Locke discovered by these legitimate exegetical means was that Christianity is essentially a moral religion. It may be more fashionable to say that Locke reinvented Christianity as a moral religion. By moral religion I mean one whose main business is the conduct of life, whose practice is prescribed by a moral law, a divine law that is equivalent to the law of nature, and that promises eternal happiness only to those who sincerely try to obey it. Holiness in such a religion is essentially a moral category, and attributes of justice and goodness are applied to God unequivocally. Unlike Kant, who deliberately set out in *Die Religion innerhalb der grenzen der bloβen Vernunft* to reinterpret Christianity in terms of his rationalist moral theory, Locke's discovery was made while reading the record of what he took to be an authentic divine revelation.

This dependence on revelation distinguishes Locke's idea of Christianity from the religion of nature. The religion of nature, which is a pure moral religion, does not require a Messiah or divine king. Christianity according to Locke most certainly does. Likewise, the narrative form of the main argument of the *Reasonableness* is not accidental but essential. The revelation of the gospel is a moment in an elaborate sacred history. Locke's Christology, such as it is, was conceived against the background of this history. This history is a political history, although the politics

here is not terrestrial. Rather, whoever accepts Christ as the Messiah becomes thereby a subject of his divine kingdom.

The argument of the *Reasonableness* is framed within the history of the world from Adam's fall to the Last Judgment. The Messiah is the second Adam, whose spirit exists before his appearance in the flesh and whose coming was foretold by the prophets. Thoughts about Christ's pre-existence were not new to Locke. He thought about this theme some time before 1679. These early considerations are recorded in his interleaved Bentley bible in a set of comments on 12 biblical texts. The dating of the comments is based on their location on the page and the method of citation.[36] In six of the comments, the letter 'G' appears in the place where Locke usually identified the source of the comment. Content and cross-referencing justifies taking them all together. It is likely that G was the author of a manuscript, perhaps a history of the Messiah, whose pre-existence G asserts. According to G, the Godhead consists of three subsistences: the Father and creator, whose energy or spirit superintended the creation of the world, the Word, and the Spirit. Immediately subsequent to the Fall and coincidentally with the first intimation of the gospel to Adam and Eve, God the Father created the intellectual nature or soul of the Messiah. Presumably, the creation of the animal soul of the Messiah awaited his virgin conception. Immediately following its creation on the first day of creation, the intellectual soul of the Messiah was united with the Word and together they remained in the bosom of the Father until the Incarnation. When incarnated, the Messiah, whose intellectual soul is still united with the Word, becomes the first creature of the new creation that is the restoration of humanity to the divine life. The transformation of mankind to this new state is the work of the divine Spirit, the third subsistent of the Godhead.

It seems unlikely that G and Locke imagined that the intellectual nature of the Messiah consisted of mere intellectual powers. In its residence in the divine bosom united with the Word, the Messiah's intellectual soul must have been infused with the divine law, of which the Messiah, once incarnate, became a perfect teacher, and with the plan of God to save mankind, which included the life of the Messiah in the

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[36] The following are the texts cited (numbers in parentheses refer to pages in Locke's interleaved Bentley bible, *LL* 309 (Locke 16.25); it should be noted that Locke's pagination was somewhat irregular): Gen. I: 2 (18); John I: 15, 18 (736). 3: 13 (738), 6: 62 (742), 9: 58 (746); I Cor. 15: 47 (804); Titus 2: 11 (833); 2 Peter I: 4 (851); I John 5: 11 (854); Rev. 4: 14 (859): 7: 3 (859). For an explanation of the method used to date the notes in Locke's interleaved bible, see below.

From Locke's practice in citing sources, I infer that 'G' refers to a person and not to the title of a work. No date or pagination is given. It is not impossible that Locke received the references in conversation, but the number of the citations makes it more likely that he was commonplacing from a written source—a letter or a manuscript. There is no trace of either among his papers. As to G's identity, from the theology of the sources, G appears to have been an Origenist. (See Origen, *On First Principles* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 108–9, 319–20.) This points to Joseph Glanvill, but I have so far not found anything in Glanvill's writings that fits these notations, nor am I aware of any evidence connecting Locke and Glanvill. *Postscript:* the referent of G turns out to be a work by Nicholas Gibbons. For a complete transcription of Locke 'G' citations, see Chap. 4, Appendix, and passim.

flesh which the prophets foretold. It is plausible that these thoughts remained with Locke, with or without their author in mind, when he was developing his Christology in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

In the long middle section of the *Reasonableness* devoted to the messianic secret, Jesus's reticence to reveal his true identity is explained by his need to fulfil the prophecies concerning him. It was as though his intellectual nature was a sort of script fashioned by God on account of Adam's fall and imprinted beforehand on the soul of the incarnate Messiah—a singular instance of innate knowledge. This script contained the plan of God, foretold and now to be fulfilled to the letter so that Adam's posterity might be delivered from the unhappy consequences of the first sin and of human frailty. This script assigns to the Messiah the role of a dying and rising king; of a divine, although not supremely divine, king who by suffering death wins the well-being of his people and is therefore rightly exalted. Hence, Locke's attribution of the title 'Saviour' to Jesus Christ is not idle.[37]

Locke's interest in sacred history did not begin in 1694. His interleaved bibles and testaments include chronological notations. Citations from Lightfoot, Mede, and Pearson, all biblical chronologers, preponderate.[38] In an interleaved Old Testament (Locke 10.59–60), Locke inscribed the dates of the sacred calender in the historical books: 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and Daniel. His interest in the harmony of the Gospel narrative was quickened during his travels in France, when he met Nicolas Toinard. In December 1678, Toinard presented him with the sheets of his *Harmony* of the Gospels; and in the same year, Locke inscribed in a notebook a fragment of a harmony of the life of Jesus.[39] This chronology of the history of Jesus, from the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist to Jesus' baptism by John, follows Toinard. Noteworthy in the sequence of texts is the location of the prologue to St John's Gospel. Locke places it, following Toinard, after the baptism. While the relocation of the prologue may raise suspicions of Socinianism, Toinard's accompanying comment, that the prologue, even although relocated in the history of the Gospel, signifies 'the eternal and divine origin of the word, that is, of Jesus Christ', offers a ready, although perhaps insufficient, assurance of orthodoxy.[40]

The study of biblical chronology was not limited to the past but looked to the future also, to the second coming of Christ, the universal resurrection of the dead,

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[37] *Reasonableness*, 93; *WR*, 155. A fuller discussion of Locke's Christology is given in Chap. 4.

[38] For a listing of the works of these authors in Locke's library, see *LL.* Lightfoot is by far the most frequently cited commentator in Locke's bibles and testaments.

[39] 'Evangelia 79', MS Locke c. 42, fols. 32–3.

[40] *Evangeliorum harmonia Graeco-Latina*. Although not published until 1707, sheets of this work were printed in 1678.This chronology should be compared with another, inscribed in Locke's hand in the cover of a French New Testament, *LL* 2863 (Locke 7.327). It is a chronology that runs from the birth of Jesus until AD 66. Here Locke follows Lightfoot and locates the prologue to John at the beginning of the sequence, just after Luke I: 1–4. No date is given; it must be later than 1682, which is the date of publication of the testament.

the last judgment, and the final conflagration that would bring the mortal world to an end. These events are given some prominence in the *Reasonableness*.[41] There is no mention, however, of the millennium, the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth foretold by the author of the Apocalypse, who learned about it in a vision shown to him by an angel.[42] Nor is any mention made of events that were expected to precede it: the ingathering of the fullness of the Gentiles and the conversion of the Jews. That he had an interest in apocalyptic expectations is shown by several manuscripts entitled 'Chronologia Sacra': two of them are dated 1692 and 1695 respectively; the third, which is in Locke's hand, is a compilation of several chronologies and was possibly inscribed in 1693.[43] In addition to a calendar of events from creation to the end of the world, it contains various calculations or proofs of their occurrence based upon numerological clues, secret numbers, and meaningful ratios discovered in Scripture and harmonized with biblical prophecies. On the basis of these, it is concluded that, from creation to consummation, the world will endure for 7,000 years, that the ingathering of the Gentiles will be completed in 1702, the conversion of the Jews in 1732. The millennium will begin in 1777 *(anno mundi* 5740) and end in 2777 (AM 6740), and will be followed by the "little season" of Satan's last freedom, mentioned in Revelation 20: 3. It will last 270 years. Absence of a full-blown millenarianism in the *Reasonableness* should not be taken to mean that Locke did not subscribe to this. It could just as well be explained by the fact that apocalyptic expectation was more background than theme of the preaching of the gospel by Christ and his apostles.

The argument of the *Reasonableness* is based upon the authenticity of Scripture as a record of revelation. This authenticity is not merely assumed. The composition of the *Reasonableness* shows that Locke had taken on the additional task of proving the authenticity of the Gospel record. In this way, he was carrying out one of the two tasks that he assigned to reason relative to any purported revelation. One of these tasks is to clarify the meaning of the revelation through proper philological means. The other is to verify that the revelation, or the testimony of it, is authentic, for only authentic revelations carry 'Assurance beyond doubt'.[44]

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[41] Locke supposed that Jesus foretold a first and second coming after his ascension. The first was imminent, the second not until the end of the world. The great accomplishment of this first coming would be the destruction of Jerusalem, an act of vengeance. See *Reasonableness*, 66; *WR*, 134.

[42] Rev. 20: 3.

[43] 'Chronologica Sacra 92', MS Locke c. 27, fol. 90; 'Chronologia Sacra *95*', ibid., fol. 91; 'Chronologia Sacra' (n.d.), ibid., fols. 258–63. The first two manuscripts are not in Locke's hand. For a possible clue to the year of composition of the third of these, see fol. 263, where specific mention is made of the year 1701. Wainwright writes that the futuristic predictions follow calculations done by Francis Mercury van Helmont in his *Seder olam, sive Ordo saeculorum* (Leyden?, 1693). See *Paraphrase*, i. 56, n. 2. My own comparison of the chronologies with the English edition of Van Helmont's book (London, 1694) confirm this, although Locke must have been using other sources as well.

[44] *Essay*, IV. xvi. 14 (667).

The proof of the reliability of the testimony of the Christian revelation offered by Locke in the *Reasonableness* takes the form of a long historical argument.[45] It is a counterpart of natural theology, inasmuch as it demonstrates the wisdom of God manifested in the dispensation of revelation, or the administration of it. There are the familiar appeals to prophecy and miracles. Its main and longest part, however, details the manner by which Jesus the Messiah administered the revelation throughout his ministry, in the events leading up to his death and following his resurrection and return. This long historical section of the *Reasonableness* includes consideration of what, in more recent times, has been called the messianic secret, that is, Jesus' reticence to reveal his identity as Messiah until just before his death. It includes assessments of the way he fitted his preaching to circumstances, of his use of miracles, of his selection of apostles as his witnesses and the vanguard of the propagation of the gospel.[46] Its importance here is as an example of what Locke meant when he wrote that reason must vouchsafe the authenticity of a revelation. It also represents another way in which Locke imagined that Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures is reasonable.

Interpreting St Paul

The most important theological work produced by Locke after *The Reasonableness of Christianity* is *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul.* Arthur Wainwright, the editor of the Clarendon critical edition of this work, guesses that Locke began work on the earliest part, the Corinthians letters, in 1699 or 1700. This may be true, but only if applied strictly to the drafts of the *Paraphrase;* for judging from Locke's interleaved bible and testaments, it is most likely that his study of Paul's letters began long before then. I shall rely on just one of these here to make my point. The most densely annotated of his bibles and testaments is a polyglot New Testament, *Le nouveau testament de nostre seigneur Jesus Christ, traduit en françois avec le grec, et le latin de la Vulgate ajoûtez à côte,* published in two volumes in 1673. Locke probably purchased it during his travels in France, 1675–9. The testament has been interleaved and rebound in five volumes.[47] There are 141 notes on St Paul's letters, including Hebrews, which Locke attributed to Paul. They are unevenly distributed: Romans, 22; I Corinthians, 99; 2 Corinthians, 1; Galatians, 3; Philippians, 1; 1 Thessalonians, 3; 2 Thessalonians, 3; 1 Timothy, 5; Hebrews, 4. Locke must not have had this testament in his possession during his exile in Holland, for Tyrrell includes it in his list of books that Locke left in his custody.[48]

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[45] For further discussion of this, see Chaps. 3, 5.

[46] *Reasonableness*, 40–108; WR, 115–66.

[47] *LL* 2864 (Locke 9.103–7).

[48] Tyrrell's description fits it exactly. See MS Locke f. 17. fol. 3. Locke received it back from Tyrrell in 1691. See MS Locke b. 2, fol. 124, 'Libri Rec'd from Mr. Tyrrell. 91'.

Therefore, these notes have to have been made either between 1675 and 1683, or between 1691 and 1704.[49] Since Locke did not affix a date to his bible notes, assigning one to any of them must depend on other evidence. This is not an exact science, but, thanks to the work of J. R. Milton, ways have been devised to assign dates to many of Locke's notes with a reasonable degree of reliability.[50] The date of printing of works cited in most cases permits fixing an earliest date. The style of the entry is also informative. Locke used two different conventions for citing Scripture. The first employs arabic numerals to denote chapter and verse (e.g. 'Rom. *5*. 3'); the second uses a mixture of roman and arabic numerals, the former to designate chapters, the latter verses ('Rom. V. 3'). It is obvious that the second method avoids ambiguity and it is probable that Locke adopted it for this reason. There is good evidence that he abandoned the first method of citation and took up the second about 1678–9. The evidence consists of the following: Locke's practice of filling up the pages of his commonplace books and interleaved bibles from top to bottom; the fact that citations according to the first method always appear in his bibles above those that employ the second method of citation; comparison with dated entries in Locke journals involving biblical citation. For a while, Locke employed a third method of biblical citation. Beginning in 1677 and continuing until 1680, he put numbers designating chapter and verse respectively before and after the name of the book (e.g. '5 Rom. 3'). He employed this method primarily in harmonies of the Gospels and in chronologies. From the method of citation, one may conclude that 80 of the 99 entries on I Corinthians are early, that is, before 1679.[51] Based on these calculations, it is clear that, prior to 1683, Locke spent considerable time with I Corinthians. His interest in it may have been triggered by the recent publication (1677) of John Lightfoot's commentary. Many of the citations are from this book.[52] The notes taken from this work, like most of the rest, are historical and philological.

The Reasonableness of Christianity also shows the influence of St Paul and, therefore, may be taken as evidence of prior study of his epistles. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how anyone unschooled in Pauline theology could have written it. Its central themes are justification by faith, and the distinction between the law of faith and the law of works. The myth of the first and second Adam provides

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[49] The notes from Lightfoot on I Corinthians are in iv. 56–105, passim (Locke 9.106).

[50] I am grateful to J. R. Milton for introducing me to the methods of dating Locke's notes and for his generosity in sharing his considerable knowledge of Locke's manuscripts. The method outlined here is incomplete. Other facts also contribute to dating: e.g. handwriting, the position of the entry on the page. I hope to present a more detailed and definite account of a method in *Locke's Theological Manuscripts*, a volume of the Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke in preparation. This volume will also include critical texts of 'Adversaria theologica' and other documents discussed here.

[51] The other early entry counts are as follows: Romans 6; 2 Corinthians I; Galatians I; Phillipians I; I Thessalonians o; 2 Thessalonians o; I Timothy 6; Hebrews 2.

[52] *Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae impensae in epistolam primam S. Pauli ad Corinthios* (Paris, 1677). There is a copy of this book in Locke's library, *LL* 1747 (Locke 12.16). However, this may not be the copy that he used to make his notes, for some of the pages of this particular volume are uncut, and some of the uncut pages are cited by Locke in his interleaved New Testament.

the framework of its central narrative. The *Paraphrase*, then, is continuous with Locke's theological investigations over a period of nearly two decades, perhaps more. Therefore, it is probably a mistake to put too much weight on John Edwards's charge that Locke did not sufficiently venerate the epistles and to speculate on Locke's reaction to it, beyond the response given in his *Vindications*. Edwards's charge may have given Locke added reason to undertake the *Paraphrase*, but surely what prompted Locke most of all was a deep interest in St Paul and the meaning of his letters.

The *Paraphrase* should, then, be regarded primarily as a continuation of work already underway. In some instances, it reflects back to themes introduced in the list of commonplaces in 'Adversaria Theologica', for example, the creation of the material world or the revolt of angels.[53] The method that Locke prescribed in his preface to the *Paraphrase* is the same method that he followed in the *Reasonableness*. There are thematic continuities as well, in addition to ones already noted: on the course of sacred history, on moral duties, on inspiration and revelation, on the propagation of Christianity, and so forth. The most pertinent of these thematic continuities to the present narrative of Locke's theology concerns Christology, in particular, Christ's kingship. Wainwright takes Locke's note on Ephesians 1: 10 as evidence of his acceptance of the pre-existence of Christ. This seems correct. Locke's paraphrase states: 'Until the Coming of the due time of that dispensation wherein he had predetermined *to reduce all things again*, both in Heaven and Earth under one Head in Christ' (italics mine). 'To reduce all things again' is Locke's translation of the Greek verb ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι He spells out his meaning in his notes: ''Tis plain in Sacred Scripture, that Christ at first had the Rule and Supremacy over all, and was head over all'. This unitary headship of 'all' under Christ was ended by the rebellion of Satan who took with him 'great Numbers of Angels'. They established their own kingdom in opposition to Christ's kingdom, and exercised sway not only over themselves but also over 'all the Heathen World' as their 'Vassals and Subjects'. Christ's ancient kingdom was supposed to have been restored through his death and resurrection.[54]

Locke cites Colossians 1: 15–17 as a gloss on Ephesians 1: 10, and this makes clear how he regarded the antiquity and scope of Christ's kingdom. The text, as recorded in Locke's Bentley bible, is as follows:

> Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers: all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

This formulation may be a long way from orthodoxy. Here, in contrast to the Christology of G described above, the Word, or second subsistence of God, is unmentioned. Still, Locke's gloss is undeniably scriptural and it is unequivocal in its expression of the Messiah's pre-existence, if not his divinity. However, this clear

[53] *Paraphrase*, ii. 616, 621.

[54] Ibid., ii. 616, 806.

assertion is muted somewhat when, in the same explanatory note, Locke tentatively suggests that 'things in heaven' and 'things on earth' might signify Jews and Gentiles, which implies that, notwithstanding his title, Christ's kingdom might be a merely terrestrial one.

Locke's notes on Hebrews add another aspect to his Christology and more light to this question. The particular notes that I shall consider are written on a quire consisting of two quarto sheets, folded and sewn. This pamphlet is inserted into Locke's polyglot New Testament. The notes consist of drafts of a summary of the contents of the letter, which Locke attributes to Paul. Similar summaries may be found in the same interleaved testament and were made in preparation for the *A Paraphrase and Notes*. It is likely, then, that these come from the same period, and that Locke planned a paraphrase and commentary on this letter also. It is a pity that he did not carry out this plan, for he would have given us his full account of his late views of the priestly office of Christ.

What makes his late opinions on these issues interesting is the fact that earlier, in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke had minimized the importance of Christ's priestly office. He justified this on the ground that Jesus never claimed the title or interpreted his suffering in terms of it.[55] Locke is quite right about this. In the Gospel narratives, Jesus speaks often enough about his suffering, but he does not relate it to any priestly office held by him, and he nowhere claims the title. It is most unlikely that, when writing the *Reasonableness*, Locke was unfamiliar with the priestly theme of Hebrews.[56] His method, however, to attend only to the Gospels and Acts, allowed him to ignore it. Locke would have wanted to say that it not only provided him with an excuse; it required that he ignore it. This may be so, but it still remains to explain how Locke intended to integrate the doctrine of Hebrews consistently with the doctrine of the *Reasonableness*. We can only speculate. He might have observed that the office of priest as represented in Hebrews does not perpetuate sacrifice or priestcraft but ends them. In this respect it fits nicely, by way of contrast, with the office of king, which is everlasting. What is more, it preserves the notion of Christianity as a moral religion. As priest, then, Christ ends the old order of rites and ceremonies; while as king, he introduces the new one of law, judgment, and mercy. Still, it remains uncertain what significance Locke would have attached to the death of Christ from this perspective. The suffering of Christ the king is a prelude to his victory over Satan. What significance has the suffering of Christ the priest? I shall leave this question for a fuller treatment at another time.

With respect to Christ's kingdom, Locke's notes on Hebrews offer further insight into his Christology. In his summary of Hebrews chs. 1, 2, and 6, he connects the two covenants, of Moses and Christ, to the doctrine of the kingdom. He observes that, according to Hebrews, the superiority of the new over the old covenant is a function of its bearer. The revelation delivered at Sinai was delivered by

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[55] *Reasonableness*, 120; *WR*, 175.

[56] Hebrews is cited in five places in the *Reasonableness* (see Appendix II, 226), but nowhere is mention made of Christ's priestly role.

angels, who were mere ministering spirits, whereas the bearer of the kingdom of God is a son of God. Locke comments further, from Hebrews, that Christ's kingdom will not be subject to angels. The superiority of Christ as son of God does not, however, imply his pre-existence. As Locke observed in a note on I Cor. 6: 14, this advantage was gained through the death and resurrection of Christ and, as a consequence of it, redeemed Christians, though mere humans, shall judge angels.[57]

Late Theological Reflections

In this penultimate section, I examine Locke's theological reflections represented in two late works: *A Discourse of Miracles* and *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, both published posthumously in 1706.[58] They were published with Locke's authority, although, as he wrote to his cousin Peter King on 4 October 1704, he regarded neither ready for publication. Locke describes the manuscript of the 'little discourse' [of Miracles] as a first draft. He leaves it to King 'and some other of my judicious friends' to decide whether it should be published and grants him editorial liberty to prepare the work for publication. He writes much the same thing concerning the *Conduct*.[59] Manuscripts of the latter work survive and a comparison of the first published edition, upon which all subsequent editions of it have until now have been based, shows that King was faithful to their wording even if sparing in the exercise of editorial judgment. Hence, we can be assured that we have access to texts representing Locke's considered opinions imperfectly expressed. What they reveal to us is that Locke's pursuit of broad theological themes continued undiminished until the end.[60]

The epigraphs that begin this chapter are both taken from the *Conduct*. The first offers a concise summary of Locke's moral religion: the knowledge of God and his creatures, our duty to him and them, and our present and future states of existence. This is the sum of theology, which is not a separate intellectual pursuit remote from all others, but one that regards its themes: the honor of God and the happiness of mankind, here and hereafter, as the true end of all other knowledge, and thus the

[57] The note appears in Locke's interleaved Bentley bible. It has been transcribed by Wainwright, *Paraphrase*, i. 433.

[58] *Posthumous Works of John Locke* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1706).

[59] Locke to Peter King, 4 October 1704: *Correspondence*, viii. 413. Locke died on 28 October 1704. On the manuscript sources of the *Conduct*, see *Of The Conduct of the Understanding*, ed. Paul Schuurman, (n.p. 2000), 97–126; the preceding is Schuurman's dissertation (Keele); it contains a critical edition of the text, the first ever. A critical edition of the *Conduct* is now in preparation by Schuurman for the Clarendon Locke as volume 3 of *John Locke. Drafts for the Essay concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, in preparation).

[60] Locke first mention of the *Conduct*, is in a letter to Molyneaux, dated 10 April 1697 (*Correspondence* vi. 87); he writes that he planned it as a chapter of the *Essay* and that he expected that it would be the longest of all. He worked on the text intermittently until his death, leaving it unfinished. See Schuurman, op. cit., 109.

endpoint to which all knowledge should be directed. Thus, Locke's idea of a *summa theologica* has very broad boundaries, comprehending all that anyone can possibly know interpreted according to these ends. Its pursuit is the duty of every rational creature. The comprehensive scheme of theology that Locke outlined in 'Adversaria Theologica' seemed to have remained in his mind.

Theology, so conceived, has two sources: 'the Works of Nature, and the Words of Revelation'. Works and words are both significant expressions of divine truth, and the method of interpreting them in both cases is a rational one, although the truths that they communicate are not all within the scope of reason to discover. This is emphasized in the second epigraph, in which the Bible is represented as an infallible source of the whole of theology, whose content, however, is recoverable only by impartial historical critical inquiry. The correlation of these two sources, of words and works, is a major theme of Locke's thought. Their intimate connection is also a leading theme of *A Discourse of Miracles*.

Locke tells us in a postscript to *A Discourse of Miracles*, that it was occasioned by William Fleetwood's *Essay on Miracles* and a published response to it, whose author he does not name.[61] However, he has little to say about what these authors wrote except to record his dissatisfaction with the definition of the term given by former and the latter's failure to provide one. A careful reading of it in the context of Locke's previous writings shows the *Discourse* is much more than an occasional writing. It appears that Locke based his defense of miracles upon his account of knowledge and belief in the *Essay*. The crux of the argument of the *Discourse* is forecast in the following paragraph from a chapter on the degrees of assent in which Locke compares the evidential force of ordinary and extraordinary events.

> Though the common Experience, and the ordinary Course of Things have justly a Mighty influence on the Minds of Men, to make them give or refuse Credit to any thing proposed to their Belief; yet there is one Case, wherein the strangeness of the Fact lessens not the Assent to a fair Testimony given of it. For where such supernatural Events are suitable to ends aim'd at by him, who has the Power to change the course of Nature, there, under such Circumstances, they may be the fitter to procure Belief, by how much the more they are beyond, or contrary to ordinary Observation. This is the proper Case of *Miracles*, which well attested, do not only find Credit themselves; but give it also to other Truths, which need such Confirmation.[62]

Locke's point is that, whereas belief in general is founded upon common experience of the ordinary course of nature, there are other beliefs that we accept upon grounds contrary to common experience. These 'other Truths' are the words of revelation, divine communications delivered by prophets and apostles, and by Jesus the Messiah, and recorded for posterity by those inspired pen-men in the Bible.

The mode of argument that Locke claims to follow in the *Discourse* is an argument from the nature of the thing, which he describes earlier in the same chapter as

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[61] William Fleetwood, *An Essay on Miracles* (London: Charles Harper, 1701); the respondent was Benjamin Hoadly, who responded in *A Letter to Mr. Fleetwood, occasion'd by his late Essay on Miracles* (London: John Nutt, 1702).

[62] *Essay* IV. xvi. 13 (667).

the paragraph just quoted.[63] The premises of this sort of argument are universal human consent, as far as it can be known, and its concurrence with one's own 'constant and never-failing Experience in like cases' concerning the properties of things or their apparent causes and effects. On such grounds we readily accept attestations of matters of fact 'as if it were certain knowledge'. 'For what our own and other Men's constant Observation has found always to be after the same manner, that we with reason conclude to be the Effects of steady and regular Causes, though they come not within the reach of our Knowledge.'

How may this argument be applied to miracles? A miracle is a sensible occurrence of extraordinary character; like all occurrences, it is a manifestation of power, but in this case what persuades is not the ordinary power that we take to reside in the natural constitution of things and that is perceived in their operations—such powers that we attempt to discover through trial and experiment; rather the extraordinary character of the event brings to the mind of an individual spectator the unrivalled power of God, who being the creator of the world is able to alter the course of nature. While it may be objected that not every individual may be of the same mind that a particular unusual event should count as a miracle, Locke does not think this defeats his case.[64]

As manifestations of this sort of power, miracles serve as credentials of divine messengers.[65] Yet, they have this virtue only when they glorify the one true God or reveal a matter of great concern to all mankind, for example, matters of deliverance and redemption that bear upon eternity. This is not because Locke supposed that only the one true God can alter the course of nature—he imagined other spiritual beings at work in the world doing extraordinary things, sometimes contrary to divine purposes—but because it is inconceivable that God, who is perfect in goodness as well as in power, would allow lesser supernatural powers to challenge divine truth.[66] In this respect, the power manifest in miracles is always overpowering, victorious when challenged, or otherwise unchallenged, and when, as Locke supposed, it is regarded rationally, its evidentiary force cannot be denied. It is just here that Locke locates proof from the nature of the thing. The 'thing' is the supposed miracle, whose extraordinariness is a matter of public witness.[67]

Miracles are performed by divine messengers as proof of their mission, and they are the more efficacious and suitable for this purpose the more extraordinary they are.

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[63] For what follows, see *Essay* IV. xvi. 6 (661), and compare with *Discourse*, *WR*, 45.

[64] *Discourse*, *WR*, 44.

[65] 'I crave leave to say, that he who comes with a Message from God to be deliver'd to the World, cannot be refus'd belief if he vouches his Mission by a Miracle, because his credentials [i.e. the miracles he performs] have a right to it. For every rational thinking Man must conclude as *Nicodemus* did, *we know that thou art a teacher come from God*, *for no Man can do these signs which thou dost*, *except God be with him*.' *WR*, 46.

[66] The example of this that Locke cites is the contest between Moses and the Egyptian magicians, see *Discourse*, *WR*, 46–9.

[67] 'He that is present at the fact, is a spectator: He that believes the History of the fact [recorded in Scripture], put himself in the place of a Spectator.' *WR*, 44.

What is implied here is that there exists a common knowledge of true religion, or at least the intimation of it, for it is just this juxtaposition of power and truth, works and words, that Locke seems to suppose makes his argument work. This conclusion, which is rationally drawn, is allowed because the messenger espouses a form of religion that reason can confirm although not in every respect discover: monotheism, a moral doctrine that is pure and rigorous, and a divine plan of redemption for all, rooted in divine justice and mercy.[68] So there is a correlation between reason and revelation.

In the *Discourse*, Locke assures his readers that miracles—in the sense that he understands them, as phenomenally extraordinary occurrences (not transgressions of the laws of nature) juxtaposed to true religion—'infallibly' direct us to divine revelation.[69] Here also, he builds upon themes developed earlier in the *Essay* and carries it forward in a remarkable way. In *Essay* IV. xvi. 14, Locke argued that a revelation, since it comes from a being who is omniscient and who can neither deceive nor be deceived, must be received in a manner that 'perfectly excludes all wavering as our knowledge it self'; he adds 'we might as well doubt of our own Being, as we can, whether any Revelation from GOD be true'. This is very high assurance. However, the force of this assertion is mitigated, when it is observed that our assent can be no higher than the evidence that the message a divine messenger bears is from God. It would seem now, on this late account, that Locke came to believe that miracles provide such infallible evidence, and vouchsafe a variety of belief that equals knowledge in its degree of certainty even though it cannot count as knowledge.[70]

Summary and Conclusion

To summarize, at the beginning of the period under consideration, Locke contemplated a broad and leisurely program of theological study which he outlined in 'Adversaria theologica'. He was guided by no dogmatic agenda. Any conclusions that he reached were supposed to be the outcome of evidence and argument. Prompted in part by the antinomian controversy and the Deist challenge, his mind seems to have taken a strongly anti-Calvinist turn. He fixed his attention on the Christian doctrine of justification. He was able to draw upon enquiries already underway. This newly focused enquiry led him to two important discoveries: the discovery that fundamental or evangelical Christianity consists of a single proposition that Jesus is the Messiah, and the rediscovery of Christianity as an essentially moral

[68] This, in outline, anticipates the account of Locke's proof of the authenticity of Scripture, see Chap. 3.

[69] *Discourse*, *WR*, 44.

[70] It has been suggested to me that the argument from the nature of the thing that Locke uses is a species of the argument to the best explanation. Put in this way, Locke's argument is that the best explanation of an extraordinary event that accompanies the communication of a purportedly divine messenger and is claimed by him to attest to the truth of his mission and message, is that it is indeed a miracle. I believe that this is what Locke thought. Its credibility, however, presupposes the truth of natural religion. I am grateful to my colleague Kareem Khalifa for this suggestion.

religion. *The Reasonableness of Christianity* was the product of this effort. Locke's further study of St Paul's epistles, including Hebrews, offered confirmation of these established positions. They also provided him with a more refined understanding about the being of Christ and the meaning of his suffering. This resulted in an unequivocal affirmation of the preexistence of Christ and in a reconsideration of the office of Christ as priest. At the end of this period, perhaps led by these last considerations to the more abstruse parts of theology, Locke reaffirmed the broad scope of theological enquiry, holding at the center of it, the Christian religion, whose doctrines, carefully derived from Scripture, he was confident could be affirmed with the highest degree of rational assurance.

Throughout this narrative, I have tried to set aside questions concerning Locke's orthodoxy or lack of it. This was deliberate, for I believe that to raise them prematurely is a hindrance and not an aid to understanding Locke. There is no doubt that Locke was anxious to protect himself from the suspicion of heterodoxy, and he must have been aware that some of his opinions would arouse it. But this anxiety should not be interpreted as due to a subversive mind or subversive sympathies, nor should it be supposed that it reached so deeply that it guided his thinking. Nor is there any evidence that Locke's almost proverbial secretiveness reached to this depth. The evidence of Locke's writing and his manuscripts, or at least that portion of them examined here, suggests that fundamentally he was guided in his theological enquiries by an attitude of 'indifferency', which he describes so well in *Of the Conduct of the Understanding.*[71]

In retrospect, however, it is clear that Locke agreed with the Socinians on several points. On the doctrine of the trinity, he was not silent or indecisive. What he wrote in his notes and published works seems to contradict or at the very least comes short of Athanasian orthodoxy. His opinions concerning mortalism, or more precisely, the insensibility of the soul between death and resurrection, original sin and satisfaction were also acceptable to many Socinians, but they were not peculiarly Socinian doctrines. It is one thing to hold opinions in common with Socinians and even to hold Socinian opinions, quite another to have a Socinian agenda. The former is true; the latter, I am convinced, is false.

Still it may be justifiable to call Locke a Socinian, although with a less sinister intent. In his lovely essay on the Tew circle, H. R. Trevor-Roper claims to have discovered an ambiguity in the use of the term 'Socinian' during the seventeenth century. This ambiguity arose from its use as an odious label intended to inculpate and to spread suspicion. He identifies two meanings of the term. According to the first, a Socinian is a follower of Faustus Socinus, who accepts his doctrine (to which the adjective 'Socinian' applies) and follows a Socinian agenda. According to the second, a Socinian is someone who puts reason above tradition and dogma when interpreting Scripture, and who has secretly adopted a Socinian agenda.[72] If my account of Locke's theology is correct, then the term 'Socinian' in neither of its senses applies to Locke.

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[71] *Conduct*, §§II, 33, 34 [i.e. II, 34, 351; *Posthumous Works*, 42–3, 101–7.

[72] H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Great Tew circle', in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans: Seventeenth-Century Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987). See especially sections 3–4.

However, Trevor-Roper applies, perhaps without noticing it, a third meaning of the term that is not at all odious. He uses it to identify a modern tradition of theological liberalism that begins with Erasmus and includes Castellio, Acontius and Ochino, Hugo Grotius, Richard Hooker and the entire Tew Circle. 'Socinus himself' is also included in this list, by which I suppose is meant Laelius Socinus. But surely Faustus Socinus belongs on this list also, as do later Socinians, such as Volkelius, the Crellii, Wisowatius and others. This tradition is identifiable by its political conservatism, an aversion to radicalism and enthusiasm, an advocacy of toleration, scepticism with respect to abstruse metaphysical and theological issues, acceptance of the freedom of the will and of the possibility of universal salvation, and a view of Christianity as a moral religion. This third sense of 'Socinian' was not in use during the seventeenth century, and, so far as I know, is Trevor-Roper's invention. He might as well have called it a Christian Renaissance tradition. However one label it, I think Trevor-Roper is quite right that there was such a tradition, and that members of it were suspected of Socinianism and much worse by those who put dogmatic loyalty first. For this reason, I think it is quite accurate to borrow Trevor-Roper's convention and label Locke a 'Socinian'.

Appendix A

MS Locke c. 43: 'AdversariaTheologica', pp. 1–7 (*WR*, 21–4)

- Deus
  - Unus
  - Trinus
  - Omnipotens
  - Ornnisciens
  - Benignus
- Spiritus
  - Quando creati
  - Natura
  - Species
  - Facultates
  - Lapsus
  - Crimen
  - Supplicium
  - Potestas
- Anima humana
  - Praeexistentia
  - Revolutio
  - Creatio
  - Traductio
- Anima brutorum
- Materia
  - creata
  - Qualis
  - Quanta
- Mundus aspectabilis
  - Antiquitas
- Systema nostrum
  - Sol
  - Planetae
  - Terra
- Homo
  - Innocens
  - Lapsus
  - Intellectus
  - Voluntas
  - Libertas
  - Sensus
- Peccatum Adami
  - quid
  - quomodo affecit Adamum
  - posteros eius reatu
    - imputatione
    - infectione
- post mortem
  - pseuchopannuchia
  - Resurrectio

(continued)

Appendix A (continued)

- Paradisus
- Gehenna
- Annihilatio

Christus
- Deus
- Primus creaturarum
- Homo
- Redimit
  - a quo
  - [quos]
  - quomodo
    - pretio
    - gratia
    - spiritu
  - quos
    - credentes
      - quae credenda ad salutem
    - sanctos
      - quae agenda ad salutem

Spiritus Sanctus
- quis
- quomodo operatur
  - in quos

Revelatio
- Necessaria
- Theopneusta
- Modi
- Certitudo
- Miracula

Biblia
- Lex Mosaica
- Evangelium

Ethica sive Hominis officium
- Erga Deurn
  - Spiritus bonos
    - malos
- Rempublicam
- Magistratus
- Parentes
- Conjuges
- Liberos
- Affines
- Dominos
- Servos
- Herum
- Famulos
- Vicinos
- Homines
- Seipsum

Appendix B

'Adversaria Theologica': titles of entries (*WR*, 23–33)

1. Trinitas/Non Trinitas (pp. 12–13)
2. Cultus (p. 14)
3. Propitio Placamen (p. 16)
   (After pp. 16–17, four double pages, paginated but blank)
4. Christus Deus Supremus/Christus non Deus supremus (pp. 26–7)
5. Christus merus homo/Christus non merus homo (pp. 28–9)
6. Spiritus Sanctus. Deus/Spiritus Sanctus Non Deus (pp. 30–31)
7. Anima humana Immaterialis/Anima humana Materialis (pp. 32–3)
8. Credenda necessario ad Salutem (p. 34)
9. Homo lapsus Liber/Homo lapsus non liber (pp. 36–7)
10. Adami Status ante Lapsum (p. 38)
    (Hominis *later added above* Adami, *perhaps as an alternative*)
11. Lex operum. Rom III. 27/Lex fidei Rom III. 27. (pp. 40–41)
12. Satisfactio Christi. Aff:/Satisfactio Christi Neg: (pp. 42–3)
13. Electio (p. 44)
14. Redemtio & Ransom (p. 46)

Chapter 3
Locke's Proof of the Divine Authority of Scripture*

> It is beyond doubt that the interpretation of the Holy Bible derives much from learning, much from reason, and, lastly, much from the Holy Spirit illuminating the minds of men, but the most certain interpreter of Scripture is Scripture itself, and it alone is infallible.[1]
>
> A Christian I am sure I am, because I believe *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*, the King and Saviour promised, and sent by God: And as a Subject of his Kingdom, I take the rule of my Faith, and Life, from his Will declar'd and left upon Record in the inspired Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists in the New Testament: Which I endeavour to the utmost of my power, as is my Duty, to understand in their true sense and meaning. To lead me into their true meaning, I know (as I have above declar'd) no infallible Guide, but the same Holy Spirit, from whom these Writings at first came.[2]
>
> All that is contain'd in the inspired Writings, is all of Divine Authority, must all be allow'd for such, and received for Divine and infallible Truth, by every Subject of Christ's Kingdom, *i.e.* every Christian.[3]

Introduction: The Problem

It should be evident to anyone who has read John Locke's mature theological writings that his primary motive as an author was to articulate a form of Christianity acceptable to all Christians not predisposed by sectarian interests, one that would prove persuasive to all impartial readers, whether confidently Christian or not, a form of religion that to his mind was not his own invention, but which represented faithfully

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*This is a revised version of a study included in *Religion and Philosophy in Enlightenment Britain*, ed. Ruth Savage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, forthcoming, 2011).

[1] John Locke, 'Infallibility', in *WR*, 72.

[2] John Locke, *A Second Vindication to The Reasonableness of Christianity* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1797), 344.

[3] Ibid., 339.

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-0274-5_3, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

the idea of Christianity perspicuously presented in Scripture, especially in the New Testament. The title of *The Reasonableness of Christianity as deliver'd in the Scriptures* is an announcement of that intention. Accordingly, he employed a theological method that is biblical and expository rather than speculative and dogmatic, and in this endeavour he was confident not only of the divine authority of Scripture but also of Scripture's capability to disclose its paramount meaning. Yet, there does not seem to be anywhere in his writings evidence to show that he ever bothered to justify his confidence that Scripture was an authoritative and infallible source of divine truth, even though everywhere he assumed this or unequivocally asserted it with an assurance bordering upon certainty.[4] This missing proof becomes perplexing, when one considers two things. First, Locke explicitly declared that it was reason's prerogative to decide whether any purported revelation is authentic and to judge between right and wrong interpretations of it. Second, he was sophisticated in the art of biblical historical criticism and well informed of contemporary critical challenges to the authority of the Bible and to its Christian interpretation.

Most readers of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* will be familiar with Locke's dictum that our assurance with respect to any revelation cannot exceed the degree of assurance that we might have that what is before us is truly a revelation and that we understand it correctly, and that these assurances are always within the prerogative of reason alone.[5] This cautious measured acceptance contrasts remarkably with the assurance that, Locke writes, is warranted by the thing itself, which, just because it is revelation from God, whom we know can neither deceive nor be deceived, 'carries with it Assurance beyond Doubt, Evidence beyond Exception' and, hence, requires from us 'the highest Degree of our Assent'.[6] Locke's professions of faith in the divine authority of Scripture quoted above seem to be expressions of unmeasured confidence. But surely his remarks about the regulative role of reason were not idle.

Locke's awareness of contemporary objections to the divine authority of Scripture and the Christian interpretation of its meaning are well documented. His interleaved Bentley Bible contains notes from Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus* taken sometime between 1672 and 1675.[7] If Locke read only the first

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[4] In his introduction to the *Reasonableness*, xxiii, John Higgins-Biddle writes that Locke made no attempt to prove the divine authority of Scripture, but merely assumed it. Nicholas Wolterstorff expresses a similar sentiment in *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 132.

[5] *Essay* IV. xviii. 10 (695).

[6] *Essay* IV. xvi. 14 (667).

[7] This interleaved bible now resides in the Bodleian Library, shelf mark Locke 16. 25 (*LL* 309). The references to Spinoza are on pp. 7, 17, 230 of this bible. Spinoza's *Tractatus* was published in 1670. Locke purchased a copy of it sometime before 16 May 1672 according to an entry in one of his account books, MS Locke c. 1, p. 4; the copy in Locke's library, *LL* 2743, has a publication date of 1674. Locke travelled to France in November 1675. It is unlikely that he took this interleaved Bible with him.

chapter, 'On Prophecy', from which his notes are taken, he would have been aware of Spinoza's deflationary account of Prophetic inspiration, according to which the prophetic mind, although it may ascend to supernormal levels of moral purity, never rises above the imagination in its understanding of God and the world, nor in these respects above the local knowledge and superstitions of its untutored audiences. Locke appropriated Spinoza's comment that the ancient Jews were ignorant of natural causes and attributed all events directly to divine action. He also adopted a similar outlook on prophetic inspiration, whether appropriated from Spinoza or not.[8] Yet, he rejected Spinoza's naturalism and his confidence in the Bible as a source of transcendent knowledge seems never to have wavered.

Locke was a behind-the-scenes participant in the debate between Philippus van Limborch and Isaac Orobio de Castro on the validity of Christian messianic doctrine.[9] So he would have been aware that Orobio denied, with cogent arguments to support his denials, that belief in the Messiah is anywhere said in the Hebrew Scriptures to be a condition for salvation for all mankind; that Jews need believe in a Messiah who has already come; that God has rejected the Jewish nation in favor of the Christian Church; and that the ceremonial prescriptions of the Mosaic law are types and prophecies of the coming of Jesus as Messiah.[10] Locke acted as Limborch's agent and editor in the publication of the debate.[11] Surely the issues of the debate must have been considered along with related exegetical and epistemological problems; for they are echoed in the *Reasonableness*, in Locke's defense of the superiority of the Christian over the Mosaic revelation.

Locke was aware, at least from 1683, of the challenge by Isaac Lepeyrère to the commonly held belief derived from the biblical narrative that Adam was the first man.[12] He was also well aware of the direct and indirect challenges of Deists to the authority of Scripture. The writings of Charles Blount, in particular, were known to him. He owned Blount's edition of Philostratus' life of Apollonius of Tyana, in which the author, while professing a belief in the divine inspiration of the biblical prophets, cites instances when their prophecies failed, when they departed from historical truth, and when they lied; likewise Blount identified what

[8] On Locke's appropriation of Spinoza's dictum, see 'Immediate Inspiration', MS Locke c. 27, fol. 73; transcribed in *WR*, 38f. See also Section 2 below.

[9] Isaac Orobio de Castro (1620–87), a philosopher, physician and biblical scholar, was born Balthasar Orobio de Castro. His parents were Marranos, that is, Jews who were forcibly converted to Christianity but who, it was supposed, secretly adhered to Judaism. Orobio converted to Judaism in 1666 and took the name 'Isaac'.

[10] See Hans Joachim Schoeps, *The Jewish Christian Argument* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963) 78–94 for a summary of the debate.

[11] *De Veritate Religionis Christianae Amica Collatio cum Erudito Judaeo* (Gouda: Justus ab Hoeve, 1687; facsimile edn Gregg International, 1969); See also Locke's correspondence with Van Limborch, *Correspondence*, ii, 690, iii, 258.

[12] See *WR*, 265.

he took to be fictions and fables in Moses' history that do not differ materially from their pagan counterparts.[13] In *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, he defends his book against the charge of doctrinal minimalism by explaining that it was intended to commend the Christian religion to Deists, to convince them of the advantages of the Christian revelation and the authenticity of the biblical account of it.[14]

Locke was also aware that the texts of the Old and New Testament had become corrupt over time, and that the canon was open to doubt, as was the authenticity of certain texts on which key doctrines depended. He studied the historical critical study of the Old Testament by the Oratorian Richard Simon, who showed that the Hebrew Bible was a compilation made from older books now lost, and put together by scribes, who were trained for the work they did, that Scripture itself was the product of tradition, and that its meaning was in many instances uncertain and therefore in need of interpretation of the sort provided by the authoritative interpretations of the Church.[15] Almost exactly to the point at issue is his response to a work commonly attributed to Jean Le Clerc, in which it was argued that not all of Scripture is divinely inspired. Locke read it sometime around September 1685 and in a letter to Van Limborch expressed serious concerns about it. He was worried that in a number of places in the book doubt was cast upon the 'overall infallibility and inspiration of Sacred Scripture'.[16] He admits that even before he read the book, he had his own doubts about how to regard certain places in Scripture, that is, whether they could be properly taken as divine. He continues that the question of the divine inspiration of Scripture is of the highest importance and should be explored with the greatest critical rigour and subtlety, for the dangers on either side were considerable. Affirming that all places in Scripture are without distinction divinely inspired gives philosophical critics, that is, freethinkers and Deists, the opportunity to ridicule one's faith or deny the sincerity of one's expression of it, because it is easy to find places in Scripture that must be exceptions to this rule. On the other hand, would not the assertion that there are parts of Scripture that are merely human undermine its divine authority 'without which the Christian religion will fall to the ground'? Surely this would be the result unless a criterion were found by which to decide what is and what is not inspired. To argue that all of

[13] Charles Blount, *The Two first Books of Philostratus, concerning the Life of Apollonius Tyaneus* (London: Nathaniel Thompson, 1680), 95, 106. See also my article 'Charles Blount' in *The Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Philosophers*, John Price, John Stephens & John Yolton, eds, 2 vols. (Bristol, 1999), vol. i, 113–16.

[14] John Locke, *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, *WR*, 213.

[15] For Locke's notes on Richard Simon's *Histoire Critique de vieux testament* (Rotterdam: Reinier Leers,1685; *LL* 2,673) see his critical notes, 'Hypothesis Testamentum Vetus', MS Locke f. 32. fols. 1–23.

[16] Jean Le Clerc, *Sentimens de quelques theólogiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Amsterdam: Henri Desbordes, 1685).

Scripture may, by divine providence, be true, even though not all of it is inspired, is dismissed by him as too finely drawn.[17]

From all this, it cannot be supposed that Locke's affirmations of the divine authority of Scripture were made without knowing that a rational justification of it was required. Three alternatives seem to remain. Either Locke provided no proof of the divine authority, because, notwithstanding this prima facie need, he thought one unnecessary; or he recognized the necessity of a proof, but was incapable of providing it; or he did provide one that has generally gone unnoticed.

The first alternative divides into what may be styled Reformed and Straussian varieties. According to the former, no justification of biblical authority is needed, for Scripture, through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, is self-authenticating. Locke comes close to saying this in the passages quoted at the head of this paper, and, in an early discourse on infallibility, he takes a position that is very much like this.[18] This, however, conflicts with his clear assignment to reason of the prerogative to judge the authenticity of a revelation. On the Straussian view, Locke's public professions of biblical authority were not sincerely meant by him, but masked a skeptical or even nihilistic motive that some discerning readers might recognize but could not convict him of. This too is implausible. It is totally out of keeping with the content and tenor of the many biblical annotations that fill his manuscripts. To account for them, one would have to suppose a highly paranoid or supremely self-deceived Locke. The second alternative, which might be called 'tragic', allows that Locke sincerely meant his assertion of the divine authority of Scripture, recognized the need for it, but, failing to justify it, was led by his Christian commitments into a more biblicist and fideistic form of faith to accommodate his persistent beliefs concerning revelation and morality.

I shall not directly to refute these alternative explanations; instead I shall offer another more plausible explanation. Locke's assertions of biblical authority are taken here as expressions of what he truly and honestly believed, and it will be argued that in his theological writing, he endeavoured to justify them in a thoroughgoing way, so that the proof of divine authority became an integral and determining part of the overall design of his theological system, articulated in repeated practice. This proof was so ubiquitous, that for Locke to highlight it or call attention to it would have been tedious, for he would have had to do so repeatedly. Moreover, it was a practice to which he had grown accustomed and therefore did not return to reflectively. This ubiquity is the probable cause of Locke's proof having gone unrecognized by his readers. On this account, Locke's assertions of biblical authority, or at least many of them, may be taken as judgments or conclusions.

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[17] Locke to Limborch, 26 September 1685, *Correspondence*, ii, 746–51. Locke returned to this theme in 1692 in some notes on William Lowth's *A Vindication of the Divine Authority and Inspiration of the Writings of the Old and New Testament* (Oxford: John Wilmot, 1692). Lowth's book was prompted by an English translation of five letters from *Sentimens* recently published (*Five Letters concerning the Inspiration of Holy Scripture*, London: s.n., 1690). See MS Locke d.1 fol. 177; transcribed in *WR*, 42f. Locke's comments are curiously non-committal.

[18] 'Infallibility' *WR*, 69–72.

The proof of the divine authority of Scripture that Locke employed was not original with him. In the first part of this paper, I shall identify a likely source of the argument and offer a brief exposition and characterization of it. The second part will be devoted to Locke's employment of the argument in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, with occasional references to other theological writings as seems appropriate. Needless to say, a fuller picture of Locke's use of the argument could be given, drawing from all periods of his intellectual life, for the argument is such that its full articulation is best realized through the course of a program of study extending over a protracted period of time. More will be said about this in the preliminary remarks to the second part of this paper.

Finally, it should be noted that the method pursued in this paper is both logical and historical. The main thesis of this paper is that Locke has offered in his writings a proof of the divine authority of Scripture. Proofs have logical structures and one task undertaken here will be to clarify the logical structure of Locke's proof. However, since the cogency of a proof depends not just upon its form but also upon the particular premises that it contains, the more difficult task remains of clarifying these premises and explaining how Locke came to believe them, and these tasks, especially the latter call for historical judgment. What I hope to show is that Locke offered in his writings a proof of the divine authority of Scripture, one that must have been persuasive to him, and that it was reasonable for him to expect others to find it reasonable also. To do this requires the introduction of contextual elements. To identify and explain them is a historical task.

The Origin of Locke's Proof of the Divine Authority of Scripture

Sometime during the early 1660s Locke had access to a manuscript version of Thomas Barlow's 'Analecta Theologica', a bibliographical guide for students of theology, which he had copied into a notebook.[19] Barlow's comments under the heading of 'Supernatural Divinity' are particularly relevant. He remarks that two questions must be considered: 'which bookes are divine' and 'what is the true meaning & sense of those bookes', in short, the questions of authority and interpretation that, we have noted, Locke identified as the tasks of reason with respect to revelation. He recommends the reading of works by authors ancient and modern, among the latter, the Huguenot Philip Mornay Du Plessis and the great Dutch scholar Hugo Grotius.[20] He then adds a third name to this list, whose book on this

[19] Barlow (1607–91) was Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Bodley's Librarian (1642), and Bishop of Lincoln (1675); for more about Barlow's 'Analecta' see Chap. 1, fn. 31.

[20] Philip de Mornay, seigneur Du Plessis-Marly (1549–1623), *de la vérité de la religion chrestienne* (Leyden: Elzevir, 1651; *LL,* item 2054[b]). For Grotius *de Veritate*, see fn. 27.

theme he characterizes as 'the most rationall of all, if I mistake not'. Barlow provides an interesting bibliographical history of this book. It was originally published in Spain by a Jesuit press, under the title *de Auctoritate S. Scripturae*, the author's name is given as Dominicus Lopez, but that, Barlow observes, is a pseudonym masking the identity of the author, who was in fact Faustus Socinus (1539–1604), the great anti-trinitarian heresiarch. In a marginal note, Barlow cites Socinus's correspondence as evidence of this. He notes three editions of the book; the earliest pseudonymous edition, published in Seville in 1588, a French translation published in 1592, and a third, which he recommends as the best edition, published in Steinfurt in 1611 and edited by Conrad Vorstius (1569–1622), an Arminian theologian.[21] We know that Locke took particular notice of Socinus's book. He had an amanuensis transcribe Barlow's comments in his notebook, and in the margin beside the title he placed an 'x'; this and other titles so marked were then transcribed by him into another notebook to form a personal bibliographical list.[22] It is curious that Locke preferred to cite the Jesuit edition under the key word 'Lopez' rather than the Steinfurt edition recommended by Barlow; perhaps it was to avoid using Socinus's name.

Socinus's basic argument is clear and simple, indeed brilliant. Its excellence is particularly evident in its strategy, whose effect is to place the burden of proof concerning the divine authority of Scripture upon those who doubt it. I offer a summary of it here:

> No one who accepts that the Christian religion is true can reasonably doubt the authority New Testament; and because the truth of the Old Testament is confirmed by the New, this applies to the whole bible.[23]

Socinus's strategy is based upon the assumption that it is easier to prove the excellence of the Christian religion than to prove the authority of the Bible, since the former depends upon certain universally recognized moral principles, whereas the latter involves matters of fact. As an apologetic strategy, it is more economical and advantageous. The authority of Scripture appears to follow directly from the truth of the Christian religion, which is its content, and therefore may be established in principle and generally before specific objections, largely historical and critical, are considered, which in any case are separate and distinct. This has the effect of fragmenting and scattering the opposition.[24] A Christian may consider objections to the authority of Scripture as they arise, and every successful response to an objection

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[21] Faustus Socinus, *De Auctoritate s. scripturae*, Conrad Vorstius, ed. (Steinfurt: Theophilus Caesar, 1611); see also an English translation made from this edition: *An Argument for the authority of Holy Scripture from the Latin of Socinus* (London: W. Meadows, J. Lacy, J. Jackson, and T. Astley, 1731). This English edition will be cited throughout.

[22] Bodl. MS Locke f. 14, p. 10.

[23] See Faustus Socinus, op. cit., 3.

[24] Socinus divides the varieties of objection to the authority Scripture into four classes: Doubts concerning the integrity of the biblical writers, doubts arising from our ignorance of their identity, or from evidence that the biblical text has been corrupted, or from extra biblical testimony contradicting biblical narrative.

reconfirms his or her original faith. On the other hand, since objections to the authority of Scripture mainly concern matters of fact that cannot be confirmed with certainty, but only with more or less probability, one's faith in the Christian religion may remain firm, even while challenged on various historical points. On the other hand, Socinus's strategy is also more efficacious in persuading those whose Christian faith is wavering, because prominence may be given at the outset to the sort of themes that more immediately attract: a clear account of the moral law, a reward promised to those who keep it, leniency to those who sincerely try but fail on account of frailty, a reward of eternal bliss also to them, and so forth.

Requisite for the success of this argument is a way of judging Christianity to be true merely on the basis of its history and content, independent of the question of the reliability of its sources. According to Socinus, one judges Christianity to be true by its 'excellency', which resides in its content, which is essentially moral: its monotheism, the quality of its moral precepts, the welcome relief it offers to all who cannot live up to the rigor of the moral law, the promise of immortality and a transfigured physical state; but also in the manner of its disclosure and transmission, in which the wisdom of God is manifest. It is in this connection that miracles apply. As evidences of the truth of the Christian religion, miracles count not as primary but as secondary evidence. They highlight the divine origin of the Messiah and serve to confirm the divine source of his teaching, both of which are otherwise evident in the doctrine itself and the character of its bearer. In this frame, they have a perfect fitness.

The possibility of miracles is grounded in the omnipotence of God, which is within the sphere of common universal knowledge, even though how they occur remains a mystery, that is, not subject to a merely natural explanation. Testimony concerning their occurrence in the narrative of the gospel history exemplifies the wisdom of God and of his special providence. Among all miracles, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is central, and it is against the background of the excellence of Christianity that Socinus considers the veracity of the apostolic testimony concerning it. He argues that it is most unlikely that they lied, for there was not only no advantage in saying such things, rather great hazard to themselves. It is more likely that they spoke from the certainty they had as eyewitnesses and of the truth of the religion they now professed.[25]

To succeed, it is necessary to present the Christian Religion in a manner that more directly commends it. Here, Socinus's strategy shows its characteristically Protestant design. A successful proof must fashion an account of the Christian religion at its best, one that is uncorrupted by tradition and superstition, and not obscured by doctrinal disputes, that is, distinguished by the purity of its precepts, the simplicity of its practice, and the sublimity of its promises and assurances. Such, it is supposed, is the account of Christianity offered in the New Testament by Jesus and the Apostles. For those who adhere to some other religion ('*Jews, Turks,* or other Infidels [i.e. Pagans]'), or who believe that there is some true religion without

[25] Faustus Socinus, op. cit., 103. Consistent with this viewpoint, Grotius treats miracles under the heading of natural theology. See *De Veritate Religionae Christianae*, Bk. I, sect. xii and further discussion of this work below.

professing any, Socinus contends that Christianity in this form is the archetype of religion, so that 'either *this* alone must be true, or no religion is or can be'.[26]

One wonders how this claim might prove persuasive, or rather why Socinus supposed that it would. Surely the account of the Christian religion is idealized and hyperbolical; the claims of excellence or of Christianity as archetypal seem extravagant and merely rhetorical. In response to such objections, it must be said that it is characteristic of historical institutions that are more or less voluntary associations and depend upon the good will of a constituency, that they regularly employ hyperbole in their self-representation and idealize the image of themselves that they present to the world. All defenders of Christianity are expansive in this way; their tone triumphal and contemptuous of their rivals. It is the sort of tone among the early Christian Fathers and epitomized in Augustine' *City of God*, a tone that the Reformers revived and adopted in their highly rhetorical accounts of Christianity.

Although it is certain that Locke knew about Socinus's book and surely also about Barlow's estimate of it, there is no evidence that he ever read it. Nevertheless, he could have come upon Socinus's argument in another way. He most certainly read Hugo Grotius in *De Veritate Religionis Christianae*.[27] Grotius writes in the dedicatory letter that he has appropriated arguments from other works, but he does not identify them, and hence makes no mention of Socinus's book.[28] Yet his argument is essentially the same. At the start of Book III, in which Grotius addresses the authority of Scripture, he offers a summary of an argument that matches Socinus's argument precisely:

> For as much then as we have before proved that the *Christian Religion* is most *true*; and it is manifest withal that it is contained in these Books [of the New Testament], if there were no other ground, yet this is sufficient to prove and avouch the *authority* of those Books.
>
> But if any body requires a more particular demonstration of it, I must first lay down this Rule, which all indifferent Judges will allow; that it is incumbent upon him, who will impugne the authority of any writing received for many Ages, to produce Arguments which prove that Writing to be false: which if he cannot do, that Book is to be defended, as in possession of its Authority.[29]

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[26] Faustus Socinus, op. cit., 76.

[27] Grotius wrote his book in Dutch verse and published it in 1627; he published a Latin prose version of it in 1628 and frequently republished in Latin and translated into other languages. Locke cited a 1660 edition (published in Oxford with a new dedication signed by E. P. to Robert Boyle: Hugo Grotius, *De Veritate religionis Christianae*, Oxford: William Hall, 1660) 15 times in MS Locke f. 14, between 1659 and 1666 (pp. 3, 5, 54, 63, 72, 104, 108, 112, 138, 140, 142, 144, 150, 156). The entries on pp. 3 and 5 differ in format from the rest just listed in one respect: the date of *De veritate* is not given. They are located in that part of this notebook (pp. 1–19) which J. R. Milton has established dates from about 1659–60. See 'The Date and Significance of Two of Locke's Early Manuscripts', *The Locke Newsletter*, 19 (1989), 53 and passim.

[28] In a charge to the clergy of his diocese, Richard Smallbroke, Bishop of St Davids, after praising Grotius book as 'the most rational, learned, and convincing Treatises, that ever appeared in Vindication of Christianity' comments, as though it were common knowledge, that he was especially helped 'by the Valuable performance of a Writer otherwise justly of ill Fame, viz, *Faustus Socinus*'s little Book *de Auctoritate S. Scripturae*.' *A Charge to the Clergy of St David's* (London, 1729), 34.

[29] The translation is by Simon Patrick, *The Truth of the Christian Religion in Six Books* (London: Richard Royston, 1680), 98; see Grotius, *De Veritate* (Oxford, 1660), 81.

Proof of the truth of the Christian Religion, which is the subject of Book II (Book I is devoted to natural theology), is offered in a series of arguments that more or less replicate Socinus's arguments, in particular, arguments concerning the excellence of the Christian religion. Grotius also claims that Christianity is indubitably excellent by virtue of its moral precepts, the promise of an eternal reward, and the manner of its introduction to the world in which the wisdom of God is manifest; like Socinus, he claims that Christianity excels all other religions and is the archetype of religion. Likewise, Grotius subordinates proof of the authority of the Old Testament to the authority of the New. He contends that since the messianic prophecies made in the Old Testament have been fulfilled in the New, there is no reason to doubt it's authority any more than one would doubt that someone who successfully predicted a certain outcome was speaking the truth. Most of Book III consists of an aggregate of responses to various objections regarded as a series of critical problems, each of which may be pursued independently of the rest as the occasion requires. Thus the reader is made to participate in the great work of critical historical and biblical scholarship: questions of authorship, textual transmission, chronology, geography, philology and lexicography, comparative religion and related subjects.

This strategy seems well suited to the intellectual situation of Locke and his cultivated contemporaries, clerical or lay, who believed that Scripture was, along with nature, one of the two sources of knowledge provided by God for the instruction of mankind. Both were supposed to have been designed to lead mankind to God, the former, by its manifold contrivances that were evidence of the wisdom, power, and goodness of their creator, the latter, by its narrative of salvation and its moral teaching.

It is characteristic of the new learning that arose during the seventeenth century, and exemplified in the work of the founders of the Royal Society, most notable among them, Robert Boyle, and later in various writings of Isaac Newton and many other lesser virtuosi in between, to suppose that the truths of Nature and Scripture could be found out by the same methods of enquiry, so that each pursuit complemented and enhanced the other. This, it was believed, was God's intention, who endowed us with our cognitive faculties so that we might read and understand his works. Locke's manuscripts, and indeed all of his writings, are best viewed against the background of this twofold enterprise. Indeed, they take us inside it, for Locke was not merely an observer of the new science, but an important participant in it. In this dual undertaking, discovery of truth and justification of the sources and instruments employed in it go together. Nature's authorship is confirmed by reading nature; Scripture's authorship is confirmed by reading Scripture. The confirmation is cumulative.

Robert Boyle played a key role in shaping this outlook, and his influence on Locke's early development, philosophically and theologically, is well documented.[30]

[30] See above p. 11f.

Boyle was intimate with Robert Barlow and it is plausible that Locke had access to Barlow's bibliographical guide through him.[31] The Oxford edition of Grotius's *De Veritate* cited by Locke carries a dedication to Boyle, making him a patron of the book. There are too few facts to draw solid conclusions from these particulars, but there is no doubt that Boyle was a major figure in the theological milieu in which Locke was working. More directly, in the same notebook that contains notes on Grotius's work, we find notes on Boyle's *Some Considerations Touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures*. This is a part of a larger work that Boyle completed around 1653 but kept unpublished. This 'fragment', as Boyle styles it, was first published in 1661 and was known to Locke in this form.[32] Locke's acquaintance with Boyle probably began sometime in 1660.[33] There are striking correspondences between Locke's discourse on infallibility, written circa 1661, and the *Some Considerations*, and although this cannot be taken as evidence of Boyle's direct influence, it shows at least the convergence of their thoughts on the authority of Scripture.[34]

Both concur that Scripture is properly its own interpreter, and that it is clear even to the untutored mind concerning those things that pertain to salvation, although this clarity is embedded in obscurity. The source of obscurity is twofold: on the one hand there are obstacles of language and strange circumstances (topography, history, customs) and the variety of styles in which Scripture is written. Different voices, alien to most current readers, speak in Scripture besides the voice of God. On the other hand, the mystery of God's nature and providence impends over the whole of the biblical narrative.[35] Perhaps most noteworthy is Boyle's overall characterization of Scripture as 'disjointed'. By this term he means that Scripture is not a didactic book of orderly instruction but a collection of writings of various genre and historical circumstance in which the wisdom of God is dispersed and gradually unfolds until it reaches a climax in the Christian Gospel, which is itself a narrative in which doctrine and law are intermingled. In this disjointedness 'the Book of Grace doth but therein resemble the Book of Nature; wherein the Stars (however Astronomers have been pleas'd to form their Constellations) are not more Nicely nor Methodically plac'd, than the Passages of Scripture'.[36] Among the pertinent observations in *Some Considerations* is the remark that Scripture, because of its

[31] Barlow (1607–1691) was 20 years older than Boyle, although they died the same year. Boyle regarded him as a sort of confessor or casuistical advisor, see *Robert Boyle, by himself and his friends*, ed. Michael Hunter (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1994), xli, lxi, 106 and passim.

[32] *Some Considerations touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures* (1661), in *Works of Robert Boyle*. Ii, 379–488; for Locke's early citations of this work, see Bod. MS Locke f. 14, pp. 78, 86, 94, 102, 116.

[33] The earliest mention occurs in letter by Dr Ayliffe Ivye to Locke, 20 May 1660, *Correspondence*, i, 146.

[34] PRO 30/24/47/33; translation in *WR,* 69–72.

[35] *Style of Scripture*, *Works of Robert Boyle*, ii, 402f., 409.

[36] Ibid., 412.

excellence, is the most fitting object of study for men of wit and parts, and that cultivated gentlemen are better endowed to be apologists for its truth than even the clergy. Most noteworthy among these observations, is that the study of Scripture is conceived analogously to the study of nature. Both systems, when viewed impartially and empirically are supposed to reveal the wisdom and power of God. This analogy was key to Boyle's effort to reconcile a life devoted to experimental natural philosophy and to the study of Scripture. They are, to his judgment, the fundamental duties of a religious form of life that he characterized as that of a Christian Virtuoso.

Boyle's design becomes clear when viewed against another of his books, which although unpublished until 1692, was long in preparation and which gives coherence to his whole life's work. This is *The Christian Virtuoso*.[37] The term 'virtuoso' was used to denote a practitioner of the new experimental philosophy. The claim that one could be a *Christian* virtuoso was meant by Boyle not just to assure the compatibility of 'being an industrious virtuoso, and a good Christian', but more importantly to assert that there is a consistency and continuity between them by virtue of the cognitive attitude that practice of each inculcates, and that this mutuality extends to the products of their respective practices. According to Boyle, experimental philosophy when practiced without prejudice discloses the 'admirable system of things in the world' and thereby opens the mind up to an awareness of 'the invisible things of God', that is, of God and the soul; thereby it disposes the mind, and makes it docile 'to discover deep and unobvious truths', improbable truths of the sort that one encounters in revelation.[38] In the light of this character, one can easily see in the works of Robert Boyle, a form of life that includes the curiosity of the virtuoso towards nature, the steadfast examination of Scripture as the primary source of Christian truth, and a commitment to the Christian religion, all in perfect self-justifying harmony and consistency. It is not hard to find the same elements in Locke's intellectual life and there is good reason to believe that Boyle's influence was operative there.[39]

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[37] Some editorial notes by Locke on a manuscript version of this work are inscribed in MS Locke, c. 27, fols. 67–8; a critical text with notes will appear in *John Locke: Theological Manuscripts*.

[38] *The Christian Virtuoso*, *Works of Robert Boyle*, xi, 323.

[39] Boyle's influence on Locke's character, especially its religious aspects, is worth careful investigation and will, I believe, be found to be very deep. It reaches beyond mere intellectual matters. For example, it may apply such matters as chastity, a virtue that Locke considered important. He includes it in two lists of Christian virtues, one early and one late (see 'Infallibility', *WR,* 71f.; MS Locke c. 27 fol. 125). His commitment to a life of chastity may also explain his intentions, at least originally, in his relationship with Damaris Cudworth. See MS Locke c. 32. fols. 20–1, which contains a poem in two parts comprising a dialogue between Clora (Damaris Cudworth) and Damon (Locke). Damon, who laments that his feelings for Clora make it difficult for him to sustain the philosophical friendship he first desired, is counseled and consoled by Clora, who nevertheless holds him to his original intention. The first part is in Damaris Cudworth's hand, the second in Locke's. Locke endorsement of the manuscript gives a date of 1682/3. For a transcription and notes on the poems, see De Beer, *Correspondence*, ii, 571–5. Mark Goldie's characterization of Locke relation with Damaris Masham at Oates confirms this view. See Goldie, *John Locke and the Mashams at Oates* (Cambridge, 2004). For a fuller account, see Chap. 1.

All of this shows that the task of responding to objections to the authority of Scripture is taken up into a comprehensive theological program that becomes a counterpart of experimental natural theology, both together confirming divine providence and giving substance to a form of religious life whose character is Christian virtuosity.

Locke's Employment of the Proof

In what follows, I shall examine the ways in which Socinus's proof is employed in the argument of the *Reasonableness of Christianity*. Preliminary to this, however, a brief survey of the sorts of biblical study that occupied Locke throughout his life is needed to set this discussion in context. The survey will be thematic rather than chronological.

Locke has left us an abundant record of his biblical study in his notebooks and journals, in his interleaved bibles and testaments, and in various fugitive documents. The chronology of the events narrated in the Bible and of the documents contained in it is a recurring theme. Typical of this interest is a note entered into his interleaved Bentley Bible concerning the time when the creation of the world took place:

> 'That the world was created about September. vid Lightfoot. Misc: c 45. 29 & on Exod. § 17. 43'[40]

The purpose of chronology was two fold: to authenticate biblical history by arranging its narrative in a historical sequence, and to identify the time and place of the composition of biblical writings, and locating both as much as possible in the framework of universal history, so that they might be more accurately interpreted. Another set of biblical annotations from the same interleaved Bible illustrates this well:

> Joshua
>
> It is probable that Joshua writ not this booke. (because there are some things mentioned in it that befell after his death vid. ch. 15. vs. 13 &. ch. 19. vs. 47.) but Phinehas rather Lightfoot har. ol test. A.M. 2569. 47.
>
> Joshua liber scriptus videtur post tempora Joshuae sed quia. cap XVI dictum est that they drave out the Cananites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwelt among the Ephraemites unto this day sed ante tempora Solomonis quia dictum est 1 Kin: IX 16 that Pharoah King of Egypt had taken Gezer & burnt it with fire & slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the Citty & given it for a present unto his daughter Solomons wife. JL
>
> Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel Psalms. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Canticles not writ before the Separation of the 10 tribes because the Samaritanes have them not. Resp: The Kings of Israel rejected them because of the devision of the Land & the authority of the Priesthood established in them. Allix 15/273 Repl: The authority of the priesthood is established in the Pentateuque. Besides the division of the Land & authority of the priesthood concerne not the other books after Joshua. JL

[40]Comment on Genesis 1: 1, Locke 16.25, p. 18. The references are to works by the renowned biblical scholar John Lightfoot (1602–75), *Erubhin or Miscellanies* (London, 1629), 150; and *An Handful of Gleanings out of the Book of Exodus* (London, 1643), 18. Both of these works are included in vol. i of Lightfoot's *Works*.

> Writ after Josuahs time vid. IV 9. V. 9 XIX. 47. This alotment to the Danites was after Joshuas time. vid. Judg: XVIII. vid. Theodoret q: 14 Masius in Josuam Simon 53. Writ by Samuel Abrav. pr: sur Jos: 20.[41]

Closely related to this theme is that of the harmony of the Bible: the task of harmonizing or reconciling different narratives of the same events and developing from these a coherent and plausible narrative. A harmony of the gospels is a prime example of this. Locke carefully read Lightfoot's several harmonies of the Old Testament and the Gospels. He became involved in Nicholas Toinard's project of producing a harmony of the Old and New Testament books, and was himself the author of a brief harmony of the preliminary part of the gospel narrative.[42]

Another theme that concerned him was that of prophecy or revelation, in particular the manner or modes of its communication and reception. Note has already been taken of Locke's reading of Spinoza on this theme. Another source was the Cambridge Platonist John Smith, whose discourse on prophecy Locke read carefully. Smith's *Discourses* is one of the few books in Locke's personal library whose text is marked up, and this particular discourse is the most heavily marked. Presumably, these are Locke's markings.[43] The influence of Spinoza and Smith on Locke with respect to this theme is evident in a manuscript that Locke composed in 1696. In a quire of four folio leaves, he recorded various modes of revelation: by voice, apparition, vision, dream, by angelic messenger, by inspiration from the Holy Spirit, by collective frenzy. By distinguishing modes, it was also possible to classify different sorts of revelation as merely rhapsodic or more or less insightful.[44] Locke's personal annotation of John 3: 34 briefly summarizes the modes of revelation and the measure of authority that he judged should be assigned to each: the lowest degree is in the casting of lots, visions and dreams come next, next higher is by audible voice. This is capped by the revelation to Jesus Christ:

> The last & highest degree of Revelation was that given to our Saviour expressed here by the Spirit given not by measure. there was noe stint of it, noe intervals where in our Saviour had not the presence & assistance of this Spirit whereby every thing he said was of divine authority every thing he did was according to the will of god. And by this I think we may understand that expression of St Pauls Col. II. 9 for in him dwelleth all the fulnesse of the Godhead bodily viz. that the Spirit of god without stint or measure was as certainly & constantly in him to be the sourse of all his words & actions, as our souls are annexed & fixd to our bodys as the principle of action in us. The context will lead us to this sense, for the Apostle there is perswading the Colossians to rest satisfied in the truth & wisdom of the Gospel revealed by Jesus Christ. JL[45]

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[41] Locke 16. 25, 190.

[42] On the relationship between Locke and Toinard, see De Beer's note in *Correspondence*, i, 579. For Locke's harmony, see MS Locke c. 42, 2nd part, pp. 32–33.

[43] John Smith, *Select Discourses* (London, 1660, 2nd edn 1673). Locke owned a copy of the 2nd edition; *LL,* item 2669.

[44] MS Locke c. 27. fols. 138–42.

[45] MS Locke f. 30, fol. 43r.

In the posthumously published *Discourse of Miracles*, Locke, like Socinus and Grotius interprets miracles as manifestations of divine omnipotence that confirm revelation and act as testimonies to the working of a special divine providence.[46]

In *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke does not rely upon this supernatural spiritual endowment of the Messiah to justify the truth or reasonableness the Christian religion. Rather, he depends upon Christianity as it is delivered in the Scriptures to justify the authority he came to attribute to Jesus and the Apostles. This is made clear in Locke's own account of the origin of his book, 'the true History of the Birth of my *Reasonableness of Christianity*' presented in his open letter to Samuel Bold, where the veracity of the biblical account is derived from its content, its fitness to human circumstances and the method of its propagation.[47] He characterizes his book as the unintended consequence of a course of biblical study that he had begun early in 1695. The occasion that provided him with a topic of study was a controversy among Dissenters over the conditions of justification, that is the conditions by which sinners are judged righteous.[48] There is no need to say any more about this controversy, for, on Locke's account, it was rather the noise of the controversy than any substantive statements about justification made by the contending parties that caught his attention.[49] It set him thinking about the meaning of justification, and having ascertained that it was faith that justified the sinner, he was led to read further in the New Testament to discover the content of this faith. 'What that produced, you [Mr. Bold] and the World have seen', viz. *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

Locke's 'true history' is probably our best guide to the origin and meaning of the *Reasonableness*, because it offers the best explanation of the work that we have before us, or, to put it differently, it resonates with the work itself. We know that in his reading, Locke focused on the historical books of the New Testament, the Gospels and Acts, and therein attended to the preaching and propagation of the gospel, and that whilst attending to this he discovered something that he believed no one before had adequately perceived. He was struck by the 'reasonableness and plainness' of the doctrine of faith as it was propounded in the gospel preaching. He made an additional 'Discovery of the marvellous and divine Wisdom of our Saviour's Conduct, in all the Circumstances of his promulgating this Doctrine', and from these

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[46] *A Discourse of Miracles*, *WR*, 44–50.

[47] See Locke's open letter to Samuel Bold in the preface to the *Second Vindication*, A8r.

[48] This was the so-called Antinomian Conflict that broke out around 1690 and continued through the decade. It started with the republication of the sermons of Tobias Crisp (1600–43). Crisp had argued that because divine election was unconditional and infallible and because Christ's death satisfied for the sins of the elect for all time, neither sins nor good works by the elect had any bearing on their election. It is not surprising, given Locke's views concerning free agency and his idea of Christianity as a moral religion, that he took no interest in this debate among moderate and extreme Calvinists. For documentation of the controversy, see my *John Locke and Christianity* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997) 111–48; also my article on Crisp in *A Dictionary of Seventeenth–Century British Philosophers*, 2 vols., ed. Andrew Pyle (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2000), i, 223–4.

[49] *A Second Vindication*, A6r. See also *Reasonableness*, 170; *WR*, 209–10.

discoveries he became convinced of 'of the necessity that such a Law-giver should be sent from God for the reforming the Morality of the World'. He professed not to have found this in other systems of divinity that he had read. In this vein, he claims to have come upon something like a proof of the gospel, 'a Thread of Evidence through the whole History of the Evangelists, as I think is impossible to be resisted; and makes it a Demonstration, that the Sacred Historians did not write by concert as Advocates, for a bad Cause, or to give Colour and Credit to an Imposture they would Usher into the World'. These discoveries led him to believe that 'the World', that is the reading public, might benefit from his discoveries as he had done personally, that they would serve to convince Deists of the necessity and excellence of the Christian revelation as well as to release all Christians from the false burden of having to accept dogmas that they could not comprehend.

In what Locke says about his discoveries, we find just those themes that in Socinus's proof justify attributing surpassing excellence to Christianity: the reasonableness and plainness of its doctrine, and the satisfaction that it gives to a fundamental human longing to live happily forever, and, not least, in the supreme wisdom manifest in its propagation.

A summary of the advantages of Christianity, offered near the end of the *Reasonableness* is a convenient place to view his understanding of the excellence of Christianity. The occasion of his remarks was his admission that the main elements of Christianity, law, repentance, forgiveness and eternal reward, might enter the minds of morally serious persons who had never received the gospel, and that they too might be saved by such faith. Locke hastened to add that nevertheless the gospel and the process of salvation that it represented was necessary, because the excellences and advantages it provided were not to be found elsewhere: the purity of its monotheistic doctrine, the completeness of the moral law delivered by Jesus, and the full rigor proper to its demands, the accessibility of its essential doctrine to all sorts and conditions of humankind, the simplicity of its worship, free of the corruptions of priestcraft, the fact that it united religion with the best insights of pagan moral philosophers, and the promise of an eternal reward for the righteous, so that the virtuous no longer need fear that their moral striving is futile. Locke's comment on the last mentioned feature exemplifies the method of argument from excellence:

> Before our Saviour's time, the Doctrine of a future State, though it were not wholly hid, yet it was not clearly known in the World. 'Twas an imperfect view of Reason; Or, perhaps the decay'd remains of an ancient Tradition; which rather seemed to float on Mens Phansies, than sink deep into their Hearts … No Religion taught it: and 'twas no where made an Article of Faith, and Principle of Religion till Jesus Christ came; Of whom it is truly said, that he at his appearing *brought life and immortality to light*.[50]

This bringing to light of immortality, 'the unquestionable assurance and pledge of it' has been achieved by resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Locke casts it here as the fulfillment of the best moral teaching of antiquity.

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[50] *Reasonableness*, 162; *WR*, 203.

> How this one truth has changed the Nature of things in the World, and given the advantage to Piety over all that could tempt or deter Men from it? The Philosophers indeed shewed the beauty of Virtue: They set her off so as drew Mens Eyes and approbation to her: But leaving her unendowed, very few were willing to espouse her. … But now there being put into the Scales, on her side, *An exceeding and immortal weight of Glory;* Interest is come about to her.[51]

It should be noted here that the excellence of Christianity, according to this account, lies not in the miracle of the resurrection itself, but in its employment in the divine economy: it confirms what is supposed to be the hope of lovers of virtue that, in the end, the virtuous are rewarded. The resurrection of Jesus is the miracle that authenticates his mission.

Finally, Locke adds one more advantage, the promise of divine assistance explicitly made:

> To a Man under the difficulties of his Nature, beset with Temptations, and hedged in with prevailing Customs; 'tis no small encouragement to set himself seriously on the courses of Virtue, and practise of true Religion, That he is from a sure hand, and an almighty arm, promised assistance to support and carry him through.[52]

On the matter of propagation, Locke has some interesting, indeed original things to say, and he employs his remarks effectively to demonstrate the authority of the biblical record from which they are derived.

Locke's second discovery requires more telling. The greater part of *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, comprising more than two-fifths of the entire work, gives an account of Jesus' propagation of the gospel, which was the main purpose of his ministry.[53] The importance that Locke attached to this part of the *Reasonableness* cannot be overstated, for in the pattern of Jesus' self-manifestation, his choice of disciples whom he prepared to be bearers of the gospel after he was gone, and his overall management of events pertaining to his ministry, Locke claims to have discovered conclusive evidence of the authenticity of the Christian revelation and of the authority of the biblical account of it. It is, I think, the heart of the *Reasonableness*, and, because of the importance that Locke attached to it, it deserves closer scrutiny.

The text of this part of the *Reasonableness* is extremely complex and difficult, for Locke seems to have had many pertinent things on his mind when writing it. Overall, it is a narrative of Jesus' ministry from his baptism until his resurrection and ascension, which is to say, it is a narrative of the founding of Christianity. In constructing this narrative, Locke had to harmonize the different versions of it in the four Gospels. Thus, he is not merely retelling a story but constructing or weaving one out of strands drawn from four different sources, pausing from time to time, to explain or justify a transposition or omission in one version or another and to reconcile the different discourses and, overall, to present a coherent and continuous story.

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[51] *Reasonableness*, 162; *WR*, 204.

[52] *Reasonableness*, 163; *WR*, 204f.

[53] *Reasonableness*, 37–108; *WR*, 113–66; see Chap. 5.

One use Locke made of this narrative was to confirm his claim that justifying faith consists of a single proposition, that Jesus is the Messiah. For the superficial reader this is all that is likely to stand out when reading this narrative. And this is often all that is taken from it, as evidence of Locke's doctrinal minimalism. But the narrative itself is itself intended as a self-verifying proof, and from it there derives a richer theology.

A second use was to explain Jesus' reserve or reticence to reveal his identity. We know this as 'the Messianic secret'.[54] Locke prefaces the narrative of Jesus' ministry with a description of the three means by which he disclosed his Messiahship: by miracles, by direct announcement, and by indirect expressions and circumlocutions that 'signifie and or intimate his coming'.[55] That the Messiah should work miracles was expected, for it was prophesied, and Jesus did not fail to fulfill this prophecy; and it is reasonable to expect that being Messiah, 'the light of the world', he would openly declare himself. Yet he did not do so, at least not right away. Rather, from the beginning of his ministry, Locke observes that Jesus seems to have preferred indirect and veiled references to his identity, and that he commanded devils, who wanted to declare it openly, to remain silent, thus acting as if he intended rather to conceal his identity than to disclose it. A narrative of Jesus' practice of self-disclosure over the whole course of his ministry, one that is carefully attentive to its different situations and purposes, is Locke's way of dispelling this paradox and of showing the wisdom and the reasonableness of Jesus' practice.[56]

In the messianic ministry of Jesus, there are two agencies at work and an important restriction in their operation. First, there is a special divine providence which is supposed to set the historical stage of the Messiah's coming by determining the political situation most advantageous to its success: viz. the dominant Roman *imperium* that allowed a limited civil constitution for the Jewish state, and its religious institutions, and the particular circumstances of Jesus own life: his family and place of habitat.[57] Second, there is the agency of the Messiah himself. It is clear from Locke's narrative, that he believed that Jesus acted as a free agent; his actions, although in every instance conforming to prophecy and with full knowledge of the divine plan of salvation that was about to be revealed, so that all he did and said was pre-ordained, was not necessitated by anything more than natural moral choice, so that it was possible that Jesus might have failed to fulfill his mission. That no failure occurred, and that everything turned out as it should have, Locke attributes to 'the Admirable Contrivance of the Divine Wisdom, in the whole Work of our Redemption, as far as we are able to trace it by the foot-steps which God

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[54] 'Messianic Secret', in *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[55] *Reasonableness*, 37–40; *WR*, 113–15.

[56] 'This concealment of himself will seem strange, in one who has come to bring Light into the World …This reservedness will be thought to look as if he had a mind to conceal himself, and not to be known to the World for the *Messiah*'. *Reasonableness* 40; *WR*, 115.

[57] *Reasonableness*, 42f., 46f.; *WR*, 117, 120.

hath made visible to Humane Reason.' Such wisdom, however, does not pursue outcomes by mere 'Omnipotent Power', arbitrarily ruling and over-ruling everything, rather it restricts itself and accomplishes its purposes 'by means', in particular by human agents, who are allowed to operate 'according to their Natures'.[58] It is important to recall that not long before Locke wrote this account of the mission of Jesus, he had completed a major revision of his chapter on the ideas of power and free agency for the second edition of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, and so he would have been mindful of the conditions of free agency that he finally arrived at, in large part to satisfy the conditions of religion and morality. At least, he would have been mindful of the basic idea of freedom, namely, the ability to act or forbear to act, according to one's choice, where choice is determined by the highest good. The inevitability of Jesus' actions were due to his resolute obedience and good will.[59]

Jesus, however, was not a mere instrument of divine providence, even a free one, but God's vicegerent, whose wisdom and power, employed to fulfill the requirements of his mission, were likewise divine. Therefore, he could not fail, not because everything was predetermined, but because he acted in unity with God.[60]

Jesus did not altogether hide his identity. He worked miracles, and these were the main means by which, Locke believed, he gained a following, for the Jewish people, who, longing for a Messiah to deliver them from the harsh yoke of Rome, expected that the promised Messiah would perform such mighty acts. Jesus' indirectness and self-concealment were, according to Locke, intended for two purposes. First, it was necessary that he negotiate his way through the political forces that seemed able to frustrate his mission or to abort it before he had accomplished every part of it. The agents of these forces could combine and bring about his death, but they would finally do so only according to his plan. There were three such forces: The Roman *imperium*, the Jewish people, and the Jewish rulers. The Roman authorities would have acted swiftly and decisively had Jesus openly declared himself King of the Jews. The people, seeing signs of his divine power in his miracles, would have risen up and tried to make him their king. The priestly rulers of the Jews feared that such an uprising and the inevitable Roman reaction to it would deprive them of the limited power they possessed and cause the destruction of the religious institutions under their care. In Locke's view they were motivated too much by worldly prudence. Locke's account of Jesus' ministry highlights the manner in which Jesus acted to provoke these forces, but only at the proper time and in a suitable measure to serve his purposes. His indirection and concealment were intended to this end. When it was time to deliver himself up to the civil and religious powers, Jesus' method of disclosure became direct and his actions provocative, although

[58] *Reasonableness*, 91; *WR*, 153.

[59] *Essay* II. xxi. One may take Locke's account of Jesus ministry as an application and a test of his idea of free agency.

[60] *Reasonableness*, 98; *WR*, 159; see also *Essay*, II. xxi. 2, 49 (234, 265).

even then, his declarations, while unambiguous to the priests, who understood the meaning of his circumlocutions, were such that the Romans would think him no dangerous incendiary, but a harmless visionary, and therefore innocent of the charges of sedition brought against him by the Priests. This was to ensure that, although Pilate finally authorized Jesus' execution, he did not condemn him but declared him innocent.[61]

There was a second purpose for Jesus' indirect method of communication. Locke shows that Jesus' pattern of self-concealment and disclosure was instrumental to his training of his disciples, whom he had chosen to carry on his mission after he departed this visible world. In this connection, Locke describes a 'Pattern' of Jesus' preaching, which he generally followed throughout his ministry:

> such a manifestation of himself, as everyone at present could not understand; but yet carried such an Evidence with it to those who were well disposed now, or would reflect on it when the whole course of his Ministry was over, as was sufficient clearly to convince them that he was the *Messiah*.[62]

This method of indirect disclosure was applied especially to his disciples, who, like most of the people, believed Jesus to be the Messiah, because of the miracles he had done, but expected that as Messiah he would manifest himself in power rather than suffer humiliation and death. As it was, it would require more than human reflection and retrospection to enlighten them in the meaning of Jesus' final discourse. On Locke's account, following the New Testament, Jesus the Messiah, having completed his mission and returned to the Father who sent him, would send the Holy Spirit, who would bring to their minds both clarity and assurance and a more than human boldness, not discernible in them when Jesus was among them.[63]

Finally, the theological implications of Locke's narrative must not be overlooked. In his exposition of Jesus' final discourses with his disciples on the night of his arrest, as reported in St John's Gospel, Locke dwells upon the authentication of Jesus' ministry, which he derives from the unity of the Messiah, the Son of God, with his Father. The works that he did, he could not have done without this. He comments that just as God the Father is known only by his works, since no one has ever seen God (the works meant here are works of creation, the evidence that sustains natural theology), so, likewise, 'the Son of God, *i.e.* the *Messiah*' is known by his redemptive works, which he could not have performed, were he not in unity with God the Father. Likewise his disciples would be empowered to perform miracles and to preach boldly by their union with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

On this triumphant and triumphal conclusion, Locke's proof of the authority of the Christian revelation and its biblical witness reaches its climax.

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[61] *Reasonableness*, 79–83, *WR*, 143–6.

[62] *Reasonableness*, 52; *WR*, 122.

[63] *Reasonableness*, 99; *WR*, 160.

Conclusion

In the foregoing parts of this paper, I have endeavored to show that Locke's confidence in the authority of Scripture was not lacking a substantial rational basis. What should be clear is that this so-called proof was not a single argument but a theological program grounded in the rational assurance of the excellence of the Christian religion and in a discipline of biblical study that was analogous to the discipline of experimental natural philosophy, and serving the same purpose, to demonstrate the wisdom, power and goodness of God. It is the sort of proof that is continuous with a specific intellectual program and is accordingly cumulative. That this proof has not been found in spite of the close scrutiny of Locke's theological writings have undergone recently may be due to the fact that researches have been too narrowly focused. The persuasiveness of the proof becomes equivalent to the persuasiveness in its time of the intellectual life that Locke lived. It can be best shown, I think, in an intellectual biography. Some may find that this proof is adaptable to present circumstances. The steps needed to achieve this go beyond the scope of this paper. For my own part, I am far from confident that such an adaptation can be successfully made. In any case, this would only show that an argument that appeared highly cogent and compelling in one age may fail to persuade in another.

Chapter 4
Locke's Christology as a Key to Understanding His Philosophy*

> A Christian I am sure I am, because I believe *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*, the King and Saviour promised, and sent by God: And as a Subject of his Kingdom, I take the rule of my Faith, and Life, from his Will declar'd and left upon Record in the inspired Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists in the New Testament: Which I endeavour to the most of my power, as is my Duty, to understand in their true sense and meaning. To lead me into their true meaning, I know no infallible Guide, but the same Holy Spirit, from whom these Writings at first came.[1]

Introduction

I begin with some remarks about the title of this chapter, and note that Locke's Christology is billed only as a key, one among many, that unlocks one of several doors to his mind. Or, I might have said, a light that illuminates the several pathways of his mind. Various keys, or lights, might be employed for this purpose: his doctrine of ideas, substance scepticism, his nominalism, his epistemology as preparation for the new science, personal identity, toleration or political individualism. These several themes, to which others might be added, represent Locke's characteristic concerns and achievements. To label them 'keys' is to express the belief that they are not only interesting in themselves, but that they can also be used to gain access to other parts of Locke's mind, even to the whole of it. Each theme offers a different mode of access to his philosophical thought and, hence, a different prospect. I propose to show, or, more modestly put, to explore the ways in which Locke's beliefs concerning Christ are integral to his thinking about the central issues that concerned him. What I am undertaking is not without precedent. It is especially appropriate to acknowledge that I am merely moving along a pathway opened up by John Dunn,

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[1] John Locke, *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, 344–45.

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-0274-5_4, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

and that I am proceeding according to his directive to consider how Locke's Christianity may assist our understanding of his particular texts.[2] Reference in my title to Locke's Christology instead of his Christianity is not to be taken as a narrowing of focus to certain doctrinal issues. Rather, I hope it will become clear that his doctrine concerning Christ is the central and organising principle of his theology.

In the first part of this study I offer an account of Locke's Christology, which I characterise as a 'Messianic' Christology. Lest this seem redundant, I hasten to add that, although the term 'Christ' is simply an English derivative of the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word 'Messiah', not all Christologies are Messianic.[3] Another variety of Christology is incarnational. These two, I believe, are the main types of Christology in the Christian tradition; the former has given the Christian religion its name and its understanding of history, whilst the latter has become the official Christology of Western orthodoxy and a catalyst for philosophical and theological speculation in Greek and Latin Christianity. They are conceptually distinct. Although both make Christ the centre of salvation, a Messianic Christ achieves this goal through deeds, and, he being a king, the benefits of his saving activity are distributed to those who become his subjects after a judicial process; an incarnational Christ, although not inactive, accomplishes salvation through the communication of his divine being, which he makes available to his beneficiaries by becoming human. There are other sorts of Christology, two of which will also concern us: one represents Christ as mediator between God and man, the λόγος, the other as a heavenly man, the founder of a new race, the second Adam. These different Christologies are not contradictories and hence are not exclusive of each other. Indeed, they are often combined in systems of theology. Locke was doubtless familiar with two contemporary instances that combine the Messianic and incarnational Christology, for example, in writings of John Lightfoot (1602–75), the great biblical commentator. Locke prized Lightfoot's commentaries and cited them more than any other.[4] Another instance occurs in the writings of the Christian

[2] John Dunn, 'What is living and what is dead in the Political Theory of John Locke' in *Interpreting Political Responsibility* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 11.

[3] On the meaning of the term 'Messiah' in various biblical contexts see William Horbury, *Messianism in the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1998). For the biblical idea of Messiah, I have relied mostly on this book and used it as a guide to other primary and secondary sources; see also Gersham Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971).

[4] In his two most heavily used interleaved Bibles and Testaments: Locke 16.25 (*LL* 309) and Locke 9.103–7 (*LL* 2864) there are respectively 132 and 216 citations of Lightfoot's works, exceeding by far any other work cited. For an example of Lightfoot's narrative theology, see *A Chronicle of the Times and Order of the Texts of the Old Testament* and *The Harmony, Chronicle and Order of the New Testament,* John Lightfoot, *Works*, 2 vols (London: Robert Scot, Thomas Basset, Richard Chiswell, and John Wright, 1684), which offers a view of history as a process of divine self-communication: i. 1: 'The Almighty Trinity [אלהים] having dwelt from all eternity in and with itself, when it saw good to communicate it self, did in the beginning of the being of things, create Heaven and Earth, the two parts of the world, of nothing in an instant'. There follows a prose narrative that in its various themes is Miltonic in its vision.

Cabbalists. Locke owned Francis van Helmont's *Seder Olam,* as well as various writings of Knorr von Rosenroth and there is evidence among his manuscripts that he took more than a passing interest in them, even though he entertained doubts about their systems.[5] In addition, notes recorded in one of Locke's interleaved bibles show that, in the early 1670s, before his Christological thoughts had matured, he explored a Christology, Origenist in nature that combined Messianic and incarnational features. The Christology presented in his published writings is more purely Messianic, which, in the light of what Locke knew beforehand, suggests that he did not arrive at it accidentally, but after deliberation with an awareness of Christological options that were available to him. In what follows, I will try to bring the character of Locke's Christology more distinctly into view through a comparison with one that is archetypally incarnational, viz. the Christology of St Athanasius (*c*.296–373).

In the second part of this study, I shall consider Locke's Christology as a key to *An Essay concerning Human Understanding.* My attention here will not be upon particular themes that have often been detached and adapted for contemporary philosophical discussion, but upon the whole work in its final authorized form. It would not be inappropriate to characterize Locke's great work as a natural theology that complements the system of divinity presented in his theological writings.[6] This is not to say that the whole *Essay* or various parts of it cannot be lifted out of their theological frame and remain coherent and philosophically interesting and made entirely devoid of natural theological implication. But then it would no longer be the *Essay* as Locke intended it, but themes from Locke's great work, set in contexts that differ variously from his. Here again, we can look to John Dunn to show us how this can be done constructively. I refer to his re-conceiving of Locke's contract theory.[7]

In the third part of my chapter, I shall explore ways in which Locke's Christology may be seen as integral to his other projects as represented in the *Two Treatises* and the *Epistola de Tolerantia.*

One final hermeneutical remark: In the second and third parts of this study, I will view Locke's main works in the light of a doctrine, namely his Christology, that did not reach maturity until a decade or more after these works were written. I do this retrospectively, from a standpoint from which Locke might have viewed them. I think it hardly needs arguing that authors, especially great ones with inclusive or synthetic projects, look back on their earlier writings in the light of later ones and see new or more articulate meaning in them. This may have been precisely what Locke was acknowledging when he admitted to the authorship of his works in the codicil to his will.

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[5] A transcription and translation of Locke's notes on Christian Knorr von Rosenroth's *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae*, are presented below, Chap. 6.

[6] See *WR*, xxiv–vi; also 'A List of theological places in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*', *WR*, 245–56.

[7] Dunn, op. cit., 22–25.

Locke's Christology

The Reasonableness of Christianity is Locke's major theological writing. Its principal theme is the redemption of mankind from sin and mortality set in the narrative of a sacred history. In this respect, the *Reasonableness* is not unlike the systems of divinity that Locke mentions dismissively in the preface and opening discourse of his book. In the preface, he tells the reader that it was the failure of the systems that he 'met with' to satisfy religious concerns or to provide a consistent account of the Christian religion that was the origin of his own work. The objects of Locke's complaint were probably Protestant or more particularly Calvinist systems. We know that, at about this time, he read through the *Westminster Confession* and made an index of its contents,[8] and in a letter to Limborch, he mentions having read Calvin and Turretin on justification and found them incoherent.[9] I think one may safely infer from Locke's remarks that he wanted the *Reasonableness* to be received as a system of divinity, one which would not suffer from the same deficiencies of those that were the object of his complaint, in particular, one which addressed primary religious concerns by showing that Christianity offered advantages pertaining to salvation not elsewhere to be found and which represented these advantages in a plain, well-founded and persuasive manner, after the manner of Scripture itself.

Richard Muller has observed that Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* became the prototype of Protestant systems of divinity.[10] Its purpose was to provide a reliable guide to biblical study for ministers of the word. These guides laid out a course of doctrine which, since they were not to take the place of Scripture, nor arbitrarily impose upon it an alien framework, were to be derived from Scripture itself, where alone, it was believed, a true account of the doctrine of salvation could be found; and they were to be so constructed that the reader would be led back to Scripture itself. The *Reasonableness* was designed to do just that, although it is arguable that Locke is more consistently biblical in his method of exposition.

One of the outstanding, some might say, notorious features of Locke's system of divinity is its frugality. It seems to advocate a single doctrine: that Jesus is the Messiah. But this is a misperception, one for which, it must be said, Locke bears some responsibility.[11] The simplicity of the proposition belies the complexity of the attribution. So, it is necessary to enquire: What did Locke understand by this attribution?

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[8] See *LL*, 140; see also *Reasonableness*, xxvi.

[9] Locke to Van Limborch, 10 May 1695, *Correspondence*, v. 370–71.

[10] Richard Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 29, 68ff.

[11] The charge that in the *Reasonableness*, Locke reduced Christianity to a single doctrine, was first made by John Edwards (1637–1716) in *Some Thoughts Concerning the Several Causes and Occasions of Atheisme* (London: J. Robinson, 1695), 105 and passim. For a full account of Edwards's criticism of Locke and Locke's responses see my introduction to *John Locke: Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, forthcoming, 2011).

In the first place, a Messiah is a king, an 'anointed King' (as the term itself signifies), and since kings characteristically offer protection, the Messiah is 'A Saviour and a King', 'King and Deliverer', 'A Head and a Chieftain, in opposition to *The Prince of this World, the Prince of the Power of the Air*', who is the ultimate source of spiritual danger.[12] As Locke understood these titles (with an understanding very much in agreement with current biblical scholarship),[13] a Messiah is king by divine appointment who rules an everlasting kingdom. Although his realm is not of this world, the Messiah does not lack temporal power, nor is it quite right to say that his office is non-political. His power is spiritual and mostly invisible, and his politics are those of a higher order, the policy of a special providence that at crucial moments impinges upon secular politics as a demonstration of divine judgment. Locke preferred to use the term 'Messiah' rather than 'Christ', to emphasize that it signified an office and not a mere surname.[14]

To show the full significance of this office, he presents it in the context of a sacred history. The belief, Jesus is the Messiah, then, is a mythic belief, that is, one whose content unfolds in a narrative, one that is mainly salvific—and it should be noted, a narrative that Locke considered real. This narrative sets the boundaries of historical time and marks the principal moments within them. World history is thoroughly sacred for Locke. An individual consciousness that is informed by this history is, accordingly, expectant. One awaits the coming of the Messiah and the consummation of history, and takes care that one will be found to be an acceptable subject.[15]

Mythic beliefs are agglutinative, that is, they join other narratives to themselves, depriving them of their independence but not of their peculiar meaning, whilst they enrich their own meaning and scope. One of these narratives features the first and second Adam; its theme is the founding and re-founding of the human race. According to Locke, the history of redemption begins with Adam's Fall, the consequence of which is that all of Adam's posterity have become mortal and subject to the hazards of living outside paradise.

Anyone familiar with the argument of Locke's *First Treatise*, will recall that in that work Locke tends to depreciate Adam's importance and to deny him any political dignity. His relation to his progeny is merely natural. In the *Reasonableness* although Adam is not granted a kingship, and although it is explicitly denied there that he in any way legally represents his posterity through his actions, yet he is, like Jesus the Messiah, a Son of God by virtue of his origin and therefore an prototypal

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[12] *Reasonableness*, 26; *WR*, 102.

[13] See Horbury, op. cit. See also E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, rev. edn, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973–87) ii, 448–554.

[14] Ibid., 23–36; *WR*, 102–13. Note that Locke regularly used the Authorised Version when citing biblical texts, but here, when quoting Messianic passages from it, he regularly replaced 'Christ' with 'Messiah'.

[15] A succinct yet remarkably detailed summary of Locke's narrative Christology is given in *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 616–18, n. 10(*t*). It is Locke's note on the theme of Eph. 1:10, the recapitulation of all things in Christ. Much of the discussion that follows will be illuminated if read with this text in mind.

figure. Being the first of his species, he had no natural parents; he was not born but created, and, accordingly, God was his father, or so St Luke supposed and Locke concurred.[16] Likewise, Jesus, although he had a natural mother, had no natural father, but was conceived by the Holy Spirit and so, on Locke's account was an 'immediate Son of God'.[17] As Sons of God, Adam and Christ were bearers of the image of God, so that, had Adam remained upright, he would have gained for himself and his posterity, immortality and bliss, which are divine attributes conveyed to Sons of God.

The consequence of Adam's disobedience was mortality. For him, this came as punishment for his failure to maintain a perfect righteousness; it extended also to his posterity, although not as punishment but as natural descent.[18] Jesus, being an immediate Son of God, was not a natural descendent of Adam, hence this consequence did not apply to him, and doubly so because he maintained perfect obedience to the divine law. Therefore, he was either immortal or he had by his innocence earned the right not to die. His death was voluntary, although it was a duty of his office, which, together with other duties, he faithfully fulfilled; his dutiful obedience gained him his kingdom and the dignity of being the first born of a new immortal race of humanity.[19]

Locke is vague about Adam's original immortal state. His writings show that he reflected repeatedly on this theme.[20] His standard formulation of it is that Adam was created immortal, yet he offers no clear or consistent idea of what his immortality consisted in and what part of him, if any, might have been lost or modified when he became mortal. In the *Reasonableness*, Locke writes that Adam lost the image of God in which he was created, but this tells us nothing, for he only notes that bearing the image of God in this context simply means being immortal.[21] In two places, he suggests that it was not due to an alteration of his nature that Adam became mortal, but to a change of place and the state of being in that place, for Adam's original habitat was paradise where sufficient conditions of immortality and bliss were to be found, for example, the tree of life. Hence, it was by his expulsion from paradise that Adam became mortal. But Jesus was not born in paradise, so how could he, being human, have been immortal? Locke's assertion in the *Reasonableness*, that being an obedient Son of God, the Messiah, unlike Adam, retained the image of God tells us no more about the being of the Messiah than it does about Adam.[22] Therefore, I will say no more on the matter, for it leads into the realm of mere conjecture about what Locke might have thought, for intellectual historians a realm of utter darkness.

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[16] See Luke 3:38; see also *Reasonableness*, 113–14; *WR*, 169–70.

[17] Ibid.

[18] *Reasonableness*, 10–11; *WR*, 94–95; Locke argues that God did no injustice in extending mortality to Adam's posterity, because even mortal existence is better than no existence at all.

[19] *Reasonableness*, 113; *WR*, 170.

[20] *Reasonableness*, 6, 11, 113, 198–99, 206; *WR*, 92, 95, 170.

[21] *Reasonableness*, 113; *WR*, 170.

[22] *Reasonableness*, 114; *WR*, 171.

There is a further complication in the relation between the first and second Adam that has bearing on Locke's Christology: for, on his biblical account, Jesus Christ, who, although like Adam, was a son of God because of his origin, was also the Messiah who was destined to rule the visible and invisible world; as such, he was, unlike Adam, pre-existent, and so not a mere man, created like Adam or generated like Adam's children.[23] Since the Virgin Mary was merely the repository of the Messiah, what sort of being was deposited there? Locke's answer, I think, is the rational soul of the Messiah. But just what was that? This is another question that Locke considered repeatedly during the course of his life. His serious consideration of the pre-existence of the Messiah was not a late development. Prior to 1675, he entered into his interleaved Bentley Bible a series of connected notes on biblical passages, which taken altogether comprise a rather sophisticated Christology of Alexandrian or Originest pedigree, a mixed Christology, incarnational and Messianic, but with more of the former. Most of these notes signify the source from which Locke took them by the letter 'G'.[24] Overall, this Christology is Trinitarian, but not orthodox after the manner of Nicea. There are three subsistences in the Godhead: the Father, who is also the creator, the Word, and the Spirit; the last two are emanations or 'energies' of the first. The intellectual soul of the Messiah was created immediately after Adam's Fall and coincident with the first intimation of the Gospel. It was thereupon united with the Word and was kept in the Godhead until it became time for it to be incarnate in the virgin Mary's womb. Even after its incarnation, the soul of the Messiah remained joined to the Word.

Although it is beyond doubt that Locke was keenly interested in this Christology, there is no evidence that he adopted it completely. Nevertheless, traces of it recur in remarks written during the last decade of his life. In the 'Adversaria Theologica' Locke offers as refutation of a long series of Unitarian arguments defending the thesis that Christ is merely human a single premise: 'Because his spirit [i.e. his rational soul] was in the ancient prophets 1 Pet. I. 11 JL'.[25] In his paraphrase and note on Romans 1: 4, Locke distinguishes between the merely human the spiritual parts of the being of the Messiah, and remarks that whilst the former originated in his mother's womb, the latter he had 'by divine extraction' 'immediately from god'.[26] A more robust affirmation of the pre-existence of the Messiah appears in Locke's notes on Ephesians, written during the same period. In this account, the pre-existent Messiah is described neither as an intellectual principle, nor as a heavenly figure sent to restore Adam and his progeny, but in good Messianic style, as the King of heaven, whose realm was diminished by the revolt of angels, whose main work is to regain his lost domains.[27]

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[23] 'Adversaria Theologica', p. 28; *WR*, 26–27.

[24] Locke's G citations are transcribed in the Appendix.

[25] 'Adversaria Theologica', p. 27; *WR*, 7.

[26] *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 487.

[27] Ibid., 616–18, fn. 10(*t*).

Also pertinent to Locke's Christology is the temporal descent of the Messiah and the relation of the Messiah's 'new' covenant to the Mosaic 'old' covenant. Prophecy specified that the Messiah would be a descendent of David, a condition that it was believed Jesus satisfied through his mother, who was of David's line.[28] But as the founder of a new constitution or covenant, and lawgiver, the Messiah's role repeats on a purportedly cosmic and world-historical scale the acts of Moses. Both are lawgivers and both are bearers of divine revelation directly received. Both enjoin a law that, in its moral part, is identical with the law of nature and hence discoverable by reason. Yet the institution of this law and the religious duties that are joined to them, namely the ritual law of Moses, and faith in the Messiah and the dominical sacraments, are entirely positive, the products of free grace and, hence, knowable only by revelation. The primary difference between the two laws lay in the degree of obedience required of those who were subject to them. On Locke's account, the Mosaic Law, the so-called Law of Works, required perfect and complete obedience. The Messiah's law, the Law of Faith, was less rigorous, it was a law accommodated to human frailty.

According to Locke's biblical account, during the Messianic interregnum, God established an earthly state, a theocracy that he ruled directly. Here the law was promulgated with full rigor. But this beacon of monotheistic righteousness, or at least the idea of it, was 'shut up in a little corner of the world' surrounded by the darkness of pagan immorality. Its rituals and customs were designed by God to wean and safeguard the people of Israel from paganism.[29] This particular institution was to remain in effect until the coming of the Messiah, when God intended a more universal promulgation of his dominion, through the Messiah. Its decisive end, Locke believed, occurred in 70 CE, with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and of the Jewish temple, which Locke interpreted as the Messiah's second coming in a spirit of retribution. There are two aspects to Locke's interpretation of this event. First, it is a moment in the history of redemption marking the transition to a new era. He believed it was prophetically foretold, most recently by Jesus' own veiled prediction and hence it is the consequence of a particular providence. It was a divine an act of vengeance against the Jewish nation that 'put an end to their Church, Worship, and Commonwealth'.[30]

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[28] The genealogy in Luke 3:23–38, which differs from the one given Matt. 1:1–17, was taken to be an account of Jesus' descent through Mary's line. See the account of given by John Lightfoot *Works*, i. 21: '*Matthew* derives his Line by the Pedigree of *Joseph* his supposed Father, and draws it from *Solomon*: *Luke* by the Pedigree of *Mary* his Mother, and draws it from *Nathan*: For as the Jews looked on him as the *Son of David*, they would regard the Masculine Line and the Line Royal. . . But looked on, as the seed promised to *Adam, the seed of the woman* [Gen. 3: 15], he was to be looked after by the Line of his Mother. And whereas this seed of the woman was to destroy the power of *Satan* by the word of truth, as *Satan* had destroyed men by words of falshood, *Luke* doth properly draw up his line to Adam, now when he is to begin to preach the Word'.

[29] *Tolerantia*, 116–17; *Reasonableness*, 146, *WR*, 193; *Second Vindication*, 86–87.

[30] Cf. *Reasonableness*, 94; *WR*, 156. On Locke's interpretation the transition from ὁ νῦν αἰων (the present age) and ὁ μέλλων αἰών (the age to come) is marked by an act of Messianic retribution against the nation that rejected him; see also, Ibid., 65–66; *WR*, 133–34.

But, if this destruction and desecration was intended as punishment, then it must have been deserved. Locke's account of the circumstances leading up to this event is an attempt to harmonize these two motives. He regards the political situation in Judea as an effect of divine providence: the imperial rule of Rome, the subjection to them of Jewish authorities, in particular, of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, the council of priests and rabbis who were the protectors and authoritative interpreters of Mosaic religion and law, and the heightened political expectation of the people that the Messiah would soon come and deliver them from Roman oppression. The ruling priests and rabbis were to blame because they were learned in the Scriptures and were aware of the Messianic prophecies. Locke attributes their failure to circumstance and passion. Like the people, the Jewish rulers expected that the Messiah would establish a temporal kingdom, but they were apprehensive about the consequences of this. On the one hand, Roman power seemed insuperable, on the other, a popular uprising, if it succeeded would most likely deprive them of their present position and their power, however limited. Finally, I should note, that as a moment in the history of redemption, Locke supposed that the destruction of Jerusalem was a once and for all act of retribution directed against the Jewish religious commonwealth and its institutions. There is no mention of collective guilt or of justified hostility against Jews.[31] Locke was not an anti-Semite. His negative attitude was directed against Jewish institutions and beliefs. It may more accurately be described as anti-Judaic. A disquieting attitude, nevertheless, but also exemplified by St Paul and most other New Testament authors, not to mention the Holy Spirit.

Like Moses, Jesus is the bearer of a divine revelation that is authenticated by the performance of miracles. But his mission itself and his very identity are authenticated also by his own actions and the events that follow them, viz. his death and resurrection, and by the propagation of the Gospel first by himself and subsequently by his chosen and directly instructed apostles. None of this is supposed to happen by chance. The salvation that Jesus accomplished had been promised by God, and the particular actions and events of his coming had been foretold by divinely inspired prophets. In his long discussion of Messianic reticence, Locke stresses the fact that Jesus' strategy was designed to fulfill prophecy, and that the wisdom of God and the ingenuity of the Messiah were evident in the deliberate manner of his self-presentation. Here we see a mixture of particular providence and individual responsibility. Although Jesus' Messianic life unfolds as the prophets foretold it, and although a particular providence is effective in it, the fulfillment of prophecy is evidence not of pre-determination, but of present obedience. Jesus the Messiah is not only the bearer of divine revelation, but its perfect manager.[32]

It is only after his resurrection that Jesus becomes a king in manifest power, although a power that is reserved and not fully manifest until his final coming for events beyond the visible world. And although this power is kept in reserve, not to be used to establish worldly dominion, its manifestation is not entirely absent in the

[31] *Reasonableness*, 95–96; *WR*, 156–57.

[32] See Chap. 5.

world. It is present in the propagation of the Gospel, indirectly and using temporal instruments in the destruction of Jerusalem, and directly in the miraculous powers exercised by the Apostles after Pentecost, their knowledge of divine things, their persuasiveness as preachers, and by the fact that wherever the Gospel is preached it prevails as truth over falsehood. Locke calls the repeated success of the Christian mission a standing miracle.[33] The end of all things, as we know them, will come when the Messiah returns. Then there will be a general resurrection and the King-Messiah will judge all of Adam's progeny according to the law that fits their circumstances, a division will be made between the saints and the reprobate: the former will receive a reward of immortal bliss, the latter, after a brief but terrible torment, will die the second death—comparable to an old-style execution. Then death itself will be abolished, and the era of Adam will be ended. The Messiah will deliver his restored Kingdom to God the Father and reign with him forever.[34]

Of the three traditional offices of Christ, Prophet, Priest, and King, Locke emphasized the last most of all and the office of prophet to a lesser degree. But he downplayed the priestly office of Christ on the grounds that according to the Gospel record Jesus attached little significance to it.[35] This was not always his opinion, nor did he continue to adhere to it. Around 1675, in an additional note to the 1667 *Essay concerning Toleration* Locke depicts Jesus Christ as 'the great high priest' in whom 'all priesthood terminated'. Hence, we must add to the various titles that Locke came to assign to the Messiah that of Priest or Priest-King, after the mysterious figure of Melchizedek, literally the 'king of righteousness', who was a type of Christ, and thus another variety of Christology is joined to the dominant Messianic one, emphasizing the mediational or transactional role of the Messiah—priests are mediators.[36]

Locke's revival of interest in the priestly office occurred whilst he was reading Hebrews in the preliminary stages of preparing a paraphrase of it. In his summary of Hebrews 3:1–5:14, he characterizes Melchizedek as a more worthy figure than Moses, because he was both priest and king and because he rules an everlasting kingdom, and because the biblical prophecies linking the Messiah with Melchizedek foretell that the Messiah rules not just Israel but a universal kingdom. As an eternal high priest, the Messiah serves also as mediator and intercessor. But priests who intercede for others usually go before God bearing some sacrifice. In this case, the Priest-Messiah gives himself in sacrifice.[37]

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[33] *A Discourse of Miracles*, *WR*, 48.

[34] For Locke's detailed account of the last things, see *'Resurrectio et quae sequuntur'*, Bodleian MS. c. 27, fols. 162–73, *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 679–84.

[35] *Reasonableness*, 120; *WR*, 175.

[36] For Locke's comment in the 1667 *Essay*, see Adversaria 1661, 270, critical text in *Toleration*, 313. I borrow the term 'transactional' from Locke, *Reasonableness*, 149. Locke's late remarks on Christ's priesthood appear in notes on Hebrews written *circa* 1700, and found on an insert in his polyglot interleaved New Testament (Locke 9. 107); transcribed in *WR*. 238–41.

[37] The text is inscribed on a sheet inserted in loc. in interleaved polyglot New Testament Bodleian Library Locke 9.107; for a transcription of the text, see *WR*, 239.

From the theme of priestly sacrifice, the move is easy to Satisfaction. The doctrine of Satisfaction teaches that by his perfect obedience and voluntary death, Jesus Christ satisfied the justice of God, which was transgressed by sin and required retribution, a payment or other transaction that would prepare the way for salvation.[38] This variety of transactional Christology was a cardinal doctrine among Protestants, especially Calvinists. John Edwards blamed Locke for deliberately ignoring it. In the first *Vindication* Locke dismissed Edwards' charge with sarcasm.[39] Yet here too, Locke seems to have changed his mind, or at least not forthrightly revealed it. Even in the *Reasonableness*, he admits that Christ is the only mediator between God and man and allows that there must have been 'Transactions' of some sort between God and Christ, although he cautions that we have no way of knowing what these may be.[40] However, in the *Second Vindication*, he expresses agreement with Samuel Bold, his defender against Edwards and other critics, that Satisfaction 'is a Doctrine that is of mighty Importance for a Christian to be well acquainted with. And I will add to it, that it is very hard for a Christian who reads the Scripture with Attention, and an unprejudiced Mind, to deny the *Satisfaction of Christ*'.[41] Further, there is a manuscript in which Locke unequivocally affirms the doctrine of Satisfaction in the light of Romans 5:12–14. It is a draft that by its content appears to have been intended for inclusion in the *Reasonableness*, but, since it is undated, one cannot be sure which edition it might have been intended for; nor has Locke left any indication of why he did not make use of it. Nevertheless, it is worth quoting as a reminder that, at the very least, Locke wavered on the question of satisfaction.

> As sin made Adam mortal. Soe sin was the cause of the death of Christ not his own but of others for whose sins he laid down his life. Soe that here the Justice of god was Satisfied for the law was noe righteousnesse noe life. Righteousnesse and life. Christ was neither descended from Adam and soe was not to die as one of his issue. Christ had noe sin and soe was not to die and therefor had a right to live. But laying downe his life when he was the son of god free from sin, It was a payment to god for those of the posteritie ofAdam who were under death The justice of gods law being satisfied that he might impute righteousness to them that beleived.[42]

In summary, Locke's Messianic Christology affirms that the Messiah is a divinely appointed king, whose rational soul informed if not joined to the divine word from its inception, was incarnate in the man Jesus of Nazareth, who was divinely conceived. Jesus the Messiah is the founder of an everlasting kingdom, the successor of all the kingdoms of this world. His coming, foretold by the Hebrew prophets,

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[38] See *Westminster Confession*, Chap. 8, §5.

[39] John Edwards, *Some Thoughts concerning the several Causes and Occasions of Atheisme* (London: J. Robinson, 1695), 112; John Locke, *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1695), 6.

[40] *Reasonableness*, 142;*WR*, 191.

[41] *Second Vindication*, 465.

[42] MS Locke c. 27, fol. 101; transcribed in *Reasonableness*, Appendix, I, 199.

made manifest the salvific purpose of God and set in operation the final historical process by which this purpose would be consummated.

I conclude this section with some comments comparing Locke's Messianic Christology and Athanasius' incarnational one. For the latter I attend only to Athanasius' *Contra gentes* and *De incarnatione verbi*.[43]

What is noteworthy in these works is that the same Messianic narrative just surveyed is present in them also, which is not surprising, for whatever the differences between Athanasius in time and place and circumstance, they were both biblical theologians, their minds shaped by a biblical culture.[44] The crucial difference between the two varieties of Christology becomes evident when we read their respective accounts of the work of Christ, which are similar in most respects.

Both begin the history of redemption with Adam, and there is agreement that Adam was made, if not immortal, then at least with the conditions of immortality within his grasp, but they differ in how they describe the circumstances of the Fall and the ensuing predicament of mankind that made him in need of a deliverer. According to Athanasius' account, Adam and all his posterity possess the intellectual capacity to contemplate the divine nature. This capacity is the consequence of the fact that mankind has been created in the image of God, which is itself a permanent reflection of the divine λόγος. Athanasius does not mean that this original knowledge of God is merely conceptual, rather that it is a means by which, if kept pure, the mind is led beyond the sensible world to contemplate the divine λόγος itself, the Son, who is the expression of the ineffable Father.[45] Adam's Fall is a descent into sensuality and desire, and its consequence is intellectual blindness, irrationality, and death, which, although the soul remains immortal, nevertheless is the loss of all that fallen mankind had come to value and hold dear.

Locke, on the other hand, defines Adam's Fall as one from original but yet untested righteousness by his disobedience of a divine command. The punishment of Adam's disobedience, as forewarned, is mortality, which is transmitted to all his descendants, although in their case, not as a punishment for sin, but just as their natural state. The two accounts may be characterized as metaphysical and legal respectively, although both have consequences pertaining to the moral competence of Adam's progeny.

Both Athanasius and Locke represent the Fall as a departure from a true knowledge of God into pagan idolatry, but neither supposes that the human condition is such as to exclude altogether the possibility that a few thoughtful individuals might realize a proper intellectual and moral understanding of God. Both agree, following St Paul, that the visible world presents unmistakable evidence of its creator. Athanasius' remark that, notwithstanding the souls of all mankind have become

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[43] Athanasius, *Contra Gentes* and *De incarnatione verbi*, ed. R. W. Thomson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

[44] On Athanasius, see R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 417–58, esp. 423.

[45] Athanasius, *Contra Gentes*, §2.

stained and encrusted with the filth of desire, they are not without the capacity of conversion, of turning 'to contemplate therewith the Word of the Father, in whose image they were made in the beginning'.[46] This is a turning or complete reversal of the immortal soul, a restoration to its original metaphysical state, or at least a clearer glimpse of it. In Locke's case, the soul is mortal and frail; it can only imagine a higher state. Yet it is not incapable of understanding its moral situation and resolving to correct it. Notwithstanding, both recognize that salvation, however it be conceived, depends upon work of Christ.

So then we come to the work of the Messiah. According to Athanasius, the work of salvation is accomplished by the divine λόγος, who restores the image of God in mankind. Only the divine word, who is the veritable image of the Father, and not just a bearer of it, can do this.

> But how could this have been done, unless the very image of God were to come, Our Saviour Jesus Christ? For neither by men was it possible, since they had been created in the image, nor by the angels, for neither were they images. So the Word of God came in his own person, in order that, as he is the image of his Father, he might be able to restore man who is in the image. But again, there is no other way to do this without the destruction of death and corruption. So he was justified in taking a mortal body, in order that in it death could be destroyed and men might again be renewed in the image. For this, then, none other than the image of the Father was required.[47]

This 'very image of God' must be God himself, not a substitute or intermediary, and not like Locke's second Adam, a man, albeit pre-existent and archetypal.[48]

In contrast to Athanasius' scheme, Locke believed that the work of the Messiah consisted primarily of kingly actions, performed as God the Father's vicegerent. He publishes the divine law, which although not quite unknown, had become obscure and lacked a proper foundation[49]; he announces the immanence of the divine kingdom and, through his obedience, wins the right to be its ruler, and he establishes a more lenient standard of obedience, the forgiveness of past sins and of all future sins that are the consequences of human frailty and for which there is repentance. He even submits himself to a priestly act of self-sacrifice. The action in all these cases is one of substitution and mediation.

It might be said that the differences noted above are easily explained by the fact that Athanasius was a Platonist, whereas Locke was a mere empiricist. There is a measure of truth in this, but the task of drawing it out is too complex to be undertaken here, and, besides, I am not ready to attempt it.[50] It should suffice to note that

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[46] Ibid., §34.

[47] Athanasius, *De incarnatione verbi*, §13.

[48] See Hanson, op. cit., 427.

[49] *Reasonableness*, 146; *WR*, 193–94.

[50] The problem is that Locke may also be styled a Platonist (see Chap. 7), and, I believe, his empiricism fits closely with his Platonism; they are united in the intellectual character of the Christian Virtuoso (see Chap. 1). But the sort of empiricism that is practiced by the Christian Virtuoso causes him to attend to facts, be they natural or historical—it is a duty; virtuosity when applied to Scripture regards it as a narrative of divine deeds that represents the Messiah as subordinate to the

there are fundamental differences between Athanasius and Locke on the person of the Messiah and his salvific work. However rich and complex Locke's Christology (a fact, I hope will not escape my readers), it is evident that Locke supposed that the Messiah, the Son of God and Second Adam, was a creature, albeit pre-existent, and that it is as a man, and not as a being who was substantially God, that he conveyed to mankind immortality. In that respect, Locke was heterodox, although not Socinian. He subscribed, without intending it, to the archetypal heresy of Arianism.[51]

Natural Theology, Christology, and the Essay

> *Reason* is natural *Revelation*, whereby the eternal Father of Light, and Fountain of all Knowledge communicates to Mankind that portion of Truth, which he has laid within the reach of their natural Faculties: *Revelation* is natural *Reason* enlarged by a new set of Discoveries communicated by GOD immediately, which Reason vouches the Truth of, by the Testimony and Proofs it gives, that they come from GOD. So that he that takes away *Reason*, to make way for *Revelation*, puts out the light of both …[52]

According to Locke and to many of his contemporaries, who were neither strict Calvinists nor Socinians, natural theology, consisting of the knowledge of the being and attributes of God and of our duty to him, was integral to Christianity. Locke makes this very clear in the *Reasonableness*, and in doing so, forges a special link between the substance of natural theology and the work of the Messiah. In the concluding section of the *Reasonableness*, he lists several advantages of a Messiah to mankind, and credits Jesus the Messiah with replenishing the endowment of reason by a clear assertion of a pure monotheism and the law of nature. He contends that these things had been made obscure through the cunning of priestcraft and superstition, even though human reason, by itself, remains capable of discovering them. Now reason, by itself, can confirm what Jesus taught on these things, and in doing so confirm his revelation.[53] If, then, Locke believed that natural theology was

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divine will. The Platonism of Athanasius seems of a different sort, and even though Athanasius should be regarded as a biblical theologian, his supposition that God is substantially present in his revelation—a supposition that favors a different sort of hermeneutics, causes him to look aside from the creatureliness of the Messiah as represented in Scripture to the divine presence—it is like seeing God in every cognition. In this respect, Athanasius would have fallen into a class that Locke labeled 'enthusiast'; see my article 'Enthusiasm', in *The Continuum Companion to Locke*, ed. S-J Savonius-Wroth, Paul Schuurman, Jonathan Walmsley (London: Continuum, 2010), 141–43.

[51] For the background of Locke's Arianism, see Maurice F. Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); on Arius' Christology, see Hanson, op. cit., 3–18.

[52] *Essay*, IV.xix.4 (698).

[53] *Reasonableness*, 141–59; *WR*, 191–201; for a discussion of this section of the *Reasonableness* see my 'Locke's Hermeneutics of Existence and his Representation of Christianity', in *Conscience and Scripture. Locke and biblical Hermeneutics*, ed. Luisa Simonutti (Dordrecht: Springer, in preparation).

an integral part of Christianity, where, in his writings, might we find it? We find it, I believe, in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Theological content in a variety of forms and circumstances pervades this book. A modest count of the theological places in the *Essay* that I recently made came to 54.[54] Some of these theological places are incidental or material parts of discussions on other themes: for example, the wisdom of God is cited as a reason for accepting the sufficiency of our cognitive faculties (I. i. 4–6); 'That *God is to be worshipped*' ranks first among the rules of morality (I. iv. 7); that, although it is beyond doubt that the being of God is infinite, this attribute applies univocally only to his duration and ubiquity and must be applied figuratively to his other attributes, such as wisdom, power and goodness (III. xvii. 1). Others comprise entire chapters or parts of them: IV. x: 'Of the Existence of God'; IV. xviii: on faith and reason; IV. xix: on enthusiasm. To these one may add those portions of II, xxi that concern human freedom and the pursuit of happiness; or II. xxvi that presents the forensic idea of personal identity; or the account of morality in II. xxviii. These 54 places make up a significant part of the *Essay*, again a modest estimate is one quarter of the book.

Among these contents are to be found all the elements of a natural theology, and there are also in the *Essay* repeated directives about how these elements fit together. They include deductive proof, or, for the less erudite, unmistakable evidence that there is a God; that he is the creator of the world; that our first duty is to worship him; that there is an eternal morality discoverable by reason and capable of demonstrative proof; that human happiness depends upon keeping this law; and that God will reward or punish us according to the conformity of our actions with this law. These elements are not just randomly distributed in the *Essay*, but they are in several places joined together in various summations (e.g. I. iii; I. iv; II.xxviii). Thus there can be no doubt at least that the *Essay* is a repository of natural theology.

I would to make a stronger claim than this, namely that Locke came to regard his great work as a natural theology. One reason in support of this claim is that just when he engaged in the final preparations for the second edition of the *Essay*, he composed a list of topics for a theological commonplace book, the 'Adversaria Theologica'. There he subsumed all of the content of the *Essay* under theology.[55] Although this is far from sufficient to justify my claim, there is other evidence that may help to tip the scales in my favor. This evidence is mostly internal, a reading of the work in the light of the abundant theological content that is in it. For example, there should be no doubt that the *Essay* is a practical work. It is an antidote against scepticism, designed to assure us that despite the limits of our understandings, we have sufficient intellectual light to guide us on the path that leads to eternal bliss, that is, to discover what is requisite for this, a knowledge of God and our duty. The repeated exhortations that we should not despair over our cognitive limitations

[54] See 'A list of theological places in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*', in *WR*, 245–56, from which much of what follows is taken.

[55] The text is printed in Appendix A of Chap. 2.

or our modest rank in the chain of being, invariably invoke the goodness and wisdom of God. All in all, Locke's theory of knowledge, which is set out in the *Essay* is a sort of theistic reliabilism. Moreover, it is made perfectly clear in this work that the acceptance of this God-given capacity and its proper use are moral duties. As we have seen, these duties are basic parts of Locke's theory of Christianity; the work of Christ to promote monotheism and to restore knowledge of the law of nature presupposes it.

The refutation of innatism is particularly noteworthy here. Although Locke's rejection of this doctrine is anticipated in *Essays on the Law of Nature*,[56] and appears early in his drafts of the *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*,[57] it could not have escaped his notice at some point that innatism was a fundamental issue between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants (otherwise known as Calvinists). At about the same time, or not long after launching the second edition of the *Essay*, which included a new chapter on personal identity and a revised account of human freedom, both theologically significant topics and basic elements in any natural theology, Locke was reading the works of the Remonstrant theologian Simon Episcopius (1583–1643) as an aid to clarify his own divided thoughts on whether the human soul was material or immaterial.[58] And, at about the same time, in a letter to Philippus van Limborch, in which he reported the death of Archbishop Tillotson and the great loss this was to him, Locke remarks that Limborch must now take Tillotson's place as his theological censor.[59] Locke's letter to Limborch also reported his plan to engage in theological study, and it is likely that he made it with the Adversaria in mind. I think it would have been quite natural for him to have reflected not only how the *Essay* fits into the sum of theology, but how its affinities with the Remonstrants' programme gave it a place in contemporary theological debates. All this suggests to me that, although it was not Locke's original intention that the *Essay* be a work of natural theology, he may have gradually come to see the need for one and redesigned it to fulfill that role.

Finally, I do not go so far as to claim that Locke came to view the *Essay* exclusively as natural theology. He no doubt regarded it in other ways as well, for example, as a new organon to prepare the ground of human enquiry for the new science; as a contribution to toleration and human concord. But even these projects, for Locke, lead back to theology. As he wrote in the posthumous *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, theology surpasses all other disciplines, because it directs all other knowledge to its true end, namely 'the honour and veneration of the Creator and the happynesse of man kinde'.[60]

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[56] See *Law of Nature*.

[57] John Locke, *Drafts for the Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch and G. A. J. Rogers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 1–11; 101–28.

[58] 'Adversaria Theologica', 32–40; *WR*, 28–31.

[59] Locke to Van Limborch, 11 Dec. 1694, *Correspondence*, v. 237–38.

[60] *Conduct*, 193; see the epigraph to Chap. 2.

Christology in Two Treatises and Epistola De Tolerantia

At first glance, the conceptual connection between *Two Treatises of Government* and Locke's Christology may appear problematic. Consider Adam. In the *Reasonableness*, Locke distinguishes between Adam as the natural progenitor of the human race and as a legal representative whose actions and their consequences would be binding on his posterity; he accepts the former and rejects the latter, thereby denuding the person of Adam any other role than that of natural ancestor to all mankind. This denial seems to be a deliberate allusion to the *Two Treatises*, although it could hardly have been intended as more than a private allusion, since the 'world' would have had little reason to make the connection between the *Reasonableness* and the *Two Treatises*, both being anonymous and, for all anyone was supposed to know, written by different authors. However, it indicates at least that Locke realized the allusion, and that in his mind the arguments of the *First Treatise* and the political theory of the *Second*, justified the diminution of Adam's dignity and the denial to him of any sacral office. Locke was, in effect, reading into the *Reasonableness* the conclusions of his earlier work, that Adam had no right to be the ruler or representative of 'Millions' who had never heard of him and who could not have authorized or consented to this.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude from this that Locke was driven at least in part or even residually by a political motive when composing this part of the *Reasonableness*. To do so would presuppose that the *First Treatise* presents a political argument in biblical theological dress.[61] But aside from grounds of suspicion, which in most cases are conjectural rather than contextual, there seems to be little ground to support this, for in terms of foundation and method, the *First Treatise* rather presents a biblical theological argument with a negative political conclusion, namely, that Filmer's claim that political authority descends from Adam to his heirs by divine appointment is false. This refutation, grounded on Scripture as a source of theological truth, shifts the burden of political argument upon reason, which can appeal to God only on natural theological grounds. On Locke's view the right of kingship in sacred history belongs only to the Messiah.

Two additional lines of continuity can be identified between *Two Treatises* and Locke's Christology. First and consequent upon what I have just remarked, there is continuity with respect to the doctrine of the law of nature, which is an essential part of Locke's natural theology and of the political theory developed in the *Second Treatise*. Just how does the law of nature figure into Locke's Christology and in what ways does Locke's Christology illuminate for us Locke's idea of it?

Before answering these questions, I offer as clarification some theses about Locke's theory of the law of nature. They are my own opinions drawing upon the more informed discussion of this theme from Wolfgang von Leyden to Stephen Buckle.

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[61] This in general is the Straussian view; see Michael P. Zuckert, 'An introduction to Locke's First Treatise', *Interpretation*, 8, 1979, 58–74.

1. Throughout his writings, Locke maintains his commitment to a law of nature, i.e. to a divinely authorized rule of right behaviour discoverable by reason.
2. This commitment is arguably coherent.
3. On the question whether Locke's theory of the law of nature is voluntarist or rationalist, it seems to be something of both. It may be called voluntarist with respect to the efficient cause of the law of nature, the will of God, but it may also be classified as rationalist, for the law of nature is not a positive law but is one discoverable by reason or the light of nature.[62] Even the voluntarism of the efficient cause of the law requires qualification, for the expression 'superior will' used in *Essays on the Law of Nature* signifies, or came to signify for Locke, more, I think, than the pre-eminent power of a creator; it is rather a pre-eminent power that conforms with goodness and wisdom whereby we may be assured that God 'directs our actions to that which is best', and since these attributes applied to God are not mere honorifics but signify something very much like what we mean by them in human contexts, and since they are demonstrable or at least discoverable by the light of nature, we may reasonably expect that the law of nature is something that we can discover and understand. Thus God is by his will the efficient cause of the law of nature, but by his nature he is its formal cause.
4. The foundation of the law of nature, then, resides not in the nature of things but primarily in the divine nature; only secondarily does it reside in the nature of things, and we may be sure, since we know God to be wise, good and supremely powerful that the law he prescribes fits the created order of things.

But how does the law of nature figure into Locke's Christology and in how does Locke's Christology illuminate for us Locke's idea of it? As noted in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke credits Jesus with rescuing the law of nature, by declaring with full clarity its foundation, content, and rigor. Reason confirms what Jesus reveals, and by doing so recovers its powers and self-possession. But Jesus' revelation takes reason beyond its natural limits, by setting the law and its demands within a larger cosmic frame having to do with revolt of angels and Adam's disobedience and God's salvific purpose. Thus, the law of nature is resuscitated in Locke's Christology, and its purpose and scope are reinterpreted in the light of the history of redemption. Whilst it remains a law of perfection, it becomes under the Gospel a goal to be aimed at rather than a rule to be rigorously kept, and its administration and enforcement now appear accommodated to human frailty and ignorance, which are along with mortality universal consequences of the expulsion from paradise.

It should also become clear from this enlarged understanding of the law of nature, that, although it is binding on creatures primarily, it is also binding on God, for God's justice requires that it be rigorously enforced. God is bound to reward those who perfectly keep it and bound as well to punish those who do not. Thus, as

[62] Locke, *Law of Nature*, 110–11; *Essay* II. xxvii. 8 (352).

Locke remarks in the *Reasonableness,* God was bound by the rule of justice to punish Adam, the consequence of which is that human life thereafter had to be lived outside of paradise. But the Gospel reveals something more, namely, that God is bound to facilitate the fulfillment of the law. The history of redemption shows that there is a resource beyond justice in the divine nature and only in employing this resource for the benefit of his creation is God free of the rigorous requirements of the law. But God is not free to grant his favor as it pleases him. He must apply it equitably. Thus, while God and his Messiah are absolute rulers of the Kingdom of God, and shall be so eternally, their government is lawful and not arbitrary.[63]

The second strand of continuity is less easily discernible, but, perhaps just because it requires more ingenuity to make it out, it is the more interesting. It comes into view when we consider the constitution of a temporal church. Locke contends that it must be a voluntary association. Now, government by consent and voluntary association are applications of the same principle, namely free choice based upon individual judgment. This is what James Tully has called the principle of political individualism (not to be confused with the notion of 'possessive individualism'), which, he believes originates with Locke.[64] Consent to enter into a civil compact is a free, that is original, and voluntary act by an individual on grounds of worldly convenience, to obtain the benefits of 'a sociable life'. Consent to join a church is the same sort of act, not however on grounds of worldly convenience but as a means of gaining God's favor by offering him proper worship, which must be based upon individual faith. In both instances, the individual cedes something to a social government: the power to enforce a law, the law of nature in the first instance, and right to interpret the Law of Faith in preaching and to regulate public worship in the second;[65] but in each instance the individual retains the right of review and dissent, and to remind magistrates and clergy of the respective laws that they are obliged to uphold. The parallel is not perfect. An individual may leave a church that is a particular religious society, with impunity, but does not have the same right with

[63] *Reasonableness*, 13–22; *WR*, 96–101. There is an interesting parallel here between justice and charity in *Two Treatises*; see Stephen Buckle, *Natural Law and the Theory of Property* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 159–60. Buckle's model of the idea of property suggests that the purpose of mankind on earth is to restore paradise as far as this is possible.

[64] James Tully, 'Locke', in *Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450–1700*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 622. On the notion of 'possessive individualism', see C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). The distinction between these two concepts is this: a political individual is essentially a rational being who regards himself and other rational beings as subject to the law of nature; a possessive individual is a creature of desire who strives to safeguard whatever may properly be called his own: his capacities and the products of his labor. For an appreciative yet critical and historically sensitive account of the Macpherson notion see, James Tully 'After the Macpherson thesis', in James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 72–95.

[65] See Locke, 'Infallibility', PRO 30/24/47/33, *WR*, 72; Locke grants to pastors a 'directive [but] not definitive' infallibility to pastors, as a means of providing 'a way that is safe and secure' for their Christian flocks.

respect to a civil state, for unlike the clergy, magistrates retain the right to claim obedience from their subjects and to coerce them if necessary.[66] Religious liberty, however, applies only to temporal society. On the other hand, whereas a civil state may be dissolved if its magistrates violate their trust, the universal church, otherwise known as the Kingdom of God, whose dominion is Christ's, cannot be dissolved, although sacred history begins with an attempt to do so. Like most of his Christian contemporaries, Locke believed that just such an attempt was made by Satan and his cohorts, although it is the sort of thing that no rational person would attempt unless his reason were blinded by passion, namely envy or pride.[67]

An early application of the principle of political individualism to the theory of the church occurs is some notes that Locke took while reading Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, circa 1682.[68] This was about the same time that he was working up his *Two Treatises.* Now it may be that this coincidence of principle was the outcome of Locke's Christological beliefs, which he further developed in *The Reasonableness of Christianity.* He believed that Christ is the head of the church, both in its temporal and supernatural forms, that is of individual churches, be they independent gatherings or national institutions or international institutions that make pretence of universality, and of the supernatural society of men and angels which will become manifest at the end of time. He also believed that one becomes a Christian, enters the church and is justified by believing the Gospel, by accepting Jesus as King and Savior, and by submitting to his law. I have hypothesized elsewhere that Locke's characterization of the Gospel as a Law of faith, and his reduction of this law to a single proposition, his so-called minimalism, may have originated from his reading of Hooker.[69] Hooker described the Gospel, that is, 'the doctrine that teacheth salvation by Jesus Christ, *Evangelium æternurn, an eternal Gospell*', as an immutable positive law, whose acceptance was a free act of submission by which one was received into the church. I do not say that Locke ever consciously perceived this coincidence of the principle of church and state, only that the principle was in his mind whilst he was reflecting on the church and that it was also present when he was considering the principles of government. What gives this hypothesis credibility is the peculiar nature of the doctrine that Jesus is the Messiah that sets it apart from all other Christian doctrines. It is a threshold doctrine to

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[66] See Locke, 'Critical Notes upon Edward Stillingfleet's *Mischief* and *Unreasonableness Separation*, MS Locke c. 34, p. 171; *WR*, 78; Locke compares independent churches with birdcages equipped with trap doors, that allow birds to enter but deny them exit.

[67] God being perfectly righteous, there could never be any just reason to seek the dissolution of his kingdom. The same cannot be said of civil magistrates.

[68] MS Locke d. 10, 'Lemmata Ethica', pp. 43–44, *WR*, 80. Perhaps the earliest application by Locke of the principle to ecclesiastical polity can be dated to 1674 in a manuscript entitled 'Excommunication'. There, drawing a distinction between Church and State, Locke wrote, 'Church membership is perfectly voluntary & may end when ever any one pleases, without any prejudice to him but in Civil Society it is not soe', MS Locke c. 27, fol. 29r, critical text in *Toleration*, 331.

[69] *WR*, xlvi.

Christian existence. Hooker's notion of it explains this peculiarity as well as the simplified form in which it is usually represented.

It would appear then, that around 1682, Locke was engaged concurrently in fundamental political and theological reflection and using the same set of ideas in each and that some of the most important results of these reflections became presuppositions for Locke when he composed the *Reasonableness.* In between the earlier and later intellectual work, he made his case for a policy of toleration, drawing from the same resources, so that from 1682 through 1695, his thought underwent a continuous development, notwithstanding the troubles that he endured, and the changes of place and circumstance that these troubles and their resolution brought with them.

I come lastly to the *Epistola de Tolerantia.* What light, if any, does Locke's Christology cast upon the policy of toleration advocated in that work? First of all, Locke's case for toleration is made, at least in part, on the basis of divine law, or more precisely on the absence of any law of nature or positive divine command assigning civil magistrates jurisdiction over the care of souls, and of any law of Christ that would establish ecclesiastical power on earth and endow it in some visible prelatical government. It follows that, since civil government has no business meddling with religion, except when it is practiced in ways that threaten the peace and order of society or the safety and well-being of its citizens, and in those instances it would only restrain and not attempt to propagate a more peaceable religion, and since there is no authorized temporal government of the church or no deputy on earth that can rightfully claim to act in Christ's stead, the business of religion, so far as it pertains to Christians, is entirely under the jurisdiction of Christ. But Christ, the 'Prince of peace', has forsworn mere temporal power to propagate the Gospel of his kingdom, and he receives as his subjects only those who freely accept him as their king and follow his example. It follows that Christian societies founded here on earth must be free voluntary associations. They may make their own constitutions, but they may not compel anyone to adhere to them. They may expel those who do not, but they may not harm them or attempt to deprive them of life, liberty or property. Here we have sufficient grounds for a policy of toleration. The assertion with which Locke begins his discourse, that religious toleration is the 'chief distinguishing mark of a true church', and later on, that it is, in the light of the Gospel and reason, virtually self-evident imply that the preceding argument was hardly necessary.

Locke offers other reasons that are prima facie neither theological nor Christological and that address current discussion about the nature of belief: namely that no rational person would cede to a civil government the right to choose his religion, for to do so would entail that one can alter one's beliefs merely by prescription or at will, which is impossible, or that the civil magistrate is necessarily incompetent to exercise jurisdiction over religion, for force is his only means, and sincere belief, which is necessary for any acceptable religion, cannot be coerced. But it would be a mistake to give these parts of Locke's argument the spotlight and cast the rest into the shadows, if our aim is to understand the mind of Locke. His philosophy of belief, after all, was fashioned to show that we possess

sufficient light to conduct all the business of life with respect to the here and the hereafter, and it is the latter that must be emphasized if we are to succeed in this understanding.

Still one might suspect, notwithstanding explicit references to God and Christ and solicitous remarks on the importance of an honest faith, that Locke's policy of toleration seems better suited to promote trade and commerce than religious truth. Jonas Proast was the earliest on record to make this charge.[70] The charge can be embellished to encompass a host of more recent objections to Locke's Christianity. The easy rationalism of his argument for toleration like his case for the reasonableness of Christianity and his antipathy to systems of doctrine, make it seem to those of a more romantic cast of mind that his sort of faith does not sufficiently tax the spirit with fear and trembling, that it is rather a comfortable faith suitable to one whose interests lay more in this world than the next.

I conclude this section by defending Locke from this charge. Doing so will lead us farther into Locke's Christology, for the defense that I offer is meant to be Locke's not mine. First, from remarks Locke makes in the *Epistola*, it becomes clear that it was not just because civil power was incompetent to make one believe that led him to reject the use of force in matters of religion. He observes often enough to the attentive reader, who understands the religious background of his remarks, that temporal power is not merely incompetent but corrupting. Temporal power is still under the domain of the rulers of this world and therefore by its very nature, it tends to corrupt. Hence it should come as no surprise that pride and ambition, a desire for dominion, and fanatical zeal inflamed by an arrogant spiritual pride, are the real motives of intolerant practices, and that the usual justification for these practices, namely that they are done for the sake of true religion or the welfare of society are mere pretences that require unmasking.[71] Thus Locke contends that when a religious sect, or clergy acting in its name, form an alliance with a civil government they do so only to satisfy the ambitions of secular rulers and of their own secular ambitions. If they would bring their flocks along with them, they must resort to priestcraft, superstition, and the evocation of base passions, relying on human frailty, ignorance and credulity to ease their way.

Now it was priestcraft of this sort that gave rise to pagan idolatry. In the *Reasonableness*, Locke remarks how, before Christ, 'the Rational or thinking part of Mankind', that is, those who employed the cognitive faculties with which they were endowed, discovered the true God, but out of fear of the people and the priests who could incite them, kept this knowledge to themselves. Whilst unscrupulous and ambitious priests held sway over the religious imagination of the people, philosophers taught virtue without making clear its true foundation in the will of a wise, good and righteous God. They relied rather on the beauty or agreeableness of virtue

[70] Jonas Proast, *The Argument of the Letter concerning Toleration, Briefly Consider'd and Answer'd* (London: George West and Henry Clements, 1690; facs. ed. New York: Garland Press, 1984), 2.

[71] Locke, *Tolerantia*, 65, 115.

as a motive. But Locke considered this inadequate.[72] Here, then, reason failed, or rather, was disabled, by the misdirection of fear. One ought, Locke believed, fear a righteous God and his anointed Son, the Messiah, who would execute final judgment on the living and the dead, but instead the bulk of mankind, except for those rational few, had been persuaded by the wiles of priestcraft that the gods were capricious and arbitrary, and had to be placated. The thinking few saw through this pretence, but the object of their fear was close by and real and so they said nothing about it.[73]

Jesus the Messiah brought an end to this unhappy state of affairs. First, he restored the principles of natural religion, the purity of monotheism, the foundation of the law of nature in the will of God and the promise of eternal bliss to those who keep it. In sum, as already noted, he restored reason. Second, he renounced the alliance between church and temporal power, and during the course of his ministry on earth was careful to avoid its enticements; it was for this reason that he was reluctant openly to reveal his identity. In the end, he allowed himself to become its victim. His voluntary death was the archetype of appeals to God in moments of apparent powerlessness, and it becomes both rule and consolation for all Christians thereafter. His resurrection and return in power offer assurance beyond consolation.

If Christians must renounce the use of force in propagating religion or maintaining its purity, there remains within their means not only charity, the love of truth, and rational persuasion (right thinking pagans had these resources but to little effect), but also the example of Christ's achievement and the assurance of his reign. In the confidence that the Messiah has come and done his work, Christian rationalism will seem to be not corrosive of true religion, but its only reliable and divinely assured preservative.

Conclusion

In the foregoing, I have attempted to provide a detailed account of Locke's Christology and to suggest how it may serve as a light that illuminates the pathways of his intellectual life. One thing, I hope is sure, that Locke's Christology, although

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[72] *Reasonableness*, 144; *WR*, 192; see also 'Error', MS Locke Film 77, 320–21, transcription *WR*, 81–83 and 'Sacerdos', MS Locke Film 77, 93, transcription in *WR*, 17.

[73] It may be useful here to clarify further Locke's voluntarism with respect to the moral law. It is true that he emphasises the principle that there can be no law without a lawgiver, and makes clear that the necessity for this is motivation: the lawgiver enforces the law through promises of reward and punishment. But it makes a great difference whether the lawgiver is righteous and consistent with justice or capricious and arbitrary. In the former case, voluntarism and rationalism are quite compatible; see Richard Ashcraft, *Locke's Two Treatises of Government* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987) 267, n. 16, for a different version of this, one that supposes a more substantial failure of reason. To assert that the moral law is grounded in the will of God is not to be a voluntarist pure and simple, unless one supposes that the will of God is entirely self-determining and not subject to some real standard, in this respect, the divine goodness and a knowledge of what is best.

the work of a layman, is coherent, sophisticated, and soundly biblical within the conventions of biblical scholarship of his day, and that it stands on its own within the Christian tradition and is an ingenious development of one of its main, albeit heterodox strands. At the same time it is not only consistent with Locke's other intellectual projects, but is integral with them and seems indeed to have developed with them. Moreover, it is not peripheral to Locke's thought but is central to it and, therefore, enables us to view it as a whole. It follows from this that Locke may be viewed as a Christian philosopher, which, I believe, is a designation that he would have welcomed.

But this leaves unanswered the question of what use might be made of this understanding of Locke's philosophy in representing the historical contexts to which his thought belongs and in investigating current philosophical themes. Answers to these questions here must be brief, selective and programmatic. First, Locke's place in the Enlightenment must be represented in the light of his Christian commitments. He belongs, as Jonathan Israel has rightly written, to that group of moderate scholars and virtuosi whose aim was to use the new learning to sustain Christianity and its institution.[74] This is a good starting point, but I think the intellectual contexts of Locke's thought are both broader and narrower. Broader, because given Locke's stature, I do not think it is saying too much to assert that he belongs as much to the Christian tradition as does Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, or John Calvin. He is a principal founder of modern liberal Christianity.[75] Locke's philosophy, then, should be viewed as a point of orientation for a historical reconstruction of this tradition whose first flowering occurred in the seventeenth century in Holland and England. In this context and in both places we may set Locke among divines and prominent Christian scholars who were his immediate predecessors, contemporaries, and successors: William Chillingworth, Ralph Cudworth, Simon Episcopius, Hugo Grotius, John Hales, Henry Hammond, Richard Hooker, Jean Le Clerc, Philippus van Limborch, John Tillotson. This Anglo-Dutch assortment of liberal theologians was succeeded by a remarkable but much unappreciated group of theologians in eighteenth-century England, all of whom owed very much to Locke: Francis Blackburne, Joseph Butler, Samuel Clarke, Philip Doddridge, David Hartley, John Jortin, Edmund Law, William Paley, Joseph Priestley, John Taylor, Daniel Waterland and Isaac Watts. These divines, who are indebted to Locke in various ways, did not see themselves as rationalisers and secularisers, but as upholders of the Reformation, fulfillers of its true meaning. In sum, Locke's Christian philosophy gave substance and direction to English liberal theology.

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[74] Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 448–76. Others in this group mentioned by Israel are Robert Boyle, Jean Le Clerc, Philippus van Limborch and Richard Simon.

[75] Liberal Christianity is not an entirely modern phenomenon. It has antecedents in a looser pre-Nicene orthodoxy with its roots in a Christian culture or *paideia* fashioned largely by the Greek fathers, in particular, by Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and the Cappadocians. To be better understood, Locke's theology should be viewed in this historical context. This something that I hope to show in subsequent writings.

Philosophically, a theological Locke may prove useful in addressing themes that are currently much talked about in the philosophy of religion: theistic reliabilism and divine command ethical theory are enjoying a revival and Locke was clearly an advocate of both. Indeed, programmatically, there are affinities between Locke and the so-called Reformed Epistemologists, who like Locke believe that it is reasonable to be a Christian. Unfortunately, this has not been well-appreciated by the leading advocates of this contemporary philosophical movement. One may only hope that the sort of exposition given here will cause them to reconsider their estimate of the great philosopher.[76]

Finally, it seems appropriate to consider one set of philosophical issues: personal identity, moral obligation, and righting wrong, that lead us back to the theme of this chapter. It is well known that Locke considered 'person' to be a 'forensick term' that applies to agents, who are intelligent and free, and 'capable of a Law, and Happiness and Misery', whose essence consists in consciousness of past and present actions and events in which it was involved, and who have, therefore, the capacity of self examination and judgment.[77] Locke also believed that moral obligation consists in subjection to a ruler whose very nature is goodness, who is incorruptible, impartial, and who, being perfectly just, is bound to reward good and punish evil. Yet he also believed that legislative power, consisting both of the rational capacity to discover laws of nature and the right enforce them, belongs to human persons in a state of nature.[78] Although not reflecting directly on Locke, Kant has put these two together: a person is a self-legislating being, whose obligation to be moral resides in the very idea of law that it derives from pure practical reason.[79] In this respect, Kant seems to have made some progress over Locke by separating morality from a transcendent religious authority and by drawing religious concerns within the limits of mere reason. However, even Kant recognised that a complete account of morality depends upon something more than autonomy; for human agents naturally expect to be happy, and being frail they often do evil things, so there remains the need to redeem humanity from its moral failure, and to rectify the wrong that its frailty and perverseness has produced.[80] In this context, Messianism becomes thematically relevant and worthy of philosophical reflection, not as a dogma to be adhered to but as a sort of wisdom to be explored for insight into the human condition.

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[76] See Nicholas Wolterstorff, *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and my review the *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 48/1, 334–38; see also my Introduction to *WR*, pp. xxvi–ix.

[77] *Essay* II. xxvi. 26 (346).

[78] *Two Treatises* II. ii. 7 (312).

[79] Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason*, in Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, ed. and trans. Allen Wood and George Di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 53–66. This work represents Kant's attempt to demonstrate reasonableness of Christianity by interpreting it from the standpoint of pure practical reason.

[80] Kant, op. cit.

Appendix

The following notes transcribed in Locke's interleaved Bentley Bible (Bodleian Shelfmark Locke 17. 25, *LL.* 309) are almost certainly from writings of Nicholas Gibbon the younger (1605–97).[81] Gibbon was a minister of the Church of England, a Royalist, and a conciliarist. How his theological writings, which were printed but unpublished, became available to Locke is unknown. These notes are evidence that he had read them. Almost all of the entries are marked with the single letter 'G' to designate the author. Two are have the designation 'Gib', and two more, 'Gibbon'.[82]

Gen. 1:2	*Spirit of God* i.e. The Energy of God the Creator. G
Job 38:4	Laid the foundations manifested my decree to make the world Gib:
Job 38:7	morning stars and sonnes of god i.e. Angells or the Intellectual creation. Gib:
John 1. 15:	ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν [*for he was before me*]. the intellectuall nature of the mediator created immediately upon the interpellation after the fall & taken into union by God the word & there resting in the bosome of the father till the incarnation vid. 1 Cor. 15. 47.
John 1:18	ὁ ὤν [*he who was*] i.e. who was in the bosom of the father his soule or intellectuall nature being created by God the creator in the beginning of the covenant of grace. vid. John 3. 13.
John 3:13	ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ i.e. *who was in the heaven.*. The verbe substantive haveing noe participle of the praeterite tense ὢν must signify the same time with the verbe going before. and then the words more conformable to sense will run thus. *But he that came downe from heaven even the son of man which was in heaven.* i.e. preexistent in the bosom of the father vid. John 6. 62. G
John 6: 62	ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον [*where he was before*] i.e. his intellectuall nature being created before & remaining preexistent to his incarnation in the bosom of the father vid. 1 Cor. 15. 47.
John 8:58	πρὶν Ἀβραάμ ἐγω εἰμι [*before Abraham was, I am*] i.e. His soule created & united to the Word the 2d subsistent of the Godhead vid. I Cor. 15. 47.
1 Cor. 15: 47	ἐξ οὐρανου [*from heaven*]. Where his intellectuall nature i.e. soule being by God the creator made presently after the fall & being assumed into union by God the word, had rested in the bosom of the father. G vid. John 1. 18. John 3. 13. John 6. 62. Heb. 10. 5. John 8. 58. John 1. 15. Rev. 3. 14.

(continued)

[81] I am grateful to J. R. Milton for clues that directed G's identity. On Gibbon, see art. Nicholas Gibbon, Anthony A Wood, *Athenae Oxienses*, ed. Philip Bliss, 4 vols. (London: Lackington, et al., 1820; Hildesheim: Olms, 1969), iv. 787–89.

[82] There are three unpublished texts by Gibbon in the Bodleian Library: *A summe or body of divinitie real* (1651, shelf mark Wood 276b (29)); *A summe or body of divinitie real* (1653, with author's notes, shelf mark Vet. A3 q.3 (20)); *Theology real, and truly scientifical: in overture for the conciliation of all Chritians* (1667, shelfmark Wood G57 (26)).

Appendix (continued)

2 Tim. 2:19	Foundation of God. i.e. His decree restoring mankinde Gibbon
Titus 2:11	Grace of god i.e. The Energy of the word or 2[d] Subsistent.
Heb. 9:11	οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως i.e. not of this Creation 1. There was light inaccessible & immense The habitations of the deity & this is that the Apostle calls ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν Ephesians 4.10. 2. God created a great orbe of light the habitation of intellectuall beings or spirits which made to them vestitures of that light & this is that which is called epouranious. This is meant in this place & Eph: 1.10 for Christ confering grace establishd the standing angells as well as restored fallen man. 3. God created a great orbe of darknesse the place of the fallen angels i.e. where the 1st intellectuall race were thrust out into. vid. 2 Pet. 2. 4. 4. Presently upon that failure of the first intellectuall race, god to supply their defection intends a 2d intellectual race, & for an habitation for them out of part of the orbe of darkness condensates the chaos & and out of it makes a spectable world. where the first thing he separates was light & here he makes a 2d race of intellectuall beings which have power to make themselves vestitures of flesh. i.e. part of this creation. & of this creation only is the hist of Moses. Gibbon
2 Peter 1:4	*Divine nature* i.e. the energy of the 2d Subsistent God the Word. G
1 John 5:11	*Eternall life* i.e. the energy of God the Word. G
Rev. 3:14	ἡ ἀρχή τής κτίσεως τού Θεού *The beginning* [*of the creation of God*] i.e. the first creature of the new creation viz. his soule being created presently upon the interpellation of the word after the fall & united to God the word. *Creation of God* i.e. the new creation i.e. the restoring of man to that divine life that communion with god in spiritualls which by the fall was lost. vid. 1 Cor. 15. 47.
Rev. 7. 3:	Sealed. Sealeing to translation into glory is the energy of God the spirit the 3[d] Subsistent. G

NB. The following undated entry in Locke's notebook, Adversaria 1661 (*LL*. 23[a]) p. 181 is undoubtedly from Gibbon.

Deus	Is spoken of in Scripture sometimes as l° in Essence Coloss 2.2. mystery of god. 2° in subsistences itd. Father. 3° Sometimes mentions God when only meanes his Energy as Jesus Christ is called god with us i.e. by the Energys of the 3 subsistents concenterd in him soe the subsistents were not in him but their energys.

Chapter 5
Locke on St Paul, Messianic Secrecy, and the Consummation of Faith

Introduction: Christian Virtuosity and the Locke's Thought

> *Reason* is natural *Revelation,* whereby the eternal Father of Light, and Fountain of all Knowledge communicates to Mankind that portion of Truth, which he has laid within the reach of their natural Faculties: *Revelation* is natural *Reason* enlarged by a new set of Discoveries communicated by GOD immediately, which *Reason* vouches the Truth of, by the Testimony and Proofs it gives, that they come from GOD. So that he that takes away *Reason*, to make way for *Revelation*, puts out the light of both …[1]

Although *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul* must surely count as one of John Locke's major works, albeit unfinished, it has not received the attention it deserves. Locke's motives and authorial intentions remain unclear. Little consideration has been given to how this late work relates to his earlier theological writings, in particular to *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, so it should come as no surprise that the question of how Locke's thoughts about St Paul might play out in his overall intellectual programme has been largely ignored.[2] My endeavour in this paper is to begin to rectify these deficiencies in Locke studies. The strong assertion of an integral relation between reason and revelation in the epigraph to this section is taken as authorization to explore the connection between Locke's philosophical and theological pursuits and thus between the philosophical program of the *Essay* and his interpretations St Paul's epistles and other New Testament writings.

In the *Essay,* Locke includes divine revelation among the sources of human cognition, so it cannot be said that he meant to keep his philosophical and Christian theological reflections separate and apart. Moreover, in his account of revelation,

[1] *Essay* IV. xix. 4 (698).

[2] The Clarendon edition of *A Paraphrase and Notes* includes supplemental documents and an introduction and notes. Unfortunately, the printed text of this edition is not formatted in a way that is advantageous to the reader. Readers of Locke's text will therefore want to consult also the edition available electronically in Eighteenth Century Collection Online (ECCO). This is the text published in vol. 3 of the 1714 edition of Locke's works. Its layout conforms to Locke's wishes. In it the text of St Paul's letters (in the AV) is set side by side with Locke's paraphrase. The notes are directly beneath, so that the reader may take in all three parts together.

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-0274-5_5,

especially in the chapter on enthusiasm, from which the epigraph to this section is taken, Locke is insistent that although the disclosures of revelation are properly about things above reason, to receive them does not require that one suspend one's rational powers. On the contrary, reason must remain active as the guarantor and interpreter of revelation. Hence, the suspension of reason would result in the abortion of revelation, or as Locke put it, 'he that takes away *Reason*, to make way for *Revelation*, puts out the light of both'. St Paul exemplifies Locke's point. He was unique among the apostles, predestined by God to bring Christianity to the gentiles, and to this end his mind had been infused with the whole Christian revelation in a single transcendent revelatory moment, and yet, being intellectually gifted, a man of parts and of superior education, he was able to interpret and defend these supernatural discoveries, to vindicate his mission and to convert many women and men by persuading them through concepts and arguments that the gospel was true. This, at least, is what Locke maintains in *A Paraphrase and Notes to the Epistles of St Paul*. Although supernaturally taught and of a volatile disposition, St Paul was no enthusiast.

Locke's account of the mission of Jesus Christ provides another instance of this integral relation between reason and revelation. He had been sent into the world by God to re-establish the divine kingdom, whose domain had been diminished by the apostasy of angels and Adam's disobedience, events that Locke believed actually occurred. Yet Jesus was reluctant to declare himself openly to be the Messiah, the divine king. In *The Reasonableness of Christianity* Locke contends that this paradoxical behaviour is part of a strategy that when understood, that is, when rationally explained, appears as an instance of a superior wisdom that proves the authenticity of Jesus' revelatory action. Moreover, this rational exposition of messianic secrecy allows the reader of the Gospels a glimpse of the will and purpose of God manifest in the acts of the Messiah and to perceive in his actions the magnificent design of the gospel revelation.

Thus far, it may be said that Locke's treatment of messianic secrecy and of the apostleship of St Paul in his theological writings show the continuity between Locke as a philosopher of human understanding and as a Christian theologian. However, the epigraph to this section suggests something more. He equates reason and revelation. Reason, that is, the discoveries of reason through experiment and hypothesis, is natural revelation; revelation is natural reason enlarged by discoveries that only supernatural revelation can deliver. I take Locke to mean by this not just that reason acquires some additional content that it would not otherwise possess, but that the scope of human understanding increases not only laterally but also reaches upwards into heavenly places. Natural reason enlarged is the perfection of reason, which in turn is not a final resting place for the mind, but one that anticipates the ultimate satisfaction of its cognitive endeavours in vision.

The perfection of reason introduces the final theme mentioned in the title of this paper. Consummate faith is the perfection of faith through the accumulation of knowledge acquired by studying Holy Scripture, particularly the New Testament, in which the testimonies of apostles, their actions and discourses, as well as those of Jesus Christ, are recorded. It does not seem that Locke supposed that consummate

faith, or, as he puts it, 'faith consummate and entire' and 'reason enlarged' refer to different intellectual states, but to the perfection of human intellectual endeavour. They may also, I think, be the same with respect to what they anticipate. Faith and rational understanding are, Locke believed, temporary states that anticipate a transfiguration in the life to come. In his account of human knowledge, Locke assigns to intuition the highest degree of certainty. Yet, strictly speaking, intuition represents a stage above reason, inasmuch as it is an immediate grasping of truth. It is contemplative, and not discursive. It represents not only a higher state of cognition, but also a higher place in the chain of being. Thus, in *Essay* IV. xvii. 14 (683), Locke remarks that whereas having the faculty of reason accounts for the superiority of human species over all other animals and the failure to use it makes one brutish, it is also a mark of human mediocrity when contrasted with the intellectual powers of angels who contemplate not mere ideas in the mind, but things themselves and their essences. Compared to them, we 'grope in the dark without light'. However, in the same place, Locke attributes this higher cognitive power also to 'the spirits of just men made perfect', pointing to a higher eschatological state of humanity.[3]

Faith and reason, in Locke's frame of reference, signify not abstract states, but stages of an intellectual life. They belong to persons, that is, to conscious beings that exist over time and are distinguished by the characters they assume. So one may enquire, what sort character fits Locke's endeavour to achieve the integration of reason and revelation? I believe that it is the character of the Christian virtuoso.

The term 'Christian Virtuoso' was coined and given currency by Robert Boyle, and it is in Boyle's writings that a definitive account of the character and vocation it denotes is to be found. He first used it in public as the title of an apologetic work intended to justify his activity as a natural philosopher.[4] 'Virtuoso' signified generally during the seventeenth century a learned or ingenious person, a savant, but more specifically, in England, it denoted an experimental natural philosopher. It came to be employed as a title of sorts that members of the Royal Society of London could append to their names, a mark of distinction signifying their association with the new science.[5] In *The Christian Virtuoso*, Boyle argued that doing experimental natural philosophy was not only compatible with being a sincere Christian, but, even more, they were mutually supportive and continuous practices. He noted that the same intellectual attitude and critical methods are applied in both, so that in doing one the mind makes itself all the more fit for the other and ready to receive its discoveries and to determine their meanings. The study of nature through experimentation, through various trials that put nature to the test, discovers

[3] The expressions quoted are biblical: Job 12: 25 and Hebrews 12: 23. Locke does not explicitly cite them, but seems to be quoting from memory.

[4] *The Christian Virtuoso, Part I The Works of Robert Boyle*, 281–366.

[5] See *OED*, 'virtuoso', §1. Also, Richard S. Westfall, *Science and Religion in Seventeenth-Century England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973), 13–25 and passim.

the *natura naturans*, the inner constitution and operation of particular phenomena and the scheme of secondary causes that, with divine direction and concurrence, explain the phenomena.[6]

This close attention to secondary causes lent credibility to the suspicion that experimental natural philosophy abetted atheism, or at least tended towards it, by diverting the mind of the virtuoso from the transcendent activity of the creator and directing it to more proximate, although not necessarily more manifest, operations of nature. Boyle's response was that such diversion had to be rather wilful than philosophical, for a protracted study of nature reveals the law-like nature of events, and since material nature, lacking intelligence, cannot be said to observe laws, the mind of the experimenter is led to consider the origin of such regularities in a transcendent intelligence, a being of infinite power and wisdom, without whose constant concurrence the particular systems of nature would remain inoperative and chaotic.[7] Laws of nature are principles of divine accommodation, limitations that God observes so that his works and deeds, which are unceasing, may communicate his providential care to his creatures. Properly practiced, then, experimental natural philosophy leads to a discovery and confirmation of divine intentions, of the wisdom, power and goodness of the creator, who, it was supposed, is blessed forever and will bless those who acknowledge and obey him. In summary, the virtuoso learns to see in natural events the art and intention of a divine artificer. Nature, like Scripture, is not in itself divine, rather they are both expressions of the divine will and purpose. This is their proper meaning, which, using the same method inquiry, the Christian virtuoso retrieves.

Moreover, the Christian virtuoso's cognitive disposition is the same whether he studies nature or Scripture. Hence, because the results of natural philosophical experiments are often unexpected, regular experimental practice also serves to render his mind docile and receptive to receive the unforeseen disclosures of supernatural revelation, which like their natural counterparts, are expressions of the same divine purpose. Scripture is the correlate of nature, and its study, employing methods that are analogous to those employed by the virtuoso, critical methods that try the text and discover its authorial meaning, complements and rounds out the latter's intellectual endeavour, which is to acquire useful knowledge that will serve the

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[6] *The Christian Virtuoso, The Works of Robert Boyle* xi. 283–88, also 304–305, 313. See also, Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, ed. Graham Rees and Maria Wakely (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 200, 535.

[7] Boyle rejected the idea that nature as a whole operates as a system; it was this 'vulgar' concept of nature, espoused by Neo-Stoics and Spinozists that he believed led to atheism. He conceived of nature as the work of God, and laws of nature as notional things that express the will of a superior will. See *A Free Enquiry into the Vulgarly Received Notion of Nature* (1686), *The Works of Robert Boyle*, x. 457. For an illuminating account of Boyle's theory of the regularity of natural operations and the divine role in establishing and maintaining them, see Peter Anstey, *The Philosophy of Robert Boyle* (London: Routledge, 2000) 158–86. To my knowledge, Locke nowhere explicitly endorses this voluntarist idea of laws of nature. However, it follows from other remarks about the nature of law: that there can be no law that is not a command, and that the capacity of obeying a law or following a rule belongs only to rational beings and not to mere matter. See *Essay*, II. xxviii. 8, 12 (352, 256).

virtuoso in this world and prepare him for the next. Here too the same outcome occurs, a retrieval of authorial intention and meaning.[8]

Restrictions of theme and space prevent me from doing full justice to the claim that Locke's *Essay* is an expression of Christian virtuosity.[9] However, if I can show that Locke's interpretation of Jesus messianic acts and of St Paul's apostolic writings are expressions of Christian virtuosity, I will have laid a foundation from which to raise the same question about the *Essay*, which I will do briefly in final section of this paper. A view Locke's exposition of the Gospels and St Paul's letters as expressions of Christian virtuosity will be made clear, if one approaches them with an understanding of his hermeneutics, for, as already noted, a primary aim of the Christian virtuoso is to retrieve meaning. Christian virtuosity becomes evident whenever the authorial intentions of sacred texts or revelatory events are retrieved through critical and impartial trials. Locke's preface to *A Paraphrase and Notes* provides a clear account of the hermeneutical principles involved in this endeavour.

Locke's Preface to St Paul

> He that reads [St Paul] with the attention I propose, will easily observe, that as he was full of the doctrine of the gospel; so it lay all clear and in order, open to his view. When he gave his thoughts utterance upon any point, the matter flowed like a torrent; but it is plain, it was a matter he was perfectly master of: he fully possessed the intire revelation he had received from God; had thoroughly digested it; all the parts were formed together in his mind, into one well-contracted harmonious body.[10]

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[8] *The Christian Virtuoso,* see fn. 6.

[9] Without a doubt, Locke must be included among seventeenth-century English Virtuosi, even if, on his own self-characterization, he was a minor one, a mere under-labourer (*Essay, Epistle to the Reader* [10]). He came under Boyle's tutelage during the 1660s. We know that during this period Locke assisted Boyle in his natural philosophical work and that he remained a lifelong friend and colleague of Boyle's. Boyle considered him worthy of the title. The preface to Boyle's *Memoirs for the Natural History of Humane Blood* (1684) is addressed to Locke: 'the very ingenious and learned Doctor JL' (see *The Correspondence*, i. 279; *Works of Robert Boyle*, x, p. xii; see also M. A. Stewart, 'Locke's professional contacts with Robert Boyle', *The Locke Newsletter*, xii. 19–44). Locke was elected to the Royal Society of London in November 1688. He was a physician, and engaged in extensive medical research. (See Kenneth Dewhurst, *John Locke, Physician and Philosopher*, London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1963, Chap. 1, and passim.) Locke edited Boyle's posthumous *General History of the Air,* which contained meteorological data that he himself had gathered (London, 1692, *Works of Robert Boyle*, xii). It would have been expected in seventeenth century England that any virtuoso and member of the Royal Society also be a Christian. But to be a Christian virtuoso in the sense that Boyle intended required more than being a nominal Christian. The question of who was and who was not an authentic Christian virtuoso must be decided on a case-by-case basis.

[10] *An Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself*, *Paraphrase and Notes*, 113; *WR*, 63. Appendix I of *Paraphrase and Notes* ii. 664–67 contains transcripts of early drafts of this text and a brief account of Locke's plans for publication of his paraphrases of St Paul.

Locke's preface to *A Paraphrase and Notes* is an ingenious document that richly rewards careful reading and reflection. He entitled it *An Essay for the Understanding of St. Paul's Epistles by consulting St. Paul himself*. To avoid confusion with his more famous *Essay*, I shall refer to it here as the *Preface*. The main problem it addresses is the reputed obscurity of St Paul's writings and the suspicion, which he suspects is commonly entertained, that they are expressions of the mind of an enthusiast who lacks the capacity of rational thought. To rebut the charge of enthusiasm, Locke set about to recover the meaning of Paul's writings and his authorial intentions and to prove their rationality. He sought plausible explanations of the difficulty of St Paul's style, and undertook to identify obstacles that stood in the way of discovering the meaning of what the Apostle wrote. He pursued these goals in the *Preface* and in the paraphrases and notes that follow it.

Locke regarded St Paul's writings as much more than just a body of ancient texts. They comprised a major part of the New Testament, which he believed Christians are obliged to study and endeavour to understand aright. Success in this effort, therefore, was a matter of serious concern for him, but for all that, Locke's method of achieving it had to be the same that might be used to interpret any ancient writing, which is to say, it had to be a rational method that uncovered a rational intention.

The *Preface* begins by identifying and explaining the causes of obscurity in St Paul's writing. They are internal and external. Internal causes of difficulty derive from the letters themselves. Not all of these pertain to St Paul's fitness for rational thought. Some, like genre, are merely circumstantial. There is an economy in letter writing. Letters, especially ones addressed to familiars or insiders, do not reveal their contexts, do not spell out shared experiences and common concerns that outsiders would need to know in order to understand what is written in them. An outsider's lack of familiarity with such things renders them obscure. In the case of St Paul's correspondence, only his letters have survived. The circumstances that occasioned them, the characteristic mood and temper of the communities to which they were addressed, other pertinent communications between the sender and receivers, common knowledge shared by St Paul and those to whom he wrote, which, although germane, would have been already known and hence passed over without mention in the letters—all of these must be supplied by some other means and always from a historical distance. A similar cause of obscurity is the language in which the letters are written. It is a dead language, that in its heyday was noted for its 'Looseness and Variety', but for us has lost its everyday familiarity; moreover, St Paul's language, and the language of the New Testament generally, is a hybrid, a dialect of the Greek language, so that it is become more 'Various' in its expressiveness by having been infused with the idioms of Hebrew or Aramaic.

Those difficulties that pertain to St Paul's rational fitness are as follows: his mental disposition and character, the cast of his mind and his manner of expression. Locke proceeds to a description of St Paul's mental character. He portrays him as a man of high spirits and quick wit, of formidable learning and of explosive genius. According to Locke, it was not just that St Paul was 'mighty well vers'd in the Writings of the Old Testament' and had sat at the feet of the renowned Rabban

Gamaliel, so that he was imbued with rabbinical learning from the master of Jewish learning, but also—and he repeats this claim several times in the *Preface* and in the synopses and notes that follow—he had received directly from God, by immediate revelation, 'the whole Doctrine of the Gospel', so that his mind was full. His was a great mind, greatly enlarged by the mightiest of spirits with the ultimate expression of divine wisdom concerning the redemption of the world. Locke imagined him writing or dictating his letters 'beset with a Crowd of Thoughts, all striving for Utterance'. He offers this as a plausible explanation for the rapid pace of St Paul's discourse, the many parentheses and digressions. Yet, Locke is insistent and at pains to show in the paraphrases and notes that follow that St Paul never loses a point and is always a master of his thoughts, in rational control of his discourse, capable of rational argument and, without loss of clarity, of sublime rhetorical expression.

Locke also notes the Apostle's changes of style and address, always fashioned, he maintains, for a more powerful affect on his readers. St Paul speaks directly in the first person in his letters, yet he often changes persona, always in a manner suitable to his theme and his addressees. These changes occur without announcement, sometimes suddenly so that a reader, removed in time and place from the intended addressees, cannot easily decide to whom or in what character or role St Paul speaks, or who should be regarded as the proper referent of 'I', or 'We'.[11] This feature of St Paul's style, along with his spontaneous and sudden shift of themes may also have been a cause of confusion for his readers as it is for us today. Locke does not deny that there is turbulence in the mind in St Paul, but he insists that it does not overcome his reason. He also notes St Paul's literary use of the internal

[11] Apropos to St Paul's adaptability of style, the following entry is inscribed in Locke's interleaved English Bible (Locke 16.25, *LL* 309), 784. Locke cites no source. It is verbatim from a work of the English Jesuit John Vincent Cane, *Fiat Lux* (n.p., 1662), 14. The entry was made c1663, for Locke's unpublished disputation, 'Infallibility' is a response to Cane's arguments for papal authority and was written about this time. What is noteworthy is that the text anticipates Locke's account of St Paul's style. 'St Paul in this Epistle [Romans] turns him self this way & that way as occasion offers, which of all other his letters as it hath most in it of Solidity soe hath it least of Method in the context. The reason is because it was intended to allay some heats & fewds that were risen at Rome among the converted Jews & Gentiles there, who began after their conversion to uppraid & disable one another with their former unworthynesse: The converted Jew esteeming himself the better man, because his nation was gods chosen from the begining, out of which the Messias came, & the Jews were in a continuall Succession, both before their conversion to Christianity, & after it still gods servants. The converted Gentile on the other side maintaind, that he had not withstanding the darknesse of his condition soe worthily behaved him self even by the meare light of reason, that god was pleasd of his love he therefor bore him to call him to the light of the Gospell, to serve the Lord of Glory whome the Jews had crucified. St Paul to end this quarrell turns him self to & fro, first on this side then on the other as occasion presented its self; & findeing the parties resolute in a question hard to decide as it was stated, & both soe deeply ingagd that they could not easily be reconcild, that he might the better part them he knockes them both downe, & he dissipates all pretenses of their owne worthinesse, to the end they might both of them have recourse to gods mercy which was equally shewd to both, & have peace among them selves. the good workes that St Paul debases, were those done before conversion to Christianity.'

dialogue, so that it might appear as though other voices were speaking through his. But this is a common practice, as has since been noted, that linked St Paul with the public discourses of travelling philosophers—the Stoic-Cynic diatribe. So it would not have been a cause of confusion for his contemporary readers.[12] Locke's point is that the practice produces sudden interruptions in the text.

External causes enumerated by Locke raise obstacles that prevent the reader from getting to the letters themselves, or they place them in alien contexts. One instance is the manner in which the text of St Paul's letters along with other biblical writings came to be formatted, *viz.* the division of the text into chapter and verse. Another is the reception and use of Scripture in the Church in subsequent ages. These obstacles substitute other contexts than contexts of origin. The division of the text into chapter and verse interferes with the natural flow of the narrative or discourse. Versification of Scripture causes readers to take it in bits and pieces, in 'scraps', and therefore they are unlikely to notice the 'Thread and Coherence', and also the reasoned arguments, of the discourse. The division into chapters has a similar effect. These are superficial obstacles. What troubled Locke were the uses to which these impositions were put and the interests that they came to serve. Reading a chapter a day, although commendable for its piety, is not a sure way to understand an author's meaning. One is reminded of the use of lectionaries, which has considerable antiquity, if not dominical legitimacy, something that Locke may not have noticed.[13] Locke remarked how isolated verses, removed from their contexts, were mistaken for aphorisms, or, even worse, were gathered up into collections of proof texts used to reinforce claims of orthodoxy for its doctrines by a particular sect.

Another obstacle arises from reading Holy Scripture uncritically in modern vernacular and from importing it into new contexts, some dogmatic or liturgical or devotional, some philosophical: contexts that are familiar to the contemporary reader but are quite different from the contexts of the texts themselves and alien to the intentions of their authors and the understandings of their original readers. Moreover, these familiar contexts are often associated with systems of doctrine and sectarian interests. Locke was not averse to the idea that Scripture teaches a particular doctrine, indeed, his interest in the *Preface* and what follows it, is to clarify 'doctrinal and discursive' parts of St Paul's letters, and to lay out St Paul's system. His concern is that this doctrine be sought only in what St Paul has written. Current practices of formatting and institutionalizing the biblical text are hindrances to this end. Locke complains that these practices create a false sense of familiarity with the Bible that prevent the reader to look beyond to its true meaning.

Learned commentaries offer assistance, but, since they do not always concur in their interpretations, where they differ, a diligent reader of Scripture must still decide between one commentator's interpretation and another's. What is needed, then, is a key or a rule. And, Locke discovers, there is one ready at hand. The rule

[12] See Moses Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 143.

[13] See Luke 4: 16–21.

can be nothing else than St Paul's own meaning, the author's intention. What is required, then, is a method of discovering the rule. The prescription is obvious. One discovers an author's meaning by reading his text attentively and repeatedly. The reader must become familiar with the author's manner and style, so that they are no longer causes of obscurity but proper instruments of his expression. Comparing different places, noting similarities and differences in style and locution and context is a way of discovering an author's intentions. This, I think, is what Locke meant when he wrote in his title that a reader comes to a true understanding of St Paul's epistles only by consulting St Paul himself. It is unclear whether he supposed that this method could be practiced successfully by laypersons who read only English. I'm inclined to think that he did, so long as they took the trouble to acquire enough knowledge to read St Paul's letters in context.[14] Locke's paraphrases are just that and are printed parallel with the text of the Authorized Version so that readers may compare them; only the notes contain comments on Greek terms and philological niceties, and even there, Locke's main intention is to clarify St Paul's argument or the tendency of his discourse and not to enlarge on grammatical and critical details. In this respect, *A Paraphrase and Notes* is not a learned commentary meant for scholars. It has a practical aim: reading St Paul and by reading him to progress towards a consummate faith.

To this end, Locke's method is intended to make St Paul himself our guide to his letters by retrieving St Paul's meaning. It is a practice that fits well with Locke's theory of writing and reading, whereby a reader supplies from his own thoughts the meaning that he perceives written in the text. In the preface to *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* he describes his book as the product of 'the Entertainment of those, who let loose their own Thoughts, and follow them in writing'.[15] Locke is here alluding to a metaphor, previously introduced that likens thinking in the pursuit of truth to hunting or hawking. Writing captures in words transcribed on a page thoughts aimed at truth. It is left to attentive readers, who employ their own thoughts in reading, to retrieve these thoughts, which is what the author intended, from the text. Reading thoughts in the text is not the same as reading something into it. Attentive readers retrieve an author's thoughts by rethinking them anew. Thus they become guarantors of the author's intentions, of the meaning in the text. Their success depends upon diligent attentiveness to the text, a state of mind that is not merely passive but active and creative, yet not wilfully innovative. This is not just a matter of fitting words with meaning. An author's intentions are, as it were, the *natura naturans* of what he has written. It is the creative intention of biblical authors, divine and human, and of the principal agents of the actions reported in their writings that Locke desires to discover.

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[14] In *Conduct*, 171–72, Locke advises that everyone is obliged to look after their progress towards a future life, and, therefore, to think about religion. He adds that they have sufficient time for this if they make the right use of the leisure provided them on the Sabbath and other religious holidays. He cites the remarkable achievement of biblical understanding of Huguenot peasantry.

[15] *Essay, Epistle to the Reader*, (6).

This view of the meaning of texts is a kind of historical realism, which is not to say that meanings are relics of the past existing somewhere in a universal memory-space waiting to be discovered. In the case of texts whose authors are no longer living, their meaning exists nowhere but in the thoughts and expressions of diligent readers of texts, who reconstitute or paraphrase them, but who also in a real sense perceive them in the texts themselves.[16] Surely Locke knew this. With respect to meanings, historical realism maintains that what an ancient author, or any author for that matter, past or present, intended in his writings is recoverable by critically attending to the work. Interpretations may then be accounted as only *more or less* true or false, for the act of retrieval of ancient meanings is not a fallible practice. It was Locke's aim to present in his paraphrases and notes a true account of St Paul's meaning, which he pursued with his own thoughts and then put in writing. In a similar manner, he endeavoured to represent or narrate Jesus' presentation of the gospel in the *Reasonableness*. In both cases, he asked only that the results of his efforts be impartially judged. He assumed that the art of criticism is rational and empirical. The author's intention, perceived in the text and recovered in the mind of the reader, is comparable to the seventeenth century virtuoso's perceiving in natural events or objects the *natura naturans* that caused them, perceiving it as though it were the intention of an author.

Before proceeding further, it may be useful to pause and clarify just what Locke meant by St Paul's meaning. One way in which Locke set about to prove that St Paul was not an enthusiast was to represent the coherence and consistency in his discourse and his arguments. St Paul's meaning was found comprehensible by a rational reader and so judged to be reasonable. This is not to deny that the themes that St Paul discusses pertain to things above reason: supernatural beings, miracles, the resurrection of the dead, the end of the world: these all transcend the compass of human reason. They are things mere human reason could never have anticipated, perhaps not even imagined; some of them remain inexplicable, even when revealed; they contradict common sense and vulgar understanding. But in all of this Locke supposed that there is discernible in the expression of them a presiding intelligence, just as there is in the design and operation of natural things. It is just here that Locke's expression 'reason enlarged' is apt. St Paul remains a rational being, in spite of the fact that he was the recipient of an immediate revelation. He remained

[16] The meaning of a text has, on this account, several locations: it is in the mind of the author as he writes; it is in the text, where the attentive reader finds it, and, finally, it takes its place in the mind of the reader. But on this account, reading must be a complex activity of attentiveness, or enforced passivity, and retrieval of the author's meaning or intention, which is a critical activity. I have found very suggestive Richard Wollheim's idea of interpretation as 'seeing-in'. He applies it to works of visual art, but it is I think applicable to literature also, and, at least in the seventeenth century, to works of nature, that is, in anything that may be regarded as a product of art. See Wollheim's *Painting as an Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 43–100; also, Wollheim, 'Criticism as Retrieval', in Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 185–204.

in command of his thought. In Stoic terms, the hegemony of reason was not overthrown; rather its scope or intellectual dominion was enlarged.

Locke's hermeneutics are typically Protestant. The Reformers' insistence that Scripture alone is the only source of Christian knowledge, that it is its own interpreter, and that the Holy Spirit will assist the faithful reader to clarify its meaning are all active principles in Locke's method. But Locke's interpretations exemplify a method distinctly different from the Protestant Reformers and their theological successors. The difference or differences are wrought by the infusion of what came to be modern historiographical methods that were free of doctrinal or confessional interest. Put in another way, Locke infused Protestant hermeneutics with the virtuosity of the new science, and thereby transformed it. This transformation occurred, however, at least in Locke's case, without a loss of religious seriousness. Thus he concludes *The Preface* with an exhortation. His readers should not rely on his account of the meaning of St Paul's letters any more than they should rely on others' accounts. 'We are like all Men liable to Errors, and infected with them.' But there is a 'sure way' of preserving ourselves from the danger losing the salvation freely offered to us. It requires 'laying aside Sloth, Carelessness, Prejudice, Party, and a Reverence of Men' and earnestly devoting ourselves to the Study of Scripture, as exemplified in Locke's method, 'seeking our Religion where we are sure it is in Truth to be found, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things.'[17] The expression 'comparing spiritual things to spiritual things' is from 1 Cor. 2: 13. Locke's paraphrase renders it, 'comparing one part of revelation with another', and in a corresponding note he writes: 'It is plain 'the spiritual things,' [St Paul] here speaks of, are the unsearchable counsels of God, revealed by the Spirit of God, which therefore he calls 'spiritual things'.[18]

The Problem of Messianic Secrecy

> This concealment of himself will seem strange, in one who was come to bring Light into the World, and was to suffer Death for the Testimony of the Truth. This reservedness will be thought to look as if he had a mind to conceal himself, and not to be known to the World for the *Messiah*; nor to be believed on as such. But we shall be of another mind, and conclude this proceeding of his according to Divine Wisdom, and suited to a fuller Manifestation and Evidence of his being the *Messiah*; When we consider, that he was to fill out the time foretold of his Ministry; And, after a Life illustrious in Miracles and Good Works, attended with Humility, Meekness, Patience, and Suffering, and every way conformable to the Prophesies of him, should be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and with all quiet and submission be brought to the Cross, though there were no guilt nor fault found in him.[19]

[17] *Paraphrase and Notes*, 115–16; *WR,* 66.

[18] *Paraphrase and Notes*, 176.

[19] *Reasonableness*, 40–41; *WR*, 115–16.

The problem of messianic secrecy is briefly this: if Jesus was sent by God into the world to reclaim a divine kingdom and assume the headship of it, why did he repeatedly attempt to conceal his identity? Locke devoted more than one-third of *The Reasonableness of Christianity* to resolving this problem.[20] He needed this much space to show that Jesus' paradoxical behaviour was part of a grand strategy of self-disclosure, and to do this, he chose to recount the history of Jesus' messianic activity relying solely on biblical sources: the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Because the narratives provided in these sources differed from each other both in the order of events and in certain details, his task was one of comparison and reconstruction. His survey of events also ranged over places in the Old Testament that according to the gospel tradition foretold Jesus' messianic adventures. In short, Locke was engaged in comparing Scripture with Scripture. His assertion that all parts of Scripture are spiritual, and that the interpretation of Scripture is a process of comparing spiritual things with spiritual things, was not intended to sanction enthusiasm, for comparing texts and determining their tenor is an activity of natural reason. It is a prerequisite to spiritual things becoming evident. The end of his endeavour was to convince his readers that Jesus' actions, when viewed in proper context, reveal a divine wisdom and offer 'a fuller Manifestation and Evidence of his being the *Messiah*'. In other words, Locke promised his readers that the story he was about to tell had evidential efficacy. He meant this, I think, in a dual sense: his history of messianic actions would make clear their import by showing how they fit into a well-conceived and efficacious plan; hence, that they were wise and rationally enacted; in addition, this clarity would serve to establish the historical truth upon which Locke believed the Christian religion was founded, that Jesus was indeed the Messiah sent by God to redeem mankind. The manner in which Jesus disclosed his identity, its consistency with a divine plan prophetically foretold, his accommodation to circumstance, and to what could be taken as a reasonable reaction to his coming by those who would welcome it and those who would not, and to the limited understanding of those who would follow him and who would later bear witness to him and carry the announcement of his kingdom into the world—all these things combined to portray a supreme instance divine wisdom, in which Jesus, according to Locke's history, was fully complicit, showing himself in all things to be the obedient Son of God and therefore himself worthy of the obedience that he claimed from those who would profess him to be the Messiah and follow him. For Locke, the history of the gospel for those who come to understand it would be an instance of reason enlarged by revelation.

Locke's reconstruction or harmony of the gospel narrative proves his involvement in one of the primary projects of early modern biblical scholarship. The aim of this project, overall, was to rearrange all the parts of the bible into a single

[20] Locke introduces the question of Messianic secrecy on p. 59 of the first edition of the *Reasonableness* and proceeds to answer it in a long historical discourse that continues through p. 188, whose total number of pages is 304; in *Reasonableness*, 40–108; WR, 115–66.

chronological order, relocating whole books, transposing parts of them, and reconciling different accounts of the same events, fitting all the parts into a single continuous history. The general purpose of this undertaking was to facilitate the retrieval of the meaning of the several parts of the Bible by placing them in their proper contexts.[21] Among the great harmonies published during this period, Locke was very familiar with the harmonies of John Lightfoot.[22] Another was the *Evangelorum Harmonia* of Nicholas Toinard, whom Locke met in France in 1679 and with whom he formed a lasting friendship. In 1679, Toinard gave Locke printed sheets of his harmony of the Gospels and Acts, which Locke had interleaved and bound in a large folio volume.[23] This was not a mere gift, although Locke felt himself greatly honoured by it. There was an expectation on Toinard's part that Locke would review it and offer corrections, and Locke's copy of the work bears critical annotations in his hand. Moreover, Locke's the narrative of events that he relates in *Reasonableness* follows exactly the order of Toinard's harmony with one exception, which is clearly a correction by Locke; further evidence that he was more than a mere follower.[24] Locke does more than relate a sequence of events; he adds an exposition of their meaning in terms of the intentions not only of its protagonist, Jesus of Nazareth, but also of all others persons involved in them.

It may be useful to keep in mind that in his exposition of the narrative of Jesus' ministry, Locke recounts the actions of Jesus and of all others with whom he dealt

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[21] A useful contemporary description of this project and its extent is given by Samuel Torshell in *A Designe about Disposing the Bible into an Harmony* (London: John Bellamy, 1647), 10: 'The *Designe* is to lay the *whole Story* together, in a *continued connexion*, the *Books* or *parts* of Books, and all the severall *parcels* disposed and placed in their *proper order*, as the continuance and *Chronicall method* of the *Scripture-history* requires, so that no *sentence* nor *word* in the whole *Bible* be *omitted*, nor any thing *repeated*, or any word *inserted*, but what is altogether necessary for *Transition*. So as some *whole chapters* or *pieces*, be put into other places, yea great parts of some *Books*, and some whole Books to be *woven* into the *body* of an other Book.'

[22] *A Chronicle of the Times and Order of the Texts of the Old Testament* (London, 1647) and *A Harmony, Chronicle and Order of the New Testament* (London, 1650); both works are collected and paginated separately the first volume of *The Works of the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot, DD*, 2 vols (London: Robert Scot, Thomas Basset, Richard Chiswell, Thomas Wright, 1684). Locke owned this edition and many other editions of Lightfoot's works. Lightfoot is the most frequently author commonplaced in Locke's interleaved Bible and Testaments. For Lightfoot's works in Locke's library, see *LL*, 1742–1752[a]. In his harmony of the New Testament, Lightfoot makes clear that restoring the parts of Scripture to their proper time and place and 'genuine order' is not something done out of disrespect for the Holy Spirit. The dislocations of Scripture, rightly considered, reveal 'the Majesty of his [the Holy Spirit's] style and divine Wisdom'; a chronological restoration is supposed also to provide the reader with the advantage of recognizing the divine wisdom of the dislocations. Like other philological notation, it does not replace the text but facilitates the interpretation of it.

[23] Locke's interleaved copy of Toinard's *Harmonia* is in the Bodleian Library, Locke 18.1 (*LL* 2934). Toinard presented it to Locke on 12 December 1678; see MS Locke f. 3, p. 108.

[24] See *Reasonableness*, 83; *WR*, 147. Locke reads Matthew 26: 63–66 and Luke 22: 66–71 as the same event; Toinard treats them as separate events.

as voluntary, that is, as involving choice, whether deliberately or spontaneously but invariably consistent with their interests.[25] Jesus, his witless disciples, Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, Roman officials, even the crowds, are all represented by him as acting in ways that one might expect in such circumstances and in the light of their respective interests and limited understandings: the Romans, to maintain order and imperial rule; the priests and rulers of the Jews, to preserve the limited autonomy they were able to retain for themselves and for their institutions under Roman power; the people to obtain deliverance from the harsh conditions of life and the satisfaction of their utopian longings for a renewal of their fortunes in a messianic kingdom. Any one of these groups or individuals could precipitate an unwanted dénouement of Jesus' messianic adventure. Thus, Locke portrays Jesus as always circumspect, a 'cautious man of affairs'.[26]

Jesus' way was made easier by divine providence which provided that political circumstances were well suited to his purposes. It was Locke's belief, as stated in the *Reasonableness,* that a fundamental consequence of the advent of the Messiah and the new age that he would inaugurate was to bring an end to the special relation between God and the Jewish people—the so-called old covenant. The Messiah would establish a new institution, the church, and a new law, a 'law of faith' to replace the Mosaic Law, and a simpler form of worship that replaced the elaborate ceremonial part of the Mosaic Law—all things suitable for a universal institution. Hence, the messiah was likely to meet with opposition from Priests and Scribes jealous of the power they possessed under the old covenant and solicitous for their traditions. But, now, during the time of the messiah's coming, Jerusalem was not the capital of a sovereign state, but a district under Roman rule, in which the Jewish rulers enjoyed a limited sovereignty that they held on to precariously. Messianic pretenders were a threat to the security of their position, hence their hostility towards them and their willingness to collaborate with the Romans against them. For the same reason, they looked askance at prophecies that announced the imminence of the messianic age, or they wilfully ignored them. The Roman rulers had no interest in Jewish sectarian quarrels. Their sole concern was to maintain the empire, to increase its riches and to keep the peace. Jesus was therefore free to go about preaching the Kingdom of God and healing the sick, so long as he did nothing that the Romans would have considered seditious. This left him free to act and

[25] The reader will recall that Locke defines freedom as the power to perform an action or abstain from it according as one chooses. On this account of free agency, every free action is voluntary, but not all voluntary actions are free. See *Essay* II. xxi. 10–12 (238–40). My conjecture is that Locke believed that all the agents in the gospel history acted freely, that is, could have acted otherwise had they chosen. This would make messianic events contingent, which may seem odd. However there is a long tradition supporting this.

[26] The expression is borrowed from Leo Strauss who applied it not without justification to Hobbes and Locke. A cautious man of affairs is one who recognizes that veiled or indirect expressions are warranted in some circumstances in order to achieve his purpose. Locke's Jesus acts in this way, of course, wisely as a serpent but innocent as a dove. See Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 206 and passim.

speak about himself in biblical idioms and to allude to biblical prophesies, in ways, therefore that revealed his identity to anyone familiar with their import (*viz*. Jewish Priests and Scribes), while appearing harmless to the rest (the Romans in particular). Just how providence arranged that the political situation at the dawn of the Messianic age should be such, Locke does not say. It is likely that he believed that divine providence consisted of a superior divine management of human desires and interests, one that operated without impinging on human freedom and the contingency of free actions.

The multitude, that is the Jewish people, who in general did not benefit from Roman rule, being persuaded that the Messiah was soon to come and expecting him to be a temporal ruler of great power sympathetic to their needs, hoped that Jesus might be the one they were waiting for. But they were too 'heady', that is, too full of impassioned zeal, to be relied upon. Hence Jesus, notwithstanding the assistance of providence, had to deal cautiously with them, as he had to do with the Jewish rulers and the Romans. Messianic secrecy is just another way of being cautious, and so it is reasonable.

A good example of how Locke saw the playing out of all the actors and their schemes in the Messianic drama relates to Jesus' memorable remark about rendering to Caesar the things that are his, etc. The Pharisees conspired to entrap him into making a seditious statement. They sent their agents to ask him whether it was lawful, under Jewish law, to pay taxes to Caesar. If he were to answer 'No', his answer could be taken as seditious. If he answered 'Yes', then he would seem to have betrayed the hopes of the people that believed in him. His 'unexpected' answer, says Locke, 'defeated their whole Design'. Locke's narrative continues, noting that there followed a series of trials of this sort with the Sadducees and the Pharisees, all of which Jesus successfully turned to his advantage. Jesus then puts them to the test, and defeats them at their own game, by showing that while they know what the Scripture says about the Messiah, they fail to understand it. Then he rebukes them before the people, because, although he has made clear that the Messiah has come, they not only refuse to accept him but also do all that they can to defeat him.[27] In the end, they had to bribe one of his followers, a betrayal that Jesus foresaw, predicted, and used to the advantage of his mission.

Jesus, however, did not plan to complete his messianic career unharmed. He came to suffer a violent death although being innocent of no crime, but this had to wait until all other things that it had been prophesied he would do and suffer had been accomplished. His death was the last in a dramatic series of pre-ordained events.

I have remarked that reconstructing the history of Jesus messianic adventure was a rational exercise. It is one that also supposedly reveals the secret counsels of God, so far as they can be brought under human scrutiny. Locke describes his interpretative activity as tracing the 'whole Work' of redemption 'by the foot-steps which God has made visible to Humane Reason'. This whole history is not an expression

[27] *Reasonableness*, 81; *WR*, 145–46.

of omnipotence but of wisdom, which is of accommodating divine actions to human understanding. Locke's explanation of this is illuminating.

> For though it be as easie to Omnipotent Power to do all things by an immediate over-ruling Will; and so to make any Instruments work, even contrary to their Nature, in subserviency to his ends; Yet his Widsom is not usually at the expence of Miracles (if I may so say) but only in cases that require them, for the evidencing of some Revelation or Mission to be from him. He does constantly (unless where confirmation of some Truth requires it otherwise) bring about his Purposes by means operating according to their Natures. If it were not so, the course and evidence of things would be confounded; Miracles would lose their name and force, and there could be no distinction between Natural and Supernatural.[28]

The miraculous birth of Jesus, the miracles he performed during his ministry, his resurrection: these seemed to Locke to be signs that testify to his teachings and his person; not as disruptions of the course of nature but as providential interventions according to a design that reason could discern. It was not through magical power that Jesus managed to accomplish all that he was foreordained to do and suffer, but through the management of himself, his adversaries and his followers. So the practice of retrieving the meaning of the narrative of Scripture is not different from discovering the *natura naturans* of some physical process. Both are expressions of divine wisdom, and both are accommodations to human reason. And reason is enlarged when it regards them in the grand narrative of the Messiah.

The last part of Locke's narrative concerns the selection of the disciples and the preparation of the role that they would play, after Jesus' triumphal resurrection and ascension removed him from a visible role in the progress of Christianity. Although they believed Jesus to be the Messiah, they showed very little understanding of what this meant, and Locke expatiates how Jesus' discourses with them often left them perplexed, going on to observe that they were calculated to prepare their minds for a full realization that would come only after they saw him resurrected. Then, in retrospect, they would understand fully. In this connection, Locke speculates whether 'St. *Paul* was not for this reaon, by his Learning, Parts, and warmer Temper, better fitted for an Apostle after, than during our Saviour's Ministry: And therefore, though a chosen Vessel, was not by the Divine Wisdom called till after Christ's Resurrection.'[29]

St Paul and Consummate Faith

> …those many other Truths contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which it is the Duty of every Christian to study, and thereby build himself up on our most Holy Faith receiving with stedfast Belief, and ready Obedience all those things which the Spirit of Truth hath therein revealed.[30]

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[28] *Reasonableness*, 91; *WR*, 153.

[29] *Reasonableness*, 89–91; *WR*, 152–53.

[30] John Locke, *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695), *WR*, 222.

> Our Faith is true and saving, when it is such as God by the new Covenant requires it to be: But it is not *entire* and *consummate*, till we explicitly believe all the Truths contained in the Word of God. For the whole Revelation of Truth in the Scripture, being the proper and entire Object of Faith. Our Faith cannot be *entire* and *consummate*, till it be adequate to its proper Object, which is the whole divine Revelation contain'd in the Scripture[31]:
>
> Blessed and magnified be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has in and by Jesus Christ furnished us Gentiles with all sorts of Blessings that may fit us to be Partakers of his heavenly Kingdom, without need of any Assistance of the Law, According as he chose us Gentiles upon Christ's Account alone, before the Law was, even before the Foundation of the World, to be his People under Jesus the Messiah … according to the Greatness of his Grace and Favour, Which he has overflowed in towards us, in bestowing on us so full a Knowledge and Comprehension of the Extent and Design of the Gospel, and Prudence to comply with it …[32]

A faith consummate and entire is a state of believing that comprehends the whole of the Christian gospel, the good news that God has reconciled the world to himself in Christ.[33] Locke believed that St Paul was an exemplar of this faith, because of the manner in which he received the divine revelation, the whole of it in a single transcendent moment, and because of the commodiousness and acuteness of his mind, which made him capable of comprehending what he had received, so far as it was comprehensible, and able to present it fully and persuasively to the world. This consummate faith envisioned not only all nations joined in a single religious institution, but also the whole creation reconstituted in him.

I have already remarked that one of Locke's aims in *A Paraphrase and Notes* is to prove that St Paul was not an enthusiast. He went about proving this claim by recounting St Paul's expositions of Christian doctrine and his arguments in defence of them. Two examples of Locke's procedure should suffice. The first is the 'synopsis' of the argument of St Paul's letter to the Romans presented in the introduction to the paraphrase.[34] Locke begins by contextualizing St Paul's arguments as a way of proving their plausibility. He observes that inasmuch as the founding events of the Christian revelation, *viz*., the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, all occurred in Judea, and inasmuch as proof of the Christian revelation resides in Hebrew prophesy, which was owned by the Jews, so that they were properly regarded as 'depositorys of the proofs of the Christian religion', it was natural that the authority of Jewish converts to Christianity should predominate in the early church. Nor was it surprising that their strong attachment to their traditions and particularly to the ceremonial parts of the Mosaic Law should cause them to believe that the ceremonial law continued to hold not only for themselves but for Gentile

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[31] *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, 310–11.

[32] Locke's paraphrase of Ephesians 1: 3–4, 7–9, *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 615–16.

[33] On the meaning of the word 'gospel' see the *Reasonableness*, 90; *WR,* 129: 'A word which in *Saxon* answers well the Greek εὐαγγέλιον and signifies, as that does, *Good news*. So that what the inspired Writers call the *Gospel*, is nothing but the good Tidings that the *Messiah* and his Kingdom was come'.

[34] *Paraphrase and Notes*, 483–86.

converts to Christianity. In his 'synopsis' to Ephesians, Locke states that it had probably not been revealed to the original Apostles, all of whom were Jews, that a consequence of the Messiah's new order was that not only Gentile converts but Jews also were released from any obligation to keep the ceremonial law and that both were now under the same dispensation: both were obliged to endeavour keep that part of the Mosaic law that pertained to moral duties,[35] which coincided exactly with the law of nature, which even the Gentiles had been obliged to keep before their gospel conversion. The new dispensation took account of universal human frailty and therefore did not require a perfect obedience to the moral law. Nevertheless, now under the Law of Faith, by means of grace, Jews and Gentiles who professed Christ found within themselves a new disposition to keep it, if not perfectly at least with persistent good intentions. The abrogation of the Mosaic ceremonial law and its consequences were revealed to St Paul, who notwithstanding the authority he possessed as a depository of revelation, did not merely declare what had been revealed to him but defended it through argument.[36] The arguments laid out by Locke are not founded on mere rational principles, but proceed from biblical history from Adam to Christ. A moral argument is made as well: St Paul argues that neither Jews, who had the Mosaic law, nor Gentiles, who had the light of nature, were able to obey the moral law. For the former, therefore, circumcision was no advantage. For the latter, the light of nature was not sufficient. The predicament, of having to obey a law that requires prefect obedience with only the means of frail human nature afflicts both Jew and Gentile, and therefore its resolution in the Christian gospel applies equally and in the same way to both.

It is noteworthy that Spinoza argued that although the Apostles were prophets, they do not prophesy in their epistles but rather express moral opinions and judgments that they justify through rational argument.[37] Most likely, Locke was familiar with Spinoza's observation, which is founded on a comparison of the literary character of prophesy and of the Apostle's instruction in their letters. Perhaps also he took it into account in *A Paraphrase and Notes*.[38] Spinoza defended this opinion by

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[35] Locke was of the opinion that under the new covenant a new law prevails, the law of faith. This law requires acceptance that Jesus is the Messiah. It also requires obedience to him, which entails a sincere endeavour to do all that he commands. What he commands is the moral law, which consists of the same precepts as the moral part of the Mosaic law and the law of nature, which is discoverable by the light of nature, all three being identical to 'the eternal rule of right'. What is new about the law of faith is that it allows that a sincere endeavour to conform to the moral law will count as much as perfect obedience did under the old covenant or under the law of nature: it would qualify a person as righteous in the sight of God. See the *Reasonableness*, 13–22, 128–30; *WR*, 96–102, 181–83.

[36] *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 607f.

[37] Spinoza, *Tractatus-Theologico-Politicus*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989), 196–204.

[38] Locke owned a copy of Spinoza's *Tractatus*. Passages from the *Tractatus* are cited in Locke's interleaved English Bible (Locke 16.25) pp. 7, 17, 230. These notes were probably transcribed sometime between 1672 and 1675. They are all citations of places in Chap. 1, 'On Prophecy'. So one cannot be certain that Locke read the whole of Spinoza's book.

citing instances in their writings, where the Apostles were clearly giving advice based on personal opinion. For example, he notes that in 1 Corinthians 7: 39–40, St Paul advises that the law does not require that a widow remarry and continues that in his opinion she would be happier if she did not remarry. He then adds, as an afterthought, 'and I think also that I have the Spirit of God' as though to suggest that his advice may after all be based on something higher than mere human judgment. Locke paraphrases this passage as follows: 'But in my opinion she is happier if she remain a widow, and permit me to say that whatever among you may think or say of me I have the spirit of god soe that I may be relyed on in this my advice that I doe not mislead you.'[39] What is implied here is something that Locke makes explicit in our second example, that reason is not only instrumental in clarifying and defending revelation, its natural competence is enhanced by the spirit so that its everyday judgments, once merely fallible, now possess an extraordinary reliability, which is what one might expect of judgments that proceed from a mind infused or sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This is the theme of my second example.

In Romans 8: 11, St Paul assures his readers, Christians in Rome, that God, who raised Christ from the dead, 'shall also quicken [literally, 'make alive'] your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you'.[40] Locke rejects the opinion that St Paul was speaking here about the resurrection of the body. He argues St Paul's expression signifies, rather, the renewal or regeneration of one's moral disposition. He observes that human bodies, after Adam, have become the 'seat and harbour of sinful lusts' and accordingly are 'indisposed and dead to the actions of the spiritual life'. By the spiritual life here Locke means a moral disposition, that is, a rational disposition to follow a rule and the power through right judgment to overcome those desires that are marks of mortality and that subvert the will to live virtuously and entice it to pursue transitory things that give no lasting satisfaction. One should be reminded here of Locke's final version of free agency: moral free agency involves the capacity to suspend desire, or to replace it with a higher but less immediate or urgent desire: a desire for immortal bliss, which is a proper reward only to those who sincerely endeavour to conform their lives to the divine law, and consistently who choose the good. Here Locke contends that to desire only the good, which impartial reason always advises, is not a diminution of free rational agency but the perfection of it.[41] This quickening by the spirit, then, is a moral capacitating of the will, and it is also, according to Locke, an intimation of immortality.[42] Practical reason, then, infused by the spirit, remains reason, but by the spirit it is

[39] *Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 204.

[40] *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 554–556; see also editor's notes, ii. 789.

[41] *Essay* II. xxi. 47–49 (263–65).

[42] The state that Locke has described here seems very much like the orthodox evangelical state of sanctification, which Locke surely must have recognized; see, for example, the *Westminster Confession*, 3rd edn (London, 1688), Chap. xiii, 'Of Sanctification'. Locke owned a copy of this edition, which he must have purchased shortly after his return to England in 1689 (*LL* 140); there is an index of its contents, not given in the book itself, inscribed on a flyleaf in his hand.

enabled to aim for higher things and to allow its fancy to consider them. These higher things are envisioned in a consummated faith.

Locke believed St Paul's letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians (which he joins thematically with the letter to the Philippians) contain supreme expressions of a consummate faith. What distinguishes them from his other letters is the rhapsodic style in which some of their content is expressed, and which evokes a visionary or contemplative state.[43] They are expressions of praise or celebration of what God has accomplished in Christ. The act of praise is a sort of contemplation. The object of praise is fixed in the mind as a way of understanding what is said.

The places where Locke finds St Paul's rapturous expression are Ephesians 1: 1–14 and Colossians 1: 15–17.[44] He also mentions Hebrews 1: 8 as cognate with this, and, as noted above, Philippians, most likely, 2: 5–11.[45] The object of praise and euphoric or ecstatic contemplation is God's great design of the gospel in the redemption of the world. In his 'Synopsis' of St Paul's letter to Ephesians Locke remarks that circumstances within the church at Ephesus were such that the Apostle had no need to prove the gospel through argument, but rather to celebrate it with the Christians there, for they had persevered in their faith in the new covenant. The conflict that once threatened to undermine their faith was the same addressed by St Paul in Romans: between those who believed that the entire Mosaic law must be obeyed and those, like St Paul, who denied this. Having no need to prove his case, he proceeds directly to an exposition of the gospel, 'not in the ordinary way of Argumentation and formal Reasoning', but presents it 'all as it were in a Rapture' using 'noble and sublime Expressions, suitable to the unsearchable Wisdom and Goodness of God, shewn to the World in the Work of Redemption'.[46] St Paul's rapture anticipates a higher state of the mind lifted up by 'great Design of the Gospel' and of the Kingdom of God under the Messiah, which exceeds the 'Mosaical Institution' in 'Glory, Greatness, Comprehension, Grace, and Bounty'. The latter he dismisses as a parochial affair that confines the understanding to the

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[43] 'The Epistle to the *Colossians* seems to be writ the very same time, in the same run and warmth of thoughts, so that the very same Expressions yet fresh in his Mind, are repeated in many Places; the Form, Phrase, Matter and all the Parts quite through of these two Epistles, do so perfectly correspond, that one cannot be mistaken in thinking one of them very fit to give light to the other.' Locke also concluded that Philippians was also written at the same time, during St Paul's captivity in Rome, and that all three treat the same theme: 'the great Design of the Gospel laid down as far surpassing the Law, both in Glory, Greatness, Comprehension, Grace and Bounty'. *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 610.

[44] *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 610, 616f.

[45] Locke's manuscript remains show that he planned paraphrases and notes of Colossians and Philippians and Hebrews. See *in locum*, Locke's polyglot New Testament, two volumes interleaved and bound in five (Locke 9: 103–107). For his analysis of Hebrews, see *WR*, 238–41. In the 'Synopsis' to Ephesians, he considers the appropriateness of a harmony of Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians, which he believed were all composed about the same time, when St Paul was a prisoner in Rome. Locke's reflections on the meaning of Ephesians may be taken as his last thoughts on Christian theology and, especially, Christology.

[46] *Paraphrase and Notes*, 609.

'narrow and beggarly Elements of this World', whereas the former is supposed to transcend it. There is an element of Platonic contempt of temporal things expressed here. The Messianic kingdom is not something that lately entered human history: it existed 'before the Foundation of the World'. Here, Locke affirms not only the pre-existence of Christ but of his kingdom also. In this connection, he cites Colossians 1: 15–17, which attributes to Christ such attributes as the 'image of the invisible God', 'the first-born of all creation', in whom all things, visible and invisible, on earth or in heaven, all spiritual powers, were created; his kingdom, which is here something like his extended body, was supposed to encompass all nations of mankind and all realms of being, and its glory did and even more will surpass even the glory of angels; to be a member of this kingdom is a free gift, not dependent upon observing any law; rebellious angels may have been permitted for a time to frustrate the advance of the messianic kingdom, setting up their own rule of dominions, principalities and dark powers, as negative counterparts of the Messiah's realm; hence this world came under the dominion of Satan until the Messiah was incarnated in a mortal body; by his death he defeated Satan and his spiritual cohorts and started the process by which the whole creation would be reconstituted under his rule. Thus the Messiah, the one in whom from the beginning 'all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell', who had equality with God, is the being through whom God reconciles all things to himself. He is the means by which God becomes all in all. This is a high Christology indeed.[47]

These epic cosmic events are laden with metaphysical meaning; as revelation they not only enlarge the scope of the understanding but also intimate its perfection beyond the limitations of this world. They are grand objects of contemplation and, even more than that, they are anticipations of future glory, of the transfiguration of mortality into immortality. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that in his plan for the education of children, Locke prescribed that instruction concerning spirits should come even before the study of corporeal things and that the Bible, abridged and adapted to their use, should be their primary reader.

> … I think it ought to go before the study of Matter, and body, not as a Science that can be methodized into a system, and treated upon Principles of Knowledge; but as an enlargement of our Minds towards a truer and fuller comprehension of the intellectual World, to which we are led both by Reason and Revelation. And since the clearest and largest Discoveries we have of other *Spirits*, besides God, and our own Souls, is imparted to us from heaven, by Revelation; I think the Information, that at least young People should have of them, should be taken from that Revelation.[48]

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[47] Compare Locke's praise of the Messiah with a recent work in Christology, which is undisputably high: Marilyn McCord Adams, *Christ and Horrors, the Coherence of Christology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), especially 170–204, which offers an exposition of Colossians 1: 15–20 and other pertinent texts that express the same themes considered above. Adams' interpretation relies heavily on Scholastic metaphysics, which Locke eschewed, and she places great weight on the Chalcedon definition of the two natures of Christ. What is remarkable is that in spite of this, Adams affirms a very similar account of the being of the Messiah and the cosmic dimensions of his realm.

[48] *Education*, 245.

Conclusion

There are two prevailing hypotheses concerning Locke's intellectual development that if true would defeat the thesis put forward in this paper that Locke's intellectual achievement is a unitary expression of Christian virtuosity and that Christian virtuosity is the key to understanding his major writings, philosophical and theological and, most likely, political as well.

The first of these, best formulated by John Dunn, is that Locke failed to establish philosophically a foundation for religion and morality.[49] Success in this endeavour left an impassable divide between his political theory, which presupposed a law of nature discoverable by natural reason, and his empirical cognitive theory, which could not justify this presupposition. This left Locke in the unhappy situation of pursuing two lines of inquiry that would never meet. To compensate for reason's incapacity to provide a foundation for morality, Locke turned to revelation. The consequence of this hypothesis is a disassociation of the major domains of Locke's intellectual work.

The other hypothesis, sometimes superimposed on the former, alleges that concurrent with his growing conviction that he must rely on revelation to provide an adequate foundation for morality, Locke was drifting towards heterodoxy, and that in the end he became a closet Socinian. One of the consequences of this drift was that his faith attenuated. He became a doctrinal minimalist. An indication of this movement is evident in the claim made and defended in the *Reasonableness* and its *Vindications* that all that is required to be a Christian is to assent to one proposition, that Jesus is the Messiah.[50]

Neither hypothesis is, I think, true. The former fails to take into account the complementarity and interdependence of reason and revelation that has been represented in this paper. It is true that Locke never produced a well-founded comprehensive system of morality that he claimed, in the *Essay*, was possible. He only went so far as to suggest how, using his own scheme of natural deduction, such a system might be developed.[51] Also noteworthy is Locke's charge against philosophers in antiquity of failing to discover the whole law of nature, well founded on the will of God. But Locke sees this as the failure of an institution rather than incapacity of reason, as contextual rather than constitutional. It was philosophy as practiced by the ancients not reason that failed. Just before this, he attributes the failure of the 'Rational and thinking part of Mankind' to profess publicly the one true God as due to fear rather than to any epistemic incapacity; it was no fault of reason that they failed to establish reason's authority in the public sphere, to

[49] John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); also *John Locke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

[50] The most detailed exposition and defence of this hypothesis is given in John Marshall, *John Locke, Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[51] *Essay* IV. xvii. 4 (670–78, esp. 672f).

establish a public religion of reason. Later, he admits that what a rational being may learn first from revelation concerning the law of nature, he may confirm by reason and should endeavour to do so.[52] It should also be kept in mind that in all of Locke's writings on politics, philosophy and theology, there is an equal reliance upon reason and revelation and a mixing of them. This important feature of Locke's writings has rarely been noticed and never, to my knowledge, been explained.

That the second hypothesis is false should be evident just from the review of Locke's theological expositions treated in this paper. What we find is not an attenuation of faith, but an increasing enrichment of it. At the end of life he had penned a strong endorsement of the pre-existence of Christ; his acceptance of those sublime celebrations of the Messiah as the first being, the principle of creation, the ruler of the universe, having equality with God—these are elements, as has been noted, of a high Christology. It is true that Locke had only contempt for creeds and orthodoxies, but this does not entail that he rejected the contents of all creeds. He rejected them because their aim was to establish clerical rather than biblical authority. In fact, he accepted as true many things asserted in the creeds and confessions of various churches: that Jesus is the only begotten son of God, that he was born of a virgin, that he was resurrected and ascended into heaven, etc. Besides, his objection to creeds derives from a conviction that creeds and confessions are used as instruments of power and not because of anything contained in them. As to his minimalism there is an explanation that does implicate him in heterodoxy. His doctrinal minimalism was a consequence of his idea of the church. He sided with those theologians, the Latitudinarians in England, who favoured a broad comprehensive church, one that practiced toleration, which, he wrote, is 'the chief distinguishing mark of a true church'.[53] It is in the context of toleration that Locke favours minimalism. He found in the New Testament, by examining the gospel preaching of Jesus and the Apostles, that only one article was required of those who would enter the Church, and this gave him warrant to limit the number of fundamental articles, after an acceptance of monotheism, to this single affirmation, that Jesus is the Messiah. But we have seen, this is not the end of faith, for Locke or for any Christian.

Nevertheless, proving that these hypotheses are false does not make true the hypothesis that Locke's thought as a whole is a unitary expression of Christian virtuosity; nor does the evidence presented in this chapter suffice. There is enough here, however, to presume that it is true and to continue to explore Locke's writing for additional evidence confirming it and out of this to construct a comprehensive account of Locke's intellectual achievement, one that makes him out to be a Christian philosopher. Such an account would give equal weight to Locke's understanding of Christianity along with his theory of knowledge, of consciousness and personality, of free agency, ethical motivation, natural kinds, toleration and civil society. It is not enough to accord each topic equal respect, but to see them

[52] *Reasonableness*, 141–44, 150–59 *WR*, 191–92, 196–201.

[53] *Tolerantia*, 59.

operating together in a single intelligence. In the interests of equality it may even be necessary to apply the principle of affirmative action to Locke's theological reflections. For Locke, the Christian revelation encompassed the whole of reality. It was as real an object of intellectual inquiry as civil society, human understanding, the law of nature or personal identity. Indeed, when one considers how much time and effort he devoted to the study of Christianity during the last decade and a half of his life, it become evident that this a dominant theme for him. There is evidence besides to show from his manuscripts that this was nothing new. How, then, could he fail to take Christianity into account when considering the many philosophical problems that also concerned him? In fact, as numerous theological places in the *Essay* show, he did not ignore it.[54]

It is also worth noting that Locke's interpretation of the Christian religion and of its sources is distinguished by an exemplary theological sophistication and insight, which suggests that there may be something living in what he wrote about them. But even if this were not so, it is dangerous to declare aspects of a great thinker's thought to be dead and use this declaration as a warrant to ignore them. This only defeats historical understanding, which is the aim of this paper. To achieve a correct historical understanding of Locke's thought requires that one comprehend his idea of Christianity and imagine it in all its richness and persuasiveness.

[54] See *WR*, 245–56 for a table of theological places in the *Essay*.

Chapter 6
Locke's 'Dubia circa Philosophiam Orientalem' and the Reception of *Kabbala Denudata* in England During the Seventeenth Century

Introduction

'Dubia circa Philosophiam Orientalem' is a manuscript containing John Locke's critical thoughts on a brief work entitled *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae*. It is composed in Latin and written in his hand. The text and a translation of it follow this introduction.

Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae was written to accompany a collection of texts, commentaries, and critical essays on the Kabbalah, a late esoteric Jewish mystical and theosophic tradition.[1] The collection was published in two volumes issued respectively at Sulzbach and Frankfurt in 1677 and 1684.[2] The whole work bore the title *Kabbala Denudata*, that is, 'Kabbalah unclothed or revealed'.

This introduction is divided into three parts. The first offers an account of the occasion and context of Locke's manuscript and the thoughts expressed therein; the second opens with a summary of the *Adumbratio* as background for an exposition of the content of Locke's manuscript that immediately follows; the final part relates some examples or instances of Locke's reception of Christian Kabbalah and closes with brief remarks about thematic continuities in two writers who were unapologetic Lockeans: Edmund Law and Abraham Tucker.

Occasion and Context

The reception of *Kabbalah Denudata* in England involved a network of personages whose various connections and associations over more than two decades comprise an important episode in the history of the European commonwealth of learning.

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[1] On the terms 'esoteric' 'mystical', and 'theosophic' as they apply to Kabbalah, see Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schoken Books, 1961), 205f.

[2] *Kabbala Denudata* seu *Doctrina Hebraeorum Trnascendentalis et Metaphysica atque Theologica*, 2 vols., ed. Freiherr Knorr von Rosenroth (vol. 1, Sulzbach: Abraham Lichtenthaler, 1677; vol. 2, Frankfurt: Johann David Zunner, 1684). The *Adumbratio* was printed and paginated separately (Frankfurt: Johann David Zunner, 1684).

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On 6 June 1679, about midway in this episode, Locke wrote to his friend Nicholas Toinard that he had learned from Robert Boyle that the *Zohar*, the principal source of Kabbalah, had been newly translated into Latin and German and recently published. The translator was a 'very clever gentleman' who accompanied his translations with notes that cast light on 'l'ancien Cabala des Juifs'. A copy of the book had been sent to Boyle, but had not yet been received by him. It was known to have arrived in London, but had become lost or misplaced in the London Customs House. Boyle suspected that someone made off with it or sold it. Locke promised Toinard that if, by luck, it should be found, he would send him full bibliographical details. He added that Boyle offered to lend him the book if it were convenient to him to receive it.[3] The lost volume was soon found and Locke sent Toinard its details repeating the offer to send the thing itself whenever Toinard should desire it.[4]

The book was first volume of *Kabbala Denudata*. The sender was Benjamin Furly, a prosperous businessman, Quaker, freethinker, and staunch Republican, who resided in the Netherlands since 1659, and in Rotterdam since 1662.[5] Seven years later, Furly would provide Locke with a haven during his exile and they would develop a deep and enduring friendship.[6] In 1679 they were unacquainted. Why Furly sent Boyle this book, whether from time to time he sent him others also, since he was well connected with Dutch booksellers, and what was the nature of their relationship is unknown. It does not seem that they were ever more than acquaintances.[7] Locke was in London at the time when he wrote to Toinard, having returned the previous month from France, where he had spent the last 6 months in Paris in frequent company of Toinard and other scholars, engaged in learned discourse. A decade would pass before Toinard acquired his own copy of this volume.

The clever gentleman who compiled, translated, and edited *Kabbala Denudata* was Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1631–89), a scholar and poet and religious visionary, born in Silesia, the son of a Lutheran minister. He was educated at Wittenberg and Leipzig, and travelled in Holland and France, and possibly England, seeking out scholars, Jewish and Christian, for the purpose of perfecting his knowledge of oriental languages, alchemy, natural philosophy, and oriental wisdom.[8]

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[3] Locke to Toinard, 6 June 1679, *Correspondence*, ii. 30–31.

[4] Locke to Toinard, 15 July 1679, *Correspondence*, ii. 57: 'There you have the yard-long title; I do not know what you are likely to think of the work itself; if you wish to see the book it will be ready for you.' See also MS. Locke f. 28, pp. 169, 175, 179f., 183.

[5] *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle*, ed. Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio, Lawrence M. Principe, 6 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2001), v. 1.

[6] Locke's earliest mention of Furly is in a journal entry for 8 October 1686; (MS Locke f. 9, p. 27). By then he was well enough acquainted with him to entrust him with financial and other personal matters (Ibid., pp. 31, 51). Locke resided in Furly's house in Rotterdam during the last 2 years of his exile, Feb. 1687–Feb. 1689; *Correspondence*, iii. pp. vii, 39–40.

[7] See Locke to Boyle, [31 January/10 February 1688?], 'your acquaintance, Mr. *Benjamin Furley*'; *Correspondence*, ii. 354.

[8] Allison P. Coudert, *The Impact of the Kabbalah in the Seventeenth Century*, 100f.

He was an accomplished Hebraist and biblical scholar.[9] He settled in Sulzbach, in upper Bavaria, where he became a privy counselor and later chancellor in the Court of the Elector Christian August (1622–1708), Duke of Sulzbach, a recent convert to Roman Catholicism, married to a Calvinist princess, Amalie of Nassau-Siegen (1613–1669), who practiced religious toleration and was disposed to mystical forms of religion.[10] Knorr shared these sentiments, and his great project of publishing the Kabbalah to the world of learning was an expression of it.

Knorr's close associate in this enterprise and a major contributor to the work was Francis Mercury van Helmont (1614–98), Kabbalist, alchemist, physician, natural philosopher, eirenicist, wandering scholar, religious seeker, courtier, diplomat, and citizen of the world. In 1650 Christian August had invited Van Helmont to Sulzbach to advise him on religious policy. Van Helmont became his confidant in these and other matters of court and spirituality. It was suspected that Van Helmont counseled Christian August to convert to Catholicism. Van Helmont was instrumental in Knorr's decision to settle in Sulzbach and in his appointment to public office.[11] Their interests coincided in many respects. They became collaborators and promoters of each other's work.

Some of the content of *Kabbala Denudata* was received in England even before it was published; it was read, criticized, and commented upon, and the results of this activity became part of the work itself. Hence, there was a significant English component in the work. The principal English contributor was Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, from whom Knorr endeavoured to enlist support for his project. Although More had doubts about the Kabbalah, because of its doctrinal stance on the creation of the world and on the trinity, he was sympathetic with its general tenour, and with its advocacy of the immortality and pre-existence of the soul. He gave the project his support, whilst he continued to express his doubts to Knorr in a lengthy correspondence. Some of his communications were substantial discourses, which is not surprising considering the author, and Knorr added a group of them to the collection.[12] Van Helmont, who is the central figure among this group of personages and its presiding spirit, was also a contributor to Knorr's collection, and on his

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[9] Locke owned a copy of Knorr's study of the book of the Apocalypse, *A genuine explication of the visions of the book of Revelation* (London, 1671), published under the pseudonym A. B. Peganius, *LL* 2245.

[10] Coudert, op. cit., 23, 100; *The Conway Letters*, Marjorie ed. Hope Nicholson, rev. edn, ed., Sarah Hutton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 324, fn. 5; Gershom Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 416–19.

[11] Coudert, ibid., pp. 21–30.

[12] More's contributions make up a *substantial* portion of the first volume of *Kabbala Denudata*. There are all in Vol. 1, Part 2: (1) *Excerpta ex Epistola quadam Compilatoris, de utilitate Versionis Libri Sohar*; (3) *Aditus tentatus rationem reddenti Nominum & ordinis decem Sephirotharum in duabus Tabulis Cabbalisticis ex Scriptura, Platonismo, Rationque libera D. Henrici Mori Cantabrigiensis*; (5) *Quaestionis & Considerationes in Tract. 1. Libri Druschim D. Henrici Mori Cantbrigiensis; cum Ejusdem Epistola*. NB The text to which More's questions and considerations are addressed is one attributed to Isaac Luria, and is printed as item (4); (6) and (8) are responses to More; (11) *Fundamenta Philosophiae seu Cabblae Acto-paedo-melissae Eiusdem* (pp. 293–312).

journeys through Europe and England he acted as principal promoter and defender of the project before and after publication. Van Helmont was a close associate of Furly's; both were nonconforming Quakers. Locke was acquainted with him from late 1686. Most likely, Furly brought them together.[13] But more than a decade and a half before this meeting, Van Helmont, who was in England to perform a service for Elizabeth of Bohemia, Princess Palatine (1618–80),[14] used the occasion to intercede with Henry More for Knorr and his project. Van Helmont was also a reputed physician, and 17 years earlier had been sought out, unsuccessfully, by John Finch, brother of Anne, Lady Conway, for advice on how to treat the chronic illness that painfully afflicted his sister. The request was renewed, when it was known he was in England, and after some delay, and Van Helmont visited Lady Conway at Ragley, the Conway country house. He went to give a consultation, but ended up taking residence there, remaining until 1679, until after Anne Conway's death. By then, she had become much more than his patient. As did Henry More, Van Helmont recognized her exceptional philosophical ability and deep religious insight. Along with More, he assisted in the publication of Conway's *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, which is rich in content from the Kabbalah.[15]

When Locke and Van Helmont were together in Furly's house sometime in 1687, Locke's interest in Kabbalah and in Knorr's book was doubtless rekindled. As he did for Henry More, Van Helmont also acted as a go-between for Knorr and Locke.

Although Locke and Knorr became connected, it is uncertain that they ever met. Van Helmont seems to have been their link. In late March or early April of 1688, Van Helmont sent Locke a set of critical remarks by Knorr on the *Abregé*, the abridgment of the *Essay*, which Locke prepared and published *Bibliothéque Universelle*.[16] Knorr disputed Locke's denial of the doctrine of innate knowledge, to which he adhered; he offered his own inverted interpretation of *tabula rasa*, which fit his own speculative scheme. He suggested that the contemplative mind is properly empty, for it is a pure reflection of divine light and therefore requires no mental content to represent what it directly perceives without ceasing or diminution. It is only in fallen souls that we may expect to find particular content,

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[13] Coudert, op. cit., 276; see also Luisa Simonutti, 'English Guests at the Lantaarn', in *Benjamin Furley 1646–1714*, ed. Sarah Hutton (Firenze: Olscki, 2007), 44–46. Locke would have been familiar with some of Van Helmont's opinions, in particular, concerning the revolution of souls, at the very least from a letter to him from Damaris Cudworth, who may have met him or learned about his opinions from her father and Henry More, see *Correspondence*, ii. 619–20n5; see also Mark Goldie, *John Locke and the Mashams at Oates* (High Laver, Essex, 2004), 21.

[14] She was a cousin of Charles II, eldest daughter of Elizabeth, queen of Bohemia and Electress Palatine (1596–1662). Elizabeth maintained a philosophical correspondence with René Descartes, who wrote his final philosophical work, *The Passions of the Soul*, for her; see *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, i. 325.

[15] Sarah Hutton, *Ann Conway* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 146–55; see also *The Conway Letters*, 309–22.

[16] *Correspondence*, iii. 399; letter 1024A in this volume, contains Knorr's comments.

but this is only a residue of original contemplative knowledge, a recollection of lost splendor.

Locke and Knorr were connected in another way. As will be explained below, Locke, when he was still in Holland, seems to have acted as a procurer of books for Knorr. This was not an uncommon service among denizens of the republic of letters.

It cannot be decided with certainty when Locke acquired his copy of *Kabbala Denudata*. In a notebook in which he kept bibliographical lists volume two is twice cited on the same page, although the entries are dated 2 years apart. On the top of a page under 'Libri', dated 1687, Locke has written the title: 'Cabbala denudata tomus 2$^{s.}$ 4^{o} Franc: 84'. In the same entry, the *Adumbratio* is mentioned as one of the items collected in volume two. Lower on the same page and continuing on a subsequent page another entry, dated 1689, mentions the *Adumbratio* again. Here Locke gives a more detailed description of the book ('Kabbala denudata Tom 2^{dus}' etc.) and follows with the comment 'I want'.[17] We may be certain, then, that Locke did not own a copy of the second volume of *Kabbala Denudata* before 1689.[18] During the previous year, Locke had received a letter from the bookseller Henry Wettstein, dated 30 June 1688.[19] Wettstein reported having sent two books to Nicholas Toinard: *Kabbala Denudata* and the *Abregé*, the french abridgment of the *Essay*. Wettstein must have sent volume one of *Kabbala Denudata* to Toinard, for in the same letter he asked Locke whether he was aware that there was also a second volume. We know that Locke did know this already in 1687. From this we may conclude that Toinard received a copy of the first volume of Knorr's book from Locke via Wettstein 10 years after Locke first mentioned its publication to him, and since Wettstein seems to have been Locke's supplier of books at that time, Locke must not at this time acquired a copy of the second volume of *Kabbala Denudata*. I have no explanation for the delay.

'Dubia circa philosophiam orientalem' is an undated manuscript; hence its time of composition must be determined indirectly from circumstantial evidence, which is not lacking. There is first of all physical evidence to be considered. The paper that Locke used consists of a folio quire in fours (two sheets folded once); it bears the watermark of the coat of arms of the City of Amsterdam, with the countermark PD. The paper matches paper used for another manuscript, whose content complements the content of the 'Dubia'.[20] This manuscript, which is entitled 'Chronologia Sacra', presents an annotated biblical chronology; it also reviews the Christian Kabbalist hypothesis of the revolution of souls and world systems and the prospect of universal salvation. Hence it overlaps thematically with the *Adumbratio*. The chronology

[17] MS Locke c. 29, pp. 31, 114.

[18] I have said nothing about when Locke acquired volume one of *Kabbala Denudata*. Presumably he acquired it before 1689, but one can't be too sure of that, for both volumes are bound together in his copy. Curiously, Locke listed the *Adumbratio* separately in his library (*LL* 1646).

[19] *Correspondence*, vol. 3, letter 1060A.

[20] MS Locke c. 27, fols. 258–63.

and notes follow closely a work by Van Helmont, *Seder Olam*, which was published in Latin in 1693 and in English the following year. Most of the manuscript is in Latin, which suggests that Locke was using the Latin edition.[21] This makes it most likely that Locke composed 'Chronologica Sacra' during 1693 or 1694. Van Helmont was a guest at Oates from October 1693 through February 1694.[22] The book Locke used could have been a presentation copy. Matching paper and matching themes make it very probable that Locke wrote both manuscripts concurrently.

However, there is important evidence suggesting an earlier date of composition. It seems that the paper on which Locke inscribed 'Dubia' was already in his possession in 1687. If one inverts the quire, one will find on the top of what would now be the front leaf a list of alchemical books under the heading 'Philalethes', a pseudonym used, among others, by George Starkey.[23] The list is not dated. However, this same list also appears in a notebook used by Locke to record titles of books he might like to purchase.[24] This second list is dated 1687, and it bears the heading, 'Knor: He has of Philalethes all these'. Just beneath is written a query asking what other works Philalethes had published? The point of the question seems to be to determine what books by Philalethes Knorr did not yet own and presumably wanted. The most likely person to whom the inquiry was directed is Francis Mercury van Helmont, who would make the delivery. Both lists must have been inscribed at about the same time and the dated one, because of its finality and because it was in a place reserved for such information, it must be the later. Did Locke inscribe this book list before or after he used the same quire to record his thoughts on the *Adumbratio*? One cannot be certain. If before, then the year of composition for the 'Dubia' would be no later than 1687. So there are two possible times for the composition of the 'Dubia', 1687 and 1693. There is a third, 1688. This is the date of two additional manuscripts containing Locke's notes on the *Adumbratio*, Both of them have the inscription 88, which in keeping with Locke's practice of dating, signifies 1688. The first bears the title 'Lexicon of the *Syncatabasis* 7. 88'. It gives a list of key terms employed in the *Adumbratio*.[25]

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[21] *Seder Olam*, *sive ordo seculaorum, historica ennaratio doctrinae* (Leiden?, 1693); English edition, *Seder Olam:* or, *The Order, Series or Succession of all the ages, periods, and times of the While World*, trans. J. Clark M.D. (London: Sarah Hawkins, 1694). Only the Latin edition is listed in Locke's library catalogue; see *LL*, 1416a.

[22] Coudert, op. cit., 277.

[23] For Starkey, see William R. Newman, *Gehennical Fire. The lives of George Starkey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), Appendix v.

[24] MS Locke c. 29, p. 82.

[25] MS Locke c. 27, fols. 79–80; the '7' in the title suggests the lexicon applies particularly to Chap. 7 of the *Adumbratio*; the page and section citations, however, prove otherwise. In his catalogue of Locke's manuscripts, P. Long treats this manuscript as part of the 'Dubia', *A Summary Catalogue of the Lovelace Collection of the Papers of John Locke in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959, p. 27. Yet apart from their contiguity in the Lovelace Collection and their identity of subject, there is nothing else that suggests that they are part of a single manuscript. They are inscribed on different leaves and use a different brand of paper.

The second is an insert in Locke's copy of *Kabbala Denudata*. It bears the title 'Caballa 88' and is a topical list based on Chap. 3 of the same work, which treats with the beginning of creation through the first Adam, a theme that I will take up shortly.[26] When compared to the 'Dubia' both manuscripts are insubstantial. The second especially, demonstrates less of a mastery of the *Adumbratio*. Nevertheless, even if it is decided, as I believe it should be, that they are earlier, the intervals between them need not be very long.

If Locke composed 'Dubia' in 1688, then he would have had to use someone else's copy. This poses no problem, for he was living in Furly's house, whose ample library included *Kabbla Denudata*.[27] As in 1693, Van Helmont would have been close by, which also fits in nicely with Locke's book service for Knorr.

There are more reasons for preferring 1693 as the time of composition of 'Dubia'. The central themes that Locke treats in 'Dubia' match Locke's preoccupations in 1693 and thereafter. They recur in Locke's writings during this period, in particular, his theological notebook 'Adversaria Theologica 94', *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, and an addition to the second edition of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Finally, it is noteworthy that Locke's copy of *Kabbala Denudata* is one of the few books in his library that he marked up. Locke was restrained in this respect. There are only lines drawn alongside passages that he no doubt wanted to return to. Some of these passages so marked correspond to places in the *Adumbratio* that are cited in 'Dubia'. However the matter be decided, it is certain that Locke was reflecting on the *Adumbratio* in 1688, and in 1693, and that if he composed 'Dubia' in 1687–88, he returned to its themes, or at least to some of them, in 1693.

The Adumbratio and Its Commentator

Before proceeding with a summary exposition of the contents of the *Adumbratio*, the question of its authorship should be settled. The *Adumbratio* was published anonymously. Scholem attributes it to Van Helmont. Allison Coudert does likewise. Neither of them provide any evidence for this abbribution.[28] Locke, however, attributed authorship to Knorr. On the title page of his copy is written, in his hand, 'per Authore Christiano Knor van Rosenrod'. Given his relations with the principal parties, his attribution of authorship to Knorr must surely be decisive. There is additional reason in support this conclusion. Knorr was surely the chief designer of

[26] This manuscript is uncatalogued. Anyone who wishes to examine it would have to request Locke's copy of *KD* at the Bodleian, shelf mark: Locke 9. 34.

[27] See Sarah Hutton, 'Mercator Theologico–Philosophicus: Benjamin Furly Reading', in *Benjamin Furley 1646–1714*, 162.

[28] Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 196f.; Coudert, op. cit., 109, 113, 201, 278. Copenhaver, op. cit., 509, fn. 90, disagrees, but gives no reason.

Kabbala Denudata, and the *Adumbratio* is its consummation; drawing upon the learned treatises of Jewish scholars included in his book, he offers to the world a Christianized epitome of their doctrine.

The long title of the *Adumbratio* offers concise information about its purpose and intent. Here it is, translated into English and briefly explained. *An Outline of Christian Kabbalah*, that is *A Hebraizing Accommodation*, Or, *A brief Application of the Doctrine of the Hebrew Kabbalah to the dogmas of the New Covenant*; *for the purpose of developing a hypothesis that will promote the conversion of the Jews*.[29] On the face of it, the *Adumbratio* is a proselytizing work designed to attract Jewish Kabbalists to the Christian faith. It is a work of accommodation or condescendence.[30] Yet it is one thing to accommodate Christianity to gentiles or, as the Jesuits attempted during the seventeenth century to Chinese literati, and quite another to the Jews. The Kabbalah was no alien wisdom to Christians. For Knorr, understanding the Kabbalah was a means of understanding the true intent of the discourses of Jesus Christ and the Apostles 'who everywhere philosophise according to the Jewish manner'.[31] No doubt also Knorr and his associates would have regarded a successful Christian interpretation of the Kabbalah as further proof of the truth of the Christian Religion, just as it they believed that the Christian gospel could be verified by showing that it fulfilled biblical prophecy. Finally, the conversion of the Jews was not a matter of disinterested benevolence. According to prevailing apocalyptic expectation, this event would be the final achievement of Christianity's evangelical mission, foreordained and foretold, before the onset of the Millenium.[32]

Indeed, in retrospect, considering the matter world-historically, the very idea of such an accommodation must seem impossible, for the Kabbalah, as a mode of Jewish self expression must mean something entirely different from any Christian expression of it. For Jews deprived of their land, their temple, their political independence, never secure in their habitations, it was a means of profound consolation, converting their experience of exile into one of purpose and hope. It gave meaning to their misfortunes and world-historical purpose to their existence as they made their precarious place in the world. As Gershom Scholem has observed, the main Kabbalaistic doctrine are expressions of the Jewish experience of exile and dispersion.[33] For the Christian community, the sort of accommodation intended in the *Adumratio* was related to a very different situation in the world. It was less an accommodation than an appropriation, one more triumph for the gospel as it was about to be carried on the wings of commerce and colonial adventures to all places

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[29] *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae*, id est *syncatabasis hebraizans*, sive *brevis applicatio doctrinae hebraeorum cabbalisticae ad dogmata novi foederis; pro formanda hypothesi, ad Conversionem Judaeorum proficua*.

[30] Copenhaver, op. cit., 508, thus translated 'syntagma'.

[31] Knorr to Lady Conway, as cited by Sarah Hutton, *Ann Conway*, 161.

[32] F. M. Van Helmont, *Seder Olam*, 53.

[33] Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 261.

in the world, motivated by imperial ambition sanctioned and assisted by divine providence.[34]

Yet, these historical observations do not negate the fact that Knorr and other Christians who studied Kabbalah were sincere in their efforts to discover its true meaning, and that their theological motives were in many respects admirable. They were attracted to Kabbalah because it envisioned universal salvation, and because it taught free choice, and so laid upon every individual responsibility for working it out; they desired that the whole creation might achieve perfection and immortal life; they advocated universal toleration; and they eschewed the harsh and cruel measures commonly associated with divine justice.

The *Adumbratio* is written as a dialogue between a Kabbalist and a Christian Philosopher.[35] The latter responds to a friendly challenge from the former, who requests that, since Christians are so eager for the conversation of the Jews and are constantly pressing them, and since the Christian Philosopher is well informed of Kabbalistic dogma, he employ this knowledge to construct a hypothesis that would make the Christian religion more understandable to him and to others like him. He avers that his hypothesis should be a grand theory of everything, from the beginning of creation to the final consummation; it must account for the entire universe, which, in response, the Christian Philosopher defines as 'a network of causes, together with their cause, or with that which is the beginning of whatever has a beginning'. The Christian philosopher forewarns the Kabbalist that the Messiah will be central to any hypothesis that he develops. The Kabbalist promises to reserve judgment (1/1–5).[36] He retains his authority throughout, and repeatedly intervenes to define and clarify key doctrines of the Kabbalah and to guide the Christian philosopher as he proceeds with his hypothesis. The setting is academic. Indeed, the universe is compared to a great academy, and the fundamental process of emanation is likened to the manner in which knowledge passes from teacher to student (1/5, 6; 2/13).

It all begins with God, who is the beginning of all things, and who, considered in himself, is properly named *Ein Soph*, a being without limitation; who, because his being is incomprehensible to rational minds, can be described only figuratively and, it would seem, is most fittingly represented as an infinite expanse of light. This supreme light is meant to represent an activity of the purest simplicity. There is no source or radiating center from which it proceeds; rather it radiates from

[34] Here perhaps Wittgenstein's notion of 'seeing as' may be applicable, where a representation, in Wittgenstein's example, the duck-rabbit, is taken to signify one thing or another but not both at the same time. Conversion of Jews to Christianity, or of a Christian to Judaism required replacing one world view with another, but in this instance taking a theosophic-cosomological system in an altogether different sense.

[35] A photographic reproduction of the text of *Kabbala Denudata* is available at the following website: www.billheidrick.com/Orpd/KRKD/index.htm. The text used is located in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, shelf mark BF1600. K7.

[36] The number in parentheses refer to chapters and sections of the *Adumbratio*; hence, Chap. 1, §§1–5.

everywhere throughout its infinite expanse and so is everywhere pure and the same (2/4) However, it is not without qualities, perhaps a multitude of them, which remain within it indistinct, for if this were not so, then the narrative that follows it could not be told.

To cause a beginning of things, in particular, to create worlds, a place must be made for them, and God in his pure simplicity must be absent from this place, for otherwise they would be indistinguishable from God. Here follows the remarkable doctrine of *Tsimtsum* (i.e. contraction or shrinkage), whereby God fixes a point within the infinite expanse of light, which is his being, and making this its center, proceeds in an orderly withdrawal, so that what is left is a spherical void (2/10).[37] This empty space, then, becomes the place and occasion for the coming to exist of something that, although having emanated from the divine substance, is not God in himself. All this comes to pass so that it might become the receptacle of divine beneficence, and be the instrument by which the being of God may become comprehensible and its attributes clarified and made distinct. Benevolence, creativity, and self-revelation are the purpose of divine creation (2/8).[38] Thus divine creation and revelation takes place altogether within God.

What follows next is the formation of worlds, of which there are five: mundus infinitivus, mundus emanativus, mundus creativus, mundus formativum, mundus factivus. The first, which comes to be from a direct infusion of divine light, comprehends the four others. (3/49, 54; 4/1–10). It is important to keep in mind, that these are not five different worlds, but five aspects of one world that has various levels or domains, although, in their original and their final state, all are to be ruled from above, and perfectly express the clarity and amiability of God.

Whereas *Ein Soph* has no form, the mundus infinitivus that proceeds directly from it, has the shape of a man; he is the original man, the first Adam, and is the medium through which and within which everything else comes to be. In describing this world, the Christian Philosopher employs the idea of *Tsimtsum* to explain how independent beings are formed within the body of Adam Kadmon. Just as infinite light withdrew within itself to make room for created worlds, so the first man, as it were, inhales, drawing in its light, so that vessels or globes within it might derive their light from the infusion from *Ein Soph*. This first creation is perfect, and eminently contains the whole of all the other worlds. It is pure spirit, it is the archetype of every variety of spiritual being and their powers: life, emotion, intelligence, will, self-identity (4/2–6; also 3/44, 50).

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[37] The Kabbalist cites *Kabbla Denudata*, i. pt. 2, p. 32 'tum compressa quadantenus Lux ista, a puncto quodam medio circumcirca ad latera recessit; atque sic relictus est Locus quidam vacuus, dictus spatium inane, aequidistans a puncto illo, exacte in medio ejus constituto'. This version of the doctrine of *Tsimtsum* is attributed to Isaac Luria (1534–72), who was not the first to use it, but the first to make it a foundational dogma; see Lawrence Fine, *Physician of the Soul, Healer of the Cosmos* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003) 128ff.

[38] The account of *Tsimtsum* presented in the *Adumbratio* does not consider other moral and psychological purposes that it is supposed to accomplish, in particular in bringing about a reconciliation between justice and mercy; see Lawrence Fine, op. cit., 131–34.

Since one of the purposes of creation is divine revelation, the body of the first Adam is designed for this purpose; its various parts represent different attributes of the divine, and they are the hallmarks of revelation and providential activity in the world. These are presented as the ten Sephiroth, or counters. Knorr's list of them, which is typical, is as follows: (1) the supreme Crown (Corona summa), (2) Wisdom (sapientia), (3) Understanding (intelligentia), which constitute the head, and most perfectly represents the Godhead[39]; (4) Goodness (Benignitas), (5) Strict Justice (Severitas), (6) Beauty (Pulchritudo), (7) Permanence (Permanentia), (8) Majesty or Glory (Laus), (9) Foundation (Fundamentum), which makes up the torso and limbs. The last, (10) Sovereignty or Dominion (Regnum), represents overall the divine presence in the world. (3/44).

The four remaining worlds all flow from this original world; unlike their original, they are corruptible. The next in order is also represented in the form of the man, Adam Protoplastes, who is both archetype, as the name signifies, and also the progenitor of the human species. He also bears the title 'Messiah'. He is an emanation from the first Adam, hence mundus emanativus. In him all human souls are gathered in one body and are infused with wisdom. They are microcosms, bearing the image of their source (4/7). Next follows the body of angelic beings or intelligences, whose existence and excellence is also acknowledged by other philosophers, Greek and Barbarian (4/8). Note that Adam Kadmon and these two subsequent worlds correspond to the first three Sephiroth, crown, wisdom, and intelligence.

Descending further, we come to the realm of the lesser angels or created spirits (mundus formativus)—for the process of production of these four lesser worlds is a descent, but, as will be seen, of a prelapsarian sort, which is to say that corruption has not yet occurred. This is a dominion of micro-persons, mundane spirits who exemplify the six Sephiroth: kindness, severity, beauty, dominance, glory, and foundation, who make up the body of Adam Protoplastes. Finally, corresponding to the last and lowest of the Sepiroth is the world of matter, or rather its spiritual prototype, and seminal spirits (mundus factivus).

Next in this hypothetical narrative is an account of the destitution of the four lower worlds. This process does not follow the order of these worlds' origination. It begins, once removed from the top (mundus emanativus), in the mundus creativus, when certain intelligences or angels cease to contemplate and love God and turn to themselves. Accordingly, their natures contract and they fall into the lower worlds, and the effect of their fall is the rise of malignant spirits and material things. Satan is their leader (5/2, and passim). This original fall brings about a general descent of all the worlds: the intelligences, as noted, descend into the lowest realm, and they are accompanied by the lesser angels; their vessels shattered, and within these fragments or shards (cortices) are entrapped sparks or broken beams of light. Belial is the leader of this lowest realm. Up above, wisdom descends into the realm of micro-spirits, and Adam Protoplastes, is, as it were, decentered and demoted to

[39] See Pinchas Giller, *Reading the Zohar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 105.

the dominion of intelligences, where angels once were (5/8). The final catastrophe is Adam Protoplastes' sin; he is expelled from paradise and descends to earth; he becomes mortal and his body corruptible. And, because he carries with him, in his loins, so to speak, the entire 'Republic of human souls', human souls become mortal and material (9/2, 6 and passim).

A detailed account of the process of restitution is unnecessary here. In the scheme of the Kabbalah, it involves a regimen of religious and moral practice; superadded are notions of transmigration and a sequence of world periods, 12 in all, through which human souls pass in their endeavour through moral improvement to participate in reconstituting the soul of the Messiah, whose coming will signal the defeat of Satan and the shattering of the cortices and the consequent release of entrapped spirits, a new influx of the Holy Spirit, and, finally, the restoration of all things.[40]

These matters are presented with a special focus in the *Adumbratio*, which is not surprising, for the Christian's aim is not only to Hebraize Christian doctrine, but also to Christianize the Kabbalah. Chapter 3, which is the second longest chapter in the work, is crucial in this undertaking.[41] Its title, 'De Medio primaevae productionis seu Adamo primo' [concerning the Intermediary of the original creation, or the first Adam]. Notwithstanding its title, the chapter encompasses the entire cosmic process from beginning to end. The chapter falls into two parts that are remarkably unequal in length, concerning the Trinity and Christology respectively. In the first and shorter part, §§1–9, the Christian philosopher is asked to explain how the Trinity is exhibited in the created world in its successive stages of original perfection, descent, restitution, and consummation, which he proceeds to do. In the beginning and end, God is 'all in all'; and, although Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct, they are of the same substance. In the descending and ascending states of the world, there is a duality of aspect, for example, Adam Kadmon, who proceeds directly from the Father, remains the unbegotten son, but he is also king or Messiah in the process of redemption and, in that respect, in a subordinate state. This difference is explained by the fact that in the original perfection of the world and its final restitution, there is a unity of God and all things, but in between there is separation.

In the remaining part of the chapter, beginning at §§10–56, the Christian philosopher responds to the Kabbalist's challenge that he show how the Christ, that is, the Christian Messiah, as he is represented in the Christian scriptures, exhibits all the attributes assigned to the first Adam in the Kabbalah. There are 23 in all. They are metaphysical and theological properties, some apply to technical aspects of Kabbalah that go beyond the scope of this introduction.

The following summary includes only those that best clarify Locke's critical notes. First, Christ, like Adam Kadmon, is a supremely perfect being and is essentially like him who made him, the infinite God, with whom he is identical in substance, yet mythologically subordinate. He is the most perfect efficient cause of

[40] Lawrence Fine, op. cit., Chap. 9 passim.

[41] This chapter fills almost 20 pages, whereas all the rest, but one, average 3 pages each. It is exceeded by Chap. 7 (21 pages), which treats the revolution of souls.

all created things, and also their archetype and ideal, hence the macrocosm; he is the sole beginning of all beginnings and the instrument and intermediary of all subsequent beginnings. His substance, which flows from *Ein Soph*, fills the void or place of creation; therefore, he contains all worlds. He is the treasure house (*gazophylacium*) of all wisdom and knowledge. He is the ancient of days, the first name. Hence even the sacred name of God, YHWH, which defines the four plenitudes or worlds, can be said of him. In Christian terminology, he is Lord. Lastly, the Kabbalist asks whether it can also be shown from the Hebrew scriptures whether Adam Kadmon may be regarded as the Messiah and in this instance he provides the answer: both are said to descend to the lowest world, the mundus factivus, and to ascend to the highest of all, to be humbled and exalted (3/56).

The method employed in proving the identity of Adam Kadmon and the Christ is ordinary proof-texting, and, although in some instances the application of a text seems strained or too general to deliver the desired confirmation,[42] in other instances, there is a curious plausibility. In particular, in the use of texts selected from St Paul's epistles, from Hebrews, and the Apocalypse.[43] This plausibility suggests that both Kabbalah and parts of the New Testament, in these last mentioned writings, were drawing from other traditions, current and ancient, that in the process of canonical and doctrinal codification have become lost. This is too great a subject to be explored here.

The title 'Dubia circa philosophiam orientalem' deserves special consideration. It does not name the *Adumbratio*, although citations in the text leave no doubt that Locke's doubts are addressed to this work only. The expression 'oriental philosophy' is reminiscent of another work that treats the pre-existence and revolution of souls, Joseph Glanvill's *Lux Orientalis*, first published in 1662 and again in 1682.[44] There is more than a thematic connection between these works by Knorr and Glanvill. Knorr's philosophical, arguments for the pre-existence of the soul, as distinct from exegetical ones, are identical with those presented by Glanvill. Locke was doubtless aware of the connection of the two works.[45]

Locke's notes are comprehensive, and although they do not follow the order of the work, all the main themes of the *Adumbratio* are covered. Not all are critical, some are merely expository: the latter combine summary, extract and paraphrase. It is evident that Locke seriously endeavored to understand this work. Compared to the two other

[42] For example, in the choice of texts cited in §45 to show that the Messiah is the embodiment of the ten Sephiroth; or in the texts cited in §49 to show that the Messiah contains all five worlds.

[43] For example, the use of Ephesians 3: 9, Colossians 1: 16 and Hebrews 1: 2 to prove that Christ, as Adam Kadmon, was the intermediary and instrument of creation (§13); or Revelation 1: 4, 8; 16: 5, to prove that the Christ, like Adam Kadmon is the first and last and has the right to bear the name YHWH (§§35, 37).

[44] *Lux Orientalis* (London: s.n., 1662).

[45] Compare Chap. 7 of the *Adumbratio* (pp. 33–54), and Glanvill, *Lux Orientalis*, Chaps. 1–12. Locke owned the a copy of the 1682 edition of Glanvill's work, published with George Rust's *A Discourse of Truth*, under the title, *Two Choice and Useful Treatises* (London: James Collins and Sam. Lowndes) *LL* 2516.

manuscripts composed in 1688 (Lexicon 'Syncatabaseos 88' and 'Caballa 88'), 'Dubia' represents a mature and considered reading of the *Adumbratio*.

Locke's initial objections, under the heading of 'Soul of the Messiah' and 'Light', address conceptual inadequacies. In regard to the being Adam Kadmon, Locke asks whether he is a new creation, produced from nothing, or is merely something fashioned to contain the diminished light that continued to flow into the void. The question concerns the adequacy of the notion of *Tsimtsum*: and so Locke asks both about the production of the first Adam and also about the origin of creatures that comprise the body, or more precisely, the soul of the Messiah. In sum, just what concept are we to form of these new beings, who are supposed to be distinct from and subordinate to God and yet formed from the same divine substance? The remainder of the comments in this section concern the nature of fallen spirits, and it is likely that Locke intended but failed to gather them under their own title, as he does subsequently (see the sections entitled '1 the Soul of the Messiah' followed by '2 Spirit', and the two sections following these).

Conceptual difficulties are the topic of the next section, 'Lumen'. Locke asks whether a clear and distinct meaning can be assigned to the term 'light'. It is a crucial question, because the theme of light pervades the Kabbalistic scheme, and because conceptually it is its foundation. The ordinary or proper idea of light, a simple idea in the Lockean scheme, is clear enough. It enters our minds whenever we open our eyes in the presence of something luminous, a lamp or the sun or simply the light of day. Locke seriously doubts that this common or vulgar notion is sufficient to do the metaphysical work assigned to it. The alternative is to use the term figuratively, and although he acknowledges there are places in the *Adumbratio* where the term is used in this way, he does not find among them expressions of a clear and distinct concept adequate to do the work assigned to it.

Similarly, with respect to the terms 'ascending' and 'descending, Locke observes an ambiguity. Sometimes this pair of terms is taken to mean the increase or diminishment of luminosity, sometime it is spatial, moving up or down from one place to another. Locke's suggests that the former is what is properly meant, since the world does not change place, but suffers a loss of being, which is signified figuratively by light. He counsels that these homonyms should be avoided. These are fundamental criticisms that are not resolved in the remainder of the manuscript.

Locke's comments under the next four headings ('God', 'Creation', 1 Soul of the Messiah', and '2 Spirit')[46] are addressed to Chaps. 3 and 4 of the *Adumbratio*. They are straightforwardly expository. Of considerable interest, however, is the first cancelled entry, 'God', written in English, which differs from the Latin entry 'Deus'. It contains a concise description of *Tsimstum* and the formation of the Messiah. Locke's reasons for cancelling it, as well as for reverting to English, can only be conjectured. The last, '2 Spirit', is noteworthy because it contains the first three signed inscriptions in the manuscript. Locke's tone and content is constructive. For example, under 'Creation' he suggests that St Paul's assertion in his address to

[46] The numerals, 1 and 2, in the last two titles are indicative of the high anthropology of Kabbalah; man, not angels, occupy the highest place in the order of created spirits.

the Athenians, that 'in [God] we live, and move, and have our being',[47] can be clarified by reference to the process of *Tsimtsum*. Under, 'Spirit 1', he cites Col. 1:16, 'For by him [the Messiah] were all things created …' as confirmation of creation by irradiation. He lists what he thinks are the beneficial effects of irradiation: internal thought or reflection, sensory perception, language ('communication of concepts') and corporeal motion, and adds his initials JL, claiming the concept as his own. These comments apply to Chap. 2, §§13, 14. Then, as though he just turned the page, Locke concludes his remarks under this head with a Trinitarian formula taken verbatim from *Adumbratio* Chap. 3, §2: 'Infinite Light is the father. Light that flows from infinity into the Messiah and is united with him is the Son. Light flowing from the Messiah into what is beneath is the Holy Spirit'.

The next two sections repeat the themes of the two immediately preceding. '1 Messiae Attributa vel nomina' offers a partial list of the 23 attributes of the Messiah presented in *Adumbratio*, Chap. 3; '2 Spiritus' is further elaboration of the preceding section with the same name.

'Lapsus', 'Mundus Visibilis', the next two sections treat the fall of angels and the formation of matter and the constitution of the visible world. Locke's exposition follows Chaps. 5 and 6 of the *Adumbratio*.

The next section, on the pre-existence of souls summarizes Chap. 7 of the *Adumbratio*. Locke's summary includes two signed comments, one immediately following the other. Both are reflections on the state of ignorance of fallen souls when they enter into new bodies; he suggests analogies from experience illustrating how ideas already in the mind, latent ideas, may be forgotten. We lose the power to revive ideas once acquired through experience when no occasions occur whereby external objects arouse them, or when in our meditations we neglect to repeat them, or when disease causes the memory to fail.[48] Here, Locke seems to be testing the compatibility of his negative views on innateness with Knorr's doctrine of the pre-existence and revolution of souls.

The next section, treating the fall of human souls, its cause, Adam's disobedience, and the subsequence degradation: descent into gross material bodies, mortality, the dominion of desire, subjection to the fallen spirits entrapped in the cortices. This is a straightforward summary of Chap. 9 of the *Adumbratio*.

Lastly, Locke summarizes the process of restitution of souls. In the *Admubratio*, Knorr devotes the last three chapters to this theme (Chaps. 10–12). In them, the Christian philosopher responds to the Kabbilist request that he show how the Messiah might be the author of it. Ultimately restitution occurs after the Messiah, Adam Kadmon, who is the crown and head of creation, has through various operations, recapitulated all things in himself, and, having accomplished this, delivered all to the God the Father, whereby God becomes once more all in all. It is a complex process, highly mythological, and Locke ignores most aspects of it, including the millennium. He attends closely, however, to the moral aspects of the process by which better souls, who strive to live righteous or virtuous lives, are

[47] Acts 17: 28.

[48] On the retention of ideas, see *Essay* II. x. 2, 3.

separated from the rest, chosen and divinely advantaged so that they may expect incorporation in the Messiah. One must remember that this process takes place over a sequence of world systems. Elected souls are reborn into one of the two divinely constituted communities of the old or new covenant, and there they receive divine instruction. Others who live outside of these communities are perfected in virtue through instruction in true philosophy, and through revolution or proselytizing may enter one of the covenant communities. Locke concludes by enumerating the special advantages of the new covenant: righteousness of faith, a fuller influx of he Holy Spirit which causes sanctification, and the hope of resurrection. These are all themes that Locke considers in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

Reception

Kabbala Denudata was the principal literary vehicle by which the Kabbalah was received in England during the seventeenth century. John Locke was one of its recipients. My purpose in this concluding section is to examine some instances of this reception in Locke's writing subsequent to the composition of the 'Dubia'. What is offered here is only a selection, as an inducement to myself and others to carry the search beyond the results presented here. What is presupposed in this undertaking, and, I trust, settled beyond a doubt by the foregoing parts of this chapter, is that Locke made a serious attempt to understand the Kabbalah, although he limited his study to a Christian version of it. What the instances examined below show, I trust, is Kabbalistic themes remained in his mind and were operative as he developed his thoughts on the origin, nature, and destiny of the human soul and the nature and offices of the Messiah. His doubts about them were not merely negative thoughts concluding in rejection. His mind was receptive. Although his considered opinions on these matters differ from those of the *Adumbratio*, its traces are nevertheless detectable in what he wrote about them.

In 1694, Locke prepared for commonplacing a paper-book that had been in his possession for some time. He gave it the title, 'Adversaria Theologica', and as was his practice, in its early pages he compiled a list of key terms that together provide a comprehensive outline of theological topics, natural and revealed.[49] It could be called Locke's 'Summa' in outline. The first three items in the outline list the realms of being: God, Angels, human souls, animal souls, matter, the visible world, and our planetary system. There is nothing peculiarly Kabbalistic in this list. Noteworthy is the location of human souls beneath angelic ones in the order of topics, which is hierarchical; this reverses the order of men and angels in the Kabbalah. Human souls still occupy a high place in the order of things, but they are no longer pre-eminent. Yet the topics listed under 'Anima humana' (the human soul) are just those treated in Chap. 7 of the *Adumbratio*, namely options concerning

[49] See Chap. 2, Appendix A. The Text of 'Adversaria Theologica' is printed in *WR*, 21–33.

the pre-existence of the soul and its mode of entry into the human body: by revolution, creation, or traduction. To be sure, the topics listed are options, not all of which can be true; in listing them, Locke shows no preference. But as a mortalist and, hence, a denier of the soul's immortality, one might expect that Locke would have seen no need to reconsider revolution (transmigration of souls); he must have believed that the notion retained some intellectual value.[50] Regarding the two remaining options: whether the soul is created coincidently with or after conception or is transmitted (traduced) through one's parents, Locke seems to have formed no opinion. Indeed, when one recalls that two of the consequences of the fall of the human soul in the *Adumbratio* are death and forgetfulness—although not insensibility (9/6), it is not unreasonable that he might want to continue to entertain Kabbilist notions about the pre-existence and revolution of souls, even while remaining a mortalist.

'Christus' or the Messiah, is located farther along on the list among articles that treat sin and redemption, which again suggests a departure from the high standing of Adam Kadmon and of the high standing of archetypal humanity in the cosmic order. Yet the first three topics follow the treatment of the first Adam/Messiah in the *Adumbratio*: God, First creature, Man. There is no explicit identification of the first creature, who is in human form, with Adam Kadmon; but its absence could only mean that Locke did not adopt the terminology of the Kabbalah.

In *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Adam Kadmon also is not mentioned, for Locke has chosen as the frame of his exposition of the Christian religion, the Pauline theme of the two Adams, and of death and immortality.[51] The Kabbalist equivalent to the first Adam here is Adam Protoplastes, whose original state, of bliss and immortality, and of a life free of toil and sorrow, he lost for himself and his progeny by sinning, and the outcome of this fall was the visible world as we know it with all its limitations and ills.[52] All that Adam has

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[50] Psychopannychia (soul sleep) is mentioned lower down on the list as a possible state after death.

[51] 1 Cor. 15: 22: 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.'

[52] Locke's comment on Romans 5: 12, written sometime during the 1690s in his folio interleaved Bible (16.25) pertains to this theme. 'It is plain that amongst the Jews, the posterity of any man were looked upon to be actualy in his loins. vid Heb VII. 5. 9 & to partake in the actions of their father. Though not as moral or voluntary agents, yet as such as might receive good or harm from the action of him in whose loins they were, espetial in what concerned their natural constitution or animal life. Now let us suppose that god had forbid the eating of the forbidden fruit upon pain of a mortal leprosie which should be the consequence of the eating of that fruit. It may be said all his posteritie sind. i e materialy partaked in that action whereby they, being in the body of their predicessor, were tainted or infected with the venom of that fruit, which would destroy their lives, as much as his that voluntarily & sinfully did actualy eat it. And thus it is noe harder a figure to say *in him all have sinned* then it is to say *In Adam all die* 1 Cor XV. 22. which I think have just the same meaning with the words here. viz That all men in Adam did soe far partake in eating the forbidden fruit as there by to be made mortal. How far the modern philosophie, & the discoveries of live animals in the masculin seed may favour this in a literal sense I need not mention JL' Compare this with Locke's note on the same place in *Paraphrase and Notes*, ii. 523n.

lost is supposed to be restored by the Messiah, who is also Adam; so the narrative that Locke recounts appears merged with grander Kabbalist one.[53] It should be recalled that Locke's primary texts for the argument of the *Reasonableness* are the four Gospels and Acts, the historical works of the New Testament. His choice of the theme of the two Adams to frame his main argument, that Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures is reasonable, is therefore significant and requires an explanation; assuming that Locke's Kabbalistic thoughts lay not far beneath the surface of his mind when he began formulating his theory of the Messiah, it may be supposed further that their presence caused him to recall 1 Cor. 15. 22 and related places in St Paul's letters. Locke's paraphrase of 1 Cor. 15: 21–28, in his subsequent commentary on this book, describes the defeat of all worldly angelic powers, lastly death, and the subjection of everything to his Kingdom (recall that this is the lowest of the Sephiroth) is reminiscent of the eschatology of the Kabbalah.[54] This theme is developed further by Locke in his note on Ephesians 1: 10 that treats the theme of the recapitulation of everything in Christ, the Head, of his recovery of the dominion of the Kingdom his 'Rule and Supremacy' over everything, which was his dominion before the foundation of the visible world. These may be vintage Christian themes, but they take on added richness when viewed against the mythological background of the Kabbalah. Locke's preference for a mythological as opposed to metaphysical Christology, although one no less high with respect to the divine dignity attributed to the Messiah, may very well have been reinforced by his reading of the *Adumbratio*.

These instances are at best possible evidence of Locke's appropriation of Kabbalistic themes for the theological tasks he undertook during the last decade of his life. The next and final instance to be considered should account for much more. This instance occurred earlier than the ones represented above. It is an addition first introduced at IV. x. 18 of the second edition of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*.[55] In this section of the *Essay*, Locke set out to refute claims that matter is eternal. He is responding to the objection that matter seems to be eternal because, although we have experience of composite bodies coming to be, we have no experience of a beginning of bare matter; this is in contrast with what every mortal conscious being knows on reflection, that his mind, which is taken to be spiritual, has a beginning. So it is easier to accept that God created spirits, than that he created bare matter. Locke's response in first edition is an appeal to divine power: it takes equal power to create matter or spirit; if we accept that God has created one of these, then there is no reason

[53] *WR*, 93.

[54] *A Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 251.

[55] The second edition was published in 1694; final arrangements for the new edition were completed by December 1693; see Nidditch, pp. xix–xxv.

why we shouldn't accept that he has created the other. The second edition adds a new argument that may be characterized as transcendentalist.

> … if we would emancipate our selves from vulgar Notions, and raise our Thoughts, as far as they would reach, to a closer contemplation of things, we might be able to aim at some dim and seeming conception how Matter might at first be made, and begin to exist by the power of that eternal first being: But to give beginning and being to a Spirit, would be found a more inconceivable effect of omnipotent Power. But this being what would perhaps lead us too far from the Notions, on which the Philosophy now in the World is built, it would not be pardonable to deviate so far from them.[56]

Coyness aside, Locke is suggesting that the proper self-awareness of a spiritual being not immersed in matter and subject to conditions of finitude, such as all of Adam's progeny are under, is a sense of eternity. Created spirits in pristine condition, in their first creation, have no more a sense of their beginning than of their end. Locke's hesitancy in introducing this argument, and his judgment that it may not be pardonable to depart from more familiar notions that characterize us in our present state, doesn't invalidate the thought, which has Kabbalistic overtones. It brings one back to the first creation, which was supposed to be altogether spiritual; the state of this first world is eternal, whether timeless or an infinite duration without beginning or end, and therefore, all spirits would have no awareness of a beginning or end of existence. To entertain such a thought about oneself, as Locke does here, involves an intimation of pre-existence, at least in an archetypal sense. It is understandable that Locke continued to apply an intellectual value to the notion of the revolution of souls.

It is noteworthy that one finds this very thought more fully expressed and defended by another English thinker who was a recipient of the Kabbalah and of the proto-*Kabbala Denudata*. Anne Conway argued that although created spirits are not co-eternal with God, nevertheless, since there can be no temporal interval between God's will to create them and their coming to be, it must be 'that time is infinite from the moment of creation and has no quantity which the created intellect can conceive. For in what way could it be finite or measured since it has no other beginning than eternity itself?'[57] The link between these two English thinkers was Francis Mercury van Helmont, who just about the time that Locke was preparing revision for the second edition of the *Essay* was a guest at Oates, and so was either in Locke's company, or not so far removed from his thoughts. It is my opinion that Locke's transcendental thought about the eternity of the mind or soul or spirit was a Helmontian and Kabbalistic moment; further, this thought and others which must have been in train with it, influenced his thinking when he set upon a course of theological reflection in 1694 and as he sought a proper frame for his reflections on

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[56] *Essay* IV. x. 18 (628–29).

[57] *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Allison P. Coudert and Taylor Corse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 12.

the Christian gospel and motivated him to a more detailed study of the more speculative part of the New Testament, the letters of St Paul.

If one looks ahead into the eighteenth century, the junction of two prominent occasions of the reception of Kabbalah in England during the previous century, and two of their personages, Anne Conway and John Locke will prove to be more than a mere curiosity of intellectual history, especially in the light of the work of two prominent Lockeans, Edmund Law (1703–87), Master of Peterhouse, and bishop of Carlisle, and Abraham Tucker (1705–74), a gentleman who turned to philosophy for consolation after his wife's untimely death. Law's *Considerations on the State of the World with regard to the Theory of Religion* is a theory of human progress, providentially governed; its course was determined before the foundation of the world in the Messiah.[58] The concurrence of moral, physical, and metaphysical progress, and of the ascent of the soul through higher species is central to the Kabbalist theory of restitution and was adopted by Christian Kabbalists, and clearly stated by Anne Conway.[59]

In Abraham Tucker, *The Light of Nature Pursued*,[60] John Locke is accorded the highest philosophical authority. Yet, Tucker departs from Locke in important ways: he rejects Locke's mortalism in favour of a doctrine of immortality that accords with Henry More, Anne Conway's friend, mentor, philosopher collaborator, and devotee. The third volume of Tucker's work combines standard Lockean notions with ideas that are reminiscent of More and the Kabbalah, although Tucker cites no sources: for example, the vehicular state of spirits,[61] the world soul (Sandalphon): and in the concluding chapter of that volume, entitled 'The Vision', Tucker records an out-of-body experience, a dream-vision, in which he is guided and instructed by John Locke in a vehicular state.[62]

This seems a good point to end this study. The ways that Locke might continue to inhabit our thoughts should not be taken casually, as one may do when thinking of him merely as the 'inventor of common sense'[63]; there is a much richer Lockean heritage, not all of it what one might expect.

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[58] Cambridge: J. Thurlbourn, 1745; *Considerations* was revised and reissued three times, 1749, 1759, and 1784; for last two editions the title was also revised: *Considerations on the Theory of Religion*.

[59] Conway, *Principles*, Chap. VI.

[60] *The Light of Nature Pursued*, ed. Sir H.P. St. John Mildmay, 7 vols. (London: R. Faulder, 1805).

[61] A quasi-material plastic state, whereby spirits are able to assume a variety of shapes and modes of perception and communication.

[62] 'My good friend … addressed me as follows. Welcome Ned Search [Tucker's nom de plume], into the vehicular state: you are in the hands of one who is not an utter stranger to you, though not your contemporary: for know that I am John Locke'; Tucker, op. cit., iii. 437.

[63] Gilbert Ryle, 'John Locke', *Collected Papers*, 2 vols. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), i. 147–57. It should be said that Ryle's thoughts about Locke were casual. It would be interesting to know how he might have modified them, had he been aware of Locke's other intellectual pursuits.

Text (MS Locke c. 27, fols. 75–7)

[75r] Dubia circa Philosophiam Orientalem[64]

Anima Messiæ

An ista anima messiae in vacuo producta. fuit novum aliquod additum diminutae dei Luci, vel lux illa sola a deo relicta v. p. 12 § 36. p. 26 § 2. Si posterius, hinc Anima Messiae est tantum pars dei obscurior. Si prius, rogo quid fuit, vel quem conceptum formari debemus, de eo quod de novo producebatur? Quod itidem Quaeri potest etiam de aliis creaturis ab Adamo primo productis v. p. 26 § 2.

Quid sibi velit Filius in Gloria patris. p. 8 § 7

Corpus lapsorum Spirituum non dicitur Adam Belial sed Belial & in Syriaco Satanas 2 Cor VI. 15 p. 27. § 9

An Spiritus in fini ordinis sive regni habuerunt cognitionem & amorem dei & aliarum rerum antequam fieri ut materia & an jam retinent hujus cognitionis aliquid

Spiritus regni ab omni actualitate sive irradiatione cessabant ex consilio dei ne Cortices delapsi natura regni guaderent. Quero in quo consistit gaudere de naturâ regni

Quid est esse globum caliginosum? 29 § 6

Quid esse destitutum vitali capacitate ad materiam. 29 § 6

Quomodo excitantur. 29 § 6

Lumen

Cum lumen sit terminus præcipuus et quasi fundamentalis intotâ hac hypothesi maxime cavendum est ne totam hanc scientiam mero sono superstruamus et labili vocis fundamento sine re innitamur. quod semper facimus cum voces sine certa clara & destincta notione usurpemus. Hic igitur in lumine statuendum est quid ubique significamus per lucem & luminosum esse. Si nempe sumenda sit pro luce vulgariter dicta et oculis perceptibili qualis est Solis vel lucernae quod non crediderim. vel si aliud quid significet ut hoc certo explicetur definiaturque. Quod eo impensius rogo. quia multi mihi videntur loci in quorum nonullis lucem proprie sumptum in aliis in sensu plane figurato suum videtur

Ascendere & Descendere

Dici aliquando videntur respectu illuminationis ut p. 7 § 5. & aliquando respectu loci ut p. 29 § 8 Quae homonymia vitanda est, si claram et a ludibrio tutam hanc velimus doctrinam

[64] All page and section numbers in the text are to *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae* (Frankfort, 1684).

Quae fuit illa unio quae cum supernis manebat 29 § 8

Spiritus Systematis creativi et formativi accipiunt vehicula materiae subtilissimae quod est caelum empyraeum. p. 32 § 8 Quero an habent semper vehicula vel ad libitum possint succedere vel deponere

An omnes cortices relegabantur in umbram terrae

Ταρταρώσις Quid significat 2 Pet II. 4 & si sit relegatio in locum quondam quinam est iste locus

Boni Genii p. 32 § 11 Quid sint

Quomodo spiritus Systemati Creativi vocari possint animae humanae cum plurima earum sint quae corpore semper carentes, nunquam constituunt homines.

Spiritus distinguitur a materia p. 34 § 2 Quero in quo consistıt ea distinctio sepositis operationibus?

Spiritus essentiae indivisibilis dicitur p. 33 §. 2. Quomodo hoc convenire possit de eo quod alibi dicitur de eorum divisibile & de scintillis

Quero Explicationem § 3 c. 9 p. 58 et praesertim quodnam fuit illud primum animarum peccatum et an omnes quae in principio creatae sunt animae erant ad unum omnes in isto corpore protoplastae

Quero In quo consistit concupiscentia prava 59 § 6

Quero Dilucidationem c 10 § 2 p. 59

Quero Animas a corticibus liberat Generatio 60 § 6

Quaenam fuerunt illae anima nobiliores 60. §. 6 vel in quo constabat ista nobilitas

~~God~~

~~Infinite inaccessible light filling every place. Withdrew that great brightnesse of his light which noe creature can bare or approach, & soe left a very large space wherein it was an abated light of his infinitely glorious presence & in this he created the Soule of the Messias which possessed all this space & is indissolubly united with that light of god which stil remaind though not in its ful luster. This is called the first man~~ [65]

Deus

Lux infinita quae ad implevit omne ubi, ubique sibi similis 1 Tim VI. 16 Jac. I. 17. 1 Joh. I. 5.

Haec lux vocatur vita Jo: I. 4

Vocatur etiam Spiritus Jo: IV. 24

Omnes autem hae appellationes deo tribuuntur secundum excellentiam; Quia incomprehensibili quodam gradu secundum hos concipiendi modos omnia producta superat

[65] This entire section marked for deletion in the manuscript.

Solus etiam bonus est unde communicabilis κατ' ἐξοχήν Ideoque quadantenus consideratus ad extra haec communicabilitas illum repraesentat partim ut cognoscibilem, partim ut amabilem. Varietas igitur non alia est in deo, nisi varii manifestandi gradus pro subiectorum contemplantium varietate exorti

Creatio

Deus ille infinitus ut creationis locum cedere possit, quae alias infinitam vim lucis ejus sustinere non potuissent Jo: I. 18 subtrahendo diversos prasentiae suae gradus spatium quoddam intra se certo modo evacuavit Act XVII. 28

1 Anima Messiae
In hoc spatio Jo: I. 18 primum Col. I. 15. Jo. XVII. 5 producta est anima messiae, cuius amplitudo tanta ut totum hoc spatium occuparet. Summus gradus lucis divinae influendo se communicans animae messiae dicitur Messiae natura Divina. Hic vocatur Adam primus. Filius dei unigenitus Jo: I. 18. Imago dei invisibili Col I 15. Hic producit & gubernat inferiora 1 Cor XV. 28 Hic vocatur Mundus Emanativus p. 25 cum luce divinitatis sibi communicata uniter gradu excellentissimo unione intellectus quæ consistit in contemplatione et voluntate quae consistit in amore.

2 Spiritus
Per & intra Col I 16 Adamum Primum producti sunt Globi diversi magnitudinis ad puncti usque exiguitatam invicem ad centra penetrabiles cum potestate irradiandi, sive emittendi sphaeram luminosam majoram minoramve secundum varios sive primae constitutiones sive proprii moderaminis gradus. Haec irradiatio mihi videtur hac tria continere. 1º Internam cogitationem 2º Externam perceptionem. 3º Conceptuum communicationem. 4º Corporum motivitatem. Et prout ad plura & remotiora & perfectius harum facultatum vis extenditur ita spiritus quius dicetur habere majoram vel minoram sphaeram irradiationis; ascendere vel descendere habere majorum vel minorum illuminationem vel influxum ~~vel gloriam~~ JL

Lux infinita est Pater Lux ab Infinito influens in Messiam et cum eo unita est Filius. Lux a Messia influens in inferiora est Spiritus Sanctus.

1 Messiae Attributa vel nomina
Unigenitus a patre Jo: I. 14. 18. III: 16. 18. 1 Jo: IV. 9 Mar XII. 16.
Instrumentum & medium unde alia inferiora 1 Jo: 3 Eph: III. 9 Col. I. 16 Heb. I. 2
Summus doctor John I. 18
Perfectus Heb. VII. 28
Splendor dei & imago essentiae eius Heb. I. 3 Jo. XIV. 9. XII. 45
Rex regum Apoc XIX. 16. XVI. 14.
Verbum Jo. I. 1. & 14 1 Jo. I. l Apoc XIX. 13 Heb. I. 3
Adam 1 Cor XV. 45 & Adam primus Apoc. I. 17
Corona summa Luc II. 14. XIX. 38 p. 11 §. 26: p. 14 § 44. p. 27 § 6 & Diadema seu fascia summi pariter Mar. V. 7 vocatur filius & virtus summi
Senex dierum Confer Dan VII. 9. 22 Joh. V. 22 Apoc. I. 14

Macrocosmus quod continet causae primae causatae Heb. I. 3. Confer 2 Cor. VI. 18 παντοκράτωρ singificat omnia tenens. Apoc. I. 8. IV. 8. XI. 17. XV. 3. XVI. 7. 14. XIX. 6. 15. XXI. 22. Jo. III. 35. confer Jo. XIII. 3 & Mat. XXVIII. 18
Habitaculum infiniti Gazophylacium perfectionum in causata distribuendorum pariter Col: II. 3 Confer Col II. 9 & Heb I. 3
Aleph Apoc. I. 8. XXI. 6. XXII. 13

2 Spiritus
Naturae productae a deo Infinito opera Adamum primum omnes erant spiritus
Essentia eorum concipi potest centri instar
Vita, ut sphæra radiosa ab illo centro pro arbitrio eradiantis juxta varias figuras modo largius modo remissius evibrata
Intellectum simul habentes seu cognitionem sine collectione intuitivam

[76^{v}]Et Voluntatem seu vim applicandi se ad commodum suum ut deum cognoscerent & amarent

Produxit eos Adam primus retrahendo suam lucem (ut ipse factus est a patre retrahendo lucem suam infinitem) in partem superiorem unde factae naturae determinatae spirituales, quae quod capaces erant recipere lucem desuper in se influentem dicuntur vasa

Horum possumus considerare 4 gradus. Post Messiam qui dicitur prima elastis sive Mundus Emanativus. p. 25 § 54. p. 27 § 6.

1º Tota congeries sive corpus animarum humanarum et sub forma unius corporis humani quod Dicitur Adam Protoplastes et Collegium Sapientiae p. 27. § 7 et mundus Creativus p. 30 § 4. Cum pars harum amore materiae tanta erat demittebatur hic Adam Protoplastes ita ut pedibus esset

2º Angeli qui perseverarunt in Collegio Intelligentiae unde a philosophis Intellegentiae dictae in mundo factivo corpore informativo et (p 27 § 8) capite in creativo 32 § 12 et totum hoc systema vocatur mundus Formativus p. 30 § 4.

3º Angeli qui postea ceciderunt in collegio micro prosopi. Horum 6 fureunt Ordines. Quorum caput post lapsum vocatur a Cab: Samaël in Evangelio Belzebul & princeps Dæmonorum Luc. XI. 15 p. 27 § 9

4º Spiritus qui nunc dicentur formae seminales & materia. in Regno. Hi fuerunt puncta irradiantia sed minoris irradiationis. Hi duo post lapsum vocuntur mundus Factivus constans ex materia & corticibus. 30

1º Animas praeexistisse v. Sap: VIII. 19. Jo. IX. 2 Mat XVI. 14

Lapsus

Angeli microprosopi peccarunt 2 Pet II. 4. 1 Jo. III. 8

Peccatum erat cessatio a contemplatione Jo. VIII. 44 & amore dei. averterunt faciem suam a luce influente, unde dicuntur deseruisse proprium suum domocilium in qua commorantes studiis divinis invigilarunt Jud 6 hi vocantur Cortices & post constitutum mundum visibilem relegabantur in conos umbrosos terrae et planetarum sub cortis ducibus hi coni vocantur funda 1 Sam XXV. 29 32 1 Thess V. 5. 8 2 Cor VI. 14 2 Pet II. 4. Lapsi sunt etiam Spiritus regni. scilicet irradiatio & activitas

eorum cessabat ita ut manerent puncta nuda seu monades materiales sive sphæra activitatis sive irradiationis, ex quibus combinatis facta est mundi materia chaotica Hoc factum dei Consilio ne Cortices Daemones delapsi naturâ regni gauderent. Rom VIII. 20. Ματαιότης Graece idem quod est Syriace status activitate & motu carens [non sponte] lapsi sunt ut Angeli [sed propter subiicientum] causam nimirem superiorem. ne Daemonibus lapsis subderentur naturae tam activae ut antea. Sed monades illi retinent aliquam adhuc lucem qua intelligant & amant se ipsos, quæ si excitetur certo modo suos iterum posset emittere radios uti formae materiales & seminales; vel saltem aliquam ad istam irradationem tendentiam. Rom. VIII. 19. 21. 22.

Cortices sive Globi caliginosi ulteriore irradiatione destituti extrinsecus excitari possunt a naturâ magis luminosâ: Et nullâ vitali capacitate ad materiam praediti sive nudi certo auxilio juvari possunt et hoc modo fieri quid medium inter cortices & lumina. Itidem monades motu proprio destitutae sed ad eundem pronae & lucis irradiationisque capaces, sunt materia. Si vero a lumine quodam vitali ad αὐτοκίνησιν excitentur medium quid sunt inter materiam & spiritum. Quales sunt spiritus vitales Animalium, plantarum & quorundam inanimatorum influi qui compositi sunt e corpusculis materialibus alimentorum & tamen ob excitationi luminosam a formâ animalis procedentum suos produnt affectus 29

Animae quaedam & Angeli ad contemplationem materiae conversi cum subtilissimae materiae partibus uniebantur unde exorta est in ipsis vitalis capacitas ad vehicula 29

Animas

Mundus Visibilis

Ex monadibus sortis activitate privatis facta est materia quae in isto statu sine motu quiescens dicebatur tohu et sine forma Bohu 31 & eae ea materia hujus visibilis mundi machina in hanc quam videmus formam extracta ab Adamo primo Apoc III. 14 Col. I. 15. 16 Jo. I. 3. 1 Cor VIII. 6 Eph. III. 9 Heb I. 2. p. 31 Et Spiritus naturae Sandalphon motum excitabet in & super particulis vorticis in quo nunc terra versatur tum suis annexis 31 scilicet *Elohim* i. e gradus divinae manifestationis qui in Adamo primo erat Jubebat ut Verbum (quod est anima Messiae cum ipso unita) operaretur & produceret lucem, quae sic ordinante Adamo primo exhibit. scilicet Spiritus naturae Sandalphon dictus materae subtilissimae dedit motum. Haec materia subtilis in qua nostra terra versatur ad Caelum Empyreum extenditur et inde fiunt Animarum persistentium et Angelorum bonorum vehicula 31

[77^{r}]C. 7 Animae Praeexistentia

Diversos Indoles Dispositiones & Inclinationes in hos vel illos mores secum inferunt animae in corpora ex habitibus prius contractis. 37 §. 9. 40 § 12.

Habitus illi contracti sunt vel ante omnem corporis ingressum. vel in aliis corporibus quae prius possederant 41. §. 12

Præexistentia Sap. VIII. 19 Jo: IX. 2. Mat. XVI. 14

In statu lapso imperfectior est anima extra quam in Corpore 48 § 31.

Animae olim cum primo factae fureunt in patria: cum delapsae sunt in statum peccati fuerunt in statu neutro; Et jam cum haec corpora ingrediuntur sunt in via reditus 48. § 32

Animae aliquae multa secula permanent in statu silentii & torporis antequam corpora ingrediantur

Ingredientes Corpora nullam retinent praeteritorum memoriam 49 § 33. Tria sunt quorum occasione in hac vita obliviscimur eorum quae nobis nota fuerunt 1º Idearum latentium excitatio ab externis objectis. 2º Idearum Latentium neglecta per meditationem repetitio. 3º Crasis corporis immutata a morbo, quae aliquando penitus delet omnes ex memoria Ideas JL prioribus duabus modis Ideae quasi sensum evanescunt JL

Animae possent extra vehiculum vivere etiamsi potentiam habet vivendi in vehiculo 50 § 34

Resurrectio non erit Carnis quatenus carnis 1 Cor XV. 51. Sed materia quae fuit caro mutabitur in naturam vehiculi quod hinc animae cuilibet competet.

Anima a Vehiculo terreno Soluta statim sistitur coram judicio particulari, et quaesitum erit an ita vixerit ut redendum ipsi sit ad priorem statum. 50 § 37

Fideles vero ascendent in statum incorruptibilem 1 Pet V. 4. 1 Cor IX. 25. XV. 42. 43

Una anima sola est centralis in uno corpore, nempe cuius centrum vitale locum suum obtinet in illo puncto materiae in quo sedem animae primariam jam determinaverit spiritus universi Haec est anima formativa anima proprie istius hominis, et reliquae in isto corpore animae si sint 600 sunt omnes subordinatae 51 §. 39

Ut animis humanis apta sit materia, materia seminalis in hominum corporibus debet recte præparari. p. 51. § 40

C 8 9

~~De personis Devinitatis~~

Animarum lapsus c. 9

Omnes animae ante lapsum materia subtilista indutae §. 2 et in unum quasi corpus sub formâ humanâ redactae sub moderamine Animae Adami terrestris. Hoc systema vocatur Adam Protoplastes, sub monarcha Messiah Eph IV. 13 Rom XII. 5 1 Cor XII. 27. Eph V. 23 Col. I. 24. Jo: XI. 52. Cui insidiatur Adam Belial i e exercitus corticum Prov VI. 12. 2 Cor VI. 15. Et singuli singules animales Adami protoplastae implicati ad peccatum imputerunt Rom V. 12. 1 Cor XV. 22. Animae minus subjugatae erant populi Israelitici & foederis antiqui. reliquae 70 populorum quibus praefecti sunt totidem principes corticum §. 5. Effectus hujus cladis mors sive privatio graduum priorum & descensus a paradiso in Terram ipsam in corpus materialae crassissimae, in dominium pravae concupiscentiae loco dominiis lucis Messianae et in captivitatum sub corticibus Col. I. 13 Heb. II. 14. 1 Pet II. 9 donec per viam Generationis &c exinde extrahantur § 6

Restitutio animarum c. 10

Messias filios dei congregabit in unum Jo XI. 52 Notitiores animae nascebantur in corporibus Israeliticis ut proinde sub primo foedere: et ita methodo Legis et vero divino multi praeparabantur ad perfectionem aliquando temporibus Messiae obtinendam Heb XI. 40. Dan XII. 13. Sive per revolutionem Mat XI. 14 sive per resurrectionem Mat XXVII. 52. 53. Exteriores vero methodo Philosophiae expoliit ad obtinendum vel proselytismum vel revolutionem intra populum foederis et haec est electio

[77^{v}] De qua tam frequenter in novo testamento et Syris dicitur Secretio scilicet ad foedus et ecclesiam tam priscam Rom IX. 11 quam Recentem Act IX. 15 & passim 2º pertinaciores corigendo partes tam corporalibus quam Gehennalibus. Impugnando 1º materiam sive carnem ejusque concupiscentias 2º peccatum sive mundum scilicet exampla prava & Idolo latriam & puriorem cultum instituendo. scilicet precando & laudando deum in & per Christum. Ad virtutem revocando 1º per philosophiam 2º per legem sive foedus antiquum 3º omnium perfectissimum per foedus novam in quo quis ob spem vitae aeternae abnegatâ propriâ justitia & viribus Patrum caelestum ardente fide ob foedus novum per messiae sacrificio propriis corporis sancitum implerat ut spiritus sancti auxilio praesentem affectum subigat hinc enim vi promissionis (Mat XV. 7–11 XXI. 22 & alibi) auxilium istud obtinet. Unde actus tales vocantur opera dei (Jo: VI. 28. 29) fructus spiritus (Gal V. 22 Eph V. 9) opera fidei (1 Thes: I. 3. 2 Thes. I. 11) plures tales actus vocantur Justitia fidei, ab instrumento; Justitia dei, a principio & omnia quae de sanctificatione dicuntur & de fide. Novi foederis conditiones a parte hominis vera fide influxum petere, ex parte Dei Patris peccatorum priorum non amplius memnisse & influxum Spiritus Sancti largiri. Hac igitur victima (Messia scilicet) in qua foedus sancitum in precibus patri oblatâ, cortices refringuntur. Satanam et totum exercitum sprituum malorum impugnando & Mortem vincendo.

Translation

[75^{r}] Doubts about Oriental Philosophy

Soul of the Messiah

Whether this soul of the messiah is produced in a void. was something new added to the diminished Light of god, or was this light only a relict from God. See, p. 12 § 36. p. 26. § 2 If the latter, then the Soul of the Messiah is merely a more obscure part of god. If the former, I ask what was it, or what concept ought we to form of that which was newly produced? Likewise, it can be asked also about other creatures produced from the first Adam see p. 26 § 2.

Why did the Son want to be in the Glory of the Father? p. 8

The body of fallen Spirits is not called Adam Belial but Belial & in Syriac Satan 2 Cor VI. 15 p. 27 § 9

Whether at the outermost limit of order or dominion Spirits possess knowledge and love of god & of other things before becoming as matter & whether now they retain some of this knowledge

In accordance with the counsel of God, Spirits will cease from all actuality or irradiation of dominion, so that fallen Cortices would no longer rejoice in the nature of dominion. I ask. What is it to rejoice in the nature of dominion?

What is it to be a dark globe?

What to be deprived of vital capacity and left to become matter? 29

How are they [i. e. fallen Spirits] aroused? 29

Light

Since light is a primary term of this hypothesis and is employed foundationally throughout it, we must above all avoid founding the whole of this science on mere sounds or sustaining it with fleeting utterances that are without a basis in reality. But this is what we always do when we utter sounds without certain clear and distinct notions. Here, accordingly, whatever we signify as light or luminous is something standing in light. I certainly would not accept [this hypothesis] if light were understood in a vulgar sense, as something visually perceived in the sun or under a lamp. or, if it were used in some other sense that is not explained and defined. But then my question becomes all the more insistent, because there are many places [in the *Adumbratio*], where light is taken in its proper sense, and others where it seems to be used in an entirely figurative sense.

Ascending & Descending

This appears sometimes to apply to illumination as p. 7 §5. & sometimes to location as p. 29 §8 which homonym ought to be avoided, if we want this whole doctrine to be clear and without reproach.

What sort of union remained above? 29 § 8

Spirits of the created or formative world system receive vehicles of the most subtle matter, which is the empyrean heaven. p. 32. I ask whether they always have these vehicles or are able at will to receive them or lay them aside

Whether all cortices were removed to the shadow of the earth

What does Tartarus signify 2 Pet II. 4 & if this is a removal at a former time to a place, what place is this?

What are Good Genii? p. 32 § 11

How can the spirits of the Created world System be called human souls when many of them are always incorporeal, and never become men?

Spirit is distinguished from matter p. 34 § 2 I ask, apart from their operations, in what does this distinction consist?

Spirit is said to be essentially indivisible p. 33§ 2. How is this able to fit with what is said elsewhere about their indivisibility and about sparks?

I ask for an Explication of §3 c. 9 p. 58 and in particular what was that first sin of the souls and whether all souls that were created in the beginning were united in the same body of [Adam] Protoplastes?

I ask. What is depraved desire? 59 § 6

I ask. [What is] Distinctness? c 10 § 2

I ask. How does generation free the souls from the cortices? 60 § 6

Since these were more noble souls 60 § 6 on what this nobility founded?

~~God~~

~~Infinite inaccessible light filling every place. Withdrew that great brightnesse of his light which noe creature can bare or approach, & soe left a very large space wherein it was an abated light of his infinitely glorious presence & in this he created the Soule of the Messias which possessed all this space & is indissolubly united with that light of god which stil remaind though not in its ful luster. This is called the first man~~

God

Infinite light that fills every place, everywhere alike I Tim. VI. 16 James I. 17. 1 John. I. 5.

Here light is called life John I. 4

It is also called Spirit John IV. 24

Moreover all these appellations are attributed to god above all. Because, according to this mode of thinking, god surpasses everything made to a degree that is beyond comprehension

Hence Good alone is communicable *par excellence*. And therefore considered externally this communicability represents him on the one hand as knowable, and on the other, as amiable. Hence there is no variety in god, except various degrees of manifestation that appear for the contemplation of subjects

Creation

This infinite god is able to vacate the place of creation, which otherwise would not have been able to endure the infinite power of his light John I. 18, by withdrawing diverse grades of his presence God evacuates in a fixed manner a certain space within himself Acts XVII. 28

1 the Soul of the Messiah

In this space John I. 18 in the beginning Col. I. 15. John XVII. 5 the soul of the messiah was produced, whose fullness is so great that it fills this whole space. The highest grade of divine light communicating itself to the soul of the messiah by an influx is called the Divine nature of the Messiah. He is called the first

Adam. Unbegotten Son of God John I. 18 Image of the invisible god I Col 15. He produces & rules what is beneath him 1 Cor XV. 28 He is called the Emanated World p. 25 with the divine light communicated to him he unites intellect, which consists in contemplation and will which consists in love into a supreme union.

2 Spirit
Through and within Col I. 16 the first Adam Globes are produced of diverse magnitude down to the smallness of a point that are mutually penetrable to their centers and with power to irradiate or emit a great or small luminous sphere according to their different or primary constitutions or degrees of control proper to them. This irradiation seems to me to consist of three things. 1º Internal thought. 2º External perception. 3º Communication of concepts. 4º Corporeal motivation. And as far as this power extends to many and more remote and more perfect of these faculties their spirit is said to have a greater or lesser sphere of irradiation; to ascend or descend to have more or less illumination or influx ~~or glory~~ JL

Infinite Light is the father. Light that flows from infinity into the Messiah and is united with him is the Son. Light flowing from the Messiah into what is beneath him is the holy spirit.

1 Attributions or names of the Messiah
Only begotten by the father John I. 14. 18. III: 16. 18. 1 John IV. 9 Mar XII. 16
Instrument & medium from whom are other inferior beings 1 John 3 Eph III. 9 Col. I. 16 Heb. I. 2
Supreme teacher John I. 18
Perfect Heb. VII. 28
Splendor of god & image of his essence Heb. I. 3 John XIV. 9. XII. 45
King of kings Apoc XIX. 17. XVI. 14.
Word John I. 1. & 14 1 John I. 1 Apoc XIX. 13 Heb. I. 3
Adam 1 Cor XV. 45 & First Adam Apoc I. 17
Highest Crown Luke II. 14. XIX. 38 p. 11 §. 26: p. 14 § 44. p. 27 § 6 & Diadem or highest symbol of power. Likewise Mar V. 7 he is called son and power of the highest
Ancient of days compare Dan VII. 9. 22 John V. 22 Apoc. I. 14
Macrocosm containing the first causes of what is caused Heb. I. 3. Compare 2 Cor. VI. 18
Pantocrator [All-Creator] signifies upholding all things. Apoc. I. 8. IV. 8. XI. 17. XV. 3. XVI. 7. 14. XIX. 6. 15. XXI. 22. John III. 35. compare John XIII. 3 & Mat. XXVIII. 18
Dwelling place of the infinite Treasure-chest of the perfections distributed among things that are caused. likewise Col. II. 3 Compare Col II. 9 & Heb I. 3
Alpha Apoc. I. 8. XXI. 6. 13

2 Spirit
Natures produced by the Infinite God through the First Adam. all were spirits
Their essence can be conceived in the image of a center

Life, as a sphere radiating from that center by the will to eradiate, sometimes joining various figures for longer durations sometimes moving them in a more relaxed manner

They also have intuitive understanding or knowledge without rational deduction

[76v]And the will or the power to apply themselves to what is advantageous to themselves so that they may know and love god

The first Adam produced them by withdrawing his superior light (just as the father made him by withdrawing his infinite light) whence were produced determinate spiritual natures, that because they had the capacity to receive light flowing into themselves from above are called Vessels

We can conceive of 4 grades of these spirits after the Messiah who is called first formed or the Emanated World. p. 25 § 54. p. 27 § 6.

1º The sum or body of human souls also under the form of a single human body is called Adam Protoplastes [the first formed man] and the College of Wisdom p. 27 § 7 and the Creative World p. 30 § 4. Since part of this body acquired such a love of matter, Adam Protoplastes was demoted to this place and was fitted out with feet

2º Angels who persevered in the College of Intelligences, whence philosophers call them Intelligences, in the factive world they have form giving bodies and in the creative world, heads. This entire system is called the Formative world p. 30 § 4.

3º Angels who thereafter have been cut off from the lesser college of intelligences. There were six orders of these. Their head after the fall is called in the Cabbala Samaël in the Gospel Beelzebul & the prince of Demons Luc. XI. 15 p. 27 § 9

4º Spirits who now are called seminal forms & matter. In the Kingdom. They were irradiating points but of minor irradiation. After the fall these two are called the Factive world consisting of matter and cortices 30

1º Pre existent Souls, v. Wisdom VIII. 19. John IX. 2 Mat XVI. 14

Fall

Microscopic Angels have sinned 2 Pet II. 4. 1 John III. 8

Sin is the cessation of the contemplation John VIII. 44 & love of god. They turned their faces from the in-flowing light, whence they are said to have abandoned their proper dwelling place in which remain those who are intent upon divine study Jude 6. They are called Cortices [Shells] & after the visible world was constituted they were removed to the shadow places of the earth and of the planets and subjected to the rule of the cohorts. These places are called the basis I Sam XXX. 29. 31 1 Thess V. 5. 8 Also fallen are the Spirits of tyranny 2 Cor VI. 14 2 Pet II. 11. 4. Specifically, their irradiation and activity ceases so that they are as midpoints or material monads or spheres of activity or irradiation, from which unities the unformed matter of the world is made. This was done according to the Counsel of God lest the fallen Cortices or Demons should celebrate the nature of their kingdom. Rom. VIII. 20. The Greek word for Futility snigifies the same as the Syriac. it is a state lacking activity and motion [not by their own choice] have the Angels fallen [but by the will of him who

subjected them] but by a cause whose superiority cannot be mistaken. This was done lest the fallen demons carry their formerly active natures with them below. But these monads retain some measure of light by which they understand & love themselves, which, if it should in some way excite them, can be used to emit rays, material & seminal forms; or at least arouse some tendency to this irradiation. Rom CIII. 19. 21.22.

Cortices or darkened Globes destitute of any further illumination can be aroused from without by a more luminous nature: And they can be deprived of any vital capability towards matter, or destitute they can be supported and in this way they come to occupy a place between cortices and lights. In the same way monads destitute of their own motion but inclining towards it and capable of light and luminosity, are matter. If they should be aroused by some light to automotion, then they become a medium between matter and spirit. Such are the vital spirits that flow into Animals, plants and certain inanimate things that are composed out of material corpuscles of nourishment, yet by this awakened luminosity proceeding from animal form they generate their desires 29.

Some souls and Angels that turned to contemplate matter became united with the most subtle parts of matter whence there originated in this life a vehicular capacity 29

Souls

The Visible World

Matter was made from different sorts of monads by means of random activity peculiar to each which in this state of repose without motion is called 'Tohu' [Waste] and without form 'Bohu' [Void] & these [monads become] the matter of this visible world, the machine in that form which we see extracted from the first Adam Apoc. III. 14 Col. I. 15. 16 Jo. I. 3 1 Cor VIII 6 Eph. III. 9 Heb I. 2. p. 31. Next Sandalphon, the spirit of nature, stimulates motion in and above particular vortices in which the earth and its annexes turn. 31 It should be noted that *Elohim* i.e. the degree of divine manifestation was in the first Adam. He commanded that the Word (who united the soul of the Messiah with himself) might work and produce light, which, so ordained, he displayed in the first Adam. It should be noted that the spirit of nature, called Sandalphon, endowed the subtlest matter with motion. This subtle matter in which our earth turns extends to the Fiery Heaven and then they become vehicles of good angels and of steadfast souls.

[77^{r}]Ch. 7 The Pre-existence of Souls

From habits acquired in previous lives, embodied souls, bring with them Diverse Characters, Dispositions & Inclinations towards certain modes of conduct. 37 § 9. 40 § 12.

They have acquired these dispositions either before their entry into any body or while in other bodies that they previously possessed 41§ 12 Preexistence The Wisdom of Solomon VIII. 19. John IX. 2. Matt. XVI. 14

In the fallen state the soul is more imperfect outside of the body than in it 48 § 31.

Souls were first made in their native place: when they had fallen into a state of sin they were in a neutral state; and now since they are involved with these bodies they are in the way of return 48 § 32

Some souls remain in a state of silence and insensitivity for many ages & before then enter into bodies

Souls that have entered into Bodies retain no memory of past things 49 § 33. There are three occasions in this life when we forget things that were known to us 1° arousal of latent ideas by external objects. 2° neglected repetition of latent ideas through meditation. 3° in a gross body altered by disease, which sometimes obliterates internally all ideas from the memory JL In the last two modes it is as though Ideas have lost their sense JL

Souls are able to live outside their vehicles even if they have the power to live in them p. 50 § 34

Resurrection is not of Flesh so far as it is flesh 1 Cor XV. 51. But matter which was flesh is transformed into a vehicle which here is suitable to any soul.

A soul freed from its earthly Vehicle is immediately brought before a particular court and is asked whether it has lived in such a way that it ought to be returned to its prior state 50 § 37

The faithful ascend to an incorruptible state 1 Pet. V. 4 1 Cor IX. 25. XV. 42. 43

There is only one soul at the midpoint of one body. It occupies its own vital center at that point in matter in which the world spirit [NB. Sandalphon] would have determined to be the primary seat of the soul. This is the formative soul, the proper soul of one particular man and if there should be in this same body an additional 600 more souls, they are all subordinate to it 51 § 39

In order that matter may be fit for a human soul, seminal matter must be correctly prepared 51 § 40

Ch. ~~8~~ 9
~~Concerning the persons of the divinity~~
The Fall of Souls Ch. 9

Before the Fall, all souls were clothed with the subtlest matter §2 and were gathered in a kind of body shaped like a human and they were put under the direction of the soul of the terrestrial Adam. This system of souls is called Adam Protoplastes, and is subject to the rule of the Messiah Eph. IV. 13 Rom XII. 5 1 Cor. XII. 27. Eph V. 23 Col. I. 24. Jo: XI.52. Adam Belial, i e the host of cortices, settled into the terrestrial Adam Prov. VI. 12. 2 cor. VI. 15. And individual souls caught up in this one Adam Protoplastes have his sin imputed to them Rom. V. 12. 1 Cor. XV. 22. The souls of the people of Israel and of those under the ancient covenant suffered a lesser degree of subjugation. The remaining 70 nations have been made subject to the rulers of the Cortices § 5. Death is the consequence of this catastrophe, or the

loss of the prior grade of existence & the descent from paradise to earth itself in gross material bodies, under the dominion of depraved desire away from the Messianic dominion of light and in captivity under the Cortices Col. I. 13 Heb. II. 14. 1 Pet II. 9 until through generation and other means they are accordingly released § 6

The Restitution of Souls Ch. 10 <&11>

The messiah will gather into one the sons of god XI. 52[66] More cognizant Souls will be born into Israelite bodies equally under the first covenant: so that by the discipline of the Law and of divine truth many will be prepared to attain perfection during the era of the Messiah. Heb. XI. 40. Daniel XII. 13. either by revolution Matt. XI. 14 or by resurrection Matt XXVII. 52. 53. Souls outside [the covenant] [the messiah] makes perfect by the discipline of true philosophy so that they may be admitted to the people of the covenant either by conversion or by revolution; and this constitutes election

Concerning which, in the New Testament and in Syriac it is as often called Separation [being set apart] for the covenant or church; the old Romans IX. 11 as well as the new Acts IX. 15 & passim 2º by making straight the more stubborn parts that are as much in the body as in Hell. By striving against 1º carnal matter and its lusts 2º sin, or the world, its wickedness & idolatry & by establishing a purer worship, in particular, by praying and praising God in & through Christ. By the restoration of virtue 1º through philosophy 2º through law or the ancient covenant 3º most perfect of all, through the new covenant, in which whoever, because of the hope of eternal life, denying his own righteousness, maintains a steadfast faith in the power of the heavenly father, and, on account of the new covenant, through the Messiah's sacrifice of his own body, is imbued with holiness as, assisted by the holy spirit, he subjugates his present desire, for henceforth he obtains this help by the power of the promise (Matt XV. 7–11 XXI. 22 & elsewhere). Whence such acts are called 'works of God' (John VI. 28. 29) 'the fruit of the spirit' (Galatians V. 22 Ephesians V. 9) 'works of faith' (1 Thess. I. 3. 2 thess. I. 11) These acts also are called 'the Righteousness of faith', on account of their means or instrumentality; or 'the Righteousness of God', on account of everything that has been declared from the beginning concerning sanctification and faith. The conditions of the new covenant are, on the part of man, that he pray with a true faith for the influx [of the holy spirit], and, on the part of God the Father, that he no longer remember prior sins & that he grant the influx of the holy spirit. Accordingly, by this victim (namely, the Messiah), who offered the holy covenant to the father in his prayers, the cortices are shattered. By assaulting Satan and the agitated host of Evil Spirits and by conquering Death.

[66] John 11: 52 '… to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad'.

Appendix

Lexicon of the Syncatabasis *7* 88

Abyssus [Abyss] is the vortex in which earth now turns p. 31[67]
Adam Kadmon or the first Adam is the preexisting soul of the Messiah in all creatures
Adam Protoplastes is the system of human souls 32. 56
Adam Belial is the whole plenitude or host of the Cortex 32
Caelum [Heaven] is the grade of [divine] manifestation which first appears in Adam & is united with him 32
Elohim [God] is the grade of manifestation which is in the first Adam & with whom he is united 32
Macroscopus refers to the Crown 54 § 2
Mors [Death] is the privation of the first grade [of manifestation] 59
Principium [Beginning of creation] is the first Adam
Sandalphon is the Spirit of nature. 32
Scintilla [Sparks] are the many souls of posterity hidden somehow in one man. 35
Verbum [Word] is the soul of the Messiah united with God

Caballa 88

Constriction of diminution of man the Vessel of the creature is an influx of light

Spirit are globes of diverse magnitude who are able to expand or contract their spheres of irradiation

They are able to penetrate each other but not to the center

There were five infinite spirits that bring forth in such a way that there could be nothing but irradiating points [i.e. sparks]; these subsequently became matter

1º. the greatest Spirit is the Soul of the messiah
2º. next in magnitude are human souls
3º. good Angels
4º. angels who are now evil
5º. minimum globes or monads

God present to himself is the father; God present to the Messiah is the son; God present to all other creatures is the Holy Spirit, who is present with or through the Messiah internal light prevades the vessels, or external & surrounding it, which is called the crown

[67] Numerals after the entries refer to page and section number of *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christianae*.

The first creation was of spirits only
1° There were numberings or lights before the fall
However there are four after the fall of the world
The vessels break from too much light and they die
The fall resulted from a turning away from contemplation and its influence
Satan or Samael or Beelzebub or Belial was the prince of the six orders of angels who fell.
Sparks They are entities between spirit and matter they descended.

Chapter 7
Reflections on Locke's Platonism*

Introduction

Although, as my title signifies, what I am about to offer are only reflections and not a comprehensive exposition and argument, I hope to show by these thoughts that the topic, Locke's Platonism, is neither incoherent nor empty, that in fact Platonic themes are woven into the fabric of Locke's philosophy, most notably, I think, the basic Neoplatonic theme of procession and return, and that on account of this, it is not only proper to regard Locke as a sort of a Platonist, but pertinent to understanding his place in the history of philosophy.[1] There are, I think, benefits to be gained from this exercise also, among them, and this is primary, a better understanding of Locke and of his contexts. Beyond these, I suspect there may be some benefit to philosophy, but to show this is not part of my present purpose. Before proceeding, I would make one proviso: I am not suggesting that Locke thought of himself as a Platonist. He probably did not. But no one would deny that it is possible to be a sort of Platonist, and even to have Platonic intentions, without believing it about oneself, and there are moments in his writings, some of which will be noted below, when one can imagine Locke thinking of himself as a friend of Plato.

My paper falls into two parts: in the first part, I shall sketch out a picture of Locke as Platonist. The dominant elements of this picture are derived from certain of his thoughts that are not on the face of it Platonic, that seem rather at first glance to be quite definitely opposed to it, but which when properly contextualised will, I trust, appear to fit quite suitably into a Platonic scheme.

The second part is devoted to a review of some of Locke's encounters with contemporary Platonism, so far as this can be determined from his manuscripts, and

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* This chapter was previously in *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity*, ed. Douglas Hedley and Sarah Hutton (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008).

[1] I have borrowed the title from Dominic Scott, see Chap. 10, Sect. [4] of his book, *Recollection and Experience, Plato's Theory of Learning and Its Successors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). I am grateful to Douglas Hedley for calling this book to my attention.

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-0274-5_7,

to considerations of how Locke might have been influenced by them. Finally, assuming that my picture of Locke as Platonist is plausible, I consider briefly how this ought to affect the way we read him and in what respect we may regard him as a precursor of modernity.

Objections to 'Locke's Platonism'

I begin by considering two objections to my supposition, for, because these seem almost insurmountable, if I can succeed in showing that they are not only consistent with Locke's being a sort of Platonist but cohere with it significantly, then, perhaps, I shall be safely on the way to my goal. These objections arise from Locke's views about knowledge and the immortality of the soul.

First, it may be argued that Locke's denial of innate cognition and his theory of knowledge generally are sufficient to defeat any attribution of Platonism to Locke, for it reduces the human mind to a state of bare passivity lacking altogether in its inwardness any tendency towards a transcendent good.[2] There are, however, precedents in the history of Platonism that may deflect the force of this argument, or, more to my purpose, may indeed reverse it. Consider Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, Prop 211. It reads (in Dodd's translation):

> Every particular soul, when it descends into temporal process, descends entire: there is not a part of it which remains above and a part which descends.[3]

There it is asserted that the individual soul, when it falls into existence falls completely, and that it processes from a state of intelligence to unintelligence, from a state of intuitive cognition into ignorance. Proclus' point of view, so I am informed, represents a sort of religious turn in Platonism in late antiquity, whereby it was thought that particular souls required supernatural aid in order to be extricated from the dank dark state of corporeality.[4]

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[2] Ralph Cudworth, *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, ed. Sarah Hutton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 144; also, James Tully, 'Governing Conduct: Locke on the Reform of Thought and Behaviour', in his *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 179–241; esp. 183f. Dominic Scott contends that the doctrine of innatism against which Locke took aim in Book I of the *Essay* was of a Stoic sort prevalent among contemporary Latitudinarian churchmen and Cambridge Platonists. It was a doctrine to which Plato also would have objected; Scott, *Recollection and Experience*, 213–39.

[3] Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, translation, introduction and commentary by E.R. Dodds, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 185.

[4] M.A. Stewart informs me that a position like this may already have been taken up by Plato, in Phaedo 75c–76d where Socrates leads Simmias to the conclusion that we are not born with innate cognition, but acquire it through recollection. However, at 75c, Socrates interprets recollection (anamnesis) as a reacquisition of knowledge, that is, learning it anew.

If we set Locke's theory of cognition in this conceptual context, his denial of innatism and his substance skepticism take on a different meaning from what is commonly assigned to them. What reason is there for doing this? There are, in fact, two. Locke came to believe that, both before and after our present condition, the state of human existence was what may be fairly characterised as Platonic. To be sure, he does not seem to have believed that human souls rise and fall individually, nor did he explicitly subscribe to the doctrine of pre-existence and the revolution of souls, although the origin of the soul remained for him a fascinating mystery, and he maintained an active interest in current theories of the pre-existence of the soul and its revolutions through successive terms of incarnation or incorporation. I shall have more to say about these topics the next part of this paper.

His belief about the future state is clear and explicit. Consider, for example, his paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13. 12 ('Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face'),

> Now we see but by reflection the dimn and as it were enigmatical representation of things: but then we shall see, things directly and as they are in themselves as a man sees another when they are face to face. Now I have but a superficial partial knowledg of things, but then I shall have an intuitive comprehensive knowledg of them, as I my self am known and lie open to the view of superior seraphick beings, not by the obscure and imperfect way of deductions and reasoning.[5]

His depiction of this future cognitive state embraces contemplation and intuition of real essences. The very same thought is expressed in the *Essay* in connection with Locke's account of intuitive cognition, which includes our knowledge of all self-evident maxims.

> In the Discovery of, and Assent to these Truths [viz. self-evident maxims], there is no Use of the discursive Faculty, no need of Reasoning, but they are known by a superior, and higher Degree of Evidence. And such, if I may guess at Things unknown, I am apt to think, that Angels have now, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, shall have, in a future state, of Thousands of Things, which now, either wholly escape our Apprehensions, or, which, our shortsighted Reason having got some faint Glimpse of, we, in the Dark, grope after.[6]

The latter appears in the first edition of the *Essay*. Hence it was written at least a few years before 1690. Locke's opinion about the prior state of our species, that is, before Adam's Fall, seems to have settled in his mind some years later, sometime after 1693. In a manuscript written in that year, in which there is a comparison of Adam's state before and after the Fall, he writes that Adam was created mortal and that the sentence imposed on account of his disobedience was not the loss of actual immortality, but of the means of attaining it, which was put out of his reach when he was banished from paradise.[7] Not long after this, he seems to have had a change of mind, and he concluded, in another manuscript, that Adam was created

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[5] *A Paraphrase upon and Notes* i. 238.

[6] *Essay* IV. xvii. 14 (683).

[7] 'Homo ante et post lapsum', MS Locke c. 28, fol. 113; *WR*, 231.

immortal; a state that is consequent upon bearing the image of God and of participating in the divine nature.[8] This change of mind prepares the way for the great theme of *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, which describes human existence as a movement between two termini, embodied in Adam and Christ. According to this scheme, not the individual soul, but the whole race of humanity has descended into a state of mortal ignorance and remains there until it is regenerated and incorporated in Christ, the second Adam. Adam and Christ are hierarchs, in whom an entire progeny participates.[9]

At about the same time that this change of mind occurred, during the middle years of the last decade of the seventeenth century (namely, 1693–1697), Locke also appears to have reached a considered judgment concerning the mortality of the soul, or rather of the whole man, body, soul and spirit.[10] Several places in his writings reflect this: first, in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, when considering the consequences of Adam's disobedience, he concludes from a reading of the biblical narrative that there was only one result of it for Adam and his posterity, namely death, by which, he goes on to say, he means the cessation of existence, 'the losing of all actions of Life and Sense'.[11] His manuscripts from this period confirm this. In one of them, he remarks that before his disobedience, Adam was immortal, and that the consequence of sin for all of his posterity is the cessation of existence.[12]

Other writings express the same opinion and carry it further. In them, Locke considers not only that the soul is mortal, but that it may be material also, although just what sort of matter he doesn't say. This seems to be the direction taken in a section of one of Locke's commonplace books, his 'Adversaria Theologica', and it is also echoed in Locke's reply to Edward Stillingfleet's critical comments on his remark in *Essay* IV. iii. 6 about the possibility of thinking matter, that is, the possibility that God could superadd the power of thinking to a material body.

The place just referred to in 'Adversaria Theologica' is a collection of evidences, mostly from Scripture, gathered under two opposing heads: *anima humana immaterialis* and *anima humana materialis*.[13] Not only is the evidence divided, but

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[8] 'Christianae religionis synopsis', MS Locke c. 28, fols. 213–14, *WR*, 242.

[9] Labelling Adam a hierarch seems to contradict Locke's attribution to Adam in the first *Treatise* and in the *Reasonableness* of nothing more than a natural relation to his progeny. Yet, I think this is warranted, at least hypothetically, inasmuch as if Adam had remained obedient, then he would have been the first born of an immortal race, and in that respect a sacred head or principal of his progeny; see also MS Locke c. 27, fol. 101, transcribed by Higgins-Biddle in the *Reasonableness,* 198–200.

[10] In this connection, it would be more appropriate to characterise Locke as adhering to thnetopsychism rather than psychopannychism. I am indebted to Bryan Ball for bringing this to my attention in a personal communication.

[11] *Reasonableness*, 8.

[12] MS Locke, c. 27, fol. 103; transcribed by Higgins-Biddle, *Reasonableness*, 201. See also the citation in fn. 7.

[13] MS Locke c. 43, pp. 32–3; *WR*, 28–30.

Locke's mind seems to have been divided as well; so much so that he has located the longest and most interesting entry in this collection on both sides of the divide. The source of his uncertainty is expressed in his opening remark that, in the New Testament ψυχή signifies terrestrial human life and thought without reference to the nature of the substance within which these activities reside. What is clear is that a living being or, σῶμα ψυχικόν is dependent on material sustenance, and hence mortal; in contrast the state of existence of an individual who is redeemed, as revealed in Scripture, will be spiritual, σώμα πνευματικόν, which is to say, 'a sensible thinkeing being or body as has life & vigor durable in it self without need of any supplie from without & soe not liable to corruption', in short, 'a body incorruptible & immortal'. Locke's uncertainty stems from the fact that both states are corporeal. Added to his perplexity is the plausible conjecture that a material body may be spiritualised, may become a thinking being, not, to be sure, by virtue of its materiality, but by the will and power of a being in whom the perfection of intellect and will and omnipotence preeminently reside.

The hesitation about this thought when he first expressed it in *Essay* IV. iii. 6, is gone when, subsequent to this conclusion, Locke defends it as a reasonable conjecture in his first reply to Stillingfleet. Now he quite confidently asserts that what makes a thing a spirit is that it possesses the power of thinking, whether the substance in which this power resides be solid or immaterial; and that in either case this power must come from above, for neither material nor immaterial substances have within themselves the power to generate a thinking faculty.[14] This seems to assign a different sense to the expression 'spiritual body' from the one given in 'Adversaria Theologica', but it can, I think, be shown that the two connect in an important way that removes any ambiguity.

Essay IV. iii. 6, the thinking matter passage, is worth reexamining in the light of what has just been remarked. This section of the *Essay*, it should be noted, falls into two parts: the first part, written for the first edition, remains largely unchanged; the second part was is an addition to the fourth edition. Thus, Locke wrote *Essay* IV. iii. 6 before 1689 and revisited it after he wrote the passage in 'Adversaria Theologica', and his reply to Stillingfleet. The theme of the chapter is the extent and limitation of human cognition. In this section, Locke remarks that just as our ideas come far short of comprehending the whole of being, so our knowledge does not reach even to the extent of our ideas; and he contrasts our state with that of other created spirits who are 'not tied down to the dull and narrow Information, [that] is to be received from some few, and not very acute ways of Perception, such as are our Senses'. To illustrate, he introduces the fancy of thinking matter. 'We have the Ideas of Matter and Thinking', but without revelation we shall never be able to know 'whether any mere material Being thinks, or no'. Yet, because there

[14] Locke, *A Letter to the Right Reverend Edward Ld Bishop of Worcester* (London: Henry Mortlock, 1697), 66: 'the general Idea of substance being the same every where, the Modification of Thinking, or the Power of Thinking joined to it, makes it a Spirit, without considering what other Modifications it has'.

seems to be no contradiction in the idea of a material body thinking and because it is within the power of God to superadd thinking to material bodies, just as he has added motive power to them, we cannot be certain or even sure that the soul is not material. In the supplement added to the fourth edition (1700), Locke reaffirms the possibility of thinking matter, but goes further, repeating the play of the mind represented in 'Adversaria Theologica'. Now it is described as the violent movement of a mind, back and forth between the hypothesis of the materiality and immateriality of the soul, where soul is understood as the substance or substratum in which a capability of thinking resides. This uncertainty is supposed to remind us of our downcast state and also of 'the Happiness of superior Ranks of Spirits, who have a quicker and more penetrating Sight, as well as a larger field of knowledge'[15]; a happiness or joy that derives from cognition (another Platonic theme). In contrast to any indecision about spirit's substrate, is the assurance that this happiness is one that we shall enjoy in an incorruptible body, whether it be material or immaterial.

Elsewhere, Locke seems to have arrived at a resolution of this indecision, in favour of immateriality. In *Essay* II. xxiii, 3–5, spiritual substance, defined as one that has the capacity of thought or reflection, is contrasted with body. In II. xxiii. 5, he writes,

We have as clear a Notion of the Substance of Spirit, as we have of body; the one being supposed to be (without knowing what it is) the Substratum to those simple Ideas we have from without; and the other supposed (with a like ignorance of what it is) to be the Substratum to those Operations, which we experiment in our selves within.

Yet two additions to the fourth edition of this chapter go beyond this agnosticism: in II. xxiii. 15, Locke added the qualifier 'an immaterial' to 'Spirit'[16]; and further down the page he added the following:

> It is for want of reflection, that we are apt to think that our Senses shew us nothing but material things. Every act of sensation, when duly considered, gives us an equal view of both parts of nature, the Corporeal and Spiritual. for whilst I know, by seeing or hearing, etc. that there is some Corporeal Being without me, the Object of that sensation, I do more certainly know, that there is some Spiritual Being within me, that sees and hears. this I must be convinced cannot be the action of bare insensible matter; nor ever could be without an immaterial thinking Being.[17]

In an article published in 1918 on the philosophy of Proclus, A.E. Taylor, suggests that Locke's adoption of the term 'reflection' was a deliberate move by him to combat the Platonism of Cudworth and More. He relates the term reflection to the Neoplatonic process of ἐπιστροφή the conversion or turning of the soul, by an initial process of turning inward, and its redirection upwards to its source. I think that Taylor got it the wrong way round; which is not to say that Locke's adoption

[15] *Essay* IV. iii. 6 (543).

[16] *Essay*, p. 305, line 19; from 'Idea of Spirit ' (eds 1–3) to 'Idea of an immaterial Spirit' (eds 4–5).

[17] *Essay*, p. 305, line 24 to p. 306, line 8.

of it shows him to be in league with the Cambridge Platonists, but that he was, on his own, thinking Platonist thoughts.[18]

What is especially noticeable about these changes or fixations of mind, whichever they were, is that Locke based them upon Scripture and not upon mere reason, and, more narrowly, on his reading of St. Paul, who, along with Moses and Jesus Christ, was believed by Locke to have been a recipient of a complete revelation, that is, 'the full doctrine of the Gospel'. This may explain why Locke did not attribute his Platonisms to the Platonic tradition or think of himself as a Platonist. Locke believed that the whole of the Christian religion had been infused into the mind of the apostle in a single moment of revelation and was the source of his preaching and writing; 'he fully possess'd the entire Revelation he had receiv'd from God, had throughly digested it; all the Parts were formed together in his Mind into one well contracted harmonious Body.' Locke is alluding to St. Paul's remark in 2 Corinthians 12. 2–3, that he was 'caught up into Paradise [or 'third Heaven'] and there heard what is not in the power of man to utter'.[19]

In his paraphrase and notes on 2 Corinthians 3, he describes the preaching of the gospel and the reception of its 'mystical and spiritual meaning'; contrasting it with the so-called old dispensation to Moses. Moses received the revelation complete and directly, which is why he was transfigured, his face shining with the glory of it, but he wore a veil, that is, he was offered divine truth in veiled and obscure discourse; but the preachers of the gospel preach openly and plainly and they and their discourse are transfigured, spiritualised; they become, as it were, mirrors reflecting the glory of Christ, whose brightness changes them 'into his very image'. Thus, Locke believed, that divine truth was irradiated throughout the world 'with a continued influx and renewing of glory'.[20]

I turn now to Locke's *Essay* and consider some places in it that lend support to my hypothesis. Locke's proof of the existence of God (*Essay* IV. x) surely supports it, most decisively, I think, in its method: the route to an irrefutable certainty is by an inward turn, and the mind's ascent to God is by means of a principle of causality, characteristic of Neoplatonic systems whereby the mind ascends from a lesser to greater perfection in an endeavour to discover the reason and cause of its existence. In *Essay* II. i, where Locke contends against the Cartesian dogma that the mind always thinks, the fancy concerning two souls sharing one body is reminiscent of the doctrine of vehicles, or at least of the portability of the person or narrative spirit (*Essay* II. i. 12); so also in his later chapter on personal identity, where it is argued that the duration of a particular consciousness or spirit does not depend upon the continuing duration of the substance in which it may for a time inhere

[18] A.E. Taylor, 'The Philosophy of Proclus', Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, NS, XVIII (London: Williams and Norgate, 1918), 600–635, esp. 631.

[19] Locke's paraphrase: *Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 307; see also Ibid., i. 113; *WR*, 63. It should be noted that, according to Locke, only the bearers of revelation and not the receivers of it are transfigured.

[20] *Paraphrase and Notes*, i, 280f.

(*Essay* II. xxvii). It is noteworthy that in *Essay* II. i, Locke uses the word 'soul' to describe the conscious self, whereas in II. xxvii he prefers the term 'spirit'. In his evolving notion of free agency (*Essay* II. xxi. 48f.), Locke concludes that genuine freedom resides not in an arbitrary indifference of the will but in the determination of will and desire of Good, of what is best, which is eternal happiness and transfiguration into a superior state. In this connection, Locke's general view of reality as consisting of God, spirits and bodies, or, with respect to merely rational beings, of God, spirits and mortals, is vaguely Platonic.

Finally, the Epistle to the Reader in Locke's great work is, I think, amenable to my hypothesis. Its subject is the human understanding 'the most elevated Faculty of the Soul' the knowledge of which gives us 'more constant Delight' than knowledge of any other thing. Thought is depicted as a great bird, to be sure, a hawk that looks down towards the earth for its prey, but whose feasts on truth bring joy and prepare it for the higher truth of revelation. For Locke's hawk symbolizes the mind of the Christian virtuoso, whose experimental researches on earth make the mind receptive to revelation from above.[21] While it is undeniable that the *Essay* was undertaken to prepare the way for the new learning, it would be a mistake to suppose that a work of such length and complexity was written with only one end in view. Why not also, therefore, consider it as a preparation of the mind, through knowledge, for a return to its principal source? I have elsewhere argued that Locke's *Essay* should be regarded as a work of natural theology. I shall not repeat that argument here, but only add that it may be imagined as a natural theology in a Platonic mode.

Let me summarise: Locke denied the immortality of the soul and innate cognition; he allowed that the soul might be material; against the Cartesians, he denied that thinking is an attribute of the soul, and argued that mind does not always think; he accepted a principle considered to be a hallmark of Neoplatonism, that a cause is always greater, that is, higher in the chain of being, than its effect and that effects aspire, so to speak, to the greater perfection of their causes; he believed that spirit or consciousness is separable from its terrestrial vehicle and that by divine action it can be fitted with an incorruptible vehicle. Taken all together, these affirmations and denials cohere in a kind of religious Platonism, one that takes a radical view of the state of the soul after the Fall, radical not in an Augustinian or Calvinist sense, according to which the soul is corrupt both morally and cognitively, but radical because what should be eternal has become naturalized and mortal. The human spirit, notwithstanding its mortal frame, can still soar, although only in the sublunary zones of the cosmos until it is awakened from death to a transfigured state.[22]

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[21] *Essay*, p. 6; this is the stance of a Christian Virtuoso.

[22] *Essay* II. xxiii. 12, 13 (302–304) is instructive here. In it Locke justifies the limitations of our sensory and cognitive powers, once again contrasting it with that of angels as the 'best for us in our present Condition', that is, in our condition as earth bound rational beings, and as sufficient for the business of life, that is, for our 'well-being in this part of the Universe, which we inhabit' and for acquisition of that knowledge, of God and our Duty, that will ensure us a place in the world to come.

Locke's Encounters with Platonism

I turn now to consider Locke's encounters with contemporary Platonism. I have just begun to explore these, so that what follows must be taken as a partial and preliminary report. Locke's encounters with the Cambridge Platonists come to mind immediately, but this is a subject that is perhaps too large and complex to treat in this brief review. Moreover, I have the advantage of being able to refer my readers to John Rogers' learned contribution to this question.[23] Instead, I shall focus on three of Locke's less well-known encounters with contemporary Platonism. They are especially interesting, because they concern themes that were central to Locke's theology. These encounters were mainly literary. We know about them from Locke's commonplace books and theological manuscripts. To my knowledge, Locke's commonplaces from authors imbued with Platonism all have to do with theological themes and with the interpretation of Scripture. What this shows, I think, is that Platonism was for Locke what it was for many other Christian philosophers—a vehicle for understanding the so-called mysteries of biblical revelation.

The first of the authors I shall take note of is Charles Hotham, sometime fellow of Peterhouse and friend of Henry More. His book *An Introduction to the Teutonick Philosophy*, first published in 1650, was read by Locke around 1660. The second author was Nicholas Gibbon (or Gibbons) of St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford. Gibbon's work circulated in manuscript together with a broadsheet on which was printed an outline of his theological scheme under the title *A Scheme or body of Divinitie Real*. Locke must to have come into possession of a copy of these materials around 1671. They were among the books and manuscripts that he entrusted to James Tyrrell for safe keeping in 1683, when he went into exile in Holland. After Locke's return, Tyrrell asked to keep them longer so that he could have them copied; there is no record that he ever returned them.[24] Locke's notes from Gibbon's manuscript and broadsheet may be found in his interleaved Bible and in an early notebook.[25] Both Hotham and Gibbon offered versions of Christian Neoplatonism. Locke's third encounter with Platonism to be considered here is with a work by Christian Knorr von Rosenroth: *Kabbalae Christianae Adumbratio*. There is, among Locke's manuscripts, a record of his critical comments and notes dating from about 1688.[26]

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[23] G. A. J. Rogers, 'Locke, Plato and Platonism', *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity*, 193–205.

[24] James Tyrrell to Locke, 13 February 1692, *Correspondence*, iv, 385f. Gibbon had three versions of his scheme privately printed: a broad sheet (1653); and two other undated pamphlets, Theology Real, and truly Scientific, n.p., n.d. (which he prepared for submission to Charles II and the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, c.1680) and The Scheme or Diagram Adjusted for Future Use, n.p., n.d. Locke's extracts while clearly from the same author and the same scheme, contain materials not in these documents, and therefore provide a valuable source for our knowledge of Gibbon.

[25] For a transcription of Locke's notes on Gibbon see the Appendix to Chap. 4.

[26] In *The Impact of the Kabbalah in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), Allison Coudert attributes authorship of the *Adumbratio* to Francis Mercury van Helmont, see 109, 113, 201, 278.

The expression 'Teutonick Philosophy' in the title of Hotham's book refers to the mystical theology of Jacob Boehme. The book contains Hotham's contribution to a disputation concerning the origin of the soul held at the University of Cambridge on 3 March 1646. The question at issue was whether each human soul is directly created and directly infused into its body at conception, or is passed on or traduced through human generation. In Locke's interleaved English Bible, his Bentley Bible, there are three extracts from Hotham's book inscribed as annotations on Zechariah 12. 1, Hebrews 7: 9 and 11: 9. They are among the earliest in Locke's Bible entries and date from about 1660.[27] The disputed question was to be decided on biblical grounds, because it was judged to be a mystery that could be learned about only through revelation. Hotham argued for traduction, while admitting that there were many places in Scripture that support creation. In the end he declares that both are true: traduction describes the process from a natural standpoint, that is, there seems to be in the generation of children no moment of supernatural intervention; direct creation properly refers to the supernatural origin of the soul and the theological explanation of it. However, by accepting that God created the soul, Hotham did not mean that God created each human soul out of nothing, but rather that the spiritual powers of life, sense perception and wisdom are infused directly from conception into each new human being by infusion from a hierarchy of spirits operative since the creation of the world.[28] In brief, Hotham's position may be described as a sort of natural supernaturalism.

Midway through his discourse, Hotham addresses the question of creation out of nothing and gives an account of this doctrine as envisioned by Jacob Boehme. On Boehme's account, 'creation out of nothing' does not signify a punctual divine action, but a decisive moment in a cosmic drama. The nothing, from which God made the world, is not just nothing, but something that ought not to have been, the chaos that God enlivened with a great wind of spirit, by which the world came into being.[29] The purpose of this divine action was to contain the rebellion of Lucifer and his angelic cohorts. This metaphysical account of the origin of all things from

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However, she gives no evidence for her judgment. Against this, we have Locke's testimony for Knorr's authorship in an inscription in his own handwriting on the title page of his copy of the *Adumbratio*, 'per Authore Christiano Knor van Rosenrod'. Locke's copy is in the Bodleian Library, shelf mark Locke 9. 8. See Chap. 6 for a transcription and translation of Locke's notes on the *Adumbratio* together with a historical introduction.

[27] Citations of Hotham may be found in Locke's interleaved English Bible (Locke 16.25; *LL* 309): *in locum* Zechariah 12.1, Hebrews 9: 9 and 11: 9.

[28] Hotham, *An Introduction to the Teutonick Philosophy* (London: Nathaniel Brooks, 1650), 58ff. This is an English translation of the latin *Ad philosophiam teutonicam manductio* (London: H. Blunden, 1648). Both include a commendatory poem by the Cambridge Platonist, Henry More, who addresses Hotham as 'his worthily honoured and deare friend' (*amicum suum charissimum*).

[29] Boehme's interpretation of creation out of nothing was appropriated by F.W. J. Schelling in his late philosophy. See Schelling, *Of Human Freedom*, ed. and trans. James Gutmann (Chicago: Open Court, 1936), 33f.

God, coupled with a tale of war in heaven was not the sort of thing that Locke would have skipped over when reading Hotham's book. He was intellectually accustomed to viewing the origin and destiny of mankind against the background of such a cosmic drama that involved creation and fall, redemption and consummation, a drama that involved not just mankind living on earth, in a visible world, but one that encompassed a vast spiritual realm populated by celestial hierarchies. It is a plausible conjecture that Locke valued speculative schemes of this sort when they were clothed in Scripture just because they seemed to lift the veil that enshrouded biblical mysteries. And although Locke must have regarded them as in many respects fanciful, he returned to them, because these fancies were nourished by what were to him credible hints coming from Scripture itself, such as obscure remarks about angelic messengers, an invisible world above us, war in heaven, transfigurations, cosmic redemptive events and spiritualised bodies with which the redeemed would be equipped.

In the course of his exposition, Hotham touches upon a question that, we have seen, greatly occupied Locke's attention during the last decade of his life, namely, the mortality of the soul or spirit. In the creation of the first Adam, the terrestrial progenitor of the human race, Hotham remarks that the breath of life, infused in him at creation, was that threefold spirit of creation mentioned above (i.e. life, sense and intellect), which was thought to be transmitted through procreation to all of Adam's posterity. However, Adam's punishment for disobeying God's command is a virtual death of the spirit, a deep sleep, 'yea so deep asleep, that (he being in truth dead as to that spirit, and it as to him) it is in Scripture called death.' This unconscious spirit is nonetheless transmitted to all of Adam's posterity and 'revived and re-enlivened in that great mysterious work of the Regeneration'. Then, in this revived state, the spirit of man may once more look 'into the magick glass of the Wisdom and the depth of the Deity'. It is not clear when this revival of the spirit shall occur, but further on Hotham seems to locate it at the resurrection.[30]

Nicholas Gibbon's Scheme is a sum of Christian divinity cast in a Neoplatonic narrative of descent and return.[31] It depicts the cosmic drama of creation, fall, redemption and consummation. According to this scheme, the being or essence of the one God is hidden in inaccessible light, yet there emanates from this ineffable ousia or substance three coequal and co-eternal hypostases or subsistences (essence is 'subsistentiated'): the Creator, who is also the Father, the Word, who is also the Son, and the Spirit, who proceeds from both; each subsistence has its own activity

[30] Hotham, *Teutonick Philosophy*, 54f., 62. Hotham's account of the regeneration of the human spirit could be read in a Joachimist sense, according to which the work of regeneration would reach its completion in the final age of the world, and that this would be an age of new spiritual men. See Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore & the Prophetic Future*, rev. edn (Gloustershire: Sutton Publishers, 1999), especially Chap. 6.

[31] John Marshall characterises the Gibbon citations ('G' passages) as anti-Trinitarian. This is quite simply false, as a reading of Locke's notes, and of Gibbon's printed texts should make clear to any impartial reader; see Marshall's 'Locke, Socinianism, "Socinianism", Unitarianism' in M. A. Stewart (ed.), *English Philosophy in the Age of Locke* 155, fn. 83.

or 'energy' (respectively creation, redemption and consummation in glory). Central to the redemption of the fallen world is the work of the messiah, or mediator, who is the incarnate Word, but whose human soul was fashioned subsequent to the Fall and united with the Word in heaven, where it remained until the fullness of time, when it was sent into the world, still united with the Word, but now incarnate in order to fulfill its divinely preordained duties.

However, also according to this scheme, the creation of the visible world was not the first creation, nor was mankind the first intellectual race. Rather this creation was preceded by the creation of a 'great orb of light', the habitation of the first intellectual race of spirits, who having rebelled against God, were thrust into 'a great orb of darkness', out of which God also condensed the chaos, from which this visible world was made as a habitation of the second race of intellectual beings, which is mankind. The establishment of this visible buffer between heaven and hell can, I think, be made sense of, if one allows the possibility of a coherent union between Neoplatonic metaphysics and oriental mythology. The material stuff that makes this creation visible is the lowest level of divine descent, or, at least, the part of it that is redeemable. In its mere passivity, then, matter is capable of receiving those endowments, namely, the organic shaping, the infusion of life and sensation and thought that fit it for return. It is not fanciful, I think, to suppose that the back and forth movement of Locke's judgments about the substance of our spiritual being was sustained by reflections of this sort.

Locke recorded extracts from Gibbon's manuscript into his Bentley Bible in 18 places. Most likely, these were made at about the same period of time if not at a single sitting. The flurry of notes suggests that Locke studied Gibbon's text with heightened interest. Parts of Gibbon's scheme, a broad sheet and some notes and a prospectus, were subsequently printed and circulated privately. Gibbon had his scheme printed for presentation to Charles II in the hope that it might provide a unifying theological outlook for the Church of England.

In 1679, writing to his newly made friend, Nicholas Toinard, Locke reported from London that Robert Boyle had informed him of a new translation of the Kabbalah ('l'ancien Cabala des Juifs') into Latin and German, but that Boyle was unable to tell him the name of the translator.[32] He promised Toinard that when he was able to secure this information, perhaps from viewing a copy of the book itself, he would send him full bibliographical details. He also conveyed to Toinard Boyle's promise that, if he were unable to purchase a copy of his own, Boyle would give Locke his copy to lend to Toinard. Boyle had been sent a copy, but it had been delayed in the London customs house.[33] There was no doubt from all of this that Locke regarded the publication of translations of the Kabbalah as a great event in the commonwealth of learning. The book eagerly awaited was the first volume of *Kabbala Denudata* (*The Kabbalah Unveiled*), published in Salzburg in

[32] The reader should compare this account with the fuller account given in Chap. 6.

[33] Locke to Toinard, *Correspondence*, ii. 30.

1677. It consists of translations into Latin of extracts and whole works from the massive corpus of Kabbalistic writings, together with editorial notes, glossaries, diagrams illustrating the Kabbalistic scheme, and critical essays. The editor of this massive project was Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1636–1689) a scholar, poet and high official in the Court of Prince Christian August of Bavaria. He counted among his friends Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, who was a contributor to the volume, and Francis Mercury van Helmont, who assisted Knorr in his great work, and who was also well known to Locke. Knorr published a second volume of *Kabbla Denudata* in 1684. *Adumbratio Kabbalae Christainae* was included in this volume as an appendix. In a notebook he used to record bibliographical information Locke inscribed a full bibliographical description of this volume and of the *Adumbratio*, underneath which is written 'I want'.[34] Locke eventually acquired copies of both volumes and purchased another copy, which he gave as a gift to his cousin Peter King.[35] The Kabbalah is an esoteric tradition of Jewish biblical interpretation and reflection that originated in southern Europe, more particularly in Provence and Catalonia during the late Middle Ages.[36] It is a theological, or more accurately theosophical reflection of biblical sacred history from creation to the final consummation, that interweaves biblical narrative, apocalyptic expectation and Neoplatonic metaphysics. Theosophy is, perhaps, a preferable term to describe the mode of thought embodied in the Kabbalah, because in its primary writings figurative narratives of episodes in the life of God take the place of the conceptual definition and logical argument characteristic of theological discourse, although this is not lacking in many of the secondary Kabbalistic writings, and it predominates in much of the material presented in Knorr's two volumes. In this connection, it should also be noted that not in its origin but only in its development did the Kabbalah appropriate elements of Platonic metaphysics and psychology and that in this process these elements underwent profound modification. One of the most striking innovations in this respect is the account of the origin of evil in the Kabbalah and the moral psychology that is used to explain it.

A large portion of the narrative that fills the pages of Kabbalistic writings occurs between the first and second days of creation, between the separation of primordial light from primordial darkness and the ordering of the heaven and earth into a visible world fit to accommodate life. 'According to the Kabbalah, in the beginning God, who is hidden in inaccessible light, and who fills all space, withdraws or contracts into himself, in order to make room for other beings. He causes an outflow of his being to enter the dark abyss that is left by his absence, which fashions

[34] MS Locke, f. 28, p. 114.

[35] *LL* 558 & 558a.

[36] Gershom Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); see also Arthur Green, 'The Zohar, Jewish Mysticism in Medieval Spain', in *Essential Papers on Kabbalah*, ed. Lawrence Fine (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 28 and passim.

itself into a being of light in the shape of a man, whose essence is constituted by ten attributes, namely, the Sephiroth'.[37] They are, briefly, (1) the supreme crown or rule, (2) wisdom, (3) understanding, (4) goodness or mercy, (5) strict justice, (6) beauty, (7) permanence, (8) glory, (9) stability and (10) royal authority.[38]

This first man, Adam Kadmon, whom Knorr identifies with the only begotten son of God, the first-born of creation, and the soul of the Messiah, is not a creature but the archetype of creation and the supreme instrument of divine revelation.[39] Creation and revelation are the same according to this scheme. God creates by revealing himself, and reveals himself by creating. From this first beginning there occurs a continuous generation of worlds, luminous spheres and of spheres within spheres, each bearing the image of the first man and, therefore, bearing within themselves, albeit less resplendently, the 10 shining Sephiroth. Three worlds, in descending order or rank, are to be noted. The first is the archetypal world of mankind. It is a single supernal human body, Adam Protoplastes, the first human creature, who bears within himself the sum of all human souls.[40] The next world consists of angelic beings, intelligences who persevere in goodness. The third consists of fallible angelic beings.[41]

In the course of this apparently limitless process of emanation, a catastrophe occurs. To explain how this happens, it is necessary to understand that the ten Sephiroth are arranged in three descending triads. The tenth stands alone beneath them: a feminine principle who is a beacon of the divine presence, the Shekinah. The outer members of each triad are opposites and, therefore, in tension. In the archetypal world, they hold together, as they do in worlds constituted of angels who persevere. But in the world of fallible angels, they do not. The second and third triads become separated from the upper one, and the remaining opposites separate. Strict justice separates from mercy, and the consequence is a hardening or materialising of the world. Thus, the materialisation of being is not just a metaphysical consequence of the inevitable distancing of beings from their source through emanation and descent, but a consequence of a moral attitude deriving from the separation of justice from mercy. The manifold spheres—recall that there is a replicating and compounding of spheres within each world—shatter, no longer being able to contain the divine light from above that flows through them; the residue of fragments or shards become dark spirits, malicious beings who now express a dark and dangerous, yet fascinating, luminosity. This is the first Fall. The second occurs as a consequence of a divine plan to restore the fallen beams of divine light through the instrumentality of mankind. But when Adam also sins, he becomes mortal and his progeny now individuated in a succession of generations, also becomes mortal.

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[37] Gersham Scholem, *Kabbalah* (New York: Plume, 1987), 416.

[38] There are slightly different versions of the Sephiroth in different places of the Kabbalah. This list it taken from the *Adumbratio*, 14f.

[39] *Adumbratio*, 8.

[40] One of Knorr's main theses in the *Adumbratio* is the preexistence of souls; see 33ff.

[41] *Adumbratio*, 27.

The first created world becomes visible, and the once immortal spirits become embodied, their higher spiritual parts darkened, but capable of moving from one life to another.

Locke's copy of the *Adumbratio* is one of the few volumes in his library that are heavily marked. In addition, there is a lengthy manuscript that gives unmistakable evidence that he read Knorr's book with great care and thoroughness. 'Dubia circa philosophia orientalis' contains Locke's topical analysis of the contents of the Adumbratio prefaced with a number of critical comments, hence, the title 'Critical thoughts about oriental philosophy'.[42] The manuscript is undated. However, on fol. 79v of the manuscript, which gives an index of terms, Locke has inscribed 88, signifying the year 1688. That being so, it is noteworthy that many of the topics covered in Locke's analysis of the *Adumbratio* are included in the topical list of Locke's theological commonplace book, 'Adversaria Theologica'. There we find listed topics such as the Fall of angelic beings, the preexistence and revolution of human souls, traduction, good and bad spirits and our duties towards them.[43]

While it would be folly to suggest that Locke embraced Knorr's system of Christian Kabbalah, one cannot deny that intermittently over a period of 15 years, from 1679 until 1694, and surely thereafter, the Kabbalah engaged his interest. There are themes in Knorr's Christian Kabbalah that are echoed in Locke's Christian outlook: a strong messianism and anthropocentrism, and a realisation that strict justice is not an aspect of God to be elevated above others, but one that must be tempered if not transformed by mercy directed not just to the elect, but to the whole creation. Finally, it must not be overlooked that Locke's earlier consideration of the Hotham's Behmenist scheme and Gibbon's Neoplatonic Christianity, which are so much akin to the Kabbalah, show an interest in such schemes throughout much of his mature intellectual life. The effect of this interest on Locke's thought overall can be ascertained only after a careful review of Locke's writing in the light of these themes.

Conclusion

Assuming that my hypothesis about Locke's Platonism has sufficient merit, it remains to ask what use might be made of it, beyond reconsidering Locke's corpus in the light of it. In particular, how should we regard him, if at all, as a precursor of modernity? Surely, we should not regard Locke as a precursor to modernity, if what is meant by that expression is someone who would reduce our understanding of being to the conventions of secular rationalism, mechanism, and materialism, and whose philosophical outlook is designed to bring about the disenchantment of

[42] MS Locke c. 27, fols. 75–80; see Chap. 6. Another manuscript that bears mentioning here is MS Locke c. 27, fols. 256–58, which contains extracts of a review of *Kabbala Denudata*.

[43] *WR*, 21–23. The list of topic is also provided in Chap. 2, Appendix A.

the world, for these were not ends that Locke intended. Unlike Spinoza, whose naturalized Neoplatonism was both radical in its intent and in its consequences, Locke's Platonism, although radical in certain respects noted above, was not so naturalized that it excluded a realm beyond nature. Indeed, Locke's Platonism is just the opposite: it is Platonism super-naturalized, for wherever Locke considered Platonic themes, it was always within the context of the biblical revelation. Platonism may have allowed Locke's mind to soar, but it was always within the safe surroundings of Holy Scripture.

How is it, then, that many regard Locke as a precursor to modernity in just the sense I have denied? I suppose it is because they have misread him. How? There is a tendency, when considering Locke's relation to the Enlightenment, to interpret him in the light of his critics, just because his critics have accused him of the very tendencies of heterodoxy, infidelity and atheism, which are supposed to have produced modernity. This is a historicist and positivist and formally, if not ideologically, Whiggish view of Locke, which assigns his writings meaning only so far as they have contributed to some historical process whose end point is the modern age. I shall give one example of this, which I think sufficiently represents this type. It is especially illuminating, because it focuses on a theme, namely, the materiality of the soul, central to the argument of this paper.

John Yolton's *Thinking Matter* is a contribution to the history of eighteenth-century materialism in Britain that has been justly praised for its learning and analytical clarity.[44] The context in which he sets this history is a network of worries over heterodoxy and irreligion that were evoked by the new learning. Yolton observes, correctly, that Locke contributed to these worries through his writings about the origin of human knowledge, human nature, personal identity and substance skepticism, and suchlike others. The particular theme of Yolton's book is taken from Locke's suggestion about thinking matter, to which reference has already been made. Yolton's account of it and its logic are clear and analytically correct. But he fails to give a satisfactory explanation of why Locke should have made such a suggestion at all, which one might think should be a proper starting place of his history. Instead, the suspicions and accusations of his detractors are made the dominant ideological motives that initiate this history and guide its outcome, and any consideration of what Locke might really have thought and, if this differed from what he was suspected of thinking, what influence these thoughts might have had on the history of materialism and on the development of modernity, is simply ignored. Since, according to Yolton, it was inevitable that Locke's thinking should be regarded just as his detractors imagined it, and since the friends of crass materialism, who saw an opportunity to gain an endorsement for their viewpoint from the mouth of a great personage, were happy to concur, the question of how to cast Locke in the role of precursor of modernity seems a foregone conclusion.

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[44] John Yolton, *Thinking Matter. Materialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). John Tully's 'Governing Conduct' (see above fn. 2) is another work to which this criticism may be applied.

But, if Locke thought differently than his detractors supposed, if his thought was theologically and metaphysically richer than they imagined it, and the burden of all that has gone before in this paper has been to show that it was, then it is reasonable to ask whether Locke's influence on modernity may not have had other effects that intellectual historians have failed to notice, and whether, to prepare to answer this question, it may be necessary to revise the concept of modernity currently employed. In brief, perhaps Locke's real meaning has influenced the development of eighteenth-century British materialism and modern thought generally in ways not yet explored and less akin to secular rationalism. I shall end here, not because I have exhausted my subject, but because I have reached the limits of my thoughts. Either I am mistaken, and it would be better not to pursue the matter further; or I am at least on the right track, and there is much more work to be done. I hope that the latter is the case.

Chapter 8
Aspects of Stoicism in Locke's Philosophy*

Introduction

To begin with, Locke was not a Stoic philosopher, at least not a self-conscious one. There is no evidence that he made any attempt to recover Stoic principles through a careful study of ancient sources that were available to him, one comparable to the study he made of the New Testament in search of the fundamental principles of the Christian Religion, or that, having once recovered Stoic principles, he endeavoured to conform his philosophical theories to them. Nevertheless, there are major aspects of Locke's philosophy that appear characteristically Stoic and that, when brought clearly into view, make him seem almost but not quite a Stoic philosopher. *Almost, but not quite*: this may serve as a motto for my essay. Being not quite one thing suggests not just privation but being something else as well. This other may consist of contrary philosophical positions. No modern philosopher who was schooled in antiquity, as was Locke, could escape being somewhat eclectic. In Locke's case, however, the other consisted of something very different, that was not philosophy, even though it was regarded by many who professed it as a form of wisdom, something which when reduced to dogma often seemed antithetical to philosophy generally and to Stoicism in particular, even while it claimed to represent what all philosophers knowingly or not aspired to. That significant other is Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures. Locke was a Christian, who was confident of his faith, and who held his Christian beliefs in higher regard than mere philosophical opinion, including his own.

This chapter falls into three parts. The first part will focus upon philosophical themes in Locke's thought that are characteristically Stoic, in particular the following: God and nature, the origin of knowledge and the growth of reason, good and bad, the passions, the grounds of morality and the law of nature. Locke's philosophical opinions concerning these themes will be compared with their Stoic

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archetypes, and, since it is not my intention to make him out to be a complete Stoic, special attention will be paid to those instances where Locke departs from Stoic orthodoxy: in his opinins about God and creation, about the origin of our ideas of good and bad and about moral obligation. However, these differences are far outweighed by Locke's profound affinities with Stoic rationalism. Locke's reliabilist and developmental theory of reason and cognition constitutes a revival of Stoic theory. To be sure, it is original and idiosyncratic, yet its pedigree remains. However, reason is, for Locke, not merely the indispensable and only means to our human pursuits of truth; it is also, and just for this reason, the divinely ordained key that provides us access to revelation, to things above reason, which without reason cannot be vouchsafed or understood. Locke's Stoic rationalism, then, together with his departures from Stoic orthodoxy set the stage for the second part of this essay. Here my main purpose is to provide a clear and comprehensive account of Locke's Christian worldview and the beliefs that it encompassed. The first part of this essay falls under the heading of *Reason*, and the second, *Reason Enlarged*. This should remind the reader of Locke's grand assertion concerning reason and revelation, that reason is natural revelation and revelation reason enlarged.[1] These are headings, of which Locke might have approved, for the terms, as he uses them, suggest not only a continuity between reason and revelation but a synthesis of them. The third part of this essay is more reflective and evaluative than expository. It adds nothing new to what precedes it. Some brief historical comments on the role of Stoicism with respect to Christianity and modernity may clarify my purpose. Locke's encounter with Stoicism occurred at a critical moment in history when Stoic philosophy, long domesticated as part of the Christian intellectual tradition, re-emerged as an instrument of modernization. Metaphysical naturalism and moral autonomy, which are basic marks of modernity, have their roots in Stoicism. Stoic moral rationalism had a more immediate role to play. Christian scholars, most notable among them, Justus Lipsius and Hugo Grotius, employed it as a means to counteract sectarian dogmatism. Locke is loosely connected to this group of Christian humanists. In this connection, his role as a major founder of liberal Protestantism, or indeed of liberal evangelicalism, becomes apparent. It is arguable that by joining reason to revelation Locke fashioned a momentous synthesis that is still a source of intellectual capital from which Christian philosophers may continue to draw. This is what, I think, Locke hoped for. On the other hand, it is arguable, from the standpoint of modernity and the

[1] *Essay* IV. xix. 4, (698): '*Reason* is natural *Revelation*, whereby the eternal Father of Light, the Fountain of all Knowledge communicates to Mankind that portion of Truth, which he has laid within the reach of their natural Faculties: *Revelation* is natural *Reason* enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by GOD immediately, which *Reason* vouches the Truth of, by the Testimony and Proofs it gives, that they come from GOD. So that he that takes away *Reason*, to make way for *Revelation*, puts out the Light of both, and does much what the same, as if he would perswade a Man to put out his Eyes the better to receive the remote Light of an invisible Star by a Telescope.'

Enlightenment, that the effect of this conjunction of reason and revelation was a fettering of reason and a diminishment of its potential. Accordingly, the heading of this final section identifies two evaluative options: *Reason Enlarged or Diminished*?[2]

Before proceeding, I offer a brief account of the Stoic sources available to Locke. He owned numerous copies of the works of Cicero and Seneca.[3] The former, although not a Stoic, was an important transmitter of Stoic ideas, and was sympathetic to many of them, especially ethical ones. Locke has a high regard for the latter's *De Officiis*, which offers a compendium of the Stoic Panaetius' moral doctrines. He also owned two editions of Epictetus' *Enchiridion*, two copies of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives* and of Plutarch's *Moralia* and Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*.[4] Hence he had immediate access to the main Latin and Greek sources. Among the Patristic transmitters of Stoic ideas, he owned copies of the works of Lactantius and Origen.[5] Among more or less contemporary sources he owned an English translation of Guillaume Du Vair's *Moral Philosophy of the Stoicks* and a Latin edition of Justus Lipsius' *De Constantia*.[6] Hugo Grotius' *De Jure belli ac pacis* was a modern source of Stoic natural law theory.[7] Manuscript sources show that Locke read extensively in Seneca and Cicero. One undated manuscript, in Locke's hand, contains a chronology of almost all of Cicero's writings.[8] Locke also owned a copy of the first edition of Spinoza's posthumous works. The latter is arguably the most creative of modern Stoics.[9] Locke's earliest writings on the law of nature show that he consciously connected the doctrine of the law of nature to Stoic sources and adopted Stoic terminology in defining it.[10]

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[2] There is a third option: Locke's achievement may be viewed as a corruption or profaning of revelation. Whether this is so is a question for theologians to consider and is beyond the scope of this essay, which is historical and philosophical.

[3] See *LL* for author's cited; Cicero, items 711–20, 721a–q; Seneca: 2612–16, 2616a. In an early notebook, Locke took extensive notes from Seneca's *De Ira*, especially Bk. III (there are 22 citations), plus several from Seneca's *Epistulae Morales*, MS Locke e. 6, fols. 7, 8, 9, 10.

[4] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (henceforward *DL*) 2 copies, *LL* 969, 970; Plutarch, *Moralia* 2356–58, 2358a–b, 2359, 2360; Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 4 copies, 1231, 1232, 1232a–b.

[5] Lactantius, *LL*, 1651, 1651a; Origen: *LL*, 2140.

[6] Du Vair, *LL*, 1003d; Lipsius, *LL*, 1763.

[7] Grotius, *De Jure*, 2 copies, *LL*, 1329, 1329a.

[8] 'Ciceronis Scripta secundum ordinem temporis digesta,' MS Locke c. 31, fols. 139–46.

[9] Susan James, 'Spinoza the Stoic,' in *The Rise of Modern Philosophy*, ed. Tom Sorell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 289–314; Also Paul Oscar Kristeller, 'Stoic and Neoplatonic Sources of Spinoza's Ethics,' *History of European Ideas* 5. 1–15. See also A. A. Long, 'Stoicism in the Philosophical Tradition,' in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 365–92. Long cautions that Spinoza should be regarded as at most a partial Stoic and not at all as a self-conscious one.

[10] See, for example, *Law of Nature*, 108f.

Reason

God and Nature

Stoicism is a sort of naturalism, although the particular variety of naturalism that it espouses differs fundamentally from modern naturalism. The Stoics conceived of nature as a finite unified system, a living body that manifests not only intelligence but also design. It exists self-contained in an infinite void of space.

Stoics admit two principles of nature: an active and a passive one, the former indwelling and infusing the latter with its active intelligent substance (a sort of *natura naturans*), and causing the emergence of manifold beings organized in a totality that is a perfect expression of the intelligent creative agent operating within it.[11] Stoics equate the active principle of nature with God, or Zeus, whose creative power is entirely subject to right reason, his primary attribute, by which he rules the universe and exercises providential care over everything in it. This personification of the divine seems to be more a matter of speaking than a real attribution. Stoics conceived of God as a material being. Thus it is represented as the creative fire (*pur technikon*), not to be confused with its familiar and grosser counterpart, or, derivatively, as spirit, a combination of rarefied fire and air that infuses everything and accounts for their expansive and contractive functions, and from whose substance all other grosser kinds of matter and material things proceed and are vivified, or again as pure energy or light endowed with the most sublime intelligence.[12] Finally, the Stoic God is not a transcendent being. It is not exalted and exists by itself only in those intervals between an infinitude of world cycles, when the process of generation has been reversed and the manifold world is returned to its primitive inchoate state, in which the active principle remains indwelling.[13]

Locke's God, by way of contrast, is a transcendent person, who created the world out of nothing at a particular moment in time, not by virtue of the necessity of his nature but according to his good pleasure. Thus, God's actions are expressions not only of power, wisdom and goodness, which are not fully fathomable, but of his inscrutable will which endows all that he does with a transcendent authority that is supposed to be unlike anything in the world.[14] The primary motive of Locke's

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[11] A. A. Long, 'The Logical Basis of Stoic Ethics,' in *Stoic Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 137.

[12] *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ed. A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) i., §44, 268–72; §46, 274–79. Recently, John M. Cooper has argued that some Stoics, Chyrsippus in particular, have supposed God to be an indwelling immaterial body. 'Stoic Autonomy,' in his *Knowledge, Nature and the Good* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 204–46. esp. 220f.

[13] Cicero, *De natura deorum* (hereafter *ND*) II, 118; *Loeb Classical Library*, 235. Hereafter all texts from *Loeb Classical Library* are abbreviated as *LCL.*

[14] 'Supposed', because divine authority bears a striking resemblance to the authority and power of an absolute monarch.

theology is biblical, that is, so far as the manifold representations of God in the Scriptures have been more or less refined by philosophical reflection, and codified into Christian doctrines that are conveniently read into biblical texts by learned expositors. Yet, notwithstanding this, Locke did not think it inappropriate to substitute the term 'Nature' for 'God,' which he did without embarrassment, although rarely and only on suitable occasions, for example, when discoursing about aspects of natural existence that testify to the existence and attributes of God. In *Essay* I. iii. 3, he writes, 'Nature, I confess, has put into Man a desire of Happiness, and an aversion to Misery: These indeed are innate practical Principles which (as practical Principles ought) do continue constantly to operate and influence all our Actions.'[15] This practice of using the terms 'nature' and 'God' synonymously was not a new one for him; there are instances of it in one of his earliest writings, the so-called *Essays on the Law of Nature.* Here also it is an occasional practice. In one instance it is employed with a caution: Locke writes that 'nature or (as I should say more correctly) God' could have created mankind differently.[16] The reason for this correction is that a Christian monotheist and voluntarist like Locke would not want it to be thought that nature by virtue of some principle inherent in it could create itself or that, as creator, God is bound by some necessity to create the world just the way it is. If he had such scruples, which seems most likely, then why use the practice at all? The answer lies in the indispensability to Locke's scheme of things of natural theology, and Stoic natural theology, as opposed to an Aristotelian variety, was for him the article of choice.

Locke's preference for Stoic natural theology is in no small way due to the important role that the doctrine of the law of nature plays in his moral and political theory, and to the Stoic derivation of this law from divine reason.[17] No doubt it also had something to do with the way Stoic proofs linked natural history to theology, by attributing the admirable contrivances of nature to the intelligent design of a superior rational being, whose wisdom, power and goodness are evident from all his works.[18]

In his long chapter on the existence of God, Locke emphatically denies the materiality of God, yet, curiously, he also expresses indifference to the hypothesis, allowing its admissibility so long as God's intelligence or cogitative nature was unequivocally and irrevocably affirmed. The variety of materialism he opposes in

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[15] Locke, *Essay*, (67); see also *Essay* III. iii. 13 (415).

[16] *Law of Nature*, 199: Von Leyden notes that there are two manuscript versions of this remark: 'natura vel (ut rectius dicam) Deus' and 'natura (vel ut rectius dicam) Deus'; see also pp. 123, 137. Locke's expression 'natura vel Deus' means just the opposite of Spinoza's 'deus sive natura' and was composed by him before he could have become aware of Spinoza's formula. Locke's caution is reminiscent of Calvin's remark, 'I confess, of course, that it can be said reverently, provided that it proceeds from a reverent mind, that nature is God.' *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols, ed. J. T. MacNeill, trans. F. L. Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), i. 58.

[17] *Law of Nature*, 109, 111.

[18] A primary source of such arguments, well known to Locke, is Book II of Cicero's *De Natura Deorum.*

this chapter is not Stoic materialism, but Corpuscularism, which was the dominant theory, or, as Locke styled it, 'the Philosophy now in the World.'[19] It served his purposes well, giving him a rhetorical advantage over the unnamed materialists he was zealous to refute. But as though to suggest that this paradigm is not the final truth about matter, Locke alludes in a veiled and cautious manner to another philosophical notion of primal matter and the origin of the visible world, one that he may have learned of from Isaac Newton: according to this hypothesis, primal matter is infinite space, a portion of which God made into the visible world by a process of thickening.[20]

Which brings us to the idea of God as an indwelling spirit. Locke conceived of God as sending forth from himself an ubiquitous creative divine Spirit capable of operating in all things, illuminating the minds of intelligent creatures, providing for their happiness and making available to them the opportunities as well as the means to achieve it, yet always maintaining its self-identity, never ceasing to be itself. The motto printed on the title page of the *Essay* expresses this sentiment. 'As thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child: even so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all things.'[21] The scepticism expressed here should be taken in a reverential rather than in a dogmatic sense. Throughout his life, the idea of spirit fascinated Locke, and he attempted to comprehend its nature even while he admitted the immense difficulty of the task. The proposition that a creative spirit invigorates matter, when considered abstractly, seems to be a shared principle between Locke and the Stoics, but when considered in different contexts its meaning varies. Locke's thoughts about spirit present his interpreters with a confusing tangle of ideas, some drawn from Stoicism, for example, that there are enduring spiritual beings that reside in realms above the terrestrial sphere, who in their refined state are pure intelligences, and that the spiritual state is a corporeal one, at least for angels and the resurrected spiritual bodies of the saints, although not for God. Mention of the latter, of course, shows that Locke's thoughts were intertwined with biblical cosmology and eschatology.[22] Like the Stoics, Locke believed that the individual soul is a spiritual substance, and even though he did not hold that individual souls are portions of the divine spirit, he also admitted the difficulty of conceiving the creation out of nothing

[19] *Essay* IV. x. 18 (629).

[20] For what follows, see *Essay* IV. x. 13–19 (625–30). The hypothesis and its source were identified by Pierre Coste, Locke's sometime secretary and French translator; see Jonathan Bennett, 'God and Matter in Locke: An Exposition of *Essay* 4.10' in *Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Christia Mercer and Eileen O'Neill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 180f. In §§18, 19 Locke also defends the doctrine of creation out of nothing.

[21] *Essay*, title page, 4 and 5 edns only; the text quoted is Ecclesiastes 11: 5.

[22] On the idea of spirit during the Hellenistic age, see Kirsopp Lake, 'The Holy Spirit,' in *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I*, 5 vols, ed. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: Macmillan, 1933), v. 97–111. The threads of thought: biblical and philosophical, popular and learned, that made up the tangle in Locke's mind are carefully delineated here.

of a spiritual entity. Finally, like the Stoics, Locke believed that the individual soul is mortal, although the authority he cites for this opinion is not some Stoic text but Genesis 2: 19.[23] To say anything more on this theme here would be to introduce topics that will be properly treated in the next section of this essay.

Reason and the Origin and Growth of Knowledge

Locke conceived of the place of a human individual in the world in the same way as the Stoics did. This becomes particularly clear when one compares their theories concerning the origin of knowledge and the growth of reason. The following summary of Stoic doctrine offers a convenient account of Stoic opinion on these topics.

> The Stoics say: when a man is born, he has the controlling part of his soul like paper well prepared for writing on. On this he inscribes each of his conceptions.
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> The first kind of inscription is that by way of the senses. For in sensing something as white, they have a memory of it when it has gone away. And when many memories of the same type have occurred, then we say that we have experience, since experience is a multitude of impressions similar in type.
>
> Of the conceptions, some occur naturally by means of the aforementioned modalities and without conscious effort, while others come about by our instruction and attention. These latter are called conceptions, but the former are preconceptions as well.
>
> Reason, for which we are called rational, is said to be completed [lit. 'filled up'] from our preconceptions as well. A concept is an image in the mind of a rational animal; for when the image comes to the rational soul, it is called a concept, taking its name from the mind.
>
> For this reason, what comes to irrational animals are images only; while those which come to us and to the gods are generically images but specifically concepts.[24]

Although this text is not one Locke is likely to have read, its convenience as a basis of comparison makes its use irresistible.

In the first place, Locke and the Stoics agree (1) that the original cognitive state of a newborn infant is, like a blank tablet, devoid of content.[25] They agree also (2) that the senses are the first sources of cognitive content, whereby a thing (e.g. something white) inscribes its likeness on the mind, which the memory then

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[23] See *Reasonableness*, 6–8; *WR*, 92–3.; also pertinent are Locke's reflections on the materiality/immateriality of the soul in 'Adversaria Theologica,' MS Locke c. 42, pp. 32–3, *WR*, 20–30. The Stoic doctrine is that the individual soul is mortal, except in the case of those perfected in wisdom, but that the latter and the soul of the world persist throughout a particular world cycle; see *DL*, VII, 156–57; Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*, 1053, *Moralia, LCL*, Vol. XIII/2, pp. 571f.

[24] Aetius *Placita*, IV, 1–4, *Doxographi Graeci*, ed. Herman Diels (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1958); the translation, with modifications, is by R. J. Hankinson, 'Stoic Epistemology,' *Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 62; translation of the first sentence of the fourth paragraph is from Long and Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophers*, §39E, i. 238.

[25] *Essay* II. i. 2 (104).

retains[26]; (3) that recurring sensations or tokens of like things fuse, by experience, into a type or preconception[27]; (4) that the process is wholly natural and, with respect to the acquisition of content generally, passive[28]; (5) but that the mind is also active, attending carefully to certain things and their qualities, and reflecting upon them, thereby transforming confused images into concepts (*ennoiai*), or ideas[29]; (6) that reason is a capacity that grows, and so it is said to be filled up or enlarged, until it reaches completion, that is, until it is operationally mature.[30] Thus not only knowledge, but the capacity to reason also is the product of experience, and reason, as it grows or is enlarged, gains the ability to see the reasonableness of things that before it might not have expected could be so.

Our text does not mention any other activities of mind than abstraction or the formation of general concepts, but other texts provide what is missing here, and once again, there is broad agreement. Thus, when developing its concepts, the mind not only abstracts from particular sensations, it also combines, compares, adds and subtracts them in whole, and arranges them in propositions and hypotheses, from which it draws inferences, and so forth. For the sake of completeness, one may add to this list that Locke, like the Stoics, adhered to a causal theory of perception, and that the perception of a thing is proof of its existence.[31]

I have remarked that Locke and the Stoics are in agreement that the mind is generally passive as a receptor of ideas. (See point (3) above). But there is a subtle difference between the two that must not be overlooked. If I understand them correctly, Stoics were more cognizant than was Locke that the acquisition of knowledge is always a natural or organic process, which does not always involve conscious effort, but in which the mind is never entirely passive. The Stoic idea of a cataleptic impression (*katalêptikê phantasia*) involves the action of grasping or apprehending.[32] Thus Locke defines perception, 'the first faculty of the Mind,' as thinking or what the mind does with its ideas; the Stoics carry the process one step backward to the very acquisition of ideas.[33] In this respect, they seem to be more consistent naturalists, a consequence, perhaps, of their belief that mind, as well as body, was a material composition.

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[26] *Essay* II. i. 6 (106); also II. x, passim.

[27] *Essay* II. ix. 8 (145). This is a particularly interesting passage, for Locke observes that in the minds of mature adults simple ideas are upon reception '*alter'd by the Judgment*, without our taking notice of it'. This, I think, approximates the Stoic idea of a preconception.

[28] *Essay* II. i. 25; xii. 1 (118, 163).

[29] *Essay* II. xii. 1 (163).

[30] *Essay* II. i. 20, 22 (116–17).

[31] Reason and reasoning are not '*a priori* and independent of events'. Rather for Stoics as well as for Locke, it may be said that 'the primary contents of human rationality … are derived from direct acquaintance of empirical events.' A. A. Long, 'The Harmonics of Stoic Virtue,' in *Stoic Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 206.

[32] Here I follow R.J. Hankinson, 'Stoic Epistemology,' 60, especially fn. 1.

[33] *Essay* II. ix. 1, but see also II. ix. 2 (143) where Locke directs his readers to what they themselves do when they see or hear or think.

There is a notable difference between Locke and the Stoics with respect to terminology. He displays a casual indifference to Stoic terms like 'phantasm' and 'common notion', yet this may have had less to do with any antipathy to Stoic epistemology than with the fact that the meaning of the terms had become obscure.[34] This indifference to terminology probably indicates that Locke had no professional interest in Stoic epistemology, with which he was surely acquainted, and whose affinities to his own thought he could not have failed to recognize but which he saw no need to acknowledge.

The Foundations of Morality and the Law of Nature

In this section I treat a series of moral topics, or, better, a medley of them, for each of the themes considered here mixes with the rest to constitute Locke's moral outlook. Here also my purpose is to clarify Locke's more or less near Stoic affinities.

Good and bad and indifferent: Stoic theory of value divides things into three classes: good, bad and indifferent.[35] Stoics maintain that virtue is the only proper good. Virtue is a unitary state of being, or a unitary disposition to act that has multiple expressions, viz. the cardinal virtues of wisdom, justice, courage and temperance. A virtue is a characteristic that is 'transferred adverbially' to actions, for example, speaking truthfully or drinking sparingly.[36] The opposite of virtue is vice, which comprises all actions and motives that are contrary to virtue as well as the unsettled character from which they proceed. Happiness is a concomitant state with virtue. Since virtue involves the perfection of reason, all the judgments of reason would be correct, that is, the virtuous individual or sage would be guided in all her judgments by right reason, and so would not be led astray by bad or debilitating passions. The sage would know that the fears and hopes and anxieties of those less perfect involve false judgments and so would not be affected by them. This perfect state is not passionless. Stoic theory allows for good passions as well as bad ones. A standard list of good passions (*eupatheiai*) mentions three: joy, caution and wishing.[37]

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[34] *Essay* I. i. 8 (47).

[35] The summary of Stoic moral opinions that is provided in this section is not original. It is very much dependent upon the expertise of a number of scholars, especially Michael Frede, Brad Inwood, A. A. Long and the notes in *The Hellenistic Philosophers.* For details of their works on which I have relied see the notes.

[36] *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 365.

[37] *DL* VII, 116 (*LCL* ii. 221): these are rational states: elation of mind (as opposed to immediate vain or sensual pleasure); rational avoidance (as opposed to fear) and rational desire (as opposed to craving). See also *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, i. 412, 419f. All three are arguably characteristics of Locke: the joy or pleasure of new learning and in general of rational pursuits (see *Essay, Epistle to the Reader*); Leo Strauss's characterization of Locke as a cautious man surely is apt, even if his use of it is mistaken; see his *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 206f; Locke's persistent desire for heaven was, at least as he understood it, a rational desire, and his considered opinion about the power of choice accepts the capability of an individual to suspend immediate desire for a greater good, viz. the joy of heaven; see *Essay* II. xxi. 65–71 (277–84).

Indifferent things include all states, circumstances and events connected to an individual life that cannot either wholly or in part be brought under the hegemony of reason: these include physical states such as health, or socio-economic conditions, for example, one's station in life, reputation, prosperity or wealth. Indifferent things also include actions that have no immediate moral bearing: whether I stand or sit, dine now or later, exercise or rest. Yet a distinction can be properly made among all of these between what is to be preferred and what is to be rejected: among the former, health, vigour, good reputation and regular exercise. The sage will always make the right judgment concerning these actions and pursuits. It is by extending ethical thought to such circumstances as these that Stoic ethics comes to embrace the common life, recommending appropriate actions or prescribing rules or laws of various generality. Of course, Stoics believe that we live in a world perfected by reason, so that it may be said that everything happens for the best and nothing happens by chance. Stoic determinism, however, is of a compatibilist variety. Events are not determined by an unbroken chain of causes and effects, but by a sequence of causes, among them, rational choice. Misfortune always offers to the individual the opportunity to respond; there is always something that is 'up to us.'[38]

Locke's theory of good and bad seems irreconcilably opposed to Stoicism. He traces our ideas of these principles to perceptions of pleasure and pain that often accompany our perceptions of things in or outside of the mind, and on account of which we judge these things to be good or bad. Good is whatever '*is apt to cause or increase Pleasure, or diminish Pain in us, or to preserve us the possession of any other Good or absence of any Evil*' and likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, for good and bad.[39] Locke's account of the origin of our ideas of good and bad was not meant as a mere description of how these common notions arise in experience. For, since the conjunction or superaddition of pleasure and pain with or to certain perceptions is divinely ordained and not just a natural consequence of a thing affecting us, there must be something divinely normative in the affects as well as in our judgments about them. Moreover, reflection reveals to us that pleasure and pain often accompany things that are by design beneficial to us, for example, heat and cold cause comfort or discomfort respectively in those very situations where they are beneficial or harmful to us, and thus they serve in these different capacities to preserve us in life.[40] Hence, that there may be an alternation of the conjunction of pleasure and pain to the same perceived object that in the first instance is beneficial and in the second, harmful, should awaken the mind to the wisdom and goodness of the creator. There is an even higher truth to be learned from the inconstancy and impermanence of pleasure too often punctuated with pain.

> Beyond all this [viz. what serves the preservation of life], we may find another reason *why* God hath scattered up and down *several degrees of Pleasure and Pain, in all the things that environ and affect us*; and blended them together, in almost all that our Thoughts and

[38] See Dorothea Frede, 'Stoic Determinism,' *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 189, ff.

[39] *Essay* II. xx. 2 (229).

[40] *Essay* II. vii. 3 (129).

> Senses have to do with; that we finding imperfection, dissatisfaction, and want of complete happiness, in all the Enjoyments which the Creatures can afford us, might be led to seek it in the enjoyment of him, *with whom there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures forever more.*[41]

Locke also allows that pleasure and pain are conjoined to moral actions and higher attitudes of mind. In an entry written in one of his notebooks, dated 1692, he comments on the varieties and degrees of pleasure that a rational being may enjoy. Pleasures of the mind or contemplation are to be preferred to those material or sensible pleasures, because they are more lasting. He observes that the sum of corporeal pleasures, including those that 'modestie speaks not openly of', probably occupies less than a quarter of one's time. And even these enjoyments are, as it were, surrounded by or embedded in the satisfactions of reflection. He then prescribes a better way for all whose 'interest & businesse' in life is 'happynesse.' The pleasures that are connected with giving food to a starving man, or to a friend, which give even greater pleasure, or saving the life of a child, in short, in doing good works of love and charity, yield a greater happiness, an 'undecaying and uninterrupted' reward in heaven.[42] Locke seems to have wanted to combine in a single perception of pleasure the satisfaction that a virtuous agent takes in doing good deeds, a joy that, according to Stoic theory, accrues to self-governing rational agents through their virtuous actions, with the consolation of the pilgrim Christian hoping for a heavenly reward, which is a consummate pleasure to which no earthly pleasure can compare. The result is a mismatch.

A brief comment about public morality and the pleasure principle provides a useful conclusion to this discussion, for Locke supposed that public morality was motivated by pleasure and advantage. In one place in the *Essay*, he attributes the stability of public morality to the concurrence of virtue and public happiness. This too is divinely ordained, for God 'by an inseparable connexion, joined *Virtue* with publick Happiness: and made the Practice thereof, necessary to the preservation of Society; and made visibly *beneficial* to all, with whom the Virtuous Man has to do', so that virtue is everywhere praised, as are the rules of government, which are supposed to be expressions of virtue. Here private interest and public esteem join to form what Locke acknowledges, somewhat petulantly, is a most effective bond of civil society.[43]

The Passions: Locke's theory of the passions follows after Stoic theory in one very important respect. He maintained that the passions are not mere emotions or impulses to action, but involve judgments, or thoughts that something is good or bad and therefore is to be desired or avoided.[44] These judgments represent the coincidence of pleasure or pain with certain objects. Locke's position on this theme is clearly stated in *Essay* II. xx. There, for example, he defines sorrow as 'uneasiness

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[41] *Essay* II. vii. 5 (130); see also II. xx. 1–3.

[42] 'Ethica,' MS Locke c. 42, p. 224; *WR*, 15f. Mention of an undecaying reward no doubt was intended to evoke Matt. 6: 20.

[43] *Essay* I. iii. 6 (69).

[44] On the Stoic theory of emotions as value judgments, see Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Chap. 2, 29–54 and passim.

of the mind, upon the thought of a Good lost' or of a 'present Evil'; he observes that fear arises from 'the thought of a future Evil likely to befall us'; he defines despair as 'the thought of the unattainableness of any Good.' Love and hatred are also judgments of value with respect to things that please or displease us. Our love or hatred of an inanimate object is a function of their utility or disutility; love or hatred of sensitive living beings arises 'from a consideration of their very Being, or Happiness.'[45] Violent emotions were the effects of wrong judgments. Locke also supposed that madness arose from wrong judgment.[46] Hence he maintained that the understanding must regulate desire by correcting its own misadventures and miscarriages.[47] This practice applies not only to matters of individual morality, but to religion as well. His common charge that every man's belief is his own orthodoxy is an instance of wrong judgment from which arise passions of pride or arrogance.[48] For the most part, Locke's thoughts about the passions appear to have been his own and not deliberately fashioned after Stoic models. Yet in one instance at least, he may have borrowed a definition. His definition of Anger: 'uneasiness or discomposure of the Mind, upon the receipt of any Injury, with a present purpose of Revenge,' has classical, if not strictly Stoic, antecedents.[49]

Locke's contention, that the will is not an independent faculty or separate agency distinct from the understanding, fits nicely here, and shows him to be in basic agreement with the Stoics, in contrast to Plato and Aristotle who claimed that the soul consisted of three distinct parts, each with its own faculty, and with Augustine, who subscribed also to a doctrine of a will divided against itself.[50] Accordingly, Locke adhered to an intellectualist view of voluntary actions. These are actions that follow the 'order or command of the mind', and hence are preceded by choice or judgments of good or bad, which are in turn determined by various passions, that is, by modifications of desire or uneasiness.[51]

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[45] *Essay* (230f).

[46] *Essay* II. xx. 13 (161).

[47] *Essay* II. xxi. 62 (274f); also *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, passim.

[48] See, *Tolerantia*, 58.

[49] *Essay* II. xx. 12 (231). Seneca, *de Ira*, 2. 3. 4–5; see Richard Sorabji's translation and discussion in his 'Stoic First Movements in Christianity,' in *Stoicism. Traditions and Transformations*, ed. Stephen K. Strange and Jack Zupko (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); see also *Seneca: Moral Essays*, ed. John M. Cooper and J.F. Procope (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19, 20, fn. 8, 44. See also fn. 4.

[50] For a full exposition of these distinctions, see Richard Sorabji, 'Stoic First Movements in Christianity', and *Emotion and Peace of Mind*.

[51] *Essay* II. xxi. 5 (230), 28–30 (248–50), 39 (257), 54–5 (268–70), 62 (274–75) Locke's notion of uneasiness seems to fluctuate between the Stoic (or more precisely Senecan) idea of a 'first movement of action' and a proper passion. On Stoic first movements, see Richard Sorabji, 'Stoic First Movements in Christianity.' Locke follows a separate path from the Stoics in developing his theory of free agency: whereas the Stoics attributed freedom only to the Sage, on account of the perfection of his reason, Locke's account is more clinical and descriptive: an action is free if and only if the agent of the action has 'has the Power of doing, or forbearing to do, according as the Mind shall chuse or direct.' *Essay* II. xxi. 10 (238).

The Education of Children: Of all of Locke's works, the one that shows the greatest Stoic affinities is *Some Thoughts concerning Education*. It is, therefore, assigned its own place in this essay. Stoic naturalism predominates throughout this work. Indeed, there is a prevailing secularity manifest in Locke's thoughts that confronts the reader in the very first sentence. 'A sound Mind in a sound Body, is a short, but full Description of *a Happy State in this World*.'[52] The expression 'A sound Mind …' comes from Juvenal, and in its context it may be read as recommending a self-governed life lived within the frame of divine providence. We may count it, then, as a Stoic idea. The love of heaven, however, does not go unmentioned in this work, and there are, as I shall point out, other signs that Locke has kept religious expectation alive in it. Absent from it, however, is any consideration of evangelical themes: temptation, sin, repentance, grace and forgiveness.[53] A mortal life, then, in Locke's judgment, is something good in itself, and it provides sufficient opportunity for satisfaction and delight to warrant living it and not grieving over what it might have been.

The purpose of education is to enable a child to achieve a state of rational self-control, so that it may properly attend to the great business of life, which is virtue and wisdom.[54] A sound body is not something good in itself, although it is a state to be preferred just because it allows freedom of action, that is, action according to nature. The proper means to achieve it produces not only health; rather they endow the whole child, mind and body, with a predisposition to fortitude, by requiring it to endure hardship, and temperance, by training it to resist desire.[55] Such robust physical training is preparatory for that moment when it reaches the age of discretion, 'when Reason comes to speak in them, and not Passion,' although even then a child's education continues through reading and discourse.[56] It is in connection with this early training that Locke acknowledges the Stoic affinities to his counsels: to discipline the body through austerities such as exposing it to cold; eating plain food, sparingly and only when hungry and not, as custom prescribes, at regular intervals; drinking 'no more than Natural Thirst requires,' sleeping on a hard bed with the head uncovered even in winter and such like practices. He makes light of these affinities, but is nonetheless serious in his commendation of the practices.[57]

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[52] *Education*, 83, italics mine. By secularity, I mean not that religion is assigned no place in the education of children, but that the prospect of a happy and fulfilled mortal life is entertained, and that such a life involves the cultivation of reason and virtue. This is consistent with the claim Locke makes in *The Reasonableness of Christianity* that a mere mortal life is better than no being at all, and that God did nothing unjust in ordaining that Adam's progeny, although innocent of his sin, should nevertheless inherit mortality, which counted for Adam as punishment but for his progeny as a natural state; see *Reasonableness*, 10; *WR*, 94.

[53] See *Essay* II. xxi 57 (271–72), where Locke equates temptation with the effect on an individual of physical deprivation, disease and violent torture.

[54] *Education*, 255.

[55] *Education*, 103, 175.

[56] *Education*, 167. See also Seneca *Moral Epistles*, no. xciv, *LCL*, iii. 42f.

[57] *Education*, 87.

The discipline he prescribes is entirely according to nature. The recommended austerities are in no way intended to mortify the flesh, but to allow nature to exercise its proper discipline on the body, thereby ensuring as much as possible a sound body fit for a sound mind. Natural impulses are not to be suppressed, rather it is the corrupting influence of custom that is to be hindered from deforming a child in mind or body. Custom is often 'soft and effeminate' and accordingly debilitating and enfeebling and dissolute. In contrast, nature's discipline is always reasonable, and guaranteed to make one free, to be master of one's self. The fault of custom lies in false judgments about what natural impulses might mean in a rational life, and rationality is clearly the intended goal of all of this.[58]

In the same way, with regard to the principles of behaviour, the goal in nurturing a child is to let nature be its guide by protecting it or weaning it from custom. Good nurturing requires that 'every one's Natural Genius' be allowed to reach its proper end. The gracefulness and beauty of natural manners, which are never forced or awkward, but 'Genuine and Easie,' are contrasted with the affectations of fashion, which never grow in the 'wild uncultivated Wast,' but emerge only in poorly cultivated 'Garden-Plotts.'[59]

Reason also must be allowed to develop naturally or, one might say, autonomously, where it is guided by an unclouded perception of what is appropriate or fitting and not by the artificial constraints of the schools or social affectations.[60]

Locke's prescription of parental roles is designed to fit the progress of a child from animality, when it is guided merely by the natural impulses of self-love, to rational personality. During childhood an individual is subject to the absolute rule of its parents, who in turn are subject to restrictions in their exercise of it which are consistent with natural experience and that follow from a developmental process that is consistent with nature generally and with the nature of the individual. Most importantly, parents must for the most part avoid harsh and violent measures, 'I am apt to think that *great Severity* of Punishment does but very little Good; nay, great Harm in Education: And … Ceteribus paribus, those Children, who have been most *chastised*, seldom make the best Men.' The 'Fear and Awe' of Parental power that holds sway when a child is very young and lacking judgment must give way, as its rational capacities develop, to 'Love and Friendship,' which joined to a cultivated virtue and a sense of honour guarantee a sure result.[61] Locke allows one notable exception to this. Severe measures must be employed to counteract early signs of injustice in a child's behaviour towards others, and to counteract obstinacy and rebelliousness. The aim in all such discipline is supposed to predispose the child towards justice and liberality.[62]

As a means of cultivating virtue in a child, Locke recommends that parents employ a system of rewards and punishments, the most effective of which is praise

[58] *Education*, 90, 105.

[59] *Education*, 122f.

[60] *Education*, 128.

[61] *Education*, 111, 115. 162.

[62] *Education*, 138f, 170f; see also Cicero *De Officiis*, I. 20–59.

or blame. The goal of such discipline is to instill in a child a sense of honor and disgrace, to 'relish' the one and to fear the latter.[63] These are characteristics of a secular morality, which Locke elsewhere demeans.[64] Yet, in another place, he makes it very clear that the true foundation of virtue rests upon 'a true Notion of *God*' which 'ought very early to be imprinted' on a child's mind, and accompanying this a love and reverence for God and a belief that God governs all things. Likewise, Locke prescribes that children learn by heart the Lord's Prayer, the ecumenical creeds and the Ten Commandments. Finally, consistent with the practice of enlarging a child's reason by cultivating curiosity in it, Locke recommends reading the Bible as the surest way to instill in it a proper notion of spirit.[65]

The Law of Nature: The classical theory of the law of nature has roots in Stoic theology and anthropology. Gods and men are united in a commonwealth of reason. Right reason, which pervades all things, may be personified as Zeus, the Lord and Ruler of the universe. Yet since it is this same reason that is the ruling principle of every rational being, reason rules not theonomously from above but autonomously from within. Zeus is not a superior being, which is what Locke believed, but is nature herself, a self-governing totality. Every rational being who chooses to act according to nature's law does so by its own authority, and its motivation to act is altogether internal and rational.[66]

Locke's theory of the law of nature differs fundamentally from the Stoic doctrine. According to his view, laws of nature are divine commands that derive their authority from God's transcendent power, by which he created us. Our motivation to obey them derives also from his power and will to reward and punish, to exercise the divine right of retribution. Yet Locke continued to claim that there was a law of nature and conceived of it as a philosophical law, and he agreed that ancient Stoic philosophers were most active and proficient in promoting it. He acknowledged all this in his earliest work on the theme, the so-called *Essays on the Law of Nature* (c.1663), and he never took any of it back.

A later and more pertinent treatment of the law of nature occurs in Locke's manuscript, 'Of Ethick in General.' It appears to have been a preliminary draft of what was originally intended to be the concluding chapter of the *Essay*.[67]

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[63] *Education*, 119, 134.

[64] See *Essay* II. xxviii. 11 (356), where Locke disparages the very view of rewards and punishments that he advocates in *Education*, grudgingly admitting their efficacy, but demeaning their moral value. See also 'Mr Locke's Extempore Advice. &c.'(i.e. 'Some Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman'), *Education*, Appendix III, 321: Here Locke asserts the excellence of the morality of the Gospel, and recommends Cicero's *De Officiis* as an instance of Pagan morality. On Locke's ambivalence towards Cicero and ancient Roman moral teaching, see Philip Mitsis, 'Locke's Offices,' in *Hellenistic and Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. Jon Miller and Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 45–61.

[65] *Education*, 212, 245. 66 *DL*, VII, 88. See also John M. Cooper, 'Stoic Autonomy,' 225 and passim.

[66] *Education*, 212, 245.

[67] MS Locke c. 28, fols. 146–52. The text is printed in *WR*, pp. 9–14. On the approximate date of composition, I follow Von Leyden, *Law of Nature*, 69–72.

Locke wrote it c.1686. A final chapter on this theme was a fitting conclusion for a work that was originally intended to inquire into the foundations of morality and revelation and which, notwithstanding the enlargement of its scope, never departed from this practical intent. It seems highly plausible that Locke meant to represent in this chapter his considered opinion on the subject. However, he never finished the chapter and abandoned any plan of concluding his great book in this way. Why he did so can only be conjectured. There is a prevailing view that Locke's decision not to carry through with his design marks a crisis in his thinking about morality and the law of nature, one that was precipitated as he contemplated the task before him. Wolfgang Von Leyden has observed that the manuscript ends just at the point where one might expect Locke to have begun a derivation and demonstration of the law of nature, of its authority and prescriptive rules.[68] He supposed that Locke found himself unable to proceed because he had settled into philosophical positions that were either inconsistent with a theory of the law of nature or would prove a hindrance to constructing one. First, by the time of writing, Locke had adopted hedonist principles of human agency. In the second place, ambiguity of language proved an obstacle to the expression of an adequate theory, although Von Leyden admitted this was not to Locke's mind an insurmountable obstacle.[69] Finally, Von Leyden supposed that Locke was stymied by his methodology. He had chosen to follow a method that was purely descriptive and that lacked any capacity to discover normative principles. This is the 'historical, plain method' of ideas.[70] Von Leyden's account of the causes of a crisis in Locke's mind are unpersuasive. The last two obstacles can be easily overcome. As already noted, Locke supposed that ambiguities of language can be addressed and corrected.[71] Locke's epistemological Reliabilism can be employed to overcome the last obstacle. Like the Stoics, he believed that our cognitive powers were designed by a benevolent providence and are therefore fit to accomplish the moral purpose for which we were created. There are norms of nature inherent in its design that guarantee the efficacy of the historical plain method and that enable its user to make proper judgments about what is useful and morally fit.

There remains the hedonistic doctrine of motivation. What is noteworthy is that in 'Of Ethick in General' Locke unequivocally reasserts this doctrine as a mainstay of the theory he is about to represent. Von Leyden was well aware of this. Where he seems to have gone astray is in supposing that Locke must have found himself at an impasse because of the incompatibility of this doctrine with any projected theory of the law of nature. There is no reason to believe that this should be so or that Locke perceived it this way. It is evident, of course, that to make a hedonistic

[68] Von Leyden, *Law of Nature*, 70. See also John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 187–99.

[69] *Law of Nature*, 73–4.

[70] *Law of Nature*, 75–6.

[71] The whole of Book III of the *Essay*, especially Chaps. x and xi.

theory of value a key part of one's theory of the law of nature necessarily involves a departure from the classical Stoic theory. If we can take Locke at his word, we may conclude that he did not flinch from such a move. And we may credit his steadfastness to a constructive eclecticism and a freedom from philosophical partisanship. Sometime after 1671, which was when he composed Drafts A and B of the *Essay*, Locke espoused a hedonistic theory of action. There is no trace of a hedonistic doctrine of motivation in either draft. This theory was well established in his mind when he completed the first edition of the *Essay*, which coincides with the writing of 'Of Ethick in General.' It was then and remained thereafter a fundamental part of his moral theory.

To summarize: 'Of Ethick in General' is a fragment of what was meant to present a system of ethics that was supposed to encompass a theory of the law of nature. The theory Locke presents, if judged according to Stoic criteria, is non-standard. Locke was familiar with Stoic moral criteria from the time he composed *Essays on the Law of Nature*, where he acknowledges them.[72] But although he held the Stoics in high esteem, and although he had by this time schooled himself well in their moral opinions, he did not judge them to be altogether authoritative for him. In another text, composed about the same time as the *Essays*, Locke vociferously rejects the Stoic idea of happiness.[73]

In 'Of Ethick in General,' he begins by clarifying the fundamental principles of his theory. First, that happiness and misery, or what is the same, pleasure and pain, are 'the two great springs of humane actions.' Second, that there is a viable idea of the law of nature. Third, that no theory of the law of nature can be adequate unless it adheres to ideas and principles derived from nature and the common life, and therefore is consistent with the method of ideas presented in the earlier parts of the *Essay.* Finally, a well-founded theory requires that the law of nature be prescribed by a superior power, that is, by God, who has the right and power to reward or punish.

The first and last principles depart from classical Stoic theory. The second and third are quite consistent with it. It is worthwhile, therefore, to examine more closely the arguments that Locke put forward each of them.

Locke gives two reasons why we may believe that there is a law of nature. The first is that every nation or society known to us acknowledges standards of right and wrong, virtue and vice, so that 'some kinde of morality is to be found every where received.' Moreover, although the 'rules and boundarys' of right and wrong that make up these moralities are 'very different,' there is enough perfection and exactness among them to warrant concluding that the idea of morality is universal and that it is not an invention of civil society or its magistrates, for standards of right and wrong are found to prevail even where those who are supposed to uphold them are silent. We may expect that by 'perfection and exactness' are meant properties of the various moralities that reason may vouch for. In sum, every nation and

[72] *Law of Nature*, pp. 109, 111.

[73] 'Oratio Censoria Funebris, 1664,' in *Law of Nature*, 223.

society acknowledges some standard of right and wrong that is not comprised of merely positive laws, that is to say, one that is inherently natural and moral.[74]

The second argument proceeds from the observation that morality generally is regarded as the domain neither of priests nor theologians or even of lawyers but of philosophers primarily, 'whose profession it has been to explaine & teach'morality 'to the world.' This is clear evidence that Locke believed that there is a law of nature, that it has been discovered, and that it represents rules of action to which rational creatures ought to conform.[75]

The gist of the third principle is this: our knowledge of the law of nature arises from experience. It is a rational law for whose understanding the ideas and common notions that constitute human reason are adequate instruments. It is noteworthy that in 'Of Ethick in General,' Locke is critical of philosophers for not paying sufficient attention to the origin of moral ideas, that is, in not tracing them back to their natural beginning but rather constructing a morality of virtue that consists more of artificialities, of affectations rather than of real affects, so that the philosophical law seems a mere law of fashion rather than a law of nature or a divine law.[76]

The fourth principle seems designed by Locke to set himself apart not only from Stoics but from philosophers in general. In 'Of Ethick in General' he criticizes philosophers not only for not paying sufficient attention to the origin of moral ideas, but also for failing to teach morality effectively, although both criticisms point to the same error, for an understanding of the true origin of morality also discloses its proper motivation. Philosophers, Locke contends, ought to have 'urged' the rules of morality 'as the commands of the great god of Heaven & Earth & such as he would retribute to men after this life.'[77] Moral Obligation for Locke does not derive just from the recognition by a rational agent that a certain action is right or wrong and therefore a law of reason, but from the authority of the divine ruler who prescribes it and the sanctions that apply to it. Such a notion would seem to transport Locke's theory beyond the boundaries of philosophy and locate it within the domain of Christian theism. But it didn't seem so to him. Philosophers had failed, because they had not adequately enlarged their reason beyond mundane considerations. Their failure was not a failure of reason, at least not according to Locke's understanding of reason. Hence, at this point in his text, Locke faced no crisis that might have led him to abandon the philosophical theory he intended at the outset.

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[74] Locke makes the same argument in *Law of Nature*, 115.

[75] *WR*, 9.

[76] *WR*, 9, §4. See also 'Sacerdos', a manuscript dated 1698. Here Locke observes that in antiquity, there was a strict division between maintained revelation and reason. The former was the domain of priestscraft, the latter of philosophy. He concludes with the complaint (following Cicero) that although philosophers 'fetched all their [moral] doctrines from reason', they failed to live up to them. 'Adversaria 1661', p. 93, *WR*, 17–18.

[77] *WR*, 9.

Rather than hypothesizing that during the last period of his intellectual life Locke turned away from reason and towards revelation, it seems more consistent with his intentions to assume that revelation was always within the horizon of his philosophical vision, and that even some aspects of his philosophy, which seem *prima facie* less attuned to his Christian motives, may have been regarded by him as serving this higher purpose. Three, in particular, come to mind: Locke's position against innatism, his denial that the mind always thinks, and his hedonistic theory of motivation. The first aligned Locke with the Stoics, the second did not. Could it be that Locke found fault with the doctrine of innate cognition, not just because it seemed a redundant theory and therefore 'impertinent' to the issue of how we come to know things, but because it might be used to foster belief that nature by itself is self-sufficient, or less serviceable to advocates of a strong doctrine of providence?[78] This may seem far-fetched, but when one considers how, when coupled with Locke's idea of the enlargement of reason, it leads one almost naturally into revelation, the hypothesis gains a measure of plausibility. Locke's denial that the mind always thinks correlates with his locating of personal identity in consciousness and his notion of a forensic self and responsibility before God.[79] His hedonism and biblical theism also enjoy a curious compatibility. The idea of a god who commands and whose will is enforced by severe punishments and excessive rewards is typically biblical. The pleasure of heaven and the pain of hell are surely more than supplements to the august authority of the divine lawgiver. These considerations seem always to have been present in Locke's thinking. The combination of Stoicism, hedonism and biblical monotheism must seem strange, but it becomes a matter of the highest curiosity when we find them not just idly present but seriously considered and combined in a mind so acute and so well cultivated. In short, the Christian theological motives in Locke's philosophy were not late-coming, they were a present force from the beginning, in his recorded earliest reflections. Because he was the sort of Christian he was, he found much that was accommodating in Stoicism. But for the very same reason, he could never be a Stoic.

Reason Enlarged[80]

To understand Locke aright it is necessary to comprehend that he was a Christian and a philosopher, and that his way of being a Christian had bearing on how he did philosophy, so that he was properly a Christian philosopher. This seemed possible

[78] 'Impertinent' in the sense that it would be vain or silly to suppose that God would have implanted in us sensible ideas, for example, ideas of colours, when he has given us eyes to see them in external objects; see *Essay* I. ii. 1 (48); see also I. i. 5 (45).

[79] Locke's case against the doctrine that the mind always thinks is presented in *Essay* II. i. 10–19; his reflections on personal identity and the forensic self are recorded in *Essay* II. xxvii. 9–26.

[80] It is important to keep in mind that while Locke confidently asserted that reason may be enlarged by revelation, the process of enlargement does not involve the addition of any new simple ideas.

to Locke, because he believed that there was a continuity between reason and revelation, that reason was enlarged by truths that it could not on its own discover, but once received, it could find most reasonable to believe, a proper adjunct to all that natural enquiry made known. In this section, I attempt to clarify just what sort of Christian Locke was. This requires much more than providing a summary of his Christian beliefs; one must enter into the Christian world that he inhabited and feel the force of its attractiveness.

Locke was a Protestant whose religion was the Bible. He believed that Holy Scripture, and not any dogma or creed or tradition, was the only infallible guide to revealed truth; that its authors were specially chosen to give testimony to this truth; that they were inspired by God, their minds directly infused with the knowledge that they delivered to the world.[81] He believed that the supernatural authority of the Bible could be established by reason, and that its meaning could be made clear by using the same rational critical means that one might employ in interpreting any ancient text, although he denied that reason could on its own discover the truth it conveyed. The discovery of it as well as the infallibility of its source were joint products of a critical historical reading of the text, so that it could be said not only that Scripture is its own interpreter but also that it comes armed with its own warrant.[82]

Nowadays, it is not supposed that the Bible presents its most critical readers with a single or unified doctrine or worldview, unless it be approached from a normative point of view informed with a priori principles capable of imposing harmony on an aggregate of extraneous and incompatible parts. Locke would have disputed this, although he would have readily admitted that Holy Scripture is a collection of texts, written at different times and under different circumstances, compiled and edited by different hands; that it displayed a variety of genre; that some parts of it were abstruse, some plain, some immediately applicable, such as moral precepts, others, prophecies and apocalypses, requiring long and careful study to comprehend and even then not altogether yielding up their mysteries. As his writings about the Bible, published and unpublished, show, Locke achieved a high

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Knowledge and belief, even of transcendent things, like God and spirits, and messianic kingdoms is always comprised of ideas of sensation and reflection that are regularly employed in ordinary knowledge and belief. The enlargement of reason, then, as an operation of the mind is always just adding ideas to ideas; of composition, whose products are complex ideas. For a concise account of this operation and its application to transcendent beings, see John Yolton in *The Two Intellectual Worlds of John Locke* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), 93–95.

[81] Among Locke's manuscripts is one dated 1696 in which Locke recorded the results of a comprehensive survey of the various modes of revelation represented in the Bible: MS Locke c. 27, fols. 138–42, 'Revelation, Its several ways under the old Testament.'

[82] On the infallibility of the Bible, see 'Infallibility,' *WR*, p. 72; also *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, 339, 334. On revelation and its warrant, see *Essay* IV. xvi. 14; xviii. 10 (667, 695). On the interpretation of Scripture, see Locke's preface to *A Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 103–16;, *WR*, 51–66. See also Chap. 3.

degree of sophistication as a biblical interpreter.[83] He sought to enlarge his reason by becoming a scholar of the Bible. The ease with which he moved among biblical texts, and the steady assurance he possessed that he was dealing with an infallible guide to truth, are evident in everything that Locke has written about the Bible.

One benefit that Locke derived from the enlargement of reason through revelation was the ability to consider deep speculative questions that were properly beyond the limits of mere reason, those limits narrowly drawn by Locke's empirical method. Now he could consider such questions as the creation of the world out of nothing, or the existence of spirits and their mode of cognition. These are not, strictly speaking, biblical notions. It is a curious fact that revelation became for Locke a warrant for philosophical and quasi-philosophical reflections about such matters as the creation and fall of angels, the pre-existence of the human soul, its descent and ascent, revelation by divine infusion, and knowledge as contemplation. In short, the appropriation of biblical revelation made it possible for Locke to be not only a Stoic empiricist but also a speculative Platonist. Revelation became his warrant for transcendental reflections and allowed him to be philosophically eclectic.[84]

Primarily, Locke viewed the Bible as an authoritative account of the history of the world, beginning from the first creation and ending with the second coming of Christ, a period that biblical chronologists estimated would comprise 7,000 years, or a Sabbath of millennia. Viewing the Bible in this way, as a continuous history, was one way of uniting its diverse parts. Chronology and the harmony of the Scriptures was a major enterprise, in which Locke took great interest.[85]

Locke believed that God created the world out of nothing probably in September, about 4,000 years before the common era.[86] He offered a spirited defence of the doctrine in *Essay* IV. x. For him, creation out of nothing was not a mere abstraction, however, but a real event. How did he imagine it? One cannot be sure, but there is an epic account of it that we can be certain Locke read and enjoyed. He did so *circa* 1655, before or just after he completed his baccalaureate at Oxford, indeed at just about the same time that he was reading Seneca's *De Ira*. This is the account of divine creation given in *The Divine Weeks* of Guillaume de Salluste,

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[83] These include *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*. Locke's literary remains include notes and comments on biblical texts in various manuscripts, commonplace books and interleaved bibles. A collection of these is available in *WR*.

[84] A fuller discussion of this theme with proper documentation may be found in my paper, 'Reflections on Locke's Platonism,' *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity*, 207–23; this study has been revised and reprinted as Chap. 6 in this book.

[85] The writings of the great Hebraist and biblical scholar John Lightfoot (1602–75) were most often relied on by Locke; in particular, Lightfoot's harmonies of the Old and New Testament, for details, see Chap. 3, fn. 5. Especially applicable is Locke's manuscript 'Chronologia Sacra,' probably composed in the late 1680s or early 1690s: MS Locke c. 27, fols. 258–63.

[86] This is recorded by Locke in his interleaved Bentley Bible (Locke 16. 25; *LL* 309), in locum as a note on Gen. 1: 1; he gives John Lightfoot as his source.

Sieur du Bartas.[87] Locke's notes on Bartas are recorded in the same commonplace book in which he wrote his notes on Seneca. They are mixed up among them.[88] His citations include passages from the first day of the first week. There Locke would have read that 'this *All* did once (of nought) begin' to create; hence the world, including the invisible world of spirits, had an absolute beginning; and that before this 'once', God ('this *All*') existed in sublime majesty, in undifferentiated light;

> Before all Time, all Matter, Forme, and Place;
> God all in all, and all in God it was:
> Immutable, immortal, infinite,
> Incomprehensible, all spirit, all light,
> All Majestie, all selfe Omnipotent,
> Invisible, impassive, excellent,
> Pure, wise, just, good, God raign'd alone at rest,
> Himself alone selfes Pallace, hoast and guest.

Further, he would have read that creation was a free action, and not in any way necessitated, rather it was willed in freedom: 'Th'immutable divine decree, which shall Cause the Worlds End, caus'd his originall'; 'from th' *Ocean* of his liberall Bountie, He poureth out a thousand Seas of Plentie'; that God first called forth from nothing all the stuff from which this world would be fashioned, and then created light, so that in its brightness, the splendour of the world being formed might be seen; and that in every respect the product of his easy labour manifested divine wisdom, power and goodness. Thus, the created world is likened to a school, or to a cloud, 'through which there shineth cleere'the true Phoebus,'or to a stage, where 'Justice, Knowledge, Love, and Providence, doo act their Parts,'or a great book 'printed all with God's great Workes in Letters Capitall.' In this connection, it was, in brief, natural revelation. Locke took special note of the creation of night, which 'tempers Dayes exceeding drought, Moistens our Aire'so that the earth will sprout; eases our travails, and 'buries our cares, and all our griefes appeases.' He would, most likely, also have read in this same narrative that hosts of angels were created, whether on the first day or long before it; that they were creatures of light, little different in essence from God; that some of them in their pride rebelled 'without right or reason,'and were cast down into that place to 'a lower Cell,' a place 'where God is not, and every where is Hell.'[89]

For the remainder of this sacred history we may turn to Locke himself. Although the main focus of *The Reasonableness of Christianity* is on the messianic career of

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[87] Du Bartas (1544–90) was a soldier, diplomat and poet. He was also a Protestant of Augustinian and Calvinist persuasion. *Les Semaines* was intended to be a history of the world, from creation to consummation. He completed only the first 'week' and a portion of the second. Locke read Du Bartas in an English translation by Joshua Sylvester (1563–1618). He cites an edition of 1641.

[88] MS Locke e. 6, fols. 10, 12.

[89] I have quoted from a facsimile edition of a 1605 edition of Joshua Sylvester's translation, *Bartas, His Divine Weekes and Works* (New York: Octagon, 1977) 2, 3, 6, 7, 19. 21, 22.

Jesus of Nazareth and the presentation of the gospel by him and his Apostles, its narrative encompasses the history of the world from Adam's sin until the final resurrection.[90] Its entire content is summarized by St Paul's dictum: 'as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'[91] This text also highlights one of the principal themes of the *Reasonableness*: the loss and restoration of immortality. Another central theme, closely connected to the former, is justification by faith.

Justification by faith has both historical and moral significance for Locke. It is a transaction between God and mankind, a settlement, whereby individuals, those favoured by God's grace and mercy, are rewarded for their faith, that is, for their accepting something as true, prescribed for them by God. For this they receive a reward, viz. a divine judgment or verdict that they are righteous or upright, notwithstanding that they have not lived perfectly upright lives, that is, lives in perfect conformity to the divine law. Locke takes a rigorist position in the *Reasonableness*. The smallest offence brings condemnation. This law of works has now been succeeded by a law of faith, whose reward is eternal bliss, when the divinely ordained history of salvation has at last run its course.

Adam's violation of a single commandment lost immortality for himself and for all of his progeny. This dispensation of death prevailed from Adam until Christ, that is until the messianic tasks, foretold by the Hebrew prophets, were fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth, and during which certain transactions between God and his Messiah determined a good outcome.[92] During this period, the divine law is variously revealed and is the rule of covenants, viz. with Noah, the patriarchs and most fully with Moses, whereby God, as it were, freely enters into a special relation with a family or nation, whom he rules directly, not as an end in itself, but as a moment in the history of salvation, a prelude to the messianic moment. The same law, however, is also revealed by natural means to the rest of mankind, to whom the same rigorous requirements apply. When the Messiah comes, he initiates a new covenant, one founded not on the rigor of the law, but on grace and forgiveness. This covenant establishes a new society of people who are judged to be righteous by their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah sent from God. The gospel is an invitation to all the world to enter the messianic kingdom by acknowledging the Messiah, with the proviso that they repent of their moral imperfections or sins, which Locke believed were the consequences not of an insurmountable depravity, but of frailty and an acquired stubbornness, and that they endeavour thereafter to conform their lives wholly to the divine law. Sincere endeavour suffices for perfect obedience.

The advent of the Messiah and the subsequent propagation of the gospel introduce a new and final historical age. The new society, the universal church of Christ,

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[90] For accounts of the narrative structure of the *Reasonableness*, see Chaps. 2, 5.

[91] 1 Cor. 15: 22; Romans 6: 12–19 also seems to have guided Locke's reflections here.

[92] By his obedience and voluntary sacrifice, the Messiah is assured an everlasting kingdom. These transactions are usually considered under the head of 'Satisfaction,' whereby God's justice and honour are satisfied by the messianic sacrifice. For an account of Locke's ambiguous stance on this doctrine, see *WR*, 32, 212–13, 271–72.

which is not to be identified with any particular ecclesiastical institution, replaces the people of Israel, as the principal bearer of divine revelation. The messianic age will last until the end of history. Then will come the resurrection and the last judgment, and the redeemed will enter a new spiritual state. The Messiah, now enthroned in divine glory, is in his resurrected body the archetype of what the redeemed shall be like. The reward of those judged righteous, eternal bliss, is pleasure transfigured.[93] The prospect of this reward, now perfectly assured, becomes the only enduring and effective motive to live a virtuous life.[94]

The Reasonableness of Christianity represents the enlargement of moral reason, so far as it offers what is supposed to be a proper comprehension of the divine law, its rigor, and the principle of justification by faith whereby that rigor is relaxed. With respect to the content of faith, it is enough that one accept that Jesus is the Messiah. But the enlargement of reason carries faith well beyond this. Locke supposed that there were two sorts of faith: a justifying faith, which makes one a Christian, and a consummate faith, whereby the whole gospel, the entire divine plan of salvation, is comprehended.[95] The exemplar of a consummate faith is St Paul, who achieved this state by a direct and original revelation.[96] So Locke believed, and so it is not surprising that, towards the end of his life, he began a careful study of all of St Paul's writings, to comprehend the Apostle's mind, and thereby himself to progress towards the perfection of his own faith. In the light of this effort, it should be clear that the attribution of theological minimalism to Locke is almost entirely false. It applies only to that primary doctrine that makes someone a Christian, but this is only the beginning, the threshold, as it were, of Christianity. The minimum is soon surpassed, for the enlargement of reason towards the consummation of faith is a duty that all Christians must fulfill to the best of their individual capacities. In the hereafter, reason and reason enlarged will give way to something more perfect, a 'state of accomplishment and perfection'; reason will be replaced by contemplation: all things will be open to view, to an 'intuitive comprehensive knowledge.' The redeemed shall have the cognitive power of angels.[97]

Reason Enlarged or Diminished?

The question posed by the title of this section is whether what Locke considered to be an enlargement of reason by revelation was just what he claimed it to be, or whether it was something else, perhaps just the opposite? It is arguable that Locke's

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[93] See Locke's manuscript, 'Resurrection et quae sequuntur,' MS Locke c. 27, fols. 213–14; *WR*, 232–37; see also Locke's paraphrase and notes on 2 Cor. 3: 18 and 5: 1, *A Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 279–80.

[94] *Reasonableness*, 162–63; *WR*, 204.

[95] On the notion of a consummate faith, see Chap. 5.

[96] On St Paul's revelation, see 2 Cor. 12: 2–4, and Locke's comment on it, *Essay* IV. xviii. 3 (690); see also *WR*, 60–64.

[97] See Locke's paraphrase of I Cor. 13: 12, *Paraphrase and Notes*, i. 238

interpretation of the Christian revelation represents not so much an enlargement of reason but a diminishment of Christianity through rationalization, a playing down of its transcendental supernaturalism. His claim, asserted in the title of his first theological publication, that Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures is reasonable, can be read in this way, but only if 'reasonableness' is taken in a reductive sense. I hope that what has been said in the previous section is sufficient to refute this. Locke was no reductionist. His version of Christianity was mythically rich and eminently supernatural. To his mind, reason was really enlarged by revelation, by truths beyond its ordinary compass.

So the question may be repeated. Does Locke succeed in truly enlarging reason by adding the Christian revelation to it? The answer, I think, is No, if the criteria of reasonableness are Stoic naturalism and moral rationalism. In comparison with the latter, the morality of the gospel must seem an oddity. Although the Bible teaches some virtues: justice, mercy, fidelity and charity, overall biblical morality is one of law or commandments, and of obedience to the lawgiver. The dominant relation is one of client and patron. Grace and justification are instances of patronage. The patron, in this instance, is God, or his surrogate, the Messiah, who wields absolute power. The messianic kingdom may not be of this world, but it is a kingdom nonetheless, and until the end it is a kingdom engaged in a cruel and violent war. Faith is a form of allegiance or loyalty. How odd to imagine that someone informed by Stoic ideas should believe that this is appropriate material for the enlargement of reason, for the perfection of the mind in this life, not to mention in a future life if one be admitted at all.

What Stoicism can bring, indeed has brought, to the mixture of ideas that make up the early modern worldview are thoughts that counteract the effect of Christian supernaturalism and absolutism. Stoic theology renders any positive notion of the will of God otiose. The Stoic theory of rationalism makes not only all human persons equal, but it renders them also equal to God. The Stoic theory of obligation posits autonomy and rules out all heteronomy. These are philosophical ideas that do not reach fruition in Locke's thinking even though there is a foundation laid for them by his borrowings from Stoicism. They are also key ideas of the Enlightenment. So in conclusion, one must judge that Locke's role as a founder of the Enlightenment should be downplayed or qualified, for the very reason that, in the end, the intellectual program of this almost but not quite Stoic philosopher downplays reason in the interests of revelation.

Chapter 9
Locke Against the Epicureans

Introduction

One of the primary philosophical labours that Locke took upon himself was the refutation of materialism and the establishment in its place of a divine physics, so I shall argue. I shall also argue that this task was fundamental to his entire philosophical programme, and that he was guided in this endeavour not only by mere natural reason but by reason enlarged by revelation, in particular, by thoughts concerning the work of Christ and the resurrection of the dead.[1]

The form of materialism at which he took particular aim was Epicurean. Against the Epicureans Locke argued that God not matter is the first and only eternal being, and that everything else, having a beginning, owes its existence to divine omnipotence and not to the random motions of material primordia operating without design in an infinite void.

This endeavour may seem curious, if not paradoxical, and ungrateful, for Locke's thinking was imbued with Epicureanism. He is not the only early modern philosopher about whom this can be said.[2] His acceptance of the theory of atomism as, at the very least, an indispensable working hypothesis for natural philosophy, along with the theory of primary and secondary qualities of material bodies, his theory of ideas, fashioned on analogy with atomism, his overall empirical stance and his moral hedonism are all unmistakably Epicurean in their origin. They are fundamental parts of Locke's philosophical system, and although he may have appropriated them indirectly from other sources, there is no doubt that he was aware of their original source. He owned two copies of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, which remains our richest primary source of Epicurus' life and thought; and he owned three copies of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*, which offers

[1] See *Essay* IV. xix. 4; also below, p. 230.

[2] It could be said about Gassendi and Spinoza, among others. On the ubiquity of Epicurean philosophy in Seventeenth Century Europe, see Catherine Wilson, *Epicureanism at the Origins of Modernity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2008).

V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 203,
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the most complete available account of Epicurean physics.[3] In the exposition of Locke's proof of God's existence that follows, I shall cite instances where Locke alludes directly to Lucretius. Furthermore, Locke was familiar with several refutations of atheism that focused on Epicureanism and Lucretius' account of it, in particular by Robert Boyle, and by the Cambridge Platonists Ralph Cudworth and John Smith[4]; and, not long before he wrote *Essay* IV. x, which contains his argument for God, he purchased a copy of Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe* and one of his copies of Lucretius. In his journal for Saturday, 18 February 1682 Locke cites Cudworth and mentions the atheist 'argument ex nihilo nihil', which, as we shall see is the Epicurean argument he laboured to refute.[5]

It may be suspected that Locke undertook a refutation of Epicurean physics merely to safeguard the Epicurean assets he had acquired; there is a measure of truth to this suspicion, but it should not be made a reason to ignore his argument and the case for transcendence that it makes. Locke's theistic proof seems paradoxical because, to borrow from Plato's *Sophist*, it shows him trying to fit both sides of the quarrel of the gods and the giants in a single philosophical programme.[6] I will try to resolve all this in the concluding section.

What follows is divided into three sections. The first section provides an exposition of Locke's theistic proof. However, because Locke's proof is designed to refute materialism as well, I begin this section a brief account of the foundations of Epicurean materialism. In the next section, I offer a brief character of Locke's divine physics taking into account both its theistic/anti-materialist stance and its correlation with Epicurean themes. In the concluding section the paradoxical nature of Locke's stance against materialism is addressed once more and a solution offered.

Locke's Proof of the Existence of God

The Foundations of Epicurean Physics

> We must now observe, concerning the non-evident, first of all that nothing comes into being out of what is not. For in that case everything would come into being out of everything, with no need for seeds. Also, if that which disappears were destroyed into what is

[3] *LL* 969, 970, 1823, 1824, 1825.

[4] Robert Boyle, *Some Considerations concerning the Usefulness of Natural Philosophy*, *The Works of Robert Boyle* iii. 250–61; cited by Locke at about the time of the book's publication (1663) in MS Locke f. 14, p. 31; John Smith, *A Short Discourse of Atheism*, *Select Discourses* (London: W. Morden, 1660), cited by Locke, c1665, MS Locke f. 14, p. 184.

[5] MS Locke f. 6; transcribed, *An Early Draft of Locke's Essay*, R.I. Aaron and Jocelyn Gibb, eds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), 118.

[6] For more on the perennial philosophical conflict between gods and giants, the gigantomachia, see below, p. 227, and fn. 60.

> not, all things would have perished, for lack of that into which they dissolved. Moreover, the totality of things was always such as it is now, and always will be, since there is nothing into which it changes, and since beside the totality there is nothing which could pass into it and produce change.[7]
>
> This terror of the mind … and this gloom must be dispelled not by the sun's rays, or the bright shafts of day, but by the aspect and law of nature. The first principle of our study we will derive from this, that no thing is ever by divine power produced from nothing. For assuredly a dread holds all mortals thus in bond, because they behold many things happening in heaven and earth whose causes they can by no means see, and they think them to be done by divine power. For which reasons, when we shall perceive that nothing can be created from nothing, then we shall at once more correctly understand from that principle what we are seeking, both the source from which each thing can be made and the manner in which everything is done without the working of the gods.[8]

Locke's proof of God's existence builds upon the argument that if something exists, then there must be something that exists from eternity, since nothing can come to be from nothing. He was well aware that this argument, given its general conclusion, could be used in support of materialism, and there can be little doubt that his selection of this argument as a starting point was a matter of logical convenience as well as strategic choice: the convenience of starting from commonly accepted principles, and a strategy aiming at usurpation.

In the Epicurean scheme of things, the principle that nothing can come to be from nothing is one of a complementary pair of principles that are instrumental in the discovery of the material source of existence. It is claimed, then, not only that nothing comes from nothing, but also that whatever ceases to be, that dies or decays or breaks apart, does not dissolve altogether into absolute nothing, but leaves something behind that feeds the formation of other things.

These principles are not presumed to be self-evident, but are inferred from experience, from a sustained and attentive observance of things as they come to be and pass away. They are defended by a common mode of argument, later formalized by the Stoics, 'P. For if not-P, then Q, which is obviously false.'[9] It is argued, that if things were produced from nothing, then they would be observed coming into existence randomly and from no special conditions; there would be no need for seeds in the production of life or for proper conditions of growth and development. But things are not observed to arise in this way. Moreover, if things dissolved into nothing, 'all things would have perished', which is obviously not the case.

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[7] Epicurus, *Letter to Herodotus*, 38–39, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, ed. A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), i. 25.

[8] Lucretius, *De rerum natura* [hereafter cited as *DRN*], eng. tr. W. H. D. Rouse, revised by Martin Ferguson Smith (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), i. 146–59.

[9] Furley, *Cosmic Problems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 166f; also *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 26; D.P. Fowler, *Lucretius on Atomic Motion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 409.

There is an ambiguity with respect to 'nothing' in the two principles. In the first instance, generative nothing is not just nothing at all, but the absence of causal conditions adequate to produce certain sorts of things; for example, seeds or suitable generative bodies. In the second, the nothing into which no thing dissolves is just nothing at all. The ambiguity suits the different kinds of evidence upon which proof of each proposition depends. As becomes clear from Lucretius' elaboration of these arguments, proof of the first proposition depends upon a familiarity with the generation of natural things, with its regularity and order, with the perception that every kind of generated thing has its own material conditions that are proper to it, that everything has its special time and season, its own period of gestation and maturation, sources of nourishment, and limits of growth; such familiarity results also from cultivating the land causing things to grow, which leads overall to the recognition of an inherent power in nature and in every natural thing to be itself.[10]

For proof of the second proposition, it is enough to recall that it never happens that things just disappear as though they suddenly popped out of existence. On the contrary, we see things gradually losing substance or coming apart and their parts becoming available to supply the generation and growth of other things. Recognition that material things contribute to the development of other material things, like raindrops disappearing into the earth, that fertilize the soil and make it productive of fruit and grain that in turn nourish humans and all other sorts of animals, gives rise to the conviction that nature is all sufficient, making one thing from another, employing the remains of the dead to support the generation of the new in a process without beginning or end.[11]

Because it is evident that things come into existence from prior material states and derive their sustenance from without and that they eventually dissolve into posterior ones, yielding up their remains for the generation and growth of new natural things, reason concludes that underlying all this change, there is something that always is, which is the primary source of existence, and that this original source of existence is not one but many, that it consists of a multitude of indivisible atoms, infinite in number, and constantly moving about through an infinite void.[12]

Because the primordia are not by themselves observable by the senses, their nature must be inferred by analogy, from experience and reasoning.[13] Experience provides analogies of natural events whose causes, although certainly material, are imperceptible: the driving force of wind, that rivals the power of great ocean waves, scents acting on the sensory organs, as well as heat and cold; observations

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[10] *DRN* i. 225–37; 5. 91–109

[11] *DRN* i. 215–64; see also *Epicurus to Herodotus*, §§38, 73–74.

[12] *DRN* i. 445–63.

[13] *naturae species ratioque*, 'the aspect of nature and her laws'. According to David Sedley, this Latin expression is Lucretius' rendering of φυσιολογία, 'with *natura* and *ratio* picking up φύσις and λόγος respectively', *Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 37; see also, Don Fowler, *Lucretius on Atomic Motion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 141.

of garments growing damp when hanging close to the shore, or drying in the sun; the wearing away of solid things like a ring on one's finger or pavements under foot, the slow and imperceptible process of erosion, or in reverse of growth by deposit; all these and more like them, induce the judgment that nature produces things 'by means of bodies unseen'.[14] Wherever we are and in whatever direction we look, we see things in motion, which, if there were not empty space in which they could move about, they could not escape confinement in a single solid mass.[15] Finally, nature provides an analogy (the footprints of knowledge) of primordia moving about in space to anyone who looks about a dark room infused by the light of the sun:

> You will see many minute particles [analogues of primordia] mingling in many ways through the void in the light itself of the rays, and as it were in everlasting conflict struggling, fighting, battling in troops without any pause, driven about with frequent meeting and partings; so that you may conjecture from this what it is for the *primordia* of things to be ever tossed about in the great void.[16]

Thus, from experience and reason, it is concluded that from eternity there exist atoms and void, both infinite, the one in number, the other in dimension. That atoms are indivisible and indestructible particles, physical minima, follows from the principle that nothing dissolves into nothing.[17] They are judged also to be eternally fixed in their nature, in solidity, size, and shape, in which they vary, but in a limited way, for if there were infinite varieties of them in size and shape, there would be no way to account for the order and regularity of things.[18] The void is pure emptiness, and has no other property but to be occupied. It is judged to be infinite, because it is unimaginable that it could be otherwise, for there is always a place beyond any supposed limit of space. The physical doctrines of the infinity of matter and void are taken to be mutually sustaining.[19]

The formation of things occurs when atoms collide and combine. Impact is the primary force of nature. The natural motion of atoms, inferred from the observation of falling bodies, is rectilinear in a downward direction. However, since free-falling bodies fall at the same rate of speed in empty space, atoms would never collide unless some of them moved from their regular course. Hence it is postulated that some atoms swerve imperceptibly, and so the mutual intercourse of atoms begins. Hence, the productivity of nature depends upon random occurrences; all that we see about us, and all that we imagine beyond the limits of our world, worlds upon worlds, are products of an endless sequence of trials.[20]

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[14] *DRN* i. 328.

[15] *DRN* 1. 329–45.

[16] *DRN* ii. 116–24.

[17] *DRN* i. 540.

[18] *DRN* i. 584–98.

[19] *DRN* i. 951–83; 1021–51; ii. 333–568.

[20] *DRN* ii. 216–24 The doctrine of the swerve of atoms is not only an important postulate of Epicurean physics, but of its theory of free agency also. In this connection it will be discussed below.

> For so many first-beginnings in so many ways [multa modis multis primordia rerum], smitten with blows and carried by their own weight from infinite time up to the present, have been accustomed to move and meet together in all manner of ways, and to try all combinations, whatsoever they could produce by coming together, that it is no wonder if they fell also into such arrangements, and came into such movements, as this sum of things now shows in its course of perpetual renovation.[21]

Therefore, nature alone operating without any purpose or design, produces order out of chaos. Nature is her own master.[22] Thus, according to Epicurean physics, although microscopically atoms move and collide randomly, macroscopically, nature emerges out of randomness as a power to fashion well formed worlds; she operates in orderly ways, fashioning ordered material systems that appear to be self-governed according to inherent laws or regularities manifest in their operations. Likewise the contents of these worlds are natural things; nature forms them into natural kinds; they reproduce themselves from seeds, grow and mature in orderly ways; some of these are sentient, thinking beings, capable of spontaneous action, wise choices, and self government. Nature so conceived is a system well suited to observation, hypothesis, and experiment, and moral agency. But the chief benefit of this understanding of nature is that it frees the mind from the fear of the gods and from the terror of death, for it is clear that god or the gods exercise no productive power in the world, and that death is the end of existence and so there is no reason to be anxious about one's state in a future life.

Preliminary Considerations

The argument presented in *Essay* IV. x. 1–12 in favour of the existence of God is a carefully crafted rhetorical argument built upon a logical frame.[23] The logical argument, if drawn out and charitably considered is, I believe, valid. In presenting the argument, Locke shows himself to be a skilled practitioner of philosophical rhetoric, a method of philosophical argument designed for the public sphere, or the commonwealth of learning, which was the context of all of Locke's published writings. Its purpose is to make philosophical doctrines 'luminous and attractive' and hence more persuasive. During Hellenistic Roman period, this mode of argument was developed and effectively employed by Cicero, and by his contemporary, Lucretius.[24] The practitioner of philosophical rhetoric does not intend to subvert the claims of logic, but to facilitate the reception of an argument presumably valid by

[21] *DRN* v. 187–94.

[22] *DRN* ii. 1090–92.

[23] The remainder of this chapter, §§13–17, 18–19 contains two supplementary arguments that will be considered below.

[24] See Elizabeth Asmis, 'Rhetoric and Reason in Lucretius', *The American Journal of Philology*, 104 (1983) 50 and passim. On Locke's familiarity with Cicero's writings, see the previous chapter.

anticipations of its conclusions, by repetitions, rearrangements, modulations of tone, figurative expression, internal dialogue, anticipations of objections among readers, and the like.

To do justice to both aspects of Locke's proof, I will present it in two versions, first the bare argument and then the argument as presented in *Essay* IV. x. In the first instance, I shall endeavour to present the argument, not in contemporary analytical style, but in a sequence of propositions, presenting it as faithfully as I can according to Locke's method of deductive proof.

Briefly, Locke maintained that deductive argument is a means of attaining knowledge that ranks second after intuitive certainty in the degrees of knowledge. Intuitive certainty is the immediate perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas. Deductive argument achieves its end through mediation.[25] In the argument that follows, Locke's endeavour is to prove that if something exists, then there is something that exists which is eternal; the intervening or mediating proof, is the proposition that nothing comes to be from nothing, which he takes to be intuitively certain. What follows, then, is an account of Locke's theistic proof as it may have existed in his mind as he went about presenting it to the world in writing. If my assumption is correct, it was just this sequence of bare thoughts that Locke hoped would arise in the mind of his readers as they read what he had written.[26] I shall as much as possible use Locke's own words to ensure fidelity. This will be followed with a description of the argument as presented in *Essay* IV. x. 1–12.

The Bare Argument[27]

1. Something exists [viz. a thinking being that has a beginning].
2. Non-entity cannot produce any real being.
3. Therefore, from eternity there has been something, which is the source of being in things that have a beginning.
4. Something exists that has a beginning and that possesses assorted powers.[28]
5. [Since non-entity cannot produce any real being], whatever powers it has must be owing to and received from the same source from which it received its being.

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[25] *Essay* IV. ii. 2–8.

[26] See *Essay*, *Epistle to the Reader*, 6f, 'This, Reader, is the Entertainment of those, who let loose their own Thoughts, and follow them in writing; which thou oughtest not to envy them, since they afford thee an Opportunity of the like Diversion, if thou wilt make use of thy own Thoughts in reading. 'Tis to them, if they are thy own, that I referr myself'.

[27] Locke's notion of a rational proof is a sequence of ideas so arranged that they form a chain of propositions that are intuitively certain and that carry the mind from the initial thought to a conclusion: in this instance, from the thought that something exists to the thought that there exists an eternal being that is all powerful and all knowing; see *Essay* IV. xvii. 4; p. 670–78.

[28] Locke does not make clear whether he intends both active and passive powers; I assume he was speaking generally and so meant both sorts. For further discussion, see below, Sect. 2.

6. Therefore, the eternal source of being must also be the source of all powers and hence the most powerful.
7. The eternal source of being is cogitative or incogitative,[29] knowing or unknowing.
8. It cannot be incogitative, for if it were, there would have been a time before now when no being had any knowledge, and that a thing, devoid of knowledge or perception has produced a perceiving knowing being, which is impossible.
9. Therefore, the eternal source of being is cogitative.
10. The eternal source of being is one or many, i.e., from eternity there is one infinite cogitative being or from eternity an infinite number of finite cogitative beings.
11. It cannot be many, for if from eternity there were many cogitative beings, the universe of things would not be an ordered cosmos, which it is.
12. Therefore the eternal source of being is one, infinite, and cogitative, and has in itself actually or at least in a higher degree, i.e. eminently, all the perfections that can ever after exist.

The argument seems valid. Some may even consider it sound, in particular, those who deny pure naturalism, whether reductive or emergent. These concerns, however, are beyond the scope of this essay. All in all, it is not a bad argument, and it deserves respect and consideration.[30] The longstanding charge that the argument is invalid because it commits the fallacy of equivocation will be considered in the next subsection.

Presentation of the Argument

Essay IV. x, where the argument appears, is the second of a trilogy of chapters devoted to our knowledge of the existence of things. Locke's ontology contains three sorts of things here given in order of perfection: God, finite spirits, and material bodies. However, the epistemic order is different. The existence of finite spirits

[29] That is, thinking or unthinking, *OED*.

[30] Locke's theistic proof has not fared well in modern scholarly opinion. J.J. MacIntosh, considers it 'startlingly weak' ('Locke and Boyle on Miracles and God's Existence', *Robert Boyle Reconsidered*, 194); Nicholas Wolterstorff counts it 'among the weakest' versions of the cosmological argument and so dismisses it as unworthy of detailed analysis and appraisal ('Locke's philosophy of religion', *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*, ed. Vere Chappell Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 189). One expositor correctly identifies it as a species of cosmological argument, but mistakes the species and much of the context (Nicholas Jolley, *Locke*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 95f). In contrast to these, Michael Ayers' exposition of Locke's proof in 'Mechanism, Superaddition, and the Proof of God's Existence in Locke's Essay' (*The Philosophical Review*, 90/2 [April 1981] 210-51) is careful and insightful; it also provides a useful comparison with Cudworth's anti-materialist arguments. See also Ayers, *Locke*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1991), ii. 168–83.

comes first in the order of certainty, for every human being knows upon reflection that he or she exists. This is intuitively certain. We know that material bodies exist by sense perception, which ranks lowest in the degrees of certainty. We know that God exists by logical demonstration, which is in between. Although through logical demonstration, we 'arrive at Certainty', proceeding on this path is 'not without pains and attention' and causes a diminution of cognitive power and 'abatement of that evident lustre and full assurance, that always accompany that which I call *intiutive*' (*Essay* IV. ii. 4, 6).

Prologue (Essay IV. x. 1)

To begin with, and perhaps to compensate for the fact that our knowledge of God ranks second best in order of mere cognitive dignity to our knowledge of ourselves, Locke assures his reader that the existence of God is 'the most obvious Truth that Reason discovers'. This is mere hyperbole. Reason's discoveries, as Locke was well aware, are its inferences drawn by illation from premises that are of the highest, that is, intuitive certainty. This is what gives a deductive argument its mathematical or apodictic certainty, and it applies to all properly executed deductive arguments whatever their subject. On this account, we should be more certain of the existence of bodies, especially our own, that of the existence of God.

As though to promote his argument, Locke promises his reader additional benefits that a successful conclusion of his proof provides. They are also evidential, although beyond the scope of the argument: anyone who by rational inference discovers that God exists may be sure that success in this endeavour is owing to the providence of God, who has endowed our minds with the capacity to achieve this, so that our cognitive faculties, which we carry about with us, are not only the instruments of our knowing him upon whom our happiness here and hereafter depends, but also evidence of his constant care and never-failing goodness.

The First Argument Proving 'That There Is an Eternal, Most Powerful, and Most Knowing Being' (Essay IV. x. 2–6)

The opening argument: something exists; nothing can be produced from nothing; therefore, from eternity there has been something (1–3 above) is the heart of Locke's entire proof. It is either explicitly or tacitly operative in every subsequent part of it and is employed in the supplementary arguments also (IV. x. 13–19). The argument is reminiscent of the introduction to Epicurean physics. This seems not just coincidental, but a deliberate appropriation of Epicurean principles. It is a sure sign of invincibility to take possession of an enemy's sword and shield, perhaps his armour as well.

Note that Locke has refashioned it. To satisfy the requirement of mathematical certainty, the Epicurean principles must be rendered intuitively certain; empirically

evident will not do. The second premise, 'nothing can be produced from nothing' becomes 'bare *nothing can no more produce any real Being, than it can be equal to two right Angles*'. The comparison is supposed to assist the reader to recognize the intuitive certainty of the premise that non-entity cannot be the cause of existence. Locke is also careful to rephrase the premise in a way that leaves open the possibility that omnipotent power can create a universe from nothing, an issue that he will settle in the second supplementary argument (below). As the argument proceeds, the quality of Non-entity is applied also to real entities that lack creative power; for example, mere matter counts as nothing with respect even to the origin of its own motion; matter in motion counts as nothing with respect to the origin of life.

The first premise of the argument is clothed in Cartesian certainty. That I exist is intuitively certain, even 'beyond the liberty of doubting'. The basic argument requires only the premise that something exists; reference to any perceived material object would have done as well to make the argument sound. Self-certainty is preferred because it is of a higher degree (see IV. ii. 3). Certainty that things exist outside the mind counts as the lowest degree of certainty; here Locke characterizes it is 'an assurance that *deserves the name of Knowledge*' (*Essay* IV. xi. 3 [631]). The choice also serves Locke's anti-materialist stance, for the mind is not supposed, at least for now, to be a material substance. Yet Locke cannot avoid giving this bit of Cartesianism an anti-Cartesian twist: this is no cogito that leaves the thinking thing still in doubt about its body and the surrounding world. The Cartesian doubter is dismissed as another sort of non-entity, who will not be shaken out of his nihilist bliss 'until Hunger, or some other Pain convince him of the contrary', when he will know that he has to exist and feed himself (*Essay* IV. x. 2 [620]). All of this represents a curious double ambivalence towards Cartesian dualism and towards materialism. Yet Locke's attitude throughout is unambiguously triumphant.

His opening argument is stated with great economy, and merits closer examination.

> If therefore we know there is some real Being, and that Non-entity cannot produce any real Being, it is an evident demonstration, that from Eternity there has been something; Since what was not from Eternity, had a Beginning; and what had a Beginning, must be produced by something else. (*Essay* IV. x. 3 [620])

It consists of two compound clauses, the first of which presents a complete and valid argument, whose conclusion holds true whether the 'real Being', which is a thinking being, mentioned in the protasis be eternal or not. The latter is clearly intended, as should be clear from the second clause.

The conclusion, 'that from Eternity there has been something' is ambiguous; no mention is made as to what sort of being this is, whether it is eternal or not eternal, or whether one or many. Yet the succeeding steps of the argument make clear that Locke has already concluded on behalf of the reader that there is one eternal being.

Two additional steps are taken to complete this phase of the argument. They may be summarized briefly. First, it is argued that since the existing thing referred to in the initial premise possesses certain powers, as yet unspecified, these powers must also have come from the same source from which it received its existence. Implied here but not stated is the argument that a thing's existence and its powers must come from the same source otherwise they would not cohere as they do in a single organized being. From this, he concludes that the source of all being is likewise the source of all observed powers, and is therefore not only eternal but 'also the most powerful of all beings', inasmuch as it possesses all the powers that might be distributed among existing things. The second step retraces the first, but with a narrower focus; it pertains to the origin of the cognitive powers of perception and knowledge. This division permits Locke to enumerate the properties of the source of existence, so that it may be unmistakable that the being whose existence is demonstrated is most obviously God, who is commonly believed to be eternal, most powerful, and most knowing.[31]

> Thus from the Consideration of our selves, and what we infallibly find in our own Constitution, our Reason leads us to the Knowledge of this certain and evident Truth, That *there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing Being*; which whether any one will please to call *God*, it matters not. The thing is evident, and from this *Idea* duly considered, will easily be deduced all those other Attributes, which we ought to ascribe to this eternal Being. (*Essay* IV. x. 6 [621])

'Those other attributes' are no doubt moral ones, in particular, goodness and mercy, that are associated with divine providence. The special treatment of cognitive powers given here allows Locke to conclude his peroration with an attack on materialism.

> If nevertheless any one should be found so senslesly arrogant, as to suppose Man alone knowing and wise, but yet the product of more ignorance and chance; and that all the rest of the Universe acted only by that blind hap-hazard: I shall leave him with that very Rational and Emphatical rebuke of *Tully* l. 2. *de leg.* … "What can be more sillily arrogant and misbecoming than for a Man to think that he has a Mind and Understanding in him, but yet in all the Universe beside, there is no such thing? …" (Ibid.)[32]

Thus Locke concluded this initial presentation of his main argument. To many, the argument presented here fails on account of an error of equivocation. Leibniz is the earliest on record to note this. He observed that the conclusion of the main argument, 'that from Eternity there has been something' (*Essay* IV. x. 3) is ambiguous. It can be taken to mean 'there has never been a time when nothing existed', or 'that there is an eternal being'. Only the former is warranted. But, so interpreted, it fails to prove the existence of God, and can be used to justify even non-theistic accounts

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[31] Note that Locke rightly does not use the familiar terms 'omnipotent' or 'omniscient'.

[32] Cicero, *De Legibus* II .vii. 16. Cicero's reproof seems directed against Lucretius's judgment that intelligence is very rare in the universe; that minds must at the very least be embodied, and most likely in bodies with 'sinews and blood', like our own (*DRN* v. 126–45).

of the origin of existence, in particular materialism. Leibniz supposes that Locke is unsuspecting of his error, but, as we shall see in the next subsection, he was mistaken.[33]

Did Locke commit an error of equivocation? From a purely logical point of view it may seem so. But a more charitable reading, and one consistent with Locke's intentions, is that he was assuming what he was sure any materialist would accept, that if something exists, then there must be some eternally existing thing or aggregate of things. In short, he must have been mindful of the Epicurean justification of materialism. When he resumes the argument in *Essay* IV. x. 8, he assumes a position where the ambiguity doesn't count against him. He also disregards the conclusions drawn in sections IV. x. 4–6, and returns to the opening argument in IV. x. 3, whose soundness he declares no rational person would reject, which is probably correct. From a rhetorical point of view, it is proper to anticipate the conclusion of an argument without having taken all the requisite steps. I believe that this is what Locke intended in *Essay* IV. x. 1–6. He foreshortened the argument with the intention of providing the missing parts in subsequent sections. The interpretation offered here gains support when note is taken of Locke's constant rehearsal or the whole argument at every stage, his reminder of what the reader should have discovered, and his patient retracing of steps.

Anti-Cartesian Interlude (Essay IV. x. 7)

Locke next makes passing mention of another sort of proof, one that proceeds a priori from '*the* Idea *of a most perfect Being*'. Although he names no names, there is little doubt that he is referring to Descartes' proof offered in the *fifth Meditation*, which turns upon the principle that existence is a perfection and hence properly belongs to a perfect being.[34] He does not choose to examine the argument further, but merely to warn against it. He questions its general utility, because it depends on anyone's idea of God, and because 'some Men' have no idea of God, others 'worse than none', and most think of God in very different ways. He also rails against the arrogance of the proponents of this argument, their reckless dismissal of other modes of proof as being of no worth; and he blames them for depriving those whose tempers differ from their own of useful aids to reflection, especially those more accessible proofs that build upon common experiences of natural things and events that bear witness to '*the invisible Things of GOD*'. These objections seem at first glance peremptory and disingenuous.

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[33] G. W. Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, tr. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 436. It should be noted that with respect to the remainder of the chapter (IV. x. 7–19), Leibniz judges Locke's arguments to be sound and his insights profound.

[34] *Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 3 vols, ed. John Cottingham et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) ii. 46–47.

Yet he had reason to be concerned. It's possible that he had in mind Spinoza's a priori argument for the existence of God. Spinoza's God, like Lucretius' nature, did not produce the world for mankind or for any special purpose.[35] However, there is no indication in Locke's brief remarks that this was of immediate concern to him. Indeed, the principal aim of this brief interlude is to assert the superiority of his own proof over this particular Cartesian one and over any proof that proceeds a priori from a mere idea.

Among Locke's manuscripts, there is one that is more explicit about the danger of a priori proofs. It is a homologue of IV. x. 7, a longer version of it, and if it were put in its place, the chapter would read as well, if not better, because the danger that it brings near is materialism.[36] A different Cartesian proof is considered, one founded on the idea of necessary existence; Descartes offered it in *The Principles of Philosophy*.[37] The following extracts from it express thoughts that one can easily imagine to be in Locke's mind when revisiting *Essay* IV. x. 7 something that he was prompted to do by some remarks of Edward Stillingfleet.[38]

> The Question between Theists and Atheists I take to be this. viz not whether there has been noething from Eternity but whether the Eternall being that made and still keeps all things in that order, beauty and method in which we see them, be a knowing immateriall Substance or a Sensless material Substance for that something either Sensless matter, or a knowing Spirit has been from Eternity I think noe body doubts.
>
> … whoever will use the Idea of necessary Existence to prove a God i e an immaterial, Eternal, knowing Spirit, will have noe more to say for it, from the idea of necessary existence than an Atheist has for his Eternall all doeing Sensless matter

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[35] Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part I, Appendix.

[36] 'Deus', MS Locke c.28, fols 119–29. The manuscript is dated 1696. It is written in the hand of Timothy Kiplin, who entered Locke's service in November 1696. There are corrections in Locke's hand and his customary signature JL. There is one correction evidently made by Kiplin, which suggests that he was copying from another manuscript and not taking dictation. There is no trace of an earlier version among Locke's manuscripts that might tell us when Locke first wrote it, however, the content leaves little doubt that Locke was addressing Edward Stillingfleet's criticism of his proof in chap. 10 of *A Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (London, 1697) 246–52. Although the year of publication for Stillingfleet's *Discourse* is given as 1697, it came out during the previous year. It is listed in *The Term Catalogue* for Michaelmas term 1696. Locke's first *Letter* to Stillingfleet, written in response to it, was published in March, 1697, and there is good evidence that he had finished drafting it before the previous year's end, for more about this, see the General Introduction to my *John Locke, Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (forthcoming, 2011).

[37] *The Principles of Philosophy*, Part One, section 14 (*The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, i. 197). It is likely that Locke did not have this place in mind, rather that he picked up on Stillingfleet's appeal to the concept. Ibid., 248. The occasion of the manuscript, then, seems to be Stillingfleet's criticism of his theistic proof, and then revisited. The manuscript may been written as a revised version of *Essay* IV. x. 7, and then abandoned. It seems clear, in any case, that Locke revisited his proof and confirmed his own anti-materialist intentions.

[38] In general, Stillingfleet found fault with Locke's proof because it was not founded upon clear and distinct ideas, but on a vague intuition of self-existence. He also chided Locke for unfairly blaming Descartes for the arrogance of some of his followers; op. cit., 246–47, 252.

> If that will doe says the Atheist I can equally prove the Eternall Existence of my first Being, Matter. For tis but adding the Idea of necessary Existence to the Complex one which I have whereby Substance extension Solidity Eternity and the power of making and produceing all things are combined and my eternall matter is proved necessarily to exist.[39]

Locke argues that arguments based upon ideas only, no matter how well conceived, do not constitute evidence of real existence, and concludes

> Real existence can be proved onely by real existence & therefore the Real Existence of a God can onely be proved by the Real existence of other things The Real existence of other things without us can be evidenced to us onely by our Senses but our own existence is known to us by a certainty yet higher then our senses can give us of the Existence of other things & that is internall perception self consciousnesse or intuition from whence therefore may be drawn by a traine of Ideas the surest and most incontestable proof of the Existence of a God. JL[40]

The Argument Revisited (Essay IV. x. 8–12)

If any lingering doubts remain that Locke combined rhetorical and logical methods when crafting his proof of God, the opening sentences of IV. x. 8 (622) should dispel them.

> There is no Truth more evident, than that *something* must be *from Eternity*. I never yet heard of any one so unreasonable, or that could suppose so manifest a Contradiction, as a Time wherein there was perfectly nothing. This being of all Absurdities the greatest, to imagine that pure nothing, the perfect Negation and Absence of all Being, should ever produce any real Existence.

There is no plain and unadorned discourse here, but a good share of hyperbole: 'no Truth more evident', 'so manifest a contradiction' 'of all Absurdities the greatest'; and pleonasm: 'I never yet heard of any one so unreasonable'. What is offered here is a variation of the main argument.[41] The conclusion 'that *something* must be *from Eternity*' retains the ambiguity but it has no effect on the argument, because Locke assumes with his materialist opponents that the some kind of eternal existence is meant. In effect, Locke sweeps past the ambiguity.

In any case, Locke has brought the reader back to the conclusion of the opening argument, and makes clear that there is still a way to go before God's existence is proved. It has yet to be decided whether the eternal being is material or immaterial, or, as he prefers, cogitative or incogitative; and whether it is many or one. These things will now be decided.

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[39] MS Locke c. 28, fos 119^{r}, 119^{v}.

[40] Ibid., fo. 120^{v}.

[41] There are actually two arguments here: (1) Something exists from eternity, for if this were not so, then there would have been a time when there was nothing, which is absurd. (2) Something exists from eternity, for if this were not so, then what now exists would be the product of pure nothing, which is absurd.

So he asks 'If then there must be something eternal, let us see what sort of Being it must be.' (IV. x. 9 [623]) One possibility is that it could be an aggregate of purely material things, uncomplimentarily represented as 'clippings of our Beards, and paring of our Nails', which are 'without Sense, Perception, or Thought'; mere material bodies, surrogate for atoms. What follows is a romp through materialist alternatives, comic and deliberately misleading, whose intention is to refute Epicurean physical theory. The reader is invited to examine a mass of matter, a pebble, 'closely united, and the parts firmly at rest together' – another analogy of a material primordium, but like the former, a misleading one.[42] It is inconceivable that if this composite of matter were eternal, it would be able to produce anything at all, nor that it could even move itself. So let us hypothetically add or superadd motion to it.[43] If it were forever in motion, what power would it have? It might, if were to collide with other bodies like it, produce changes in figure and bulk as the Epicurean suppose, but it is inconceivable that it could produce a thinking thing. In summary: if we suppose that from eternity there is nothing, then matter could never be (since it is obvious that non-entity can produce nothing); if we suppose matter only eternal, then motion could never be, for it is not inherent to matter to move itself (since nothing comes from nothing); if we suppose matter eternally in motion, then thinking things could never be, for mere moving matter is incapable of producing mind (since nothing comes from nothing).[44] More than ridicule is at work here, for Locke has also managed to summarize his divine physics. Yet, I think, in all this, Locke deliberately ignores the possibility that incogitative material atoms might combine in special configurations as to produce a thinking being.[45]

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[42] Compare with *DRN* ii. 886–90 '… what is that which strikes on your very mind … forbidding you to believe that the sensible is born from the insensible? Surely that stones and sticks and earth though mingled together and earth though mingled together yet cannot produce the vital sense'. Lucretius point is that sentient thinking beings are of a different sort from sticks and stones, and from pebbles or nail clippings; they are complex organic bodies 'with flesh, sinews, veins', and material souls and minds. There is agreement thus far between Lucretius and Locke, even as far that finite thinking beings may be material organized mortal bodies.

[43] Locke's claim that matter is inherently inert, that motion must be superadded to it is reminiscent of his reflection concerning thinking matter. Unlike bulk, shape, texture and location, motion and thought must be superadded. See also *Essay* II. xxi. 4; perhaps deliberately, in this connection, Locke fails to mention free falling bodies; but see II. xxi. 9, 27.

[44] *Essay* IV. x. 10, p. 623, line 32—624, line 7, alludes to the Epicurean theory that mind and ideas are composed of the finest of elements; as though the refining of matter affects a 'spiritualizing' of it; yet, Locke insists, 'They knock, impel, and resist one another, just as the greater do, and that is all they can do'; see *DRN* iii. 241–57.

[45] Lucretius agrees that sensation and thinking are not properties of material atoms, but of organic bodies. *DRN* ii. 865 Lucretius uses a similar argument to prove the emergence of mind; if atoms had the power of thinking, then every atom would be a thinking being, whereas we see that intelligence is a power of a certain kind of complex organized body.

But suppose that from eternity matter were endowed with thought? Here Locke informs the reader that a more accurate account of matter is needed:

> … yet really all Matter is not one individual thing, neither is there any such thing existing as one individual thing [e.g. a single pebble] … And therefore if Matter were the eternal first cogitative Being, there would not be one eternal infinite cogitative Being, but an infinite number of eternal finite cogitative Beings, independent one of another, of limited force, and distinct thoughts… (*Essay*, IV. x. 10 [624])

But an infinite magnitude of finite intelligences 'could never produce that order, harmony, and beauty which is to be found in Nature'. Therefore 'the first of all Things' (an allusion to Lucretius's material 'primordia'), must be one eternal cogitative being. And since the world that it has produced contains many perfections, it must contain within itself eminently 'all the perfections that can ever after exist', and since matter evidently does not, it follows that 'the first eternal being cannot be Matter' (IV. x. 10). In IV. x. 12, Locke returns to some unfinished business from the previous version of the argument. In IV. x. 4, 5, he argued from the existence of a solitary thinking being. The rest of the world had not yet come into view. Locke now expands the scope of his argument, although he has already inferred in IV. x. 11, that a single eternal mind is necessary to account for the order, harmony, and beauty of the world, he now provides another route to the conclusion that God created the whole world. Since it has been established that God has made us thinking beings, and that all our powers, including cognitive powers are from him, it follows that God must have created 'also the less-excellent pieces of this Universe'. And from consideration of the unity of these pieces, there follows '*Omniscience, Power*, and *Providence*' and all other attributes.

The First Supplementary Argument Proving That God Is Not a Material Being (Essay IV. x. 13–17)

The main issue having been decided, it remains, in philosophical-rhetorical arguments, to answer objections and to settle doubts.[46] The doubters in the first instance are those who accept that God exists, but doubt that materialism has been refuted; they maintain that God is a material being.[47] Locke's initial response is that it makes no difference. An eternal, omnipotent, omniscient being would be God, whether material or not. Yet he doesn't intend to let the matter stand, for he judges this hypothesis to be pernicious, devised by materialists who have allowed evident truth that God is a knowing being 'to slide out of their Minds'. Their professions of theism cannot be serious or well seated in their minds, and their opinions should be regarded with suspicion.

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[46] See Asmis, op. cit., 52.

[47] As is appropriate, Locke names no names. Hobbes comes immediately to mind, and Stoic theology. But it becomes clear that Locke's purpose is not to refute some particular theory, but to ridicule the very idea.

To suppose that God is a material being is to suppose that there is from eternity a material body that thinks and, perhaps, possesses other powers, such as the power to create something out of nothing. Locke then explores several ways this might be interpreted. His stated purpose is to examine and to prove untenable alternative materialist theologies, but his objections to them are broadly anti-materialist, which makes sense, since Locke has already suggested that material theism may be only a mask concealing a bare materialist.

Let it be supposed, first of all, that every particle of matter is by nature cogitative. Material theists would have to reject this option because it opens the door to polytheism, for if from eternity there is an infinity of atoms that think, they may all be gods, for they are at least immortals. But, if, to avoid this, one were to suppose that one particle only of matter is by nature a thinking being, and all the rest not, one could no more explain how finite thinking bodies might come to be out of these remaining particles, than one could explain how an extended being might be made from unextended ones (IV. x. 14).

The second alternative picks up where the first left off. Let it be supposed that there is one atom only that thinks, and by virtue of this power it is pre-eminent over all the rest. Either it alone exists from eternity, or it does not. If it is the only eternal being, then it must have created the rest of matter out of nothing, by the mere power of thought. But this contradicts materialism, in particular, its doctrine that nothing can be created from nothing.[48] Suppose, then, that all the rest of matter is eternal along with this one cogitative particle. Locke breaks off with the dismissive comment that anyone who would accept this would accept anything (IV. x. 15 [626]).

The last alternative is the most philosophically substantial. It is reminiscent of his conjecture concerning thinking matter.[49] Locke considers the possibility of an eternal thinking being comprised of an ordered aggregate of matter, whether it be the whole of matter in the universe or only a part of it,[50] '*some certain System of Matter* duly put together', which is something like 'fitly disposed' (*Essay* IV. x. 16 [627]; compare with IV. iii. 6 [540]). He contends that no configuration of mere material particles can produce thought. Two variations of this hypothesis follow, one ridiculous, another serious. First it is imagined that this 'corporeal system' either has all its parts at rest, in which case it is but one inert thinking lump. Next, he imagines that all its parts are in motion, and that thinking is a product of this activity. His objection to this alternative is that it reduces thinking to mere accident, an unanticipated consequence of material particles moving about randomly. This materialist account is essentially Epicurean inasmuch as it takes for granted the hypothesis of atomism that all activities of bodies are due to motion and impact among atoms; compare Lucretius in *DRN* iii. 161 with iii. 94–416. Further, Locke's

[48] Here Nidditch cites Lucretius, *DRN* i. 150, which is quoted above, 209.

[49] In the account of this last alternative, I have relied on Ayers, op. cit. 1981.

[50] This qualification is added at the end of Locke's discourse (IV. x. 17 [628]), and lends support to the present interpretation, that Locke is considering a material thinking body in Epicurean and not Stoic terms.

objection brings to mind the Epicurean doctrine of atomic swerve, although no explicit mention is made of it.[51] He rejects this materialist doctrine of thinking not because if offers no explanation of the origin of human thought and agency, but because it relies on some sort of emergence and not on creation.[52]

> If it be the motion of its parts, on which its Thinking depends, all the Thoughts there must be unavoidably accidental, and limited; since all the Particles that by Motion cause Thought, being each of them in it self without any Thought, cannot regulate its own Motions, much less be regulated by the Thought of the whole; since that Thought is not the cause of Motion, (for then it must be antecedent to it, and so without it,) but the consequence of it, whereby Freedom, Power, Choice, and all rational and wise thinking or acting will be quite taken away: So that such a thinking Being will be no better nor wiser, than pure blind Matter [whose motions are random and unguided].[53]

One must keep in mind that here Locke is addressing the possibility that God is an eternal cogitative material body. We know from Locke's conjecture that there may be finite material bodies that think, that he considered the latter possible, but only if a cogitative power were superadded to bodies fitly disposed by an eternal omnipotent immaterial being. In the succeeding section, it will, I hope, be made clear that superaddition by an omnipotent being is a fundamental principle of Locke's divine physics.

The Second Supplementary Argument Proving That Matter Is Not Co-eternal with God, but That God Created All Things, Bodies and Spirits out of Nothing (Essay IV. x. 18–19)

In these last two sections, Locke defends the classical doctrine of creation, that God by his omnipotence created the universe out of nothing. He addresses the objection of someone who believes that God, a 'cogitative, immaterial Being', exists from eternity, but who also believes that matter is eternal, or co-eternal with God.[54] 'This, tho' it take away not the Being of a GOD, yet since it denies … the first great piece of his Workmanship, the Creation, let us consider it a little' (*Essay* IV. x. 18 [628]).

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[51] On the doctrine of the 'swerve', see *DRN* ii. 16–93; Lucretius relies on this doctrine to explain free agency (ii. 251–83). It is quite clear from these lines and elsewhere in his discussion of mind (animus) as self-governing, that he believed that animals have a power, an emergent power, which is not directly caused by the random swerve of atoms but made possible by it. For contemporary discussion, see David Furley, *Aristotle and Epicurus on Voluntary Action*, *Two Studies in the Greek Atomists* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 169–83 and passim; *Hellenistic Philosophers* i. 110–12; D.P. Fowler, op. cit., 219–63.

[52] See *DRN* ii. 263–71, 284–93; iii. 95, 143–44.

[53] *Essay* IV. x. 17 (627).

[54] The point of view represented here is similar to one presented by Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, *Observations on Experimental Philosophy* (1666), ed. Eileen O'Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 23–42. There is no evidence that Locke read this book. However, the materialist positions represented in the two supplementary arguments have affinities with views promoted by the Newcastle circle, with which Margaret Cavendish and Hobbes were associated.

The objector doubts the creation of matter out of nothing, because he has no experience of it, and because he can't conceive how it might be done. Presumably, the objector perceives the coming to be and passing away of bodies as Epicureans do: they arise out of something material and dissolve into material remains, and Locke relies on this common sense. On the other hand, the objector believes that God has created all spirits, which are, like him, thinking self-conscious beings, out of nothing. He believes this because he has a recollection of his own beginning; 'twenty or forty years since' he began to be, and presumably he has no experience of some spiritual substance preceding the coming to be or passing away of other finite spirits. The objector's position on finite spirits anticipates Locke's theory of personal identity, as temporal, narrative consciousness.[55]

Locke's answer to this objection is an appeal to the power of God, who could just as easily have created matter as he has created finite spirits, and he observes that God's way of doing this in both instances is equally beyond our comprehension.

In the second edition of the *Essay*, published in 1694, Locke added a new consideration. He attributed the objector's doubt to the current cognitive state of humankind, bound to vulgar, empirical notions. If we existed in a higher state than the one we are now in, he suggests, able to gain 'a closer contemplation of things' we might begin to see, albeit dimly, how 'Matter might first be made'. By 'contemplation of things' Locke most likely means a direct intuition of things, of which higher spirits are capable. From this higher cognitive standpoint, spiritual beings would have a clear and distinct grasp of spiritual substance, in contrast to the barely substantial one that self-consciousness now reveals to us[56]; from there, 'to give beginning and being to a Spirit, would be found a more inconceivable effect of omnipotent Power'. Locke seems to be saying that higher spirits, ones not embodied as we are or sharing our limited cognitive powers, whilst they might easily perceive that matter had a beginning, might have difficulty conceiving that they had a beginning. He offers no explanation for this opinion.[57] Instead he calls himself and his reader back from this reverie, and resolves not to depart from 'the Notions,

[55] *Essay* IV. x. 18–19, with the exception of an important insertion, this was written before II. xxvii., which first appeared in the second edition of the *Essay* (1694).

[56] I follow John Yolton here, who observes that Locke doesn't seem to have attributed to spirit, an immaterial substance, any other properties than 'bare being', whereas he regularly attributes to matter the properties of solidity and extension; see Yolton, *Thinking Matter* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983) 20. Yolton's observation derives from Locke's remark in his second *Reply to Stillingfleet* (*Mr Locke's reply to the Lord Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Second Letter*, London, A. and J. Churchill, and E. Castle, 1699) 402. However, in the *Essay*, Locke attributes to common opinion a fuller notion of spirit: 'a Substance, wherein *Thinking*, *Knowing*, *Doubting*, and a power of Moving, *etc*. subsist' and concludes that we have as clear an idea of the substance of spirit as we do of body (*Essay* II. xxiii. 5 [297]).

[57] The idea that higher spirits might be disposed to doubt that they were created is reminiscent of *Paradise Lost* v. 859, where Satan denies having any memory of his own creation: 'We know no time when we were not as now'. The idea of created spirits having no awareness of a beginning of existence is reminiscent of the Kabbalah; see above Chap. 6.

on which the Philosophy now in the world is built', since they are sufficient to assure us that if God can create one kind of substance out of nothing, he can create any other (IV. x. 18 [629–30]).

Locke considers one more objection before closing his defence. This is the objection of inconceivability. The last objector finds it 'impossible to admit of the *making of any thing out of nothing*, since we cannot possibly conceive it'. The response is that there are many things that we cannot explain: for example, how by impact one body causes another to move; how by merely by taking thought and willing it I can cause my right hand to move and my left to remain still. These are matters of fact, ordinary powers whose operations are quite familiar to us; they can neither be denied nor explained. Only when we understand how these actions are possible can we hope to begin to understand divine creation. Locke shows no awareness that the argument against inconceivability might be used in defence of naturalism. Instead he remonstrates with any doubters not to limit God to their own finite understanding of things, and concludes with a fitting peroration:

> If you cannot understand the Operations of your own finite Mind, that thinking thing within you, do not deem it strange, that you cannot comprehend the Operations of that eternal infinite Mind, who made and governs all Things, and whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain. (*Essay* IV. x. 19 [630])[58]

Locke's Divine Physics

At the outset, a brief justification of the term 'physics' is needed. The term is Locke's. In *Essay* IV. xxi, the final chapter of the book, Locke divides the sciences into three: φυσική, πρακτική, and λογική. The first, which Locke translates as 'natural philosophy' consists of the 'Knowledge of Things, as they are in their own Proper Beings … bare speculative Truth, and whatsoever can afford the Mind of Man any such, falls under this branch, whether it be God himself, Angels, Spirits, Bodies, or any of their Affections, as Number, Figure, *etc*.'[59] I have added the qualifier 'divine' because Locke supposed the natural world originated from a divine act of creation out of nothing.

The fundamental concept of Locke's divine physics is superaddition. The term has become notorious, because Locke employed it in his conjecture concerning thinking matter, about which more will follow. This conjecture suits my purpose, because it calls attention to the paradoxical nature of Locke's philosophical stance, his ambiguous associations with gods and giants.

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[58] The argument against inconceivability is double-edged. Locke regularly employs it to support divine creative power; yet as in the case of his defence of secondary qualities as effects of material bodies that possess only the attributes of solidity, shape, size and mobility (*Essay* II. viii. 13) and, in his argument against Stillingfleet, to defend the possibility that material organized bodies may think and possess other powers, he is defending material powers.

[59] IV. xxi. 2 (720).

Plato used the mythical battle between gods and giants, the gigantomachia, to characterize the perennial conflict between materialists and idealists.[60] The giants admit only material bodies among the things that exist; they 'drag everything down to earth from heaven and the invisible region, actually grasping rocks and trees with their hands'.[61] They are thoroughgoing naturalists, materialists, and empiricists. Accordingly, they deny the existence of any immaterial substance. The gods maintain that this material domain, because it is always in process, is only a realm of becoming, and contrast it with a transcendent domain of immaterial forms, pure essences, that are eternal and unchanging.

Lucretius also alludes to the conflict, but not surprisingly presents it in a way that is favourable to the giants.[62]

Locke may have been aware of the theme, for in two places he appears to allude to gianthood as a state of mind in a manner reminiscent of Plato.[63]

A brief account of the philosophical gigantomachia will be useful at this point. The Eleatic stranger, the principal interlocutor in the *Sophist*, believes that he can defeat the giants and make them more docile through dialectic. This requires that he engage them in dialogue. To that end, he enlists the young Theaetetus in a rehearsal of such a dialogue. Through questioning, he gets the giants to agree that they are mortal animals and that they are therefore animate, and so they agree to include souls among the things that exist. But they continue to believe that the soul is just another sort of body. However, they are also made to admit that some souls are just, other unjust, some wise, others foolish, and that, accordingly, justice and wisdom must be present or absent in them; but, it is argued, something that is able to be present or absent must also exist. But justice and wisdom, if they exist, are not bodies. The giants remain noncommittal, they allow that if justice and wisdom exist, they are not material bodies, but immaterial. This brief imaginary dialogue ends with a general conclusion about the nature of existence. The giants are supposed to have agreed that existence is power. As the Eleatic stranger sums it up,

> … everything which possesses any power of any kind, either to produce a change in anything or any nature or to be affected even in the least degree by the slightest cause … has real existence (247d,e).

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[60] Plato, *Sophist* 246a-c; also *Symposium* 190b; an account of the mythical Gigantomachia is provided by Apollodorus, *The Library*, I.vi.103; see also Hesiod, *Theogony*, 820-68. Thomas Lennon has used the theme well to characterize the vicissitudes of European philosophy during the seventeenth century in his eponymous book, *The Battle of the Gods and the Giants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). Lennon includes Locke among the giants. While I have benefited greatly from reading his book and agree with much of it, I differ with his interpretation of Locke's materialist affinities.

[61] *Sophist* 246a, translation by H.N. Fowler modified (Plato, *Sophist*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921).

[62] *DRN* iv. 136–42; v. 110–25; see Monica Gale, *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 43–45 and passim.

[63] *Essay* IV. iii. 6 (540, 542).

How does Locke fit into all this? He like the giants, and the Epicureans, surely counts among those who drag things down from heaven to earth. One need only consider his theory of ideas, which represent them as thoroughly earthbound in their origin (*Essay* II. i. 4 [105]). The ideas of justice and injustice, virtue and vice, which belong to the class of mixed modes, are the inventions of earth bound men and women, and have no existence except as far as we employ them in thought and discourse (*Essay* II. xxii). Ideas of substance also bear all the marks of earth bound imaginations (*Essay* II. xxiii.) But the idea of power as a determining mark of real existence is especially relevant for locating Locke in the gigantomachia. His account of our ideas of substances in *Essay* II. xxiii, is relevant here. Substances are for Locke primary beings. Of the three classes, bodies, finite spirits and God, the first of these we know only by their power to affect our senses. This applies particularly to secondary qualities, for whose perception we are dependent upon the power of bodies to produce them in us (*Essay* II. xxiii. 7–10 and passim; also II. xxi. 1 et seq.). Primary qualities are also manifestations of power in bodies that are large enough to fall within the scope of our sensibilities. The best example of this is Locke's account of solidity, which 'arises from the resistance we find in a body' (*Essay* II. iv. 1 [122]). All of these ideas, it should be noted, fit nicely with Epicurean materialism. So it would seem that, if Locke is to be classified as a giant, he should be counted among that group consisting of those who have been reformed through dialectic and have entered into the service of the gods.

Locke's idea of God seems to be basically an idea of active creative power. This idea dominates his theistic proof. Moreover, the conjecture concerning thinking matter is not just about whether there exist complex material bodies that think, but whether it is within the power of God to produce them. When considered in this light, the common interpretation, that the conjecture reveals Locke's flirtation with materialism, seems mistaken, a consequence of a disposition among some of Locke's interpreters to make him seem more modern than he was. In *Essay* IV. iii. 6, Locke introduces the question whether there may be complex material bodies that think as an example of the sort of problem that cannot be resolved by humankind in its current cognitive state. It is like squaring the circle, he tells us. We seem to be unable to discover mediating proofs that would decide whether it is possible to construct a square whose area is equal to the area of a circle. We lack the proof, the mediating ideas to decide yes or no. In the case of thinking material thinking bodies, however, he has no doubt that God is able, if it be his pleasure, to superadd the power of thinking to material bodies that are fitly disposed by divine power to receive it. He adds that we cannot know that God has done this except by revelation.

Now it should be clear from Locke's theistic proof that superaddition is an act of creation, and so it is the principle upon which any divine physics must be founded. In his defence of his conjecture against Stillingfleet, Locke summarizes his divine physics as a sequence of divine creative acts, superadditions, moving ever upward in the chain of being.

> God creates an extended solid Substance, without the superadding any thing else to it, and so we may consider it at rest: To some parts of it he superadds Motion, but it has still the Essence of Matter: Other parts of it he frames into Plants, with all the Excellencies of

> Vegetation, Life and Beauty, which is to be found in a Rose or a Peach-tree, *&c*. above the Essence of Matter in general, but it is till but Matter: To other parts he adds Sense and Spontaneous Motion, and those other Properties that are to be found in an Elephant. Hitherto it is not doubted but the Power of God may go, and that the Properties of a Rose, a Peach or an elephant, superadded to Matter, change not the Properties of Matter; but Matter is in these things Matter still. But if one venture to go one step further and say, God may give to Matter, Thought, Reason and Volition, as well as Sense and Spontaneous Motion, there are Men ready presently to limit the Power of the Omnipotent Creator, and tell us, he cannot do it; because it destroys the Essence, or *changes the essential Properties* of Matter. To make good which Assertion they have no more to say, but that Thought and Reason are not included in the Essence of Matter. I grant it; but whatever Excellency, not contained in its Essence, be superadded to Matter, it does not destroy the Essence of Matter, if it leaves it an extended solid Substance; where-ever that is, there is the Essence of Matter; and if every thing of greater Perfection, superadded to such a Substance destroys the Essence of Matter, what will become of the Essence of Matter in a Plant of an Animal, whose Properties far exceed those of a meer extended solid Substance.[64]

What is the meaning of 'superaddition' implied here? Surely it has nothing to do with an arbitrary manifestation of divine power, for instance, a miracle, for the objects of divine superaddition have been fitly disposed, physically constituted to receive the power given to them; their basic physical qualities continue. Nor does superaddition signify design. I take it that when Locke used the terms 'fitly disposed' he was talking about design, which precedes superadding power. All that remains to make present in a body an actual power where before there was none is actualizing, empowering, which in biblical terms may be effected by a mere performative utterance. The effects of superaddition are real corporeal powers that operate naturally: movement, generation, growth, spontaneous motion, perception, and finally, thought and deliberate action. To suppose that there may be complex bodies with powers that violate nature is not consistent with Locke's divine physics. Superaddition, then, is the divine action of actualizing power in bodies whose physical constitution makes them fit to receive them. What the notion of superaddition makes clear is that these added powers are imposed from above, that they are real powers, and that they operate, as it were, from the top down, and yet are proper natural faculties of the particular substance that bears them.[65]

It is noteworthy, that in his defence of his conjecture to Stillingfleet, Locke's tone seems less hypothetical and more assertive; not that he was fully persuaded but that he had grown more comfortable with the idea that the substances that carried about the faculties associated with mind and soul might be material. Perhaps this was because he discovered in revelation, that is, in Scripture, a clarification of the issue. I refer to his reflections concerning the materiality of the soul recorded in 'Adversaria Theologica', a notebook prepared for theological commonplacing in 1694. He records the following thoughts, based on 1 Cor. 15. His thoughts describe

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[64] Second *Reply to Stillingfleet*, 397–98; see also below fn. 67.

[65] The Aristotelian notion of ἐντελέχια, i.e., actualization, perfection, most likely belongs to the ancestry of Locke's thinking here; see Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1009a36, 1015a19; *De Anima*, 412b5, the definition of soul as the first entelechy of the body.

a scheme of existence in which matter and spirit are not opposed but rather different levels of corporeal existence: insensible matter; living bodies, in particular, human bodies; and spiritual bodies, which is the state of those who are rewarded at the resurrection are restored to that state of eternal life that Adam lost.

> Here the Apostle tells us of a spiritual body & an animal body. By which it appears that matter is capable of animality & spirituality ~~wherein then lies the difference between body soul & spirit?~~ And maybe considered in three states 1st simply Body is insensible matter. <2nd> σῶμα ψυχικόν that state of a thinkeing being in this life which depending on nourishment & the assistance and supply of new matter is corruptible. <3d> ~~Spirit~~ σῶμα πνευματικόν such a state of a sensible thinkeing being or body as has life & vigor durable in its self without need of any supplie from without & so not liable to corruption.[66]

The second stage represents a complex material body that thinks. It is also a mortal body, not only with respect to vital functions, but also with respect to mind and soul. Locke's mortalism, his belief that the soul dies with the body, puts him in the camp of the giants, but his acceptance of it now has divine authority.[67] Here also Locke's qualifications for reformed gianthood are evident. He clings to the notion that real being is corporeal. He makes power his central ontological principle. He is a philosopher who is refined enough to be in the company of the friends of the forms, and yet quite capable, in the business of experimental natural philosophy, to associate with unreformed giants. His reflections on 1 Cor. 15 provides a glimpse of where divine physics end. At the resurrection, God superadds immortality to material bodies fitly disposed to receive it.

Conclusion

In the introduction, I suggested that Locke's refutation of Epicurean materialism is paradoxical, or, at least, it is a show of ingratitude, for the reason that he had appropriated substantial parts of Epicurean theory and so integrated them into his philosophical system that they came to define its character: empirical naturalism and hedonism. He accepted the Epicurean doctrines that the natural world, which is the object of natural philosophical enquiries, consists of bodies and their affects, that natural bodies are compositions of solid indestructible particles, and that impact is the primary force of nature; that pleasure and pain, which accompany almost all

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[66] MS Locke c. 43, p. 32; *WR*, 29. The strikethroughs are Locke's deletions in the manuscript. My additions are in brackets.

[67] It might have occurred to Locke, given his acquaintance with Hellenistic philosophical schools, that the Stoics had no trouble conceiving of material bodies that think in a way that was more accommodating to his purposes; but he preferred St Paul, who he believed wrote with divine authority. It is noteworthy that St Paul's account in 1 Cor. 15 of different levels of body has key affinities with Stoic theory and most likely, directly or indirectly, derives from it. See A. A. Long, 'Soul and Body in Stoicism', *Stoic Studies*, 224–49. I am grateful to Christopher Star for calling this to my attention.

perceptions, are the basic motives of human agency as they are for all sentient beings; that perception of objects, upon which all our knowledge depends, is the result of impacts or resistance of bodies on the sensory organs; that happiness or bliss is the proper end of human life, and that virtue is a means of attaining it; he accepted that it was possible, perhaps even likely, that mind and soul are material states, and, in any case, that they are mortal and do not survive physical death.

It is true that Locke did not think of himself as an Epicurean; in philosophy, politics, and religion, he was careful to avoid partisan entanglements. Philosophically, he was an eclectic and went about appropriating concepts and arguments that suited his purposes as a philosophical enquirer. Still, when he appropriated an idea or expression, he was more often than not aware of its origin and pedigree. He was after all an accomplished scholar of antiquity.

The paradox begins to dissipate and Locke is exonerated when one considers that materialism is a system of nature to which one may assign different even contrary meanings, and that indeed Locke and Lucretius assigned contrary meanings to Epicurean physics.

This is revealed, first of all, in the striking difference of tone between them. Lucretius' tone is triumphant and joyous. His achievement was to transform Epicurean doctrine, which was supposedly obscure and in some respects grim, into luminous Latin verse. He fashioned himself as a poet of a joyful wisdom that dispelled the superstitions engendered by religion. And for this he justly claimed originality, whereas with respect to the doctrine itself, he claimed to be nothing more than Epicurus' shadow.[68]

In contrast, Locke's tone is sober and cautious. This is nicely illustrated in his similitudes. At the start of *Essay*, in the *Epistle to the Reader*, Locke describes the subject of his book, the understanding (the intellect or νοῦς) as the most elevated faculty of the soul and one might expect to be used to contemplate objects of a similar dignity. Yet he encourages a modest use of it. 'He that hawks at Larks and Sparrows, has no less Sport, though a much less considerable Quarry, than he that flies at nobler Game.' It matters not what the object is, for the pursuit itself is pleasant. Moreover, even the smallest truth gives satisfaction that suffices until it is succeeded by a new discovery. The similitude is employed in the presentation of his book as the product of his having let loose his thoughts and followed them in writing. To his readers, who will use his book and their own enquiring thoughts to join him in these pursuits of truth,[69] he promises a similar satisfaction. When he next mentions to this theme, he warns his readers not to allow successful enquiries to tempt them out into the

[68] Compare *DRN* i. 926–50; iv. 1–25; iii. 1–30; iv. 364–65: in the last, Lucretius, in apparent self-mockery, describes how our shadows move in the sunlight following in our own footsteps, imitating our every move.

[69] I offer this as a gloss on Locke's admonition that readers must rely on their own thoughts (*Essay*, *Epistle to the Reader* [7]); these thoughts are not just any thoughts that a reader might care to use in interpreting what an author has written, but suitable thoughts for use in a particular enquiry. They are thoughts that arise in the mind when it attends carefully to the object of enquiry and ignores what some tradition and authority would have one think.

unlimited expanse of the ocean of being. We ought to imagine ourselves doing the work of a sailor with his plumb line, who can never know the depth of the sea in every place, but knows enough to guide his boat safely to its destination (*Essay* I. i. 6, 7 [46f]). Empiricism, which limits the scope of our knowledge to what is perceived by the senses, is from this perspective comparable to being on a tether (I. i. 4 [45]); or in confinement, like dwelling in a camera obscura, or, like a worm, shut up in a cabinet (*Essay* II. xii. 17 [162]; II. ii. 3 [120]).[70]

This sense of limitation is complemented by Locke's belief that there are mansions, dwellings of intellectual beings, beyond the material universe that cannot be apprehended by embodied minds, a hierarchy of spiritual beings, with other, more powerful sensibilities, and contemplative power by which they can ascertain the inner constitution of things. In contrast, Lucretius represents Epicurus using his reason, as breaking down the barriers of the world and taking in the unlimited contemplation of worlds beyond worlds, all of them compositions of matter moving about in the void (*DRN* iii. 1–30). It is this very intellect that Locke represents in its present condition as a mere candle (I. i. 5 [46]).

Heretofore, I have characterized Locke as a reformed giant according to Plato's use of Greek mythology; but to clarify his thinking on these matters, it is necessary to consider another source of myth than the Greeks, viz. Christianity as represented by St Paul. According to this myth, which for Locke was divine truth, the cause of our present state of mortality, moral frailty, and cognitive fallibility, on account of which we are all empiricists and perhaps material thinking bodies, is Adam's disobedience, by which he and his progeny lost immortality and bliss. Adam's original state was presumably angelic. The present state of humankind is one of mediocrity, a state between mere brutes and the angelic state. Now, according to the Christian myth, the angelic condition, which Adam lost, has been restored for us by Christ. Locke develops this theme in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.[71] The Messiah, pre-existent, incarnated and sent into the world, and transfigured, becomes the archetype of a restored human nature, so that, when, at the resurrection, God superadds immortality to human nature, at least in the case of those who have merited his favour, they will receive a nature that originated in heaven before the world was made. Accordingly, Locke and those who follow him philosophically must be characterized not as giants, who are earthborn, but as heaven born as well as heaven destined creatures, fallen angels in hope of restoration. Resurrection is both the perfection of divine creation and a restoration. It is noteworthy that this theme finds expression in Locke's thoughts on politics, it's appearance so far afield suggesting that it was more than an occasional thought in his mind. It is expressed in Locke's

[70] However, at *Essay* II. i. 24 (118), Locke writes in a more expansive if not triumphal Lucretian mood. After observing that all our knowledge originates with ideas of sensation and reflection, he remarks: 'All those sublime Thoughts, which towre above the Clouds, and reach as high as Heaven it self, take their Rise and Footing here: In all that great Extent wherein the mind wanders, in those remote Speculations, it may seem to be elevated with, it stirs not one jot beyond those *Ideas*, which *Sense* or *Reflection*, have offered for its Contemplation.'

[71] *Reasonableness*, 5–12; *WR*, 91–95.

well known, but I think not well understood, remark in the *Second Treatise of Government* §7:

> For Men being all the Workmanship of one Omnipotent, and infinitely wise Maker; All the Servants of one Sovereign Master, sent into the World by his order and about his business, they are his Property, whose Workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one anothers Pleasure.[72]

Locke's purpose in this section of his book is to justify human equality, an individual's right of self-preservation, and the duty of each to preserve the rest. There is no disagreement about this, nor about the grounds of it: all having the same faculties and belonging to the same community of nature. But these grounds are incomplete. The expression 'sent into the World' is messianic. Every human person is in origin a token of the messiah, who is the archetype of humanity, the first born of all creatures. Our moral duty, our political duty, and our cognitive duty require that we employ the powers that we now possess and not presume that we have any greater, even though we may enjoy momentary anticipations of them, as Locke suggested we might in *Essay* IV. x. 17. Having been sent into the world, we humans must accept the material world as our station where we are to perform duties as heaven born rational creatures within the boundaries that divine physics has set.

In this light, one can begin to see why Locke employed reason and revelation in his philosophical endeavours and used them to fashion a divine physics that facilitated his appropriation of a system of nature that was antithetical to any religion. He was performing his duty as divine revelation prescribed it. What he achieved in his endeavour must be admired even by those who consider the Christianity an improper frame for philosophical pursuits.

Yet there is an interesting irony in all this. Locke, like Boyle and other seventeenth century Virtuosi were attracted to Epicurean physics and, therefore, to Lucretius, because it offered more accommodating theoretical outlook to their natural philosophical pursuits. It is an outlook that, mutatis mutandis, still prevails among the physical sciences. Divine physics has not fared so well. Hence in retrospect, Lucretius great poem was not unlike the Trojan horse, a curiosity bearing gifts from the Greeks that, when incautiously brought with the walls, became the cause of the ruin of the citadel of faith. Nevertheless, Locke's appropriation and exposition of Epicurean materialist and empiricist themes was so well done, that it is possible to ignore its antique Christian frame and use it even now as a philosophical guide to being in the world.

[72] *Two Treatises*, 289.

Chapter 10
Locke's Religious Thinking and His Politics*

Introduction

The expression 'Locke's religious thinking' can be taken in two ways, one religious and the other not or not-necessarily so: it may signify either Locke's religious thoughts or his thoughts about religion. There is no doubt that Locke thought a lot about religion. The question is whether any of these thoughts were religiously meant or motivated. Something like the same distinction can be made concerning Locke's politics, about which he also thought a lot, and so we may enquire whether any of his thoughts about politics, as well as his political actions and associations, were politically motivated? I count as religiously motivated thoughts ones that are guided by a serious consideration of God, our duty to him, and our future state (these are the main ingredients of Locke's idea of religion). Such thoughts are often accompanied by expressions of piety. Politically motivated thoughts are, on the other hand, guided by secular interests, some of them partisan or selfish, others not; for example, establishing peace, protecting property, securing offices for oneself or one's friends, promoting policies, or aiding commerce, and in general thoughts impelled by a desire for the public welfare, institutional integrity, wealth, power, or glory.

We may also ask whether any of Locke's thoughts about religion were politically motivated, and if so, whether they were purely secular thoughts; or whether any of Locke's thoughts about politics were religiously motivated and were, accordingly, properly religious sentiments under-girding policies of state. If some or all of these questions are answered affirmatively, we may then enquire more generally about Locke's religious and political motives, whether they were always pure or were sometimes mixed or overlapping or alternating one with the other.

These queries, arranged in a matrix, outline a program for research and data gathering and interpretation, one that would insure comprehensiveness and objectivity.

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* This chapter derives from a paper read at a conference held at the University Center for Human Values, Princeton University in April 2005, on the theme 'Reason, Faith, Politics: John Locke Reexamined'. The lecture has been largely rewritten. When it was nearly complete, I recalled, what I should have had in mind at the outset, that the path I had been following had already been cleared by John Dunn.

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This is not possible here. My method is rather selective and intuitive. I provide examples and interpretations, which, because from long experience they seem to be key, will permit some tentative or hypothetical conclusions about Locke's motives.

Finally, at the risk of stating the obvious, let it be noted that when I speak of Locke's thoughts, I have in mind ones that, to use his expression, having once let loose, he pursued in writing.[1] These thoughts are retrievable by attentive reading.

I begin with two examples in two places in Locke's *Essay*, viz. II. xxvii, which includes his discussion of personal identity, and II. xxi, which records his developing thoughts free agency. In each instance, I find evidence of a pure religious motive, which I characterize. These observations may be used as touchstones in a search for religious motivation in Locke's political writings. Indeed, at the outset, it seems certain that Locke's ideas of person and free agency are presuppositions of his opinions about toleration and government by consent.

My investigation into motives in Locke's politics is limited to two places. The first is an unfinished essay containing his early thoughts on toleration; the second, some passages in the *Second Treatise of Government* and *The Reasonableness of Christianity* concerning the biblical figure of Adam. I find in these places a medley of mixed and alternating motives and ideas. In both instances, I conclude that religious motives are more fundamental than secular ones. In none of these examples do we find Locke's thoughts guided by a purely secular interest.

The last section offers a tentative conclusion and finishes with an example of Locke's piety.

Personal Identity and Free Agency

In Locke's well known discussion of personal identity in *Essay* II. xxvii, there is a moment where religion takes center stage. Having observed that consciousness is all it takes to be a person, Locke moves on to consider an aspect of it that leads directly to religion. I am referring to his account of a person, regarded forensically, as a responsible self, a rational being capable of following a rule and applying it judgmentally to his actions, past and present, and in whose consciousness of self, accordingly, there comes to reside an awareness of the 'Right and Justice of Reward and Punishment' applied to his own self. A person is a sensible being, conscious of pleasure and pain, 'capable of Happiness or Misery', and hence always solicitous of it self, scrupulous of its actions and its motives, living in the hope of a reward of eternal bliss and in the fear of losing it.[2] These thoughts are introduced at the end of the chapter and represent a religious turn of what up until this point seems to

[1] *Essay, Epistle to the Reader* (6): 'This, Reader, is the Entertainment of those, who let loose their own Thoughts, and follow them in writing'.

[2] *Essay* II. xxvii, 17, 26 (341, 346f); *Essay* IV. xvi, on the degrees of assent, shows a similar development, there Locke begins with a straightforward account of probable truth which, at the end, he accommodates to account for belief in miracles; more about this will follow, but see also above, the penultimate section of Chap. 2.

have been a purely philosophical discussion. This is not first time in the *Essay* that Locke's discourse takes a religious turn.[3]

The same turn towards a religious theme occurs in the discussion of human agency in Bk. II, Ch. xxi. This chapter is notorious for its difficulty, because of the additions and rearrangements of its content in successive editions.[4] Yet the changes that concern the power of choice, when carefully reviewed, reveal an unmistakable religious intent. For Locke's authorial concern is to discover the capacity of an individual to pursue a course of life that will lead eventually to heaven, a goal that is reachable only if the person is an agent capable of a sort of free choice, one that is able to resist the strong and immediate impulse of desire. This issue is clearly stated in the first and all subsequent editions. 'Morality', Locke writes, 'if established upon its true Foundations, cannot but determine the Choice in any one, that will but consider: and he that will not be so far a rational Creature, as to reflect seriously upon infinite Happiness and Misery, must needs condemn himself, as not making that use of his Understanding he should. The Rewards and Punishments of another Life, which the Almighty has established, as the Enforcements of his Law, are of weight enough to determine the Choice, against whatever Pleasure and Pain this Life can shew, when the eternal State is considered but in its bare possibility'.[5] This possibility requires a sort of free agency, which Locke sought in successive editions to clarify, a power 'wherein a Man may suspend the act of his choice from being determined for our against the thing proposed, till he has examined, whether it be really of a nature in its self and consequences to make him happy or no'.[6]

Political and Religious Motivations for Toleration

Locke's 1667 *Essay on Toleration* is not the earliest of his writings on this topic.[7] I use the expression 'early' to distinguish it from the *Epistola de Tolerantia*, published 22 years later, which, although it presents much the same content and takes the same stance as the 1667 *Essay*, assigns a meaning to the term not found in its predecessor. It does this in a different voice. These differences are prominent in

[3] See my 'A list of theological places in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*', *WR*, 244–56.

[4] *Essay* II. xxi; the changes through successive editions of this chapter are transcribed in an apparatus of the critical text (see List of Abbreviations). Some of them are substantial. Yet it is noteworthy, that although he may have revised his idea of free agency, Locke was reluctant to discard any of his text, preferring to relocate it and adding new in its place.

[5] *Essay* II. xxi. 70 (281). The idea of a 'rational Creature' in pursuit of happiness complements the idea of a forensic self, one capable of following a rule, in this instance a rule and the 'bare possibility' of what obedience to it will secure against the attraction of an immediate concrete object of desire.

[6] *Essay* II. xxi. 56 (270).

[7] For Locke's earliest surviving writings on this subject, see John Locke, *Two Tracts of Government*, ed. Philip Abrams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

the proem of the *Epistola*.[8] They have much to do with differences of circumstance and genre, but not necessarily differences of motive.

The 1667 *Essay* was most likely composed as a policy paper for the first Earl of Shaftesbury. It presents toleration as a civil policy of indulgence extended to non-comformists and dissenters, who for reasons of conscience feel compelled to practice their religion separate from a national church. The purpose of this policy is to secure 'civill peace & propieties of his subjects', which are secular ends.[9] In the *Epistola*, on the other hand, toleration is styled as an ecclesiastical virtue that is affiliated with a corresponding civil policy.[10] In the light of these differences, one might suppose that the 1667 *Essay* was primarily politically motivated, whereas the *Epistola*, notwithstanding that much of its content was appropriated from the former, was produced from religious motives. Here, I hope to show that this would be a mistake, that a religious motivation is as strong and as dominant in the former as in the latter. What is remarkable about the 1667 *Essay*, which was a work in progress and was never finished, is the interplay of motives, revealed in its argumentation, in which Locke appears intent to found a policy as much as possible on first principles that, when examined, turn out to be religious, and also on prudential considerations that arise out of a religious concern for solidarity among Christians, or at least among Protestant Christians in England.[11]

Locke describes his purpose as one of setting limits to the power of magistrates over their subjects, especially with respect to their beliefs, practices, and moral conduct. He argues that, whether a magistrate rules by divine right or by consent, the sole reason for the power that he exercises over his subjects is that it be exercised for their welfare, peace, and preservation, or elsewhere stated, to secure their peace and property.[12] These ends, which do not look beyond the conditions of our worldly life, appear at first glance to be secular.

Securing the peace is a recurring motive, as in Locke's admonitions that magistrates should do no unnecessary violence to their subjects by attempting to restrict them in practices that do no harm to others, and likewise in his counsel for passive obedience to subjects who for reasons of conscience are inclined to resist particular civil laws.[13] Yet although the peace aimed at is strictly worldly a one that accords with the temporal human condition, the imperative to keep the peace does not, in Locke's case, depend on a merely worldly considerations, as it did for Hobbes, whose 'first, and fundamental law of nature … *to seek peace, and follow it*', is a

[8] A critical edition of the 1667 *Essay* together with drafts and additions appears in *Toleration*, 269–315; I have benefited from the editors' historical introduction to the text, 11–52.

[9] *Toleration*, 270.

[10] *Tolerantia*, 58–59.

[11] *Tolerantia*, 53.

[12] *Tolerence*, 269–71.

[13] As J. R. and Philip Milton have observed, the aim of Locke's policy of toleration is to secure freedom of religion for individuals and not liberty of conscience; see *Toleration*, 37.

sort of naturalized categorical imperative whose cogency derives from rational reflection upon human nature and circumstances.[14]

Locke argues differently. The duties of a magistrate to maintain peace, to protect the property of his subjects, and to practice toleration are imposed by divine command. Likewise, God enjoins all subjects to obey their temporal rulers. God is 'the great King of Kings' to whom magistrates and subjects 'equally owe obedience'.[15] Their obedience and disobedience are subject to divine sanctions, voiced in promises and threats of eternal rewards and punishments. These are unmistakably religious motives.

A further look at Locke's arguments reveals much of the same. Defending liberty of conscience in matters of speculation, he contends that no one can grant to another a power over himself that he does not have—, for example 'to command his owne understanding'. This seems self-evident and, therefore, there is no need to carry the argument any further. But Locke does, adding the corollary that it would be idle to suppose that God would grant anyone such a useless power. Likewise, in support of the liberty of religious practice, he contends since salvation cannot be gained by 'any forced exterior performance, but the voluntary & secret choise of the minde', it cannot be supposed that God would use such means, and by extension that he would sanction it.[16] The gist of this is that the magistrate who attempts to enforce religious belief and practice is acting against God, and thus the arguments take on a mildly religious aspect. In the same way, the 'perfect and uncontrould liberty' of individuals in civil society with respect to religion is ours just so that we may carry out our religious duties. Religious liberty is not an end in itself. The pursuit of it would be idle in a society that had no religion at all. The very idea of religious liberty, as Locke conceives it, is an expression of deep religious interest.

This last claim receives support from the homology that Locke tacitly acknowledges of arguments against ceding to another the power to secure for us things of great personal concern, such as health, home, and eternal salvation.[17] These all may be termed motivational arguments, based on a sort of necessity—the necessity of our securing things of deep personal concernment. What no fallible individual can guarantee for us, we must reserve the right to secure for ourselves. It is a duty to ourselves. My consent to a magistrate's right to preserve me in life does not take away my liberty to self-preservation, for keeping myself in existence never ceases to be a matter of greatest concern to me. Religion is a matter of the greatest concern for me, because it pertains to my existence and its future state in eternity, therefore the liberty to practice it must be inviolable.

The arguments that Locke makes in the 1667 *Essay* are of two sorts, theoretical and practical. The former are attempts to ground the rights and duties of citizens and

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[14] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I. xiv.4. I owe this insight to Tim Stanton. On Locke's opposition to moral autonomy, see J. R. and Philip Milton's comments, *Toleration*, 45.

[15] *Toleration*, 288, also 279, 287.

[16] *Toleration*, 272–73.

[17] *Toleration*, 273.

magistrates on first principles, which, it turns out, are religious. The latter follow from prudential considerations, taking into account 'the state of England at present', and therefore may be merely secular.[18] They are counsels or arguments from convenience pertaining to situations where religion, community, and commercial interests converge, and to policies that foster the growth of population and industry.[19] The question of whether Roman Catholics should be indulged is treated here as a prudential matter that arises out of a concern for the stability of civil government; it is recommended that toleration should be withheld from Catholics, because they hold 'dangerous opinions which are absolutely destructive to all governments [this would apply even to Catholic governments] but the popes'. Professed Roman Catholics, then, have an incapacity, deriving from their religion, for citizenship, especially in a Protestant kingdom, and because the principles of their religion preclude them from extending toleration to those of another religion they forgo their own right to it. On the other hand, toleration of Protestant dissenters is recommended for it promotes solidarity or community among a Protestant people that coincidentally facilitates industry and commerce. So far all is temporal convenience.

However, Locke's observations of the futility of forcing belief on others take us beyond mere convenience. He commends friendliness and gentle indulgence as effective means of persuading hearts and minds.

> Though force cannot master the opinions men have, nor plant new ones in their breasts, yet courtesy friendship & soft usage may, for severall (I thinke I may say most) men whose business or lazynesse keep them from examining take many of their opinions upon trust, even in things of religion, but never take them from any man of whose knowledge freindship & sincerity they have not very good thoughts. which it is impossible they should have of one that persecutes them.
>
> But inquisitive men though they are not of an others mind because of his kindness yet they are the more willing to be convinced & will be apt to search after reasons that may persuade them to be soe whome they are obleigd to love.[20]

This counsel commends friendliness as a means of persuasion and aims at religious uniformity in a Protestant kingdom, but it is a uniformity based upon a deeper exploration of reasons induced by goodwill, whose aim is concord, a unity of hearts and minds.

This gentle counsel for toleration is echoed in *Essay* IV. xvi. Remarking on the stubbornness with which persons adhere to beliefs long held, as consequences of custom and training, or past judgments, whose origins have fled the memory, all of which lack substantial proof, and noting that such a state of mind is unavoidable and inevitable, he concludes that it is fitting that 'all Men … maintain *Peace*, and the common Offices of Humanity, *and Friendship*, *in the diversity of Opinions*,

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[18] *Toleration*, 289.

[19] *Toleration*, 290: 'As to promoteing the welfare of the Kingdome which consists in riches & power, to this most immediately conduces the number & industry of your subjects.' On the significance of the use of the second person here, see Ibid. 49.

[20] *Toleration*, 297–98.

since we cannot reasonably expect, that any one should readily and obsequiously quit his own Opinion, and embrace ours with a blind resignation to an Authority, which the Understanding of Man acknowledges not'.[21]

However, Locke does not recommend that such kindness be shown to atheists. In lines meant to be added to the 1667 *Essay*, he argues that, whilst purely speculative opinions in general ought to be indulged—for it is a private matter what an individual believes and it does no harm—the denial of God's existence is an exception, because belief in God is the foundation of morality. Atheists are, according to his opinion, immoralists, who by virtue of their unbelief are beyond the pale of human society, indeed they are outside the human species. They are failed, if not ruined persons, for they deny their dependency on God.[22]

> I must only remarke before I leave this head of speculative opinions that the beleif of a deitie is not to be recond [reckoned] amongst purely speculative opinions for it being the foundation of all morality & that which influences the whole life & actions of men without which a man is to be counted noe other then one of the most dangerous sorts of wild beasts & soe uncapeable of all societie.[23]

Atheists are incapable of all society, because they have no morals; they have no morals because they have no god, therefore they have no place in any civil society. This singular harshness requires an explanation, to which I will return later. Here I want to keep close to the question whether Locke's prudential counsels in behalf of toleration are basically religiously motivated. The answer, I think, is yes, for they are intended to foster a society that is inherently god-fearing. Their purpose is to elicit a religious sentiment in all members of society that inclines them keep their promises and honour their contractual obligations.[24]

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[21] (659).

[22] See 'Law', MS Locke c. 28, fo.141: 'The original and foundation of all law is dependency. A dependent intelligent being is under the power and direction and dominion of him on whom he depends and must be for the ends appointed him by that superior being. If man were independent he could have no law but his own will, no end but himself. He would be a god to himself, and the satisfaction of his own will the sole measure and end of all his actions.' Cited by John Dunn in *Western Political Theory in the Face of the Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 41–42. From this, Dunn suggests, with tongue in cheek, that Locke without his religious convictions, his other beliefs remaining the same, would more likely have ended up 'a morally anarchic exponent of individual self-creation, a somewhat doleful Nietzschean'. But this is to concede what Dunn does only for the sake of argument, that Locke was an egoist and individualist, which he was not.

[23] *Toleration*, 308. See also *Tolerantia*, 134–35; here another argument is added which in the 1667 *Essay* was used against Roman Catholics: '… a man who by his atheism undermines and destroys all religion cannot in the name of religion claim the privilege of toleration for himself'.

[24] In *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke provides a theological argument that complements this prudential policy of toleration. Here he establishes the great proposition that all that is required for solidarity among Christians is that they accept Christ as their King and sincerely endeavour to obey him, while it is the duty of every Christian privately to progress towards a consummate faith.

Finally, it may be asked just how enlightened was Locke's policy of toleration? It is not the sort of policy that one might associate with free thinkers who were champions of the liberty to philosophize.

We must keep in mind what Locke's policy prescribed. It required that constraints be put on the power of government to interfere into the private lives of individuals; these same constraints would prevent churches or the clergy from using political power for their own aggrandizement or for the advancement of their institutional interests. This policy was grounded on two principles: that government is responsible only for the temporal welfare of its subjects, and that liberty of belief is a necessary condition for religious flourishing, so far as this pertains to the good of individuals but not necessarily of religious institutions and ecclesiastical careers. Indeed, this policy seems to have been put in practice in England, and, its effect has been a sort of benign religious pluralism, which is arguably enlightened. Surely, it requires a degree of enlightenment to imagine that this sort of policy serves public and private good. This is implied in the notion of political rationalism. These considerations warrant calling this sort of enlightenment 'institutional', a measured liberalism, or latitudinarianism, not at all fanatical, practical and accommodating. It seems entirely correct to name Locke its father.[25]

Above, I suggested that the differences between 1667 *Essay* and the *Epistola de Tolerantia*, might be of little substance, and that they merely reflect their different occasions and circumstances. This applies, I think, even to the important innovation, that toleration is an ecclesiastical virtue, 'the chief distinguishing mark of the true church', which flows into and becomes indistinguishable from Christian virtue of charity. This is consistent with the theme of the *Epistola*: 'mutual toleration among Christians', although this 'charity, meekness and a good will' is supposed to be shown also towards mankind, 'even towards those who do not profess the Christian faith', that is, to anyone who professes some religion. But to represent toleration as a virtue rather than a policy adds nothing to our understanding of its use. The attribution seems purely rhetorical.

A Natural and a Supernatural Adam

Adam, the progenitor of our race according to biblical lore, figures thematically in the *First Treatise of Government* and *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. In the former, Locke's thoughts and arguments about Adam, and his motive as an author, seem merely political and anti-theological—his denial that the absolute power of monarchy is divinely ordained. In the latter, they seem entirely religious.

[25]This account of Locke's liberalism is in accord with John Dunn's; see Dunn, *Western Political Theory*, ch. 2, esp. 40–42. For a discussion of institutional character of the Enlightenment in England, see J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion,* 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999–2008) i. 7 and passim.

In the *First Treatise*, Adam is the focus of a dispute over the origin and nature of monarchical power. Filmer had argued that at the time of creation God endowed Adam with regal power and authority, and that the power of kings derives from this original endowment.[26] The power in question and the office in which it is supposed to reside are purely worldly. And Filmer's arguments are legal and historical, based on Scripture regarded as an authentic historical record. That Locke's response to Filmer is largely biblical and exegetical does not make it religious. He is building his case on common ground. And, although undoubtedly Locke, like Filmer, accepted the divine authority of Scripture, his acceptance of it was not necessary to an effective counterargument.

In the *First Treatise* Locke contends that Adam's authority is not that of a sovereign but of a parent, a role that is not his alone, but one that he shares with Eve, his wife, and so it is subsequently with respect to all fathers and mothers. This, Locke points out, is evident from the very biblical places upon which Filmer attempts to build his case. Hence the fifth commandment states that children should obey their father *and mother* while they are children and continue to honour them after they have grown into mature adulthood. Likewise dominion was originally given to Adam and Eve together, according to Genesis 1: 28–30, and it was a right granted to them and their descendents in common. In short, Adam is no king, but a parent and a husband, a householder and a steward of the land, all of which may be styled as secular roles.[27] At most, then, Adam is the prototype of everyman, endowed with limited rights over his wife and children and servants. These are at best rights of convenience and not monarchical; someone must rule the family and the household, and since the father is supposed to be the stronger, this role naturally falls to him.[28]

Having disposed of Adam, Locke is free in the *Second Treatise* to speak more generally of the species, of 'man in a state of nature', and yet here, surprisingly, he employs distinctly theological terms: men are described as creatures in a theological sense, 'all the Workmanship of one Omnipotent, and infinitely wise Maker'. This may be mere convention. But the next, which is uncommon, is an attribution of high theological dignity. We are now called 'Servants' of God, who are 'sent into the World by his order and about his business', having power to execute the law of nature. These are the marks of a messiah. There is no doubt that Locke has chosen his words carefully, and is using theological terms with political intent. These theological descriptions of our species alternate with assertions of human equality, which, it should be noted, is stated as a self-evident principle, one that is intuitively certain and that requires no justification other than that it be clearly stated.[29] This is high equality indeed, and its use must have been intentional. Only those with a

[26] Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha*, first published London, 1680; modern edition, *Filmer: Patriarcha and Other Writings*, ed. Johann P. Somerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[27] *Two Treatises*, I. ii. 7 (145) I. iii. 2 (152), I. iv. 29, 30 (161f), I. v. 44, 48 (171f., 174) I. vi. 60–64 (183–87) and *passim*.

[28] *Two Treatises*, II. 82 (339).

[29] *Two Treatises*, II. ii. 4–8 (269–72).

divine mission are 'sent into the world'. The fact that humans generally are bearers of the divine law means that their existence has a supernatural dimension whose full meaning we discover in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Reasonableness of Christianity presents at first glance what seems a different and purely religious idea of Adam, who is a central figure in the saga of fall and redemption. Here Adam, an immortal, is the first man through whom sin and death, the punishment for his sin, entered the world and became characteristic of the human condition. This man has a counterpart in Christ, who, through his death, conquered sin and death and restored Adam's progeny to immortality. These are figures in whom every member of the human race, if not the whole of creation, is somehow mystically incorporated. Genesis 1–3 is the source of this mythic scenario only in a formal sense. Its immediate source is St Paul in Romans 6: 13–21 and 1 Corinthians 15: 21. Note that Eve has disappeared from this discourse.

There is an argument involving Adam in the *Reasonableness* that depends on the theory of contract, which is vaguely reminiscent of the *Second Treatise*. Here Locke is about to reject the doctrine of original sin, which teaches that God has attributed the guilt of Adam's sin to all his progeny along with a sentence of eternal punishment. His case against this doctrine is legal and theological. Legally, in order for Adam's posterity to have incurred his guilt, they would have had to have made Adam their representative and contracted to assume any guilt resulting from his misdeeds along with the penalties attached to them. This is impossible, for Adam's posterity did not exist until after his first sin. Theologically, Locke argues the doctrine dishonours God, making him out to be a tyrant, and so tends towards atheism.[30] All of this goes to show that legal and theological concepts and arguments can be employed in an extended religious argument.

Accounts of the law of nature in the *Second Treatise* and in the *Reasonableness* differ according to their respective secular and religious applications, yet not as much as one might suppose. In both, it is the same law of nature that is considered: a law discoverable by reason, but in the *Second Treatise*, little is said about its function as a law of perfection, for whose smallest violation justice demands death. In the *Reasonableness*, this rigour is emphasized as a reflection of the perfect righteousness of God, who cannot tolerate imperfection and is bound by his nature to punish it to the extreme, that is until his mercy gets the best of him, and a more humane and less rigorous regime is introduced into heaven.[31] Individuals in a state of nature and magistrates in a civil state, are limited to a less rigorous regime although not a less exacting one. Their punishments for violations of the law may be mitigated by circumstances and in any case are to be proportioned, so that any punishment in each case fits the crime. Accordingly, murder is punishable by death in a state of nature and in a civil state. But the tone in which this right of punishment is reported, as well as the reasons that justify it, reveal a sort of legal zeal that is reminiscent of Locke's condemnation of atheists already noted and of God's

[30] *Reasonableness*, 5; *WR*, 91.

[31] *Essay* II. ii. 12 (274f); *Reasonableness*, 13; *WR*, 96.

condemnation of sinners. We read that in a state of nature, every man has the power to kill a murderer; this, we are assured, besides being a proper deterrent is also a just recompense for 'a Criminal, who having renounced Reason, the common Rule and Measure, God hath given to Mankind, hath by the unjust Violence and Slaughter he hath committed upon one, declared War against all Mankind, and therefore be destroyed as … one of those Savage Beasts, with whom Men can have no Society nor Security'.[32]

How are we to explain the zeal with which Locke promotes the execution of the law, his harsh condemnation of those who break it? The best explanation seem to be an underlying motive in Locke's thoughts about law and its power that is religious in origin. Locke's law appears to be in essence a religious law inasmuch as it is the expression of an omnipotent divine will, of a rigidly righteous God, of a vengeful God who even though he allows mercy to prevail in certain instances, never abandons his intention to punish, nor relinquishes his right, as creator, to punish by absolute exclusion and metaphysical destruction. Locke may have had liberal tendencies, but his liberality was never sufficient to subvert this dire religious outlook, which was deeply seated in his worldview. Even his recommendations of patient kindness and friendliness are prudential, as being better instruments of persuasion than the use of force.

Summary and Conclusion

My conclusion from the foregoing interpretations is that Locke was fundamentally a Christian thinker, motivated by Christian religious concerns, and that this applies not only to his philosophical thought, but to his theology and political philosophy.

Since religion involves not only beliefs and practices, but also pious sentiment, it is appropriate to ask what sorts of sentiments are characteristically exhibited in Locke's writings. I cannot give a comprehensive answer, but once again taking an example, I offer a partial one.

A longing for eternity must surely count as a religious sentiment. There is a place in the *Essay*, where this longing finds poignant expression. It occurs near the end of the chapter 'Of Judgment'. Locke describes our present cognitive state as a twilight, in which we, as probationers and pilgrims should endeavour 'with Industry and Care' to realize a greater perfection in our lives. 'It being highly rational to think, even were Revelation silent in the Case, That as Men employ those Talents, God has given them here, they shall accordingly receive their Rewards at the close of the day, when their Sun shall set, and Night shall put an end to their Labours.'[33]

These are words that are reminiscent of the *Book of Common Prayer*, some later versions of which contain a collect whose petitions are, in turn, reminiscent of Locke's remarks. I would like to think that they are in some indirect way derivative of them.

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[32] *Two Treatises* II. ii. 11 (292).

[33] *Essay* IV. xiv. 2 (652).

> O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last.[34]

This collect was composed more than a century after Locke's death. It was adapted from words in a sermon by John Henry Newman. The sentiment is surely the same. And if one were to seek a label for it, I would call it Anglican. I am inclined to believe that during the most of his adult life, the prevailing sentiment of Locke's reflective moments was of this sort, and that intimations of it were rarely far from his thought.

[34] *The Book of English Collects*, ed. John Wallace Suter (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1940), 285, 481.

Chapter 11
Catharine Cockburn's Enlightenment*

> Οὐ γὰρ ἐστιν εὑρεῖν τῆς δικαισονύσης ἄλλην ἀρχὴν οὐδ' ἀλλην γένεσιν, ἡ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ ἐκ κοινῆς φύσεως.[1]
>
> Quid est autem non dicam in homine, sed in omni caelo atque terra ratione divinius? Quae cum adolevit atque perfecta est, nominatur rite sapientia.[2]

Introduction

That Catharine Cockburn, née Trotter, was enlightened there can be no doubt.[3] Her wit, her learning and her standing in cultivated and polite society are sufficient proof of this. That her enlightenment is a paramount expression of the philosophical

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*This is a revised version of a paper was presented on 24 March 2006 at a conference on the theme 'Women, Metaphysics and Enlightenment', held at the Institute of Philosophy, University of London.

[1] 'It is not possible to discover any other beginning of justice or any source for it other than that from God and from the universal nature.' Chrysippus, according to Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*, ed. and tr. Harold Cherniss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), i. 432–33.

[2] 'But what is more divine, I will not say in man only, but in all heaven and earth, than reason? And reason, when it is full grown and perfected, is rightly called wisdom.' Cicero, *De Legibus*, ed. and tr. Clinton Walker Keyes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 320–21.

[3] For the biography of Catharine Trotter Cockburn, see Thomas Birch, 'The Life of Mrs. Cockburn, in *The Works of Mrs. Catharine Cockburn, in Two Volumes*, ed. Thomas Birch (London 1751; facs. edn Bristol, 1992; hereafter to be cited in this chapter as *Works*) i. i–xiviii. All subsequent biographical accounts are based upon Birch, in particular, Leslie Stephen, in *DNB* and Victor Nuovo, *Dictionary of Eighteenth Century British Philosophers* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999). However, Anne Kelley's article in the new *Oxford DNB* adds new details, most notable concerning the year of her birth, which nevertheless still remains in doubt. Birch gives Catharine Trotter's birth date as 16 August 1679. Kelley has discovered a baptismal certificate among the parish records of St Andrew's Church, Holborn certifying that Katherine Trotters, daughter of David and Sarah Trotters, was baptized on 29 August 1674. The parental given names are the same as those reported in other documentation of her life. An earlier date fits better with the years of her earliest reported writings, 1693, 1695 (*Works*, i. p. v). Even this earlier date may not seem early enough to begin to explain her news, related to Thomas Burnet of Kemnay in a letter dated 13 December 1707, that she had become a grandmother. 'I believe you will be surprized to know that the lady with whom I went to the country, was Mr. *Le Clerc's* sister-in-law, the youngest mistress *Leti*, who is married to my son, and has already made me a Grandmother' (*Works*, ii. 203).

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Enlightenment and that this may also be said with high assurance, is the thesis of this chapter. Although I will have occasion to remark on most of her philosophical writings and some of her correspondence, these remarks will be preliminary to a discussion of the main themes of her last writings, written in defence of the metaphysical and moral opinions of the theologian, metaphysician and natural philosopher Samuel Clarke (1675–1729). It is in these writings that we may discover the perfection of her enlightenment and discern most clearly its distinguishing marks. In justifying the claim of paramountcy for her, I hope to correct an injustice done to her no doubt because of her sex, which was to treat her work as that of a minor figure whose thoughts were altogether derivative, deferential, and yet not fully comprehended by her, gleaned from her reading of the work of others, who were certified great thinkers, all male; and because it seemed that, out of deference, she refashioned her thoughts to fit those of the particular author who momentarily had commanded her attention, dutifully entering one train of thought that happened to head in a direction contrary to the one along which she had previously made her way, she has been charged with inconsistency, and even worse, with unwitting inconsistency.[4] Such charges are, of course, false, and they can be refuted by proving the originality and coherence of her thought, and by showing its importance for a proper understanding of the historical period during which she lived. This is what I shall attempt to accomplish here.

The central theme informing all of Catharine Cockburn's philosophical writings, which gives them coherence and unity, is *the perfection of human agency through reason*, or, alternately put, *the perfection of practical reason in a single individual*. This is a Stoic idea; profoundly theoretical but eminently practical. Her writings show that she not only thoroughly understood it and expressed it, but that she also effectively realized it in her life. This, I think, explains the remarkable intellectual and moral power of her writings, especially notable in her letters. She was first and foremost an original thinker.

Claiming originality for a philosophical author is not the same as claiming novelty for the thoughts expressed in her writings.[5] There is nothing altogether new in the writings of Catharine Cockburn, but the authority with which she expressed her thoughts and the clarity of her expression of them, show that she had

[4]In his *DNB* article, Leslie Stephen wrote that Mrs. Cockburn lacked the philosophical acuity to perceive the inconsistency of the ethical theory of 'her old teacher Locke', whom she defended in her earliest philosophical publication, and that of Samuel Clarke, whom she defended in her last writings.

[5]The distinction between originality and novelty in philosophy is one that was repeatedly invoked by my teacher, Paul Oskar Kristeller in his lectures. It is useful when interpreting the writings of so-called minor figures in the history of philosophy. To discover the originality of any philosophical author requires repeated and attentive reading of their works, as it were, rehearsing the acts that produced them, and in one's exposition, weaving together expression and intention. Only then, can one judge originality in a philosophical author. The same applies thinking one's own thoughts. Since Cockburn was primarily a moral philosopher, a good place to discover her originality is in her conduct of life. This approach is followed here. For the hermeneutical theory behind these remarks, see my 'Locke's Hermeneutics of Existence and his Representation of Reality'.

made them her own, had fathomed them completely, and was able to apply them to a lasting philosophical purpose.[6] The tendency to view her as a secondary and derivative author is due, in part, to the fact that all her published philosophical works, defences of John Locke (1632–1704) and Samuel Clarke, highlight the opinions of others. But this is misleading. In her *Defence of Mr. Locke's Essay*, she did not so much defend his opinions as interpret them and direct them along pathways that, she acknowledged, Locke himself had not fully explored. Her intention was clearly not only to defend Locke, whom she nonetheless believed was unfairly represented by his adversaries, but also, and foremost, to discover truth.[7] As will become clear in subsequent sections of this paper, the doctrine she owned as the truth was not of a sort that Locke would have embraced. Her defence of Clarke is in a similar mode, although, because she engaged in this defence at the end of her life and has left us with abundant documentation of her opinions leading up to it, it is very clear that the positions she defended in Clarke are ones that she had already arrived at on her own, and that the thoughts she expressed in these last writings are about subjects that she had mastered at least as well as any of her contemporaries.[8] She accepted the thesis of divine necessity, which Clarke made the basis of his theistic proof, and applied it more radically than he, and she allied herself with the Neo-Stoic position of Clarke and John Balguy that the foundation of morality, not only with respect to what ought to be done, but the obligation to do it, is founded on

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[6]Apropos to this is her response to the remark of Thomas Burnet of Kemnay that in Lady Masham's philosophical letters to Leibniz one may discern 'the hand of Joab', that is, of Locke'. Cockburn wrote back that she was surprised that he should suspect any other hand than Lady's Masham's, and continued: 'It is not to be doubted, that women are as capable of penetrating into the grounds of things, and reasoning justly, as men are, who certainly have no advantage of us, but in their opportunities of knowledge.… I pray be more equitable to her sex, than the generality of yours are; who, when any thing is written by a woman, that they cannot deny their approbation to, are sure to rob us of the glory in it, by concluding 'tis not her own; or at least, that she had some assistance, which has been said in many instances to my knowledge unjustly.' (Mr. Burnet to Mrs Trotter, 5 December 1704; Mrs Trotter Mr. Burnet, 19 February 1705, *Works,* ii. 185, 190. Also noteworthy here is her *Letter of advice to her Son* which contains an affirmation of the equality of women, and the duties according owed to them by men (*Works,* ii. 119).

[7][Catharine Trotter], *A Defence of Mr. Locke's Essay of Human Understanding* (London: William Turner, 1702) *Works,* i. 45. She makes this declaration in her dedicatory epistle to Locke. There is a curious reversal of gender roles in her self-characterization as an author: she writes that she does not presume to play the role of a champion, but of 'a rash lover, that fights in defence of a lady's honour'; yet the lady is not Locke but truth herself, and her remarks are not rash but measured and well aimed. Locke's letter to her employs the same conceit: 'You have herein not only vanquished my adversary, but reduced me also absolutely under your power'. *Works,* i. xx; also *Correspondence*, vii. 731. Locke's copy of *A Defence* (*LL* 1801) is in the Bodleian library, Locke, 8. 71.

[8]Martha Brandt Bolton makes this point well in 'Some aspects of the philosophical work of Catharine Trotter', *Hypatia's Daughters*, ed. Linda Lopez McAlister (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 138–64, esp. 141: '…although Trotter describes herself as defending the moral theory of Clarke, she did not derive the doctrine in question from that philosopher. She anticipated the main points of Clarke's moral theory in her first defense of Locke.' I came across Bolton's excellent paper after this chapter was completed; her conclusions confirm my own; where hers differs is in her assessment of Cockburn's motives; see, Bolton, 154–56.

the fitness of things.[9] In sum, it is clear, as we read her defences, that, whether merely defending an author or actively joining him, she did so not out of deference accommodate her thoughts to those of another, a male other, but thought them, clarified them and grounded them upon reasons that she judged adequate, reasons that, by the way, continue to be cogent and compelling. Anyone who takes the time to read her writings with care cannot fail to sense the well-founded sufficiency and cogency in the remarks that she makes about the themes she considers. Once engaged in reading her, one may have cause to argue with her, but none at all to dismiss her.

What is distinctive about Catharine Cockburn is her character. Birch describes her as a precocious autodidact. She taught herself French, Latin, logic, and moral philosophy. She was articulate and outspoken and admired for her wit, which is to say, from early on she had discovered her own voice. At an early age she was a promising poet and playwright. The straightened circumstances of her early life, and the necessity, if she was to succeed in life, to be her own master, were the causes and circumstance of her remarkable self-possession. Her intellectual stances are always firm but not rigid, because, as it seems, they are constantly nourished by impartial reflection. Her letters especially reveal this. This sort of self-mastery is the mark of a philosophical life, and it will soon become clear that she had become settled in this mode of life before she took up her pen to defend John Locke. It is revealed in her letters to Thomas Burnet of Kemnay.[10] Illustrations of this character will be the subject of the succeeding section. Next after this, I shall show how she used the occasion of defending Locke to apply and elaborate her philosophical outlook on the foundations of morality. In the concluding section, I shall give an account of her mature philosophical outlook as it found expression in her defence of the metaphysical and moral opinions of Clarke and Balguy.

A Moralist's Religion

Catharine Cockburn's mastery of the art of rational self-government becomes evident in what might be described as her adventures in religion. In her most intimate writings on this theme, there is never a trace of impulsiveness or enthusiasm, and, least of all,

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[9]John Balguy 1686–1748) was a Church of England clergyman noted for his writings on moral theology. Most relevant to the theme of this paper are his *The Foundation of Moral Goodness* (London: John Pemberton, 1728), *The Second Part of the Foundation of Moral Goodness* (London: John Pemberton, 1729) and *Divine Rectitude* (London: John Pemberton, 1730); these were later published in *A Collection of Tracts Moral and Theological* (London: John Pemberton, 1734). Cockburn's defence focuses on primarily on Clarke.

[10]Thomas Burnet(t) of Kemnay (1656–1729), was a first cousin of Gilbert Burnet. He was a diplomat, known to Locke, and, having resided for a time in Hanover, became acquainted with Leibniz and, through correspondence, acted as their go-between. *Correspondence*, vi. 60; also vi. nos. 2228, 2575, vii. nos. 2708, 2709, 2724A. There is a disagreement between Birch and De Beer on Burnet's correct given name. Birch calls him 'George' (*Works*, i. xxiv–v; ii. 153). De Beer seems right about the name, for in his letters to Locke, Burnet signs his name as 'Thomas Burnett'. It is clear that they are the same person.

evangelicalism. Measured rationality with a slight touch of impatience is the prevailing tone. The latter is in response to the condescension and stubborn incredulity of her male correspondent.

Her early conversion to Roman Catholicism posed a problem for her male admirers who could not help but respect her for her intelligence. Birch writes that she was exposed 'to the *Romish* persuasion' while very young, perhaps around 1691, when she was in her late teens and became a convert. She remained a Roman Catholic for 16 years, until 1707, when she returned to the Church of England. In his brief biography, the uncomprehending yet admiring Birch failed to recognize that it was just her 'deep penetration' into philosophical subjects 'of the most difficult and abstract kind' that was the cause of her adherence to Rome.[11] He imagined her adherence to Rome as a departure from reason. In contrast, Catharine Trotter had no difficulty giving a rational account of it.

Writing to Thomas Burnet, she justified her adherence to Rome with the following argument. She acknowledges Burnet's assertion that the divinity of Jesus Christ is a necessary article of faith. Let it be so, she writes tentatively, and let it also be granted that, without accepting this doctrine, one cannot be a member of Christ's church, which is necessary for salvation. It follows that there is something, a body of doctrine—this one and others, that all Christians must believe, which, by relying on their respective private understandings, they cannot uniformly comprehend, for the doctrine of Christ's divinity is not so plainly asserted in Scripture 'as to prevent all disputes'. And if there is one doctrine of this sort, there are surely others, as many as there are dark places in Scripture, which are many indeed. Since there are many visible churches, each one claiming to teach true doctrine, it is left to the individual Christian to 'submit to the decision of those, who [one thinks] have the best right to judge'. She derides the celebrated Protestant notion of religious liberty because it leads to the proliferation of sects, to an endless division of Christ's church and to doctrinal uncertainty. Yet at the same time she contends that religious belief is ultimately a matter of private judgment, and she expresses her preference for a far simpler form of religion; 'the best religion', she writes, 'is the knowledge and practice of our duty, in the belief that all that God has revealed to us.'[12] Three and a half years later she once again defended her continuing adherence to Rome, but in a somewhat different way.

> … in my judgment, when one is satisfied, that the church, of which one has professed one's self, teaches all necessary truths, which none can deny of ours; it is better to continue in it, than to make a noise in the world with changing, though one were convinced, that some points were strained a little too high, or some things required more than necessary, unless they were proved dangerous to salvation. For, if every one were obliged to quit every communion, that were not absolutely perfect in all points, it may be there is none in the world, to which one could adhere.[13]

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[11] *Works,* i. xxf.

[12] Mrs Trotter to Mr. Burnet, 9 December 1701, *Works,* ii. 155–59, esp, 157, 158. During this period, Catharine Trotter was a frequent visitor at the residences of Gilbert Burnet, who in 1689 was created Bishop of Salisbury. The Bishop was endeavouring to lure her back to the Church of England, and may also have been playing the role of matchmaker.

[13] Mrs Trotter to Mr. Burnet, 7 July 1705, *Works,* ii. 187.

Here, her point is that the Roman Catholic Church is as good as any and that it is more prudent to stay put than to shift from one church to another when what is at issue is a matter indifference to salvation. To move from one church to another would serve only to exaggerate the differences among them and reinforce their divisions. Pluralism and a mutual respect among Christians are the best or fittest guides of action.

Thomas Burnet of Kemnay was her suitor, and Catharine's Catholicism, he believed, presented an obstacle that he thought had to be removed if he were to take her as his wife. He even wondered whether their friendship could flourish as long as she remained in this faith. To this concern she responded:

> I cannot but wonder, that in an engagement of friendship *only,*[14] you should think the difference between us will deprive you of whatever satisfaction you can propose to it; especially since I have so freely declared to you, that I cannot think myself at a great distance from the communion of any *Christians;* esteeming an agreement in the duties of practice, in the worship of one God, and faith in Christ, the only essentials sufficient to establish a union in friendship, though our worship is not performed in the same place, or in the same manner …[15]

She continues that she is 'zealous' to have him agree with her 'in this one article' viz. 'that all good *Christians* are of the same religion; a sentiment which I sincerely confess, how little soever it is countenanced by the generality of the church of *Rome*'.[16]

To summarize, Catharine Trotter was a religious moralist. Her stance involves interesting polarities that reflect her moral seriousness and mature understanding of the religious situation of her age. As a Christian, she acknowledged the necessity of faith, of belief in particular doctrine. She accepted the utility of an objective standard of faith, and yet she reserved the right to judge which church's standard came nearest to the truth. She recognized that the practice of supernatural religion required a public expression of faith. On the other hand, she believed a person's acceptance of particular doctrines depended finally on private judgment—this was inviolable. Because it seemed to her that the Church of Rome taught all necessary truths of religion with an apparent authority not evident anywhere else in Christendom, she believed that her adherence to it was warranted, for the time being. Yet, she modelled her adherence on the principle that religious affiliation should not promote sectarian conflict or intolerance. Not sectarian zeal, rather toleration was to be practiced. The promotion of peace among churches, not hostile divisiveness was also a guiding principle for her. Practical reasons of this sort guided her eventual return to the Church of England: viz. the apparent adequacy of its doctrine, the convenience of place, a concern that remaining a Roman Catholic in England would locally call attention to the divisions in the Church and therefore public conflict. She may also have been led to this decision when she came to believe that the Roman Catholic Church's claim to infallibility was logically indefensible.[17]

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[14] Italics mine.

[15] *Works,* ii. 186f.

[16] *Works,* ii. 187.

[17] Her objections to this doctrine are given in *A Discourse concerning a* Guide in Controversies*, in two Letters* (1707), *Works,* i. 1–42; see also *Works*, ii. 134–38.

Defender of Locke

While she was composing her first defence of Locke against another Thomas Burnet,[18] Catharine Trotter was also actively considering whether to remain a Roman Catholic or to return to the Church of England. The remarks just quoted about her religious preferences and about the unity of Christians and the distinguishing marks of a Christian are characteristically Lockean, although one cannot be sure whether she knew them to have this affinity when we first discover her writing about them (December 1701), for they are notions that Locke presented in works whose authorship was not publicly revealed.[19] Later on I shall offer reasons to believe that she had adopted them independently even before she read Locke. There is, in any case, a connection between her defence of Locke's *Essay* and these thoughts.

Two themes are prominent in *A Defence of Mr. Locke's Essay of Human Understanding*[20]: the foundations of morality and the immortality of the soul, but a third theme, although not highlighted, also finds expression, and this may be the reason for her celebration of Locke's book. It is Locke as rubbish remover whom she seems to admire; the primary gardener of the public mind who cuts away the undergrowth of imaginary science, drags away the tangled refuse of ill-conceived and misbegotten systems, leaving the ground bare, ready for cultivation and open to the light of truth. *A Defence* was her first published venture into philosophy, and Locke's *Essay* was to her mind just what was needed for the renewal of philosophy. She characterizes it as a book reminiscent of the 'first ages of philosophy', which it evokes; it exemplifies the utter simplicity of that state, and it is just this, she suggests, that Locke's adversaries cannot tolerate, for it reveals their pretences and prejudices, which have all the marks of clericalism.[21]

Responding to Burnet's objection to two of Locke's assertions, that the mind does not always think and that personal identity resides in consciousness rather than in some underlying and indiscernible substance, she sees no reason why one should suspect that either assertion entails a denial of the immortality of the soul, which is a doctrine that she personally accepts, and to which she seems to think Locke also subscribes. She acknowledges that it is a doctrine that by the mere light of nature

[18] Dr. Thomas Burnet (c. 1635–1715), a divine of the Church of England, natural philosopher and Platonist; most notably, the author of *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, first published in Latin in 1681, translated into English and frequently reprinted.

[19] In the *Epistola de Tolerantia* (1689) and *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695).

[20] This is the title given on the title page (i. 43); the head title on the first page (i. 51) read, *A Vindication of an Essay concerning Human Understanding*.

[21] 'When the light of truth shines too clear and strong to be directly faced, the only shelter for those, who would not feel its force, is to seek for far fetched dangerous consequences, supposed inconsistencies with revealed truths, and mysteries of faith, deduced by a long train of arguments, which engaging in an intricate dispute shades them with some pretence, for not confessing the splendour of that truth, they cannot encounter; inconsistencies with revealed truths, when the real necessary consequence of any principles being sufficient proofs against them, how plausible soever they appear' (*Works*, i. 52).

may seem only probable; that one must rely on revelation for its confirmation. Locke's treatment of the theme in no way undermines this possibility.[22] But this is all by the way.

The theme that receives priority in her *Defence* is curiously one that Locke fails to develop adequately in the *Essay,* viz. the foundations of morality, foundations that she would represent more completely and authoritatively 40 years later in her defence of Samuel Clarke. What she discovers in Locke's *Essay* are 'hints' (this is her term) of a moral theory that grounds moral distinctions and the obligation to observe them in nature, in our perceptions of natural distinctions, drawn from ordinary circumstances, and of the fitness of our actions to them, actions that are, in this respect, conformable to nature.[23] She discerns in Locke's *Essay* a consistent rationalism, which is to say that, according to current discourse, she considered him to be like herself an 'Intellectualist' or 'Anti-voluntarist', a sort of moral rationalist.[24] Morality, both with respect to our duty and our obligation to do it, is not, on her account, founded upon the mere will of God, but upon the nature of God, whose moral attributes of justness and goodness are discoverable by rational reflection on human nature and rationality and, given that, on the appropriateness or inappropriateness of certain sorts of action or inaction in life situations.[25] She disputes Burnet's charge that Locke fails to maintain a distinction between two sorts of good, that is, between what is purely virtuous (*honestum*) and what is merely expedient or beneficial (*utile*), and that ultimately he subordinates the former to the latter. She affirms for herself and attributes to Locke just the opposite that 'nothing can be truly profitable, that is not honest.'[26] It would seem that the author of the *Defence* had perceived in Locke hints of that paradigmatic moral religion of which we have already taken notice, and which she most likely first encountered in the writings of Hugo Grotius, with whom she associates the doctrine that 'the law of nature is the product of human nature itself'.[27]

This is, of course, pure Stoicism. To read Locke as a Neo-Stoic may not be far off the mark. Once one's eyes have been open to it, the Stoic influences on Locke's thought are everywhere evident. We need only remind ourselves how much Locke valued Cicero's writings, especially the *De Officiis*, a work that draws heavily from

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[22] *Works,* i. 71.

[23] *Works,* i. 48. Burnet, however, was not arguing from a voluntarist but from an intuitivist position. It was Locke's voluntarism that he found fault with.

[24] The distinction is central to Jerome Schneewind's account of the history of early modern moral philosophy and natural law theory: J. B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 8 and passim. For a theological elaboration of the distinction see Jennifer A. Herdt, 'Affective Perfectionism: Community with God without Common Measure', in *New Essays on the History of Autonomy*, ed. Natalie Brender and Larry Krasnoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 30–60.

[25] *Works,* i. 56f.

[26] *Works,* i. 53–69; also ii. 26–29, 61, fn., 62.

[27] *Works,* i. 58.

Stoic sources for its account of morality.[28] The brief hints of a moral theory presented in the *Essay* are more accurately described as dependent upon this work than upon the New Testament. I shall elaborate later on other aspects of Locke's Stoicism. Right now, it is noteworthy that Cicero's *De Officiis* was regarded as a manual of morals among Christian humanists generally.[29] Hugo Grotius, mentioned above, relied on it heavily, especially Cicero's account of the law of nature, which follows Panaetius, in *De Legibus,* Book I. Surely the early Locke, before he became a philosopher, was a Christian humanist, and an avid reader of Grotius, and he continued in this character when he began his monumental philosophical work.[30] Catharine Cockburn recognized this. In sum, it seems most probable that she was predisposed to Locke's *Essay* by what she perceived to be a kindred philosophical outlook. The Locke whom she rose to defend was in her mind a Christian humanist and Stoic moralist. She was not mistaken in this. If fault can be found, it was that she was too generous. I shall elaborate on this distinction, for, I trust, by doing so the point of this paper will become clearer.

She was not mistaken. She was right to perceive in Locke's *Essay* something that historians of philosophy, or I at least, have until now failed adequately to recognize. The *Essay* does indeed appear in many respects to be the work of a Stoic moralist. Once one attends to this hypothesis, elements of Stoicism are everywhere to be seen. One may start with the strong emphasis on the love of truth, a theme that radiates throughout the *Essay* as it does throughout all of Locke's writings. In *De Officiis*, knowledge of the truth, a clear and articulate understanding of it, is a highest good, and therefore truth is something constantly and diligently to be pursued.[31] We should also take brief note of Locke's attestation that a law of nature is discoverable

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[28]Locke's library lists 27 titles of Cicero's, including eight editions of *De Officiis*, three separate editions, three in collections of Cicero's works. Also notable is his manuscript, 'Ciceronis Scripta secundum ordinem temporis digesta', a chronological and historical summary of all of Cicero's writings. MS Locke c. 31, fols. 139–46. This is discussed by Phillip Mitsis in his article 'Locke's Offices', *Hellenistic and Early Modern Philosophy*, 45–61, and by John Marshall in *John Locke, Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) Chaps. 5 and 7, passim. Neither author has much to say about Locke's philosophical use of Cicero. Mitsis offers some useful insights in his account of Locke's use of Cicero in *Education*, 52–59. For more on Locke's Stoicism, see above, Chap. 8, where it is shown that Locke was less of a Stoic than Cockburn supposed.

[29]Ludwig Edelstein, *The Meaning of Stoicism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 54.

[30]On the idea of 'humanist' and 'Christian humanist' I rely on the work of P. O. Kristeller according to whom the designation 'humanist' does not apply to someone with a particular philosophical outlook, e.g. Platonist, Aristotelian, Stoic or Epicurean, but to a classical scholar who was engaged in the effort to recover antiquity. The philosophical works of the great Latin stylist Cicero were influential among them, and from them flowed that unique combination of academic scepticism and Stoic moralism that marks early modern thought. Christian humanists combined the study of Cicero with the study of Christian and biblical antiquity.

[31]Cicero, *De Officiis*, ed. and tr. Walter Miller (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961). bk. i, sects 15, 18. Cicero, although himself not a Stoic, but Academic Sceptic, nonetheless based the moral theory presented in this work on that of Panaetius (180–109 BCE), sometime head of the Stoic school in Athens.

by human reason; that it prescribes an eternal obligation rooted in the wisdom and goodness of God, whose being and attributes are discernible in the natural order of things and, more particularly, in the providential care taken in the design and operation of the world; that God has established in nature an inseparable connection between virtue and public happiness, so that what is virtuous and beneficial are not in conflict but in harmony.[32] One might add to this list Locke's empirical theory of knowledge, his nominalism and his inclusion among the forms of cognition, the direct perception of real existence.

On the other hand, she was too generous. She overlooked the fact that Locke's moral theory owed much Epicurean hedonism. She took no notice that the theory of the passions presented in the *Essay* is more Epicurean than Stoic: Epicurean so far as passions are modifications of pleasure and pain; Stoic, so far particular passions involve judgments of good and bad. More important, Locke's Stoicism combines with certain elements of a Christian faith that seem to have had no place in her own Christian conscience. One important element is the notion of free grace, which to be sure may be more residual than operative in Locke's thinking. Free grace is a capacity of the divine will to suspend the demands of divine justice, in biblical mode harsh and vengeful, so that it may allow for a totally unwarranted lenience and an acknowledgment of human frailty. This is the foundation of justification by faith, which is a central theme Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*. This morally ambiguous notion of the divine voluntarism is sufficiently at work in Locke's thought to inhibit a pure notion of divine impartiality and of what might be termed divine nobility, a true greatness that does not require praise or submission, and which never gives way to jealousy. These characteristics are essential to Stoic morality and its divinity and pagan divinity generally.[33]

More to the point, Locke's idea of moral obligation seems to have differed from hers fundamentally. In general, he supposed that obligation must arise from some external principle that is super-added to the perception of a moral rule and which makes it obligatory. In the case of positive civil law, obligation to obey the law derives from the legislative and executive powers of a magistrate to impose a law and to punish wrongdoers; in the case of the divine law, moral obligation in the fullest sense originates in the right of God, as creator to impose a law on his creatures, whatever law seems fit to him; every law is a commandment that requires perfect obedience, and it is incomplete and ineffective unless accompanied by a promise of reward or threat of punishment in the world to come. In the same context Locke also considers a third variety of moral law, which he styled, with unmistakable sarcasm, as a 'Law of Fashion', elsewhere as the 'Law of Opinion and Reputation', whose force, which Locke regards as considerable, resides in a natural

[32] *Essay*, I. iii. 6; II. xviii. 8.

[33] See Michael Frede, 'Monotheism and Pagan Philosophy', in *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* ed. Polymnia Athanassiadi and Michael Frede (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 40–67. See also Gregory Vlastos, *Plato's Universe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 26.

desire of men to keep them selves in reputation among their peers, and to enjoy the advantages that follow from this. Moral rectitude by itself did not have this necessitating power for him.[34]

Cockburn, on the other hand, maintained consistently throughout her writings that the judgment that something is a moral duty, that it is the right thing to do generally or in a particular situation, coincides or is the very same with a judgment that one is obliged, that is, bound by moral necessity to do what it prescribes. Why did she not acknowledge this important difference between her and Locke? Did she perceive it? I have no certain answer to either question. I'm inclined to attribute it to her generosity, to her annoyance at what she regarded as fatuous objections to a work in which found much to admire and, finally, because she found enough in it to establish an affinity between her own viewpoint and that of the author of the *Essay*. In forming her own opinions, in her self-education, she had become a student of the writings of Hugo Grotius, the archetypical modern Christian Stoic, a most fitting guide for someone seriously struggling with the question of what church to belong to. Her mention of Grotius has already by noted.[35] I think that her ideas of Christian unity and the key to achieving it, by limiting essential Christian faith to those articles that can be unequivocally accepted by all Christians probably came to her from reading him. Birch writes that while still a Roman Catholic she wrote a defence of Christianity and managed to articulate on half a sheet what it took Grotius a whole volume to develop. He was referring to Grotius's *De Veritate religionis Christianae*, and, although it may have been that he was choosing the most available name, Grotius's work is just the sort of place where someone might find that sort of broad comprehensive Christianity that she so highly valued.[36]

It is clear from her *Defence of Locke's Essay* and from her letters from the same period that Catharine Cockburn had developed her views on religion and the foundation of morality quite early and that she persisted in them, and that the viewpoint from which she conceived them was not Locke's but her own. They were most likely already settled in her mind when she began reading Locke. If there was any source on which she relied, it was, as I've already noted, Grotius, although, I'm sure, not exclusively. Justus Lipsius may be another source of her opinions. I shall have more to say about this later.

A characteristic expression of her viewpoint is given in a letter written to Patrick Cockburn, whom she would soon marry. Her remarks develop a theme that is akin to her already formed idea of moral obligation. The theme is worldly pleasure, in particular conjugal love, and the issue is whether it should be enjoyed for its own sake. Patrick seemed not to think so because, as he put it, 'the soul of the *Christian*' (a fanciful expression that Catharine reminds him can only mean 'the great principle of religion') is the 'habitual elevation of the mind to God' so that God becomes 'the

[34] *Essay,* II, xxviii, 4–10.

[35] Her reference here is, most likely, to Grotius *De Jure belli ac pacis*; more about this work will follow.

[36] *Works,* i. xxi.

first intention, and virtually the aim of all our actions', for this, she writes is what she supposes he meant to say. But now she finds his remarks inconsistent.

> But when you say, that the consequence of this [principle] is a disengagement of our hearts from all earthly things, if you mean those words strictly, of such a disengagement, as allows them no share at all in our affections, I cannot reconcile that with your asserting afterwards, that marriage ought to be a union of mutual love, and endearments. For explain, or define, or fix that love on any foundation you please, if it is love (which I think must be a wishing or delighting in the being, and well-being of the object) it will be inconsistent with having no attention at all for the creatures.[37]

She represents conjugal love as a virtue that should govern the mutual relation of marital partners; its affective complement is endearment and the mutual delight that each partner takes in the other. It could be said that there is an essential fitness here, that is, a rightness and one might add a completeness, in the relationship, to which nothing at all can be added by the hope that, by faithfully practicing this virtue and not enjoying it too much, a person would merit the reward of heavenly bliss and of pleasures never realized in this world. The everyday duties of a conjugal relationship are the duties of friendship: equality, mutual respect and good will. In an undated piece, entitled 'On moral virtue, and its natural tendency to happiness' she commends 'antient philosophers' who taught that 'the practice of moral virtue' naturally tends to human happiness and so is rightly regarded as the highest good. She interprets the heavenly reward of Christians in this light: heavenly bliss is merely a transcendent place for those 'who endeavour to perfect themselves in virtue'; it is a city of righteousness.[38] This is not the typical Christian view of heaven. Rather it represents a transcendent Stoic commonwealth, whose citizens are rational beings perfected in wisdom, whose live lives that are not merely contemplative but active.[39]

In passing, it should be noted, that Catharine was also putting Patrick on notice that she would no more take as her husband a mystic, or a Malebranchian, whose mind is so full of God that he becomes indifferent to if not contemptuous of good worldly pleasures and of the enjoyment of virtuous life here below, than she would take someone who, regarding women as mere objects of pleasure and convenience, would presume to be her master.

There is one place that I have found, however, where Cockburn gives the appearance of having departed from the viewpoint so far represented as hers characteristically, and which I have argued she held to throughout her life. In a letter to her niece she comments on the moral ideas of the third Earl of Shaftesbury.

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[37] Mrs. Trotter to Mr. [Patrick] Cockburn, 13 August 1707, *Works,* ii. 241. The argument is reminiscent of Lady Masham's refutation of John Norris' Malbranchian doctrine that God only is the proper object of all our affective and cognitive pursuits; see her *A Treatise on the Locke of God* (London: A. and J. Churchill, 1695).

[38] *Works,* ii. 129. In this respect only, she regarded Christianity to be superior to Stoicism. See Catharine Trotter to Patrick Cockburn, dated 3 June 1707, *Works,* ii. 212.

[39] Cicero, *De Legibus*, ed, and tr. Clinton Walter Keyes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959) 322–25; see Plutarch, *On Stoic Contradictions*, 322–33).

She writes with approval of Shaftesbury's claim that 'morality may be capable of demonstration, as it is founded on the very nature of things' both with respect to our duties and to our obligation to keep them. 'This', she adds, 'is properly called natural religion, *from which indeed morality may be distinguished, when the consideration of the author of our being is left out of the scheme'*.[40] She continues that morality, so conceived, will be incomplete, for it leaves out of consideration duties owed to God. There is no inconsistency here. But then she adds, that, without consideration of our relation to God, 'virtue cannot have the force of a law … how highly soever the beauty and tendency of it to the happiness of mankind may be extoll'd and admired'. I am not sure how to take the expression 'force of law'. If she meant by it the same thing as 'moral obligation', then she would seem to have been allying herself with the so-called voluntarists, who believed that moral obligation is founded only on the will of God. Another reading of it would be to take 'force of law' to mean an external impulse, distinct from moral obligation that determines an action. Or perhaps she meant something else: viz. that 'the will of God' is a fitting expression of true morality and nothing more, a will that cannot express itself otherwise than in ways consistent with right reason. I'm inclined to opt for this third option, which anticipates Kant.

Support for this option may be drawn from her comments directly following this. She writes that although it is acceptable to regard morality as distinct from religion, to take them as opposites is 'the most pernicious error in the world'; however, not because morality needs religion, and even less because it requires the backing of some historical religious institution or a commandment of God given in revelation, but just the opposite. Revealed religion, if separated from a morality grounded in reason and nature, engenders 'the grossest superstitions, and the wildest fanaticisms, that the head of man is capable of'. The perniciousness of this error resides not in rational thinking about morality or religion, but in a religious tradition that subjects rational morality to the will of God. As historical proof of this she harks back to the English civil wars and the Interregnum and the violence that was justified by those who put the will of God above morality. She invokes the principle, common among right thinking divines, who got it from Grotius, that the truth of a religion is evident in the excellence of its morality, that 'even the miracles of *Christ* would not have been sufficient to prove his mission divine, if he had taught any thing … contrary to our natural notions of moral virtue. The reason of this is', she affirms, 'that there can be no external evidence of any thing being the will of God, more certain, than we are, than those duties, which arise from the very frame of our nature (which we are sure is his workmanship) must be his will'.[41]

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[40] Mrs. Cockburn to her Niece, 2 March 1733, *Works*, ii. 268, italics added.

[41] *Works,* ii, 269.

Cockburn's Enlightenment Philosophy

All of this is meant to be preliminary to what I set out to consider: Catharine Cockburn's late philosophical writings as mature expressions of Enlightenment philosophy. There are two substantial works. The first, published in 1743 as *Remarks upon some Writers in the controversy concerning the Foundation of Moral Virtue and Moral Obligation*; the second, *Remarks upon the Principles and Reasonings of Dr. Rutherforth's Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue*, first published in 1747. Although the first work is purportedly about the foundations of morality, its central concern is about metaphysics and a proper understanding of God. In both works, she appears as the champion of Samuel Clarke. The occasion of her writing the earlier *Remarks* was the dispute about divine necessity between Clarke and Edmund Law (1703–1787), then Archdeacon of Carlisle, who would later (1756) become Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and subsequently Bishop of Carlisle (1768), and the man she regarded as the grey eminence behind his efforts, Daniel Waterland (1683–1740), Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, and defender of Nicene Orthodoxy, who, unlike Edmund Law, she did not seem to hold in high esteem.[42] Other metaphysical issues are also considered in this short work, in particular, the concept of substance, the reality of space, and plurality of spiritual beings in the chain of being, but they are less germane to the present argument and, so, I pass over them here.

In his Boyle lectures, Samuel Clarke presented an argument for the existence of God founded upon a metaphysical principle of necessity. He argued that God, who is a self-existent being, i.e., a being without a cause, exists by virtue of an 'Absolute Necessity'. And, although this principle is intrinsic to the divine nature, it is logically and epistemically at least, although not temporally, antecedent to the being it self of God. The idea of an absolute necessity, or necessary existence, when it is correctly conceived, is not derivative in any respect; rather it '*antecedently*' forces it self upon the mind.[43] Absolute necessity, then, is the reason, or, since it is a metaphysical principle, the ground of God's existence and, of course, of everything else. Law and Waterland worried that by giving a reason for God's existence, metaphysical standing was given to something prior to the being of God, and they worried also that this might lead to Spinozism.[44] Cockburn's defence of Clarke's thesis proceeds by considering the unacceptable consequences that follow from its denial. If it is

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[42] *Works,* i. 381. I take 'the *eminent head* of the opposition against [Clarke] … whose figure in the learned world has drawn many rash adventurers to engage on his side' to mean Waterland.

[43] Samuel Clarke, *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God* (London: James Knapton, 1705), 29.

[44] On the Law-Waterland position, as cited by Catherine Cockburn, see *An Essay on the Origin of Evil. By William King,* ed. and tr. Edmund Law, 2nd edn (Cambridge: W. Thurlbourn, 1741), 2 vols., esp. Law's notes: no. 10, i. 47–53; and Remark e, i. 73–74; also Edmund Law, *An Enquiry into the Ideas of Space, Time, Immensity, and Eternity, to which is added, A Dissertation upon the Argument a priori for proving the Existence of God* (Cambridge: W. Thurlbourn, 1734). The *Dissertation* mentioned in the title is by Daniel Waterland.

improper to conceive of God existing by an absolute necessity intrinsic to God's very nature, then the mind will be left without any ground or reason for the existence of God. Moreover, if God can be thought to exist without a ground or reason for his existence, why not the universe or nature itself, alone, apart from God? We may just as well have the world without God, and, at that, a world that might just as well not have been. The cosmological proof, which Daniel Waterland & company conceived as an a posteriori proof of God's existence, does not take the mind beyond the notion of a dependent being. It only hypothesizes the necessity of the prior existence of a self-existent being, that is, a being without a cause. But this hypothetical or *de dicto* necessity casts no light at all on the reason or ground of the existence of God or, for that matter, of anything else.[45] A voluntarist might glory in this indeterminateness contending that it merely points us to the absolute and unconditional freedom and sovereignty of God, who, as creator or in any other role, will be what he will be. But, as has been already noted, Catharine Cockburn was no voluntarist, not in a moral sense, and, as it clear from her defence of metaphysical necessity, not in a metaphysical sense either. Her remarks show her determination to carry reason to the ultimate limit of what can be thought. She was willing to entertain only one mystery: the mystery of existence, but she intended to keep it within strict rational limits.[46] I know of only one other philosopher who has ventured so far, another early-modern neo-Stoic, viz. Spinoza.[47]

Cockburn's *Remarks upon the Principles and Reasonings of Dr. Rutherforth's Essay*, &c. will be the last work to be considered in this paper. It offers us sure evidence of the Grotian and Stoic influences on her thought. There is an inscription on the title page, a fragment of a work by Chrysippus, which was quoted by Plutarch in his work on Stoic contradictions. The text is inscribed at the head of this paper. The inscription, by the way, is in Greek, which suggests that she had acquired knowledge of both classical languages and not of Latin only, as Birch reports.[48] The inscription states the following: 'It is not possible to discover the principle of justice elsewhere than in God and in universal nature.'[49] I have given it in English translation made from a Latin translation that appears in Grotius *de Jure*, where the Greek text

[45] *Works,* i. 386–88. The terms *de dicto* and *de re* are not employed by Cockburn, but she nevertheless draws the distinction here.

[46] It has always seemed to me that the unintended consequence of proofs of the existence of God is that, if they succeed at all, they succeed only in proving, if that is the right term here, the eternity of the world or, more vaguely, of existence. Even a deflationist view of necessary existence, for example, Bede Rundel's, who concludes that the proper answer to the question why anything exists is just that something must exist, implies more than a psychological or logical necessity, rather is calls for something more, something metaphysical. See his *Why is there something rather than nothing* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004).

[47] See Paul Kristeller, 'Stoic and Neoplatonic Sources of Spinoza's Ethics', *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 5/1, pp. 1-15; and Susan James, 'Spinoza the Stoic', *The Rise of Modern Philosophy*, ed. Tom Sorell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 289–314.

[48] *Works,* i. p. v.

[49] See above, fn. 1.

is also provided.[50] Most likely, she got it directly from Grotius, for in the context in which the fragment appears in Plutarch, the consistency of Chrysippus' physics and not his moral theory is at issue. Chrysippus' remark is quoted by Grotius in the prolegomena of *De Jure*, in the paragraph just following his famous or infamous (which one depends on one's position about the role of the will of God in determining morality) comment that given humanity's social nature, its inherent sociability and rationality, the perception and practice of justice would persist even if there were no God.[51] Grotius sincerely did not intend to dishonour God by his comment, but only to emphasize that the foundation of morality rests on right reason and not on any other motive, such as fear of punishment or hope for a reward. Thus, Grotius finds Chrysippus a proper authority, citing God and nature conjointly as the only sources of our knowledge of right and wrong. Grotius's remarks here constitute the locus classicus of anti-voluntarism, and, I think, the source of the notion, advocated by Clarke and Balguy, that morality is properly founded on the rational perception of the fitness of things. This context, and not Plutarch, better provides the background for the arguments Cockburn presents against Rutherforth. Rutherforth maintained that the foundation of morality was expediency, in which the will of God operated outside the realm of a legislative reason as a compelling force. Moral obligation, in his mind, was a prudential matter. I must move expeditiously here, and therefore will not relate all the points of controversy. Cockburn's main point is this: it is inconceivable that a rational agent should perceive an action as right and not at the same time recognize her obligation to do it. It is fitting that parents should provide their children with food and clothing and shelter and protection, as well as with love and affection. Who does not recognize this? Can it be supposed that the recognition of this fitness somehow is disconnected from the obligation to do such things? She acknowledges that not everyone who recognizes this may act appropriately, but this is not because of any failure to perceive one's obligation. The failure of those like Rutherforth to admit this is due to confusion between the force or strength of a principle (which is always external to it) and its intrinsic tendency.

> … the perception we have of the essential difference of things, with the fitnesses and unfitnesses resulting from thence, and our consciousness of right and wrong, have a *tendency* to direct us to virtue, and a *right* to influence our practice, seems to me as clear and certain, as it is, that we are reasonable beings, and moral agents; and that therefore they are both *true causes or grounds of moral obligation.* For
>
> 'By obligation I understand, such a perception of an inducement to act, or to forbear acting, as forces an agent to stand self-condemned, if he does not conform to it.' A definition, which, I think, all the contending parties on this subject might agree in; for no stronger restraint can be laid upon a *free agent,* even by the commands of God, and the sanctions of his laws, than that of forcing him to stand *self-condemned*, if he chuses to hazard the consequences of disobeying them.[52]

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[50] Hugo Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis,* ed. P. C. Molhuysen (Lugdunum, Batavia, 1919), 11. See also the English translation of this work; Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, ed. Richard Tuck, 3 vols (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 2005), i. 89.

[51] *De Jure*, 7; Eng. Transl. i. 89.

[52] *Works,* ii. 35.

Here, I think, she means by 'stronger restraint', not a violent impulse, but rational judgment of the consistency between one's actions and moral beliefs. She does not deny that passions do and ought to play a role in our actions, 'benevolent affections', 'love of truth' and the sentiment of approval that fills us when we consider noble actions. These seem to be, after the Stoic manner, 'good passions', like conjugal endearment. They are altogether natural and fit. Yet, she observes 'the *application* of any of these, is not determined by nature, but is in our own power [as rational agents], so that we may make either a right or a wrong use of them'. Even the sentiment of the love of truth may be misapplied, in those instances where proper care has not been taken to discover what it is.[53] Here she seems to be resorting to the Stoic notion that even good passions depend upon right judgment, that is, depend upon reason for their value.[54] Her claim, that 'no stronger restraint can be laid upon a *free agent*' than self-judgment, should not be taken to mean that she acknowledges no other force upon us to act or even a stronger one; rather it means that when a rational agent achieves true autonomy, there is no other power that can compel it to act otherwise that according to what it judges to be right.

I shall stop here. There is much more to be learned from her writings. Her letters are full of philosophical content, and there one finds described how she chose to live in the world. She chose to live Stoically, to govern her life by reason, to accept what came as the consequences of providence ever guided by reason and thereby always capable of being the occasion for some moral good, and living in this way to demonstrate the truth of principles that she professed.

Conclusion

The account of Catharine Cockburn's *Defence of Mr. Locke* given above is, I hope, sufficient to make clear that she chose to defend Locke by clarifying what she took to be his best intentions, and that in the process of doing this she brought to expression philosophical opinions that were originally her own. This method of proceeding seems apt, for the themes that she chose to defend, viz. the foundation of morality and the nature of moral obligation, belong to that part of Locke's philosophical program that he failed to develop satisfactorily, at least this appears so if one judges his achievement from a purely philosophical point of view. She returned to these themes in her last philosophical writings, defending the clearer account of them presented by Samuel Clarke in his Boyle lectures. Even here, she did more than represent Clarke. Her proprietary relation to the position she defends is unmistakable.

This position has the following characteristics. Morality is founded on human nature and its powers, especially reason. Reason is for her a natural and not a supernatural power. She attributes reason to God, of course, but because of its excellence

[53] *Works,* ii. 31.

[54] On the distinction between good and bad passions and the role of judgment in properly direction of the passions, see Cicero, *de Finibus bonorum et malorum*, ed. J. E. King (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951) 339–41.

rather than any transcendental tendency. She did not suppose reason to be erotic. Moreover, as her account of a virtuous marriage illustrates, the situations of nature to which moral actions pertain, and with respect to which they are judged fit or unfit and determined to be obligatory, are natural in the broadest sense: they comprise the ordinary and natural conditions of life: coping with human infirmity, with failed expectations, with what vocation to choose in life, with marriage, child-rearing, death, and most certainly with being a woman in a man's world. She also naturalized God. She maintains that God is subject to two necessities: one metaphysical and the other moral. God exists by the necessity of existence, which indeed is the ground of everything else as well. The second necessity is a moral one: it is right reason, which is the moral governing principle of God, spirits and humankind. For her, it is the divine understanding that rules the world, not the divine will, and the former unlike the latter is never secret.

The vehicle which she used to arrive at this philosophical position was ancient Stoicism, which came to her, at least originally, by way of Hugo Grotius, who used Stoic doctrines of the law of nature to address the political and social disorder and moral uncertainty, not to mention pessimism, that resulted from the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. For Catharine Cockburn as for Hugo Grotius and also Justus Lipsius, Stoicism was to be prized because it offered the prospect of a universal moral order grounded on rationality and a common humanity.[55] None of these desired to replace Christianity with Stoicism, but to use it to give expression to a more benign version of Christianity that would be acceptable to all persons of good will. The product of this effort, is liberal Christianity or Christian humanism, a tradition that has attempted, with some notable success, to re-conceive or re-invent the Christian religion as a purely moral religion. Stoicism is also an effective instrument to achieve this enlightenment, for by naturalizing morality and divine providence, and by favouring an active over a contemplative life, it refocused the attention of those who came under its influence to life in this world.[56]

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[55]John Cooper, 'Justus Lipsius and the Revival of Stoicism', in *New Essays on the History of Autonomy*, ed. Natalie Brender and Larry Krasnoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 7–29., esp. 13.

[56]There is, I think, an interesting irony here. Most classic schools of Christian thought appropriated one or another school of ancient philosophy. Calvinism was especially imbued with Stoicism, which is not surprising given Calvin's classical humanist education. The Stoic themes are visible in Calvinist determinism, providentialism, moral rigor, and sobriety. Yet Stoic themes are altered, perhaps distorted, in this new context by being made to fit with Calvinist notions of divine sovereignty, grace and predestination and in general theistic voluntarism. The upshot of this is that if one were to compare the two traditions, reason might be found to cast Calvinism as the evil twin of Stoicism. Consider the following brief review of some leading themes: Calvinist notions of providence have two faces, one public and reasonable, the other secret; Stoic providence is purportedly governed by universal reason and rationally discoverable laws of nature; Calvinist perfectionism is more of a demand that an achievement, demanding a perfect or punctilious obedience to a divine law, an unreasonable demand because there are virtual metaphysical obstacles preventing it; Stoic perfectionism exalts virtue, which is rare but not impossible . Other themes might also be considered: grace vs. self-governance; sin vs. human fallibility and frailty; election and limited atonement vs. the rarity of human excellence; perseverance of the saints vs. the self-sufficiency of the wise, etc.

Finally, the themes that Catharine Cockburn chose to defend and develop on her own, were central philosophical issues of the Enlightenment, and the manner in which she developed them make her an important contributor to the Enlightenment project towards autonomy. This achievement alone justifies the claim that her enlightenment is a paramount expression of the Enlightenment. Jerome Schneewind has declared Kant to be the inventor of autonomy.[57] There is truth in this, I think. Kant's system of critical philosophy is such that it required an inventive genius to fashion it, and to the extent that autonomy lies at the centre of his moral theory, one is justified in saying that he invented not autonomy itself, but an important and influential version of it. More importantly, it may be said that Catharine Cockburn rediscovered autonomy, clarified its historical roots in antiquity, and offered it in a form free of the annoying rigidities of Kant. It was a variety of autonomy that she not only conceived but also perfected in life.

[57] See above, fn. 24.

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