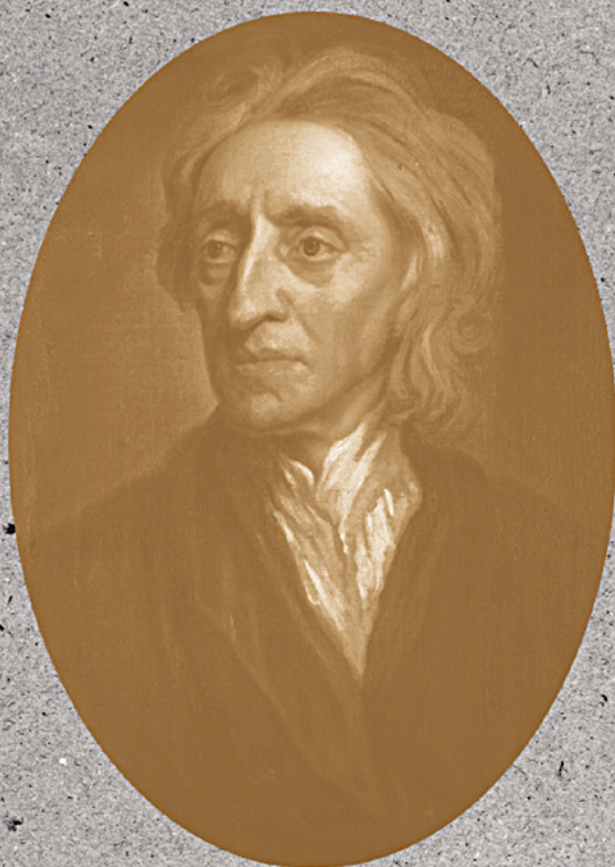


THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN LOCKE

New perspectives

EDITED BY PETER R. ANSTEY



Routledge Studies in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy

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The Philosophy of John Locke

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Peter R. Anstey is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Sydney. He is the author of *The Philosophy of Robert Boyle* (Routledge, 2000).

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Contributors

Peter R. Anstey is a U2000 Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney.

John Colman was formerly Lecturer in Philosophy and is now Honorary Research Associate, School of Philosophy, University of Tasmania.

James Hill is Lecturer in Philosophy, Charles University, Prague.

Duncan Ivison is Senior Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney.

Nicholas Jolley is Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, University of California, Irvine.

J.R. Milton is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, King's College London.

Victor Nuovo is Charles A. Dana Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, Middlebury College and Senior Research Fellow, Harris Manchester College, Oxford.

Paul Schuurman is Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Philosophy, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam.

Kiyoshi Shimokawa is Professor at the College of Humanities, Chubu University.

Kenneth Winkler is Class of 1919 Professor of Philosophy at Wellesley College.

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Peter R. Anstey

Abbreviations

- Conduct* *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, in *Works*, III, pp. 205–89.
- Correspondence* *The Correspondence of John Locke*, 9 vols, (ed.) E.S. de Beer, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976– .
- Essay* *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, (ed.) P.H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
- ELN* *Essays on the Law of Nature*, (ed.) W. von Leyden, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.
- FC* ‘Further Considerations Concerning Raising the Value of Money’, in *Locke on Money*, (ed.) P. Kelly, Oxford: Clarendon Press, II, 1991, pp. 399–481.
- FTOL* *Lettre sur la tolérance, texte latin et traduction française*, édition critique et préface par R. Klibansky, traduction et introduction par R. Polin, Quadrige/PUF, 1995.
- King* *The Life of John Locke*, new edn, 2 vols, London: Colburn and Bentley, 1830, by Lord King; 1st edn 1829.
- LL* Locke’s Library. (A prefix for the catalogue number of books in Locke’s library as recorded in J. Harrison and P. Laslett, *The Library of John Locke*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.)
- OED* *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Paraphrase and Notes* *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*, 2 vols, (ed.) A. W. Wainwright, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- PTOL* *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, (ed.) J. Tully, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983. This reproduces, with some revision, the 1st edn of W. Popple’s translation of Locke’s *Epistola de Tolerantia*.
- Reasonableness* *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, (ed.) J.C. Higgins-Biddle, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.
- STCE* *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, (eds) J.W. and J.S. Yolton, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

- TOL* *Epistola de Tolerantia, A Letter on Toleration*, Latin text edited with a Preface by R. Klibansky, English translation with an Introduction and Notes by J.W. Gough, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.
- TT* *Two Treatises of Government*, 2nd edn, (ed.) P. Laslett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- 2TOL* *A Second Letter concerning Toleration*, in *Works*, VI, pp. 59–137.
- 3TOL* *A Third Letter for Toleration: to the Author of the Third Letter concerning Toleration*, in *Works*, VI, pp. 139–546.
- Vindication* *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, London, 1695.
- Second Vindication* *A Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, London, 1697.
- Works* *The Works of John Locke*, London: Thomas Tegg and others, 1823.

Introduction

If there is one species of Australian fauna which is regularly mentioned by philosophers it is the black swan. What better way to teach about the fallibility of inductive inferences than to contrast ‘All ravens are black’ with ‘All swans are white’? It is fascinating, therefore, to find that long before the official discovery of Australia, there was a reference to black swans in John Locke’s correspondence. On 19/29 September 1698 Jean-Baptiste du Bos wrote to Locke of ‘the discoveries of the Dutch of black swans which they found in an inlet which flows inland’ (*Correspondence*, VI, p. 480).¹

This is the first, albeit tenuous, connection between Locke and Australia, a connection which in the last few decades has become far more robust. Locke’s philosophy is now widely taught across the country and a small but vigorous group of philosophers and scholars has been making its presence felt in Locke scholarship. It was fitting, therefore, that in July 2001 a symposium be held at the University of Sydney to discuss new work on the philosophy of John Locke. The collection of chapters that constitutes this book represents the fruit of that symposium. All but one of the contributions, that of James Hill and J.R. Milton, were delivered at the Sydney meeting and it is a pleasure now to have them in print.

The chapters in this collection fall naturally into three groups: those that concern Locke’s *Essay* and natural philosophy; those which address aspects of Locke’s moral and political philosophy; and those concerned with reason and religion. Yet as a collection they are also illustrative of some of the more exciting and fertile trends to emerge in Locke scholarship over the last decade. Of particular importance here is the new rigour with which Locke’s manuscripts are now being used to shed new light on his intellectual development and the evolution of his published works. The contributions of Hill and Milton and Nuovo break new ground in Locke scholarship in virtue of their close analysis of manuscript material. Another trend, which is indicative of the maturation of Locke scholarship in recent years, has been a deepening sensitivity to Locke’s intellectual context and an acknowledgment of the revisionist historiography which now pervades early modern scholarship. We now have a far richer understanding of, say, the variegated nature of the mechanical philosophy than is to be found in the first wave of discussion on Locke’s debt to thinkers like Robert Boyle. And my own study of Locke’s views

on method in natural philosophy in this volume has been informed by this revisionist trend.

Finally, another trend represented here, one which complements and in a sense grows out of the new appreciation of Locke's intellectual context, is the theological turn in Locke scholarship. That Locke's theological beliefs are never far beneath the surface in his moral and political thought is clear from the contributions of Shimokawa, Ivison and Colman. Nor are they easy to ignore in the *Essay* as Nicholas Jolley points out in his treatment of the chapter on Enthusiasm in Book IV of the *Essay*. Yet, it is Nuovo's chapter which in its striking title, 'Locke's Christology as a key to understanding his philosophy', best captures the impact of the serious reconsideration that Locke's theology is having on our understanding of other dimensions of this thought. However, enough of general methodological reflections. Let us turn to a summary of the contents of the chapters in this collection.

Locke's *Essay* and natural philosophy

Part I contains three chapters which concern Locke's *Essay* and natural philosophy. In some respects these contributions appear to be quite different. Hill and Milton's concerns the gestation of the *Essay*, my own concerns the interpretation of the *Essay* and Schuurman's deals with responses to the *Essay*. However, on closer scrutiny important continuities emerge.

The chapter by Hill and Milton on the Epitome of Locke's *Essay* is beautifully illustrative of the importance of the detailed study of Locke's manuscripts, not simply for the mode of composition of works like the *Essay*, but also for our interpretation of Locke's published works. What Hill and Milton show is that the Epitome, which is among Locke's manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, was almost definitely composed in the period between Drafts A and B in the early 1670s and Draft C of 1685. They have thus furnished us with our first substantial evidence of Locke's work on the *Essay* in the decade in between these well-known drafts. This in itself is a significant contribution to our knowledge of the gestation of the *Essay*. However, and here is the bearing of their work on Locke's natural philosophy, they have also demonstrated how the Epitome can be brought to bear on certain important points of interpretation of the published version of the *Essay*. For example, it is able to remove the ambiguity of one of Locke's crucial discussions of primary and secondary qualities such that Locke's view of the ontological status of secondary qualities can be settled beyond doubt.

If the Epitome can be shown to shed light on the *Essay*, so too can other previously unexploited writings of Locke's. Indeed, it is remarkable that in all the discussions of Locke's debt to corpuscularianism, no one, to my knowledge, has ever referred to Locke's review of Robert Boyle's *Specific Medicines* (1685). Yet Boyle's work explicitly deals with the corpuscular theory of matter. Jean Le Clerc, in his *The Life and Character of Mr John Locke*, tells us of Locke that 'He made me likewise several Extracts of Books, as that of Mr. Boyle concerning *Specifique Remedies*, which is in the same Tome, and some others that are in the following' (Le Clerc 1706,

p. 14). This review appeared in French in 1686 and its contents bear importantly upon some aspects of Locke's views on matter theory and hypotheses. In my own chapter on 'Locke on method in natural philosophy' I have used this review and material from Locke's correspondence in an attempt to get clear on the respective roles of natural history, hypotheses and analogy in Locke's philosophy of science. The upshot is, in my view, that Locke's account of how natural philosophy should proceed is decidedly Baconian in so far as it has a central place for natural histories, and rather pessimistic, given our lack of epistemic access to the true nature of bodies. What, then, of the success of Newtonian mechanics and, in particular, the role of mathematics in Newton's science?

These questions are addressed in Paul Schuurman's chapter on 's Gravesande's use of Locke in his defence of Newtonian physics. Indeed, as Schuurman shows, Locke's views on method ultimately could not accommodate the Newtonian achievement in natural philosophy. 's Gravesande, however, was able to develop a kind of hybrid Lockean methodology which retained Locke's epistemic cautions, but jettisoned his pessimism. Locke could only say 'to a perfect science of natural bodies (not to mention spiritual beings), we are, I think, so far from being capable of any such thing, that I conclude it lost labour to seek after it' (*Essay* IV. iii. 29). By contrast, 's Gravesande claims confidently that 'Though many things in Nature are hidden from us; yet what is set down in Physics as a Science, is undoubted'.²

Moral and political philosophy

Part II of the collection comprises three studies on Locke's moral and political philosophy. The first is by the Japanese philosopher Kiyoshi Shimokawa. Now, while Locke had something of a fascination for Japan, it is surprising to find that Locke himself was not mentioned in Japanese literature until 1835. The first reference to him occurs in Takano Chōei's 'Bunken Manroku', where it is stated that 'Locke in particular investigated the matter relating to the human mind, and on the basis of reason and experience, he determined the limits of human understanding'.³ I mention this rather late appearance of Locke's ideas in Japan because of the stark contrast with the state of Locke scholarship in that country today. For Japan is now one of the leading centres for Locke studies outside of the English-speaking world. Shimokawa's contribution on Locke's concept of justice gives us something of a window into the high standard of that centre of scholarship, because it contains a substantial amount of material (though it has been recast with a different focus) from his chapter on justice in his *John Locke no Jiyushugi Seijitetsugaku*.⁴

Shimokawa presents a conceptual analysis of Locke's notion of justice which, not surprisingly, is a property-based concept of justice. He sets the scene for his explication of Locke's concept of justice by examining the important sources of influence on it, namely the views of Aristotle, Grotius and others. He then, most importantly, clarifies Locke's notion of property. Shimokawa stresses that it is not to the rather loose definition of property in the *Essay* that we should turn in order to understand Locke's notion of justice, but that developed in the *Two Treatises*.

Indeed, this is his point of departure from the only other substantial study of the subject, the recent essay by Ian Harris (2000). After exploring the function of justice in civil society and the state of nature, Shimokawa concludes his chapter with a discussion of the fascinating case of an appeal to heaven in a time of war when all earthly forms of administering justice are absent.

If Shimokawa's chapter is one of exposition of Locke's ideas, Duncan Ivison's is one of exploration of their application. The first half of Ivison's chapter spells out, with special reference to Locke, that cluster of early modern arguments which were used to justify territorial expansion by the colonising powers of the age. Ivison's launching pad for this overview is the landmark decision of the 1992 High Court of Australia in the 'Mabo case' that native title was not extinguished with the arrival of European settlers. He then switches to the issue of the recent rewriting of the early modern roots of Liberalism and Locke's place in it. It turns out, according to Ivison, that Locke's views on property and political society were well-tailored to the almost intrinsically expansionist early modern state. But the post-colonial era of today, in which native title is widely believed not to have been extinguished by European settlement, gives rise to some deep and pressing problems with the Lockean theory of indigenous rights and property. Yet Ivison's chapter is not a critique of Lockean political theory. Rather, it is an attempt to sketch the historico-political contours of our current dilemmas on issues such as land settlement with a view to finding a way forward.

The third in the triad of studies of Locke's moral and political thought is that of John Colman. Colman defends the view that Locke's empiricist epistemology in the *Essay* is reconcilable with the moral law theory spelt out in his earlier *Essays on the Law of Nature*. He first lays out all the theses from the *Essay* that might incline one to accept the 'irreconcilability thesis', namely that Locke had somehow moved on from the natural law theory of his younger years. He then attempts to rebuild the pointed relativism of Book I of the *Essay*, Locke's hedonism, his claims for a demonstrative moral theory and the theory of ideas into a coherent and internally consistent whole. The key move in this rebuilding is to mesh Locke's moral thought with his empiricist epistemology producing an 'empiricist theory of the law of nature'.

Reason and religion

This brings us to Part III of the collection where in the contribution by Victor Nuovo we also find a discussion of the law of nature, though Nuovo's concern is with its relation to Locke's Christology rather than Locke's moral theory. For it is Locke's Christology, according to Nuovo, that provides a key (though not the only key) to the whole compass of Locke's thought. Having outlined Locke's Messianic Christology, he argues that the *Essay* itself came to be seen by Locke, in part, as a kind of natural theology. Indeed, he points out the rather surprising fact that even on his conservative estimate, one quarter of the *Essay* can be characterised as having theological content. But Nuovo takes us further afield than the *Essay* in his exposition of Locke's Christology and its ramifications. Using his detailed

knowledge of Locke's theological works and manuscripts and the theological debates in relation to which Locke's views were formed, Nuovo rightly impresses on us just how 'Locke may be viewed as a Christian philosopher'; how Locke's Christianity is intertwined with his political philosophy; and he sketches for us how Locke's theology influenced subsequent generations of Christian thinkers.

If the *Essay* can be read as a work of natural theology, it was also read in Locke's day as a work of logic. Kenneth Winkler, in his chapter 'Lockean logic', begins by reminding us just how early Locke's *Essay* was being understood as a contribution to the study of logic. For in 1693 William Molyneux spoke of the *Essay* as being a 'Logick that deserves to be Named' as reading for young gentlemen. It is the reception of Locke's *Essay* (and other writings on reasoning) as a work of logic that is taken up in Winkler's chapter. This is not an episode in the history of logic that one should expect to find in something like the Kneales' *The Development of Logic*; it is not a step on the road to the emergence of the propositional calculus. For, when Winkler speaks of 'Lockean logic' he is referring to an alternative tradition of thinking about logic that began in the mid-seventeenth century in writings such as the Port Royal *Logique* and for which Locke's *Essay* provided something of a new epistemological framework and his *Conduct* something of a practical handbook.

Indeed, it is worth digressing here to mention the seminal article by James Buickerood (1985) which was the first to sketch the contours of this tradition and to place Locke squarely within it. Buickerood very fittingly calls this approach to logic Facultative Logic because in these logics an exposition of the functioning of the cognitive faculties is integral to the study of human reasoning. Winkler's chapter takes up where Buickerood's left off by paying special attention to the *Conduct* and those logicians who took up Locke's account of the operation of our cognitive faculties.

Of course, it was not the School logicians who endorsed the *Essay* as a work of logic. In fact, we find Pope chiding the 'logicians' of Oxford University for censuring the *Essay*,

Each staunch Polemic, stubborn as a rock,
Each fierce Logician, still expelling Locke.⁵

Rather, it was the textbook writers Watts, Bentham, Duncan and Reid who sought to develop a non-formal approach to reasoning, stressing the role of intuition, practice and degrees of evidence. After spelling out Locke's 'ethics of judgment' in the *Conduct*, Winkler goes on to examine the reception of Lockean prescriptions for reasoning in this textbook tradition. He concludes his chapter with an assessment of the critics of Lockean logic from Stillingfleet to Priestley.

Nicholas Jolley's chapter is concerned with the polemical context and the philosophical content of Locke's chapter on enthusiasm which appeared in the last lifetime edition of the *Essay*. He argues that the chapter, 'Of Enthusiasm', was strategically weighted by Locke to counterbalance his earlier critique in the first edition of the Catholic doctrines of Papal infallibility and transubstantiation and

thus it served implicitly to situate Locke in between the extremes of the enthusiastic left and the Romish right. This, of course, was done in response to the charges against Locke of unorthodoxy and it is a far more natural reading of the motivation of the chapter than the traditional view that Locke's 'Of Enthusiasm' is directed against the earlier fanaticism of the Puritan sects.

Turning to the content of the chapter on enthusiasm, Jolley argues against Thomas Lennon's view that Locke's target is Malebranche, claiming instead that Locke is criticising religious radicals who believed that they received special revelation, a revelation not available to all people. Jolley does not elaborate on who these radicals might be, but it is interesting to speculate. One group which Locke may have had in his sights are those who promoted the phenomenon of second sight, that is, the ability to foresee future events by special divine revelation. We know that Locke was interested in this phenomenon because copies of two letters from the Scots savant James Garden to John Aubrey of 2 January and 4 May 1694 discussing second sight exist among his manuscripts and because he owned books which gave accounts of this phenomenon.⁶ But regardless of whom Locke is criticising, it does seem that Jolley's reading of the polemical context of the enthusiasm chapter is an important corrective.

The final issue which Jolley addresses is the question of the status of reason versus revelation in the fourth edition of the *Essay*. This issue was delicate for Locke, not least because of the charge of Socinianism which had been levelled against him. Jolley shows how reason's dim candle really functions for Locke and that this last inclusion to the long-evolving *Essay*, the chapter on enthusiasm, is fully integrated into Locke's epistemology and not a mere afterthought.

Pierre Nicole observed that 'the world is soe every where fill'd with people, that scarce thinke at all, & trouble them selves not about any thing, but the necessity of this life' (J.S. Yolton 2000, p. 89). Happily, John Locke did trouble himself to think, and to think about many important things. It is hoped that this collection of papers on his philosophy will ignite our own dim candles as we seek to come to grips with those thoughts.

Notes

1 I would like to thank M.A. Stewart for this reference.

2 Quoted from P. Schuurman below, page 47.

3 I would like to thank Kiyoshi Shimokawa for this information.

4 See the review of *John Locke no Jiyushugi Seijitetsugaku* by S. Morimura (Morimura 2001).

5 *The Dunciad*, Book IV, lines 195–6, in A. Pope 1963, p. 776.

6 In particular he owned John Aubrey's *Miscellanies* (1696), LL 148. He also owned Martin Martin's *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* (1703), LL 1924, which attests a continued interest in the phenomenon. For more on second sight see M. Hunter 2001.

Part I

**Locke's *Essay* and
natural philosophy**

1 The Epitome (*Abrégé*) of Locke's *Essay*

James Hill and J.R. Milton

In the spring of 1688 readers of Jean Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque universelle et historique* were presented with an account of a new philosophical work that had been produced by one of the friends of the editor: 'Extrait d'un Livre Anglois qui n'est pas encore publié, intitulé ESSAI PHILOSOPHIQUE concernant L'ENTENDEMENT, où l'on montre quelle est l'étendue de nos connoissances certaines, & la maniere dont nous y parvenons. Communiqué par Monsieur LOCKE'.¹ It was Locke's first publication of any real importance, and it did not fall dead-born from the press. A copy of the journal reached Dublin, where it was read by William Molyneux, who posed his famous question in a letter sent to Locke care of the *Bibliothèque universelle*.² The work also came to the attention of those watchful surveyors of the Republic of Letters, Bayle and Leibniz.³ Locke himself did his best to make sure it was noticed. While the journal was being printed he took the unusual step of arranging for extra copies of his own contribution – in effect off-prints – to be run off and sent to his friends in England and elsewhere.⁴ The printing of these was finished by mid-February and copies had reached England by the end of the month.⁵

Until the publication in 1700 of Pierre Coste's French translation of the *Essay*, the *Abrégé*⁶ was one of the very few sources from which continental scholars with no knowledge of English could obtain a direct insight into Locke's system.⁷ Since then it has largely been neglected, and despite the massive expansion of Locke studies in recent years it has received barely a mention in the modern secondary literature. One might suppose that writers on Locke would turn to it to see if it could clarify any difficult passages in the *Essay*, just as Hume scholars regularly consult the *Abstract* of the *Treatise*. In fact this seldom happens. One likely reason – though a difficult one to document – is a loosely held (and erroneous) belief that the Epitome contains nothing not set out more fully in the *Essay* itself. Another is the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory text. No modern edition in English exists,⁸ and the one older edition that is fairly accessible – in King's *Life of John Locke*⁹ – is both inaccurate and seriously incomplete. A critical edition of both the French and the English texts will in due course appear in the Clarendon Edition of Locke's works.¹⁰ This article contains a description and comparison of the manuscript and printed sources, and argues for a rather earlier date for the composition of the work than has hitherto been presumed.

The Bodleian manuscript

The only known manuscript of the Epitome was preserved among Locke's own papers, and is now held at the Bodleian Library as fols 52–82 in MS Locke c. 28, a guardbook of miscellaneous philosophical manuscripts. The work has no title, and is in English throughout. The main text is in the hand of Locke's manservant Sylvester Brounower, but there are a fair number of alterations and additions in Locke's hand, including the marginal chapter numbers, with a few more apparently by Brounower. The fidelity of Brounower's spelling to Locke's normal usage makes it extremely unlikely that the text was dictated orally, and small details in the manuscript confirm this.¹¹ Other manuscripts in Brounower's hand among Locke's papers suggest that Locke seldom if ever dictated the material that Brounower copied,¹² and it can be concluded with confidence approaching certainty that Brounower's copy was made from an earlier manuscript – presumably in Locke's hand – that no longer survives.

The manuscript consists of four small quires each of eight leaves. Its pages were not numbered (the folio numbers are modern) but the quires were signed A to D, probably by Locke. Their contents are as follows:¹³

- A (fols 52–9) A very brief description of the first book of the *Essay* followed by a more detailed summary of Book II up to mid-way through ch. xxiii.
- B (fols 60–7) A summary from II. xxiii (second part) to III. ix.
- C (fols 68–75) A summary of the rest of Book III, taking up only fol. 68^r and about half of fol. 68^v. The remaining leaves are blank.
- D (fols 76–82) A summary of Book IV. This quire contains only seven full leaves: what would have been fol. 83 is reduced to a stub, the recto of which has been filled with the final part of the account of the division of the sciences, written vertically.¹⁴

Quire D is different from the others in several respects. Its pages are slightly larger, measuring approximately 165 × 108 mm, compared with approximately 160 × 103 mm for quires A to C. The heading 'L 4' is in Brounower's hand, while the headings for the first three books were written by Locke.¹⁵ Quires A to C contain a continuous text with catchwords at the end of each quire, and there would have been plenty of room to continue with Book IV in the blank portion of quire C. Whether this was not done because Book IV had already been copied, or because no abridgement of it was yet available, or for some more obscure reason, cannot be determined from an examination of the manuscript.

In its present state quire D is anomalous in another respect: it has been wrongly bound. The two innermost sheets have been placed side by side, so that fol. 78 is conjugate with fol. 79, and fol. 80 with fol. 81; a thin strip of tape joining the two sheets has been added between fol. 79 and fol. 80 and the quire stitched together through this. This was presumably done by the staff of the Bodleian Library soon after the purchase of the Lovelace Collection in 1948.¹⁶ Why it should have been done is not at all obvious, but the result is that the summary of Book IV is badly disrupted. In its present state its contents are as follows:

- fol. 76–7 From the beginning of ch. i to midway through ch. iii.
fol. 78–9 From midway through ch. iv to the first sentence of ch. x.
fol. 80 From where ch. iii left off at the end of fol. 77^v to where ch. iv picks up at the start of fol. 78^r.
fol. 81–3 From the beginning of ch. xi to the end of ch. xix.

It is clear from this that the sheet now forming fol. 80 and 81 was originally the third sheet (D3, D6) in a normal gathering, and that the correct order of the leaves is 76, 77, 80, 78, 79, 81, 82, [83]. This rearrangement of the sheets can only be detected from a careful examination of the manuscript and would not be easy to discover if all one had to use were the photocopies supplied by the Bodleian Library to readers without access to the Locke Room. A reader unaware of what had happened might easily conclude that this part of the *Essay* was still in a state of disorder when the manuscript was written.

The original text of the manuscript was written by Brounower in a small, neat hand, using a fine pen. The ink is dark in quire A, while in the others it is more faded, though never so badly as to prevent the text from being legible. In a few places Brounower made deletions and corrections while he was writing but most of the alterations are later. The great majority of these are in Locke's hand, but a few in Book II were apparently made by Brounower; these can be distinguished from his earlier corrections by his use of paler ink and a rather broader pen. Locke's additions and alterations in quires A to C are also nearly all in paler ink.¹⁷ Those in quire D, on the other hand, are for the most part in darker ink than Brounower's text; this suggests that they were not added at the same time as those in quires A to C. The text of Book IV is more heavily revised than the others: in Books I–III the longest addition is a mere ten words, while the longest addition in Book IV – the account of the division of the sciences – is nearly ten times that length.

Differences of ink also suggest that while all the marginal chapter numbers in the manuscript are later insertions, those in quire D were not added at the same time as the others.

King's 'Abstract of the Essay'

The first publication of an English version of the *Epitome* was in 1692, when it was included in a volume of the *Young-Students-Library*, published by the grandly named Athenian Society.¹⁸ The text of this diverges so markedly from the Bodleian manuscript that it must be an independent translation from the French. There is no evidence that Locke had any involvement with this edition, and its readings are therefore of no value for understanding his intentions. The needs felt by young students – then as now – for a shorter version of the *Essay*, were subsequently met by John Wynne's authorised abridgement, which first appeared in 1696 and which (unlike the *Epitome*) was frequently reprinted in the century that followed.¹⁹

The first appearance of a text taken from the Bodleian manuscript was not until 1829, when it was included by Peter King in his *Life of John Locke* under the title 'View of the Essay'.²⁰ A revised text incorporating minor changes and renamed

‘Abstract of the Essay’ was included in the second edition of the *Life*, which came out a year later; this is the version used here.

In one respect King’s ‘Abstract’ is a more reliable guide to Locke’s intentions than the manuscript as it now exists, in that his transcription predates the disordering of the leaves in quire D discussed above. King’s version has the right order of chapters in Book IV. In other respects his edition needs to be used with caution. King’s editorial practices were lax by modern standards. In several places he modernised the text,²¹ and he constantly intervened to make up for the extremely sparse punctuation of the original; though this generally makes the ‘Abstract’ easier to read, there are places where Locke’s meaning is obscured. One occurs on fol. 65^r where Brounower wrote that one name is used for many particulars

. . . as they agree in one common conception Genera & species then seeme to me to be noething but sorting of things in order to denomination . . .

If punctuation were to be added, a full stop after ‘conception’ would seem appropriate. King inserted a semicolon one word later:

. . . as they agree in one common conception *genera*; and species, then, seem to me to be nothing but sorting of things in order to denomination . . .

(p. 265)

To punctuate like this suggests a certain philosophical naïveté, as do such misreadings as ‘assents in *linea predicamentali*’ for ‘ascents’.²²

The greatest weakness of King’s edition is however that he failed entirely to note which parts of the manuscript are in Locke’s hand, and what the changes were that Locke introduced. While the text that he printed is unquestionably of use in the absence of any other readily accessible edition in English, it needs to be treated with caution and should not be regarded as a satisfactory edition of the manuscript.

The *Abrégé*

Even a cursory survey of the *Abrégé* reveals that it is considerably longer than the English text in the Bodleian manuscript: indeed its total length is about 20,000 words, in comparison with rather less than 14,000 in the Bodleian manuscript. The greatest differences are in Book II where there are eleven chapters not present in the earlier version, but throughout the work there are other additions and alterations, some of considerable importance.

As already mentioned, the text originally written by Brounower contained no chapter numbers. Those now present in the manuscript were added later, in one of two ways. Where Brounower’s copy included a summary of a chapter the relevant number was placed in the left margin next to the start of the chapter. Where a summary had not been included the numbers of the omitted chapters were added at the end of the previous chapter; in each case these numbers were followed by another number in a square box (represented here by square brackets):

Folio number in MS Locke c. 28	Numbers at paragraph ends
55 ^r	8. 9. 10 ²³ [4]
57 ^r	18. 19. [10]
61 ^r	24 [36]
61 ^v	28. 29. 30. 31 ²⁴ [37]

The summaries of all these chapters appear in the *Abrégé* with the same numbering.²⁵ The boxed numbers (which are not mentioned in King's edition) almost certainly refer to page numbers in another – and presumably later – manuscript in which these other chapters had been included.

Apart from these missing chapters the most conspicuous instance of material absent in the manuscript but present in the *Abrégé* is the account of Locke's proof of the existence of God in IV. x. In the manuscript the opening part of the first sentence, 'Of the Existence of a God there is demonstration for which we need goe noe farther then our selves for a proof' was written by Brounower at the foot of fol. 79^v; since this breaks off in mid-sentence it is possible that it was originally followed by further material on a leaf subsequently mislaid or removed.²⁶ At the top of fol. 81^r the words 'Though god has given ——'²⁷ appear in Locke's hand directly above the summary of ch. xi; otherwise there is nothing. In the *Abrégé* there is a full account of the proof that runs to almost five pages (pp. 128–32); some minor divergences aside, it is a straight translation of the first six sections of the chapter as they appeared in the first edition of the *Essay*.²⁸

The Bodleian manuscript also contains two marginal signs that King omitted. These are short vertical lines in the margin, crossed at both ends, and appear to mark passages intended to be excised and replaced by new material. The first of these is at II. xii (fol. 55^r), in the account of our ideas of space, and seems to mark the passage 'Having got the Idea of the length of our span or the heighth & breadth of the dore we usually goe in & out at . . . ' for removal. In the *Abrégé* the ideas of length cited are more general: 'l'idée de la grandeur d'une paume, d'un pied, d'une coudée [a cubit] ou de quelque autre mesure, qui nous est familiere . . . ' (p. 60). The second marginal mark was placed next to the account of the idea of number in II. xv (fol. 56^v), and apparently refers to the phrase 'we could count Ideas thoughts bodys every thing.' Locke presumably had second thoughts about making a claim that we can count everything; in any event the passage was replaced with one that Le Clerc translated as 'Car nous contons nos pensées & les actions de nôtre esprit, aussi aisément que les corps & leurs qualitez' (p. 64).

Except in a few places (for example in IV. xix) when the passages in which they occur were themselves altered radically by subsequent revision, all the changes that either Locke or Brounower made in the manuscript appear in the *Abrégé*. The insertions and alterations in Locke's hand fall into two classes. Some are merely rectifications of mistakes by Brounower, for example 'the artificial species of genera of the schools', corrected by Locke to 'species and genera . . .'.²⁹ Changes such as these are clearly of no value for determining whether the text of the *Abrégé* is derived from the Bodleian manuscript. Other changes are true revisions and apparently

reflect further thinking by Locke on the philosophical issues involved. An interesting pair of examples can be found in the summary of IV. xi, 'Of our Knowledge of the Existence of other Things'. Brounower wrote:

For the existence of any other being haveing noe necessary Connection with any of the Ideas I have I cannot from them infer the necessary Existence of any particular being & can receive the knowledg of it only from my senses.³⁰

Locke then inserted the phrase 'in my memory' after 'any of the Ideas I have', and replaced 'from' in the last line by 'by the actuall perception of'. The *Abrégé* follows the revised text:

L'existence de quelque autre Etre que ce soit, n'ayant point de liaison necessaire avec aucune des idées qui sont en nôtre memoire, nous n'en pouvons inferer l'existence d'aucun Etre particulier, & nous n'en pouvons avoir de connoissance que par une perception actuelle de nos sens.

(p. 133)

The incorporation of these changes into the *Abrégé* strongly suggests not merely that the *Abrégé* is later than the manuscript, but that it was directly or indirectly derived from it.

It might therefore be supposed that Le Clerc used the Bodleian manuscript for his translation, supplemented by the other manuscript to which the boxed numbers refer. There are, however, good reasons for doubting this. By no means all of the additional material in the *Abrégé* is signalled by anything in the Bodleian manuscript. In the summary of II. i there are two additions:

- (i) At the end of the second paragraph there is an entirely new sentence:

Je croi que ces idées de sensation sont les premiers actes de la pensée, & jusqu'à ce que les objets extérieurs aient fourni à l'esprit ces idées, je ne voi pas qu'il ait aucune pensée.

(p. 50)

Nowhere in the *Essay* are ideas of sensation described as 'the first acts' of the mind. The only place where the phrase occurs is at the start of Book IV: 'Tis the first Act of the Mind, when it has any Sentiments or *Ideas* at all, to perceive its *Ideas*, and so far as it perceives them, to know each what it is . . .'.³¹ Here ideas seem to be the objects of acts of perception, and not the perceptions themselves.

- (ii) The final sentence of the chapter also has no equivalent in the manuscript:

Car n'y aiant dans l'Esprit aucune idée *innée*, ou naturelle, supposer l'esprit occupé par des idées, avant qu'il les ait reçues de dehors, c'est supposer une chose contradictoire.

(p. 51)

The passages just described were simple insertions into the text of a chapter otherwise left unaltered. Other passages in the *Abrégé* had been the subject of extensive revision. In the chapter on space (II. xii) Brounower originally wrote that

though sensation should supply us with noe Idea but of a foot a yard or a mile long we could by this repetition atteinẽ & forme to our selves the Idea of space we had received by our senses & is noething but the enlargement of that by repetition . . .³²

Locke then used the margin to add the phrase 'of immensity which had its foundation still in that Idea' after the phrase 'forme to our selves the Idea'. It is possible that this merely restored a passage that Brounower had accidentally omitted, but in the *Abrégé* there are additions which are certainly new. Here the passage is expanded as follows:

En cette sorte, quoi que la sensation ne nous fournisse que l'idée d'un pied, nous pouvons par cette répétition nous former à nous mêmes l'idée d'un espace aussi grand que nous voulons. Et comme nous sentons en nous le pouvoir de répéter sans fin ces idées d'espace, nous nous formons par là l'idée de l'*immensité*, qui est fondée néanmoins sur l'idée de l'espace, que nous avons reçue par les sens.

(pp. 60–1)

It is evident from this that the manuscript used by Le Clerc for his translation incorporated revisions by Locke that are later than those in the Bodleian manuscript.

The longer additions in the *Abrégé* are unquestionably due to Locke: no one supposes that Le Clerc composed whole new paragraphs or sentences on his own initiative, or that Locke would have allowed him to insert them if he had. Smaller changes are more problematic, and as some of them have philosophical implications it is an important question for Locke scholarship whether they were sanctioned by Locke or introduced independently by his translator. One small but significant change comes in the summary of the chapter on primary and secondary qualities. In the manuscript there is the following account of primary qualities:

The original qualities that may be observed in bodys are Solidity Extension Figure Number motion or rest These in whatsoever state body is put are always inseperable from it.³³

In the *Abrégé* this is rendered as:

Les qualitez originales, que l'on peut remarquer dans le corps, sont la solidité, l'étenduë, la figure, le nombre, le mouvement ou le repos. En quelque état que les corps soient, ces qualitez n'en peuvent être séparées, & c'est pourquoi je les appelle qualitez *originales* ou *premières*.

(p. 56)

In the manuscript there is nothing corresponding to the final clause: ‘and that is why I call them original or primary qualities’. Given the first-person reference it is extremely unlikely that this is a clarification made independently by Le Clerc: certainly it accords with Locke’s view that it is *because* primary qualities are inseparable that they are ‘primary’ or ‘original’.³⁴ If the *Abrégé* includes an augmentation of the text that brings it more into line with what we know Locke to have thought, then it seems reasonable to infer that he himself was behind the change.

Locke was quite happy to treat the *Abrégé* as a reliable summary of his philosophical doctrines. It is hardly conceivable that he would have sent copies of the off-print to England to be read by people as important as Pembroke and Boyle³⁵ if he did not think of it as containing an accurate exposition of his views. Locke was certainly in a position to judge the matter for himself: though he gave the task of making the translation of the *Abrégé* to Le Clerc his command of French was more than sufficient for him to read it through and point out any unsatisfactory renderings. When Pierre Coste made his translation of the *Essay*, Locke checked it very carefully, as he informed the reader: ‘Mr Coste read me this version from one end to the other, and all the places that I noticed to deviate from my thoughts were returned to the sense of the original.’³⁶

Even in the absence of any other evidence one could reasonably presume that Locke would have paid careful attention to the exact wording of the *Abrégé*; the presence of alterations that he made in two of his own copies renders this certain:

- (i) There is one correction in Locke’s hand in his own copy of the *Bibliothèque universelle*.³⁷ On p. 127, at the end of IV. viii, the text originally ran ‘Si l’on bannissoit du discours toutes ces propositions ridicules . . .’. Locke deleted ‘ridicules’ and replaced it by ‘inutiles’ (the English word translated was ‘trifling’).
- (ii) A copy of the off-print containing two corrections apparently by Locke has recently been discovered by Jean Yolton.³⁸ The first of these is identical to the alteration described above, a fact that leaves little doubt that Yolton was correct in her identification of Locke’s handwriting. The second has been described by Yolton:

The text as published reads, ‘L’erreur n’est pas un manquement de connoissance, mais une faute de jugement, qui fait qu’un donne son consentement à des choses qui ne sont point veritables.’ Locke has stricken out ‘manquement’ and inserted ‘bevue’ in the margin, inserted ‘la’ before ‘connoissance’ and changed ‘de jugement’ to ‘du jugement’ by overwriting.³⁹

There is nothing corresponding to this in Locke’s copy of the *Bibliothèque universelle*. Such solicitude over the precise wording of the French text underlines its importance: neither it nor the English text can be set aside in favour of the other. In this respect the Epitome presents editorial problems that are almost unique

within the corpus of Locke's writings, though not without parallels elsewhere.⁴⁰ The English text is superior in that it is written in the language that Locke used, but it does have two defects, or at least limitations. One is that the only source is a manuscript that is not in Locke's hand; this is less important than it could have been, given both that Brounower was a careful and experienced copyist and that Locke himself read through the text in order to check for mistakes, but one can never be certain that he spotted everything that was wrong. The other is that the English text is significantly shorter than the French, by about 6,000 words. The French text is superior both in that it is fuller and in that it was authorised for publication by Locke; its weakness is the obvious one that it is a translation by someone else. Anyone seeking to use the *Epitome* as a source for Locke's thought has therefore no choice but to use both texts.

The date of the English version

One important matter has not yet been discussed. The French translation was almost certainly made shortly before it was printed in January–February 1688.⁴¹ The English text in the Bodleian manuscript is undoubtedly earlier than this, but how much earlier?

Three dates need to be considered:

- (a) The date of the manuscript – presumably in Locke's hand – from which the Bodleian manuscript was copied.
- (b) The date at which Brounower wrote the Bodleian manuscript.
- (c) The date at which Locke added the chapter numbers in the Bodleian manuscript (and probably the other additions also, though these are not our present concern).

In determining these dates valuable evidence is provided by Draft C of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*.⁴² This is the last of the three surviving drafts of the *Essay*, and the only one for which no full text has ever been published. The manuscript is a copy in Brounower's hand and carries the date 1685; the original from which it was derived is unlikely to be appreciably earlier. Draft C contains Books I and II only, and as the *Abrégé* has only a very brief summary of Book I the evidence supplied by Draft C is of value chiefly for dating the abstract of Book II.

Since the chapter numbers in the Bodleian manuscript are the same as those in the *Abrégé*, and diverge quite appreciably from those in Draft C, it is likely that they were added well after Draft C was written, probably around 1687. The dates (a) and (b) are less easy to determine. It is perhaps natural to assume, as both the authors of this article originally did, that the Bodleian manuscript was written only a fairly short time before the publication of the *Abrégé*. There are however reasons for doubting this, and for supposing that the text in the Bodleian manuscript was put together before Locke had written the version of the *Essay* copied by Brounower in Draft C.

First an explanation needs to be given for the missing chapters in the Bodleian manuscript, especially those in Book II. There is no sign in the manuscript as originally copied by Brounower that anything had been left out: at the beginning of his account of primary and secondary qualities Locke announced that the next subject would be complex ideas, and this is the topic raised in the following section, the discussion proceeding smoothly without any obvious hiatus.⁴³ Indeed the whole structure of Book II of the draft *Epitome* is simpler than that of either Draft C or the published *Essay*, as the following table makes clear:

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Draft Epitome</i> (pages in <i>King</i>)	<i>Chapters in</i> <i>Draft C (1685)</i>	<i>Chapters in</i> <i>Abrégé (1688)</i>	<i>Chapters in</i> <i>Essay (1690)</i>
Simple ideas	232–9	i–vii	i–vii	i–iii, v–viii
Simple ideas (continued) ⁴⁴	239–47	xvi–xx, xxiv–xxv	xi–xvi	xiii–xvii, xx–xxi
Complex ideas ⁴⁵	247–8	xiv	xxii	xii
Substance	248–53	xxvii	xxiii	xxiii
Modes	253–4	xxvi	xxii	xxii
Relations	254–6	xxix	xxv ⁴⁶	xxv

The chapters on perception and the other operations of the mind (*Essay* II. ix–xi), which are even longer in Draft C than in the *Essay*⁴⁷ and which quite noticeably interrupt the flow of Locke’s account of the different kinds of ideas, are not present in the draft *Epitome* at all. It is not obvious why Locke should have omitted all mention of a topic as important as this if he had already put together a detailed account of it.⁴⁸

Second, there is no mention at all of simple modes anywhere in the account of the ideas of space, duration and number, which are treated as simple ideas, as they had been in Draft B:⁴⁹ the term ‘simple mode’ is not introduced until after the account of substance in ch. xxiii.⁵⁰ In Draft C the expression ‘simple mode’ is used as widely as it is in the *Essay*, if not even more so.⁵¹ If Locke had already developed a theory of simple modes by the time he came to write the draft *Epitome*, why does the expression never occur in the chapters dealing with this kind of idea?

In the *Abrégé* the expression ‘mode simple’ occurs three times in two of the chapters (xviii, xix) missing from the draft *Epitome*. This strongly suggests that the summaries of these chapters had not been drafted when Brounower’s copy was made, but were written later.

Third, the account of mixed modes, which comes immediately before the account of substance in Draft C, the *Abrégé* and the *Essay*,⁵² comes immediately *after* it in the draft *Epitome*,⁵³ where the order of discussion is the arguably more natural one of substances, modes and relations. This reversal of the order of exposition furnishes strong evidence that the draft *Epitome* was composed before Draft C. The most likely explanation for the change is that since writing the draft *Epitome*

Locke had devised his theory of simple modes, and that he wanted the account of mixed modes to follow on directly from this.

Fourth, in both Draft C and the *Essay* the account of the idea of number and the account of the idea of infinity are placed in separate chapters.⁵⁴ In the original state of Brounower's copy of the draft Epitome the first flows into the second without even a sentence break:

And haveing got the Idea of an unite by the repetition & addition of one or more such unites [we] make any combinations of numbers that we please & because the minde can never come to the end of these additions but findes in it self still the power of addeing more in what proportion it pleases hence we come by the Idea of infinite . . .⁵⁵

If the discussion of these two ideas had already been allocated to separate chapters in the draft of the *Essay* that Locke was abridging, is it likely that he would have run the one discussion into the other in the way he did here?

Fifth, in the manuscript one paragraph has the number '14' added next to it in the margin, indicating that it was intended to serve as a summary of II. xiv (II. xv in the published *Essay*). It is not clear, however, that this is the purpose for which it was originally written. The account is brief enough to quote in full:

And though the word *Time* is usually taken for that part of *duration* which is taken up by the Existence of natural things or the motions of the heavens as Extension for that part of space which is commensurate & filled by body yet the minde haveing got the Idea of any portion of time as a day or a yeare it can repeat it as often as it will & soe enlarge its Idea of duration beyond the being or motion of the sun & have as cleare an Idea of the 763 yeares of the Julian period before the begining of the world as of any 763 yeares since And from this power of repeating & enlargeing its Idea of duration without ever coming to an end frame to it self the Idea of *Æternity* as by endlesse addition of Ideas of space it doth that of immensity.⁵⁶

The chapter of which this is supposedly a summary – 'Of Duration and Expansion, considered together' – would not be easy to compress into 150 words, but this passage gives little impression of being even an attempt at the task. There are some similarities with material in §7, where Locke referred to an interval of 764 years since the beginning of the Julian Period (1 January 4713 BC), but the point being made there was quite different. A closer parallel is with II. xiv. 24, though the example used for illustration is the birth of Abraham in year 2712 of the Julian Period. An even closer parallel is with the precursor of II. xiv. 24 in Draft C (II. xvii. 45), where the same numbers occur: 'the 700th yeare of the Julian period or 63 yeares before the beginning of the world'.⁵⁷

It appears therefore that though a section of the draft Epitome was subsequently designated as a summary of ch. xiv, it was originally a summary of material in the previous chapter. The obvious explanation for this is that the version of the *Essay* summarised in the draft Epitome did not yet contain a chapter on Duration and

Expansion considered together. If so it must have been earlier than Draft C, where ch. xviii, 'Duration & Expansion Considerd together', is about as long as it became (after substantial revision) in the *Essay*.

It seems that Locke subsequently noticed the inadequacy of this passage as a summary of the chapter on Duration and Expansion considered together. In the *Abrégé* the last part of the section was considerably expanded:

Par cette puissance que l'esprit a d'étendre & de répéter l'idée de la Durée, aussi souvent qu'il veut, sans jamais arriver au bout, il se forme à lui même l'idée de l'*Eternité*. Ainsi dans une semblable puissance de étendre toûjours l'idée de l'Espace, il trouve l'idée de l'Immensité, comme on l'a déjà fait voir.
(p. 64)

This is much closer to the ostensible subject matter of the chapter and was presumably added after the chapter had been written.

Finally, perhaps the strongest evidence of all emerges from a detailed comparison of individual passages in the draft Epitome, Draft C and the *Essay*. As an account of Locke's philosophy the Epitome is a rather unsatisfactory work. No doubt the task of condensing the *Essay* to around 5 per cent of its original length would tax anyone, even its author, but Locke's account is sub-optimal by any standards.⁵⁸ Some parts of Book II (e.g. ch. xxi) are so abbreviated that only a very indistinct picture of Locke's thought emerges, while others are barely shortened at all. Compare for example the accounts of joy given in the draft Epitome and in Draft C:

Draft Epitome

Joy is a delight of the minde from the consideration of the present or future assured possession of a good Thus a man almost starved has joy at the arrival of releife even before he tastes it And we are then possessed of any good when we have it soe in our power that we can use it when we please a Father in whom the very well being of his children causes delight is in the possession of that good always as long as his children are in such an estate. For he needs but to reflect on it to have that pleasure.⁵⁹

Draft C

Joy is a delight of the minde from the Consideration of the present or approaching possession of a good & we are then possessed of any good when we have it soe in our power that we can use it when we please thus a man almost starvd has joy at the arival of releife even before he has the pleasure of using it and a Father in whom the very well being of his children causes delight is always as long as his children are in such an estate in the possession of that good for he needs but to reflect on it to have that pleasure.⁶⁰

In the first edition of the *Essay* there is only one substantive change from Draft C: the insertion of the word 'assured' before 'approaching'.⁶¹ In the draft Epitome the

thought is the same, but the order of expression significantly different. If Locke had chosen radically to condense the passage for the Epitome he would necessarily have had to change it considerably, but the passage here is only six words shorter (101 words against 107 in Draft C), and it is not easy to see why Locke should have rearranged it so thoroughly merely in order to achieve such a trivial reduction in length. A more likely explanation is that the passage in the draft Epitome was derived from a draft of the *Essay* that was earlier than Draft C.

The same conclusion is suggested by a passage in the chapter on primary and secondary qualities:

Draft Epitome

By the same way we may also conceive how the Ideas of the colour & smell of a violet may as well be produced in us as of its figure viz by a certaine impulse on our Eyes or noses, of particles of such a bulke figure number & motion as those that come from violets when we see or smell them & by the particular motion received in the organ from that impulse, & continued to the braine It being noe more impossible to conceive that God should annex such Ideas to such motions with which they have noe similitude then that he should annex the Idea of pain to the motion of a peice of steele deviding our flesh with which that Idea has also noe resemblance.⁶²

Draft C

Let us suppose at present that the different motions & figures bulke & number of such particles affecting the severall organs of our senses produce in us those different sensations which we have from the colours & smells of bodys v.g. a violet by which impulse of those insensible particles of matter of different figures & bulkes & in a different degree & modification we may have the Ideas of the blew colour & sweet sent of a violet produced in our mindes It being noe more impossible to conceive that God should annex such Ideas to such motions with which they have noe similitude then that he should annex the Idea of pain to the motion of a piece of steele deviding our flesh with which that Idea hath noe resemblance⁶³

In the first edition of the *Essay* the passage is identical to its predecessor in Draft C, except in accidentals (in the second edition it was significantly modified).⁶⁴

The last sentence in Draft C and the *Essay* are exactly the same (barring accidentals) and differ from the equivalent sentence in the Epitome in only one small respect: where the Epitome had the words 'has also', Draft C and the *Essay* read 'hath'. It is difficult to believe that Locke would have abridged his account by introducing an extra word. The earlier part of the passage is noticeably different. When no significant changes were made between Draft C and the *Essay* one can reasonably assume that the most up-to-date manuscript in Locke's possession in 1686–7 would have had the same text as both its predecessor and its successor. If

the draft Epitome had been derived from such a manuscript, why should Locke have copied the last sentence so carefully but made such extensive changes in those that preceded it, without thereby making the text significantly shorter? It seems much more reasonable to suppose that the version in the draft Epitome was derived from a manuscript written before Draft C.

Taken together, all these considerations provide a very strong case for the claim that the draft Epitome is earlier than Draft C. How much earlier is uncertain. A *terminus post quem* for Brounower's copy is given by a reference to 'Bernouli' in II. xxiii.⁶⁵ This is not explained further, but the work in question is identifiable as Jakob Bernoulli's *Dissertatio de Gravitate Aetheris* (Amsterdam, 1683), a book that Locke bought while in Holland.⁶⁶ If this reference was in the original text of the manuscript from which Brounower made his copy then it would be certain that the draft Epitome was written after Locke went into exile in September 1683. The possibility cannot be entirely excluded that this reference to Bernoulli was a later insertion and that Locke's manuscript of the draft was earlier, but this seems unlikely. The most probable date for the composition of the draft Epitome would appear to be during Locke's first two years in Holland.

There are two objections that might be made against this dating. One is that the organisation of the Epitome is derived from and therefore presupposes a similar organisation of the draft *Essay* itself, and that this would not have existed until the *Essay* had been put into something fairly close to its published form in 1685–6.⁶⁷ It is not clear how much force this objection has. We know from Locke's letters that during 1684 and 1685 he was endeavouring to put his draft papers in order. On 1 January 1685 (new style) he wrote to Edward Clarke and described how he had been

much in my chamber alone the last winter and busy there for the most part about my enquiry concerneing Humane Understanding a subject which I had for a good while backwards thought on by catches and set downe without method severall thoughts upon as they had at distinct times and on severall occasions come in my way and which I was now willing in this retreat to forme into a lesse confused and coherent discourse and adde what was wanting to make my designe intelligible to some of my freinds who had desired it of me and to whom I had promised a sight of it when it was a litle out of the rubbish . . .⁶⁸

Turning his various drafts into a unified and coherent work would not have been an easy task, and it is not clear how it could have been performed without a fairly detailed plan of the intended structure of the *Essay*. Locke would not have needed the main work to be anywhere near completion in order to be able to sketch such a plan. Many of the chapters in the draft Epitome could have been written before the corresponding chapter in the *Essay* had been finished,⁶⁹ and arguably some of them before it had even been started. Consider for example IV. xiii, 'Some farther Considerations concerning our Knowledge'. This occupies only two pages in the *Essay*, but in the summary that Brounower copied there is only a single sentence:

Knowledg is not borne with us nor does it always force it self upon our understandings animadversion & application is in most parts of it required & that depends on our wills whether we will be knowing or ignorant.⁷⁰

There is no need to suppose that Locke must have had a full draft of the chapter in front of him in order for him to be able to make a summary such as this, in which the main subject of the chapter as it appeared in the *Essay* – that knowledge is neither wholly necessary nor wholly voluntary – is not mentioned at all. When Locke came to revise the manuscript he added a passage in the margin that does reflect the subject matter of the chapter: the summary now ended with the statement that ‘but when we have thoroughly surveyd & to our utmost traced our ideas it depends not then on our wills whether we will be knowing or ignorant’.⁷¹

The other objection to an early date for the draft Epitome is that it creates a mystery as to why Locke should have written it in the first place. There is no problem in understanding why he should have put together an abridgement of the *Essay* in 1687 – it was so that it could be published by Le Clerc in the *Bibliothèque universelle*. No such explanation can be provided for a work written in 1683–5: the journal did not begin publication until 1686.

It is not clear that this is a very damaging objection. At this time of his life Locke was not someone who only wrote works that he intended to see printed in the near future – indeed quite the contrary. By the middle of the 1680s his boxes of manuscripts were full of unpublished writings – not only the still incomplete *Essay* and the *Two Treatises of Government* (now hidden safely in England), but also shorter works on toleration, rates of interest, the law of nature, and so on. There is no sign that Locke ever suffered from writer’s block, but during the early and middle parts of his life he does seem to have had deep inhibitions about publication of anything more substantial than occasional poems or minor contributions to the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society.⁷² It is interesting to note that his first publication of any length, the ‘Methode Nouvelle de dresser des Recueils’⁷³ was not only semi-anonymous (it was described as being a ‘Lettre de Monsieur J. L.’) and utterly inoffensive in content, but was also a translation of a work written some seven years earlier. If Locke’s first contribution to Le Clerc’s journal had originally been written for another purpose, it is not clear why there should be any difficulty in making a similar assumption about its successor.

The circumstances in which Locke began to draft the Epitome are therefore unknown. Perhaps it was to guide his own thoughts in sorting out the mass of his papers. Perhaps – and this seems at least as likely – it was produced for the friends mentioned in the letter to Clarke to whom Locke had promised an account of his thought. Possibly it served both functions: we do not know.

The Epitome and the *Essay*

As already observed, Locke’s Epitome has remained a largely unexploited resource for interpreting the *Essay*. One should not, of course, expect it to provide incontrovertible evidence as to how the *Essay* should be understood – apart from

anything else, it could always be claimed that Locke changed his mind, and if the dating of the draft Epitome argued for above is correct he would have had plenty of time to do so. Nevertheless there are several cases where evidence supplied by the English or French texts of the Epitome is at the very least highly suggestive. Two, both from II. viii, are discussed below.

The first example concerns one of the most controversial passages in the whole of the *Essay*. In his discussion of primary and secondary qualities Locke wrote that:

Whatsoever the Mind perceives in it self, or is the immediate object of Perception, Thought, or Understanding, that I call *Idea*; and the Power to produce any *Idea* in our mind, I call *Quality* of the Subject wherein that power is. Thus a Snow-ball having the power to produce in us the *Ideas* of *White*, *Cold*, and *Round*, the Powers to produce those *Ideas* in us, as they are in the Snow-ball, I call *Qualities*; and as they are Sensations, or Perceptions, in our Understandings, I call them *Ideas*: which *Ideas*, if I speak of sometimes, as in the things themselves, I would be understood to mean those *Qualities* in the Objects which produce them in us.

(*Essay* II. viii. 8, p. 134, 17–26)

One notorious problem with understanding this passage is that it is far from clear what noun the two occurrences of the pronoun ‘they’ were intended to refer back to: is it the powers to produce the ideas, the ideas that are produced, or something else again? More than one commentator has taken Locke to be contradicting himself here. Jonathan Bennett argued that ideas were meant, and that by describing both the qualities in the snow-ball and the perceptions in the understanding as ideas, Locke had managed to confuse ideas and qualities in the very passage in which he was attempting to distinguish between them.⁷⁴ Peter Alexander, though in broad agreement with this reading, took a more indulgent line, viewing the passage as the first part of a strategy of ‘leading us from thinking with the vulgar to thinking with the learned’: if in this passage Locke failed to distinguish between ideas and qualities that is because the vulgar themselves were muddled.⁷⁵

A different reading of the passage has recently been proposed by Thomas Lennon.⁷⁶ According to Lennon, ‘Ideas are not in things and qualities are not in minds, but *White*, *Cold*, and *Round* are in both’.⁷⁷ Part of his argument is based on Coste’s translation of the *Essay*, where the second sentence of the passage quoted from §8 is rendered as follows:

Ainsi j’appelle *idées*, la blancheur, la froideur & la rondeur, entant qu’elles sont des perceptions ou des sensations qui sont dans l’Ame: & entant qu’elles sont dans une balle de neige, qui peut produire ces idées en nous, je les appelle *qualités*.⁷⁸

This is a fairly free translation of Locke’s English, and one reason for this is that strictly speaking it is not a translation from the *Essay* at all: except for minor changes

of spelling and punctuation it is exactly the same as the equivalent passage in the *Abrégé*.⁷⁹ This fact considerably increases the evidential value of the passage: it must have been approved by Locke not only in the late 1690s when he read through Coste's translation, but also in 1687–8 when he read Le Clerc's. It also means that we can refer to the English original from which the passage was derived. In the draft Epitome Locke had written that:

Whatsoever immediate object whatsoever perception be in the minde when it thinks that I call *Idea*. And the power to produce any Idea in the minde I call *Quality* of the subject wherein that power is. Thus whitenesse coldnesse roundnesse as they are sensations or perceptions in the understanding I call Ideas as they are in a snow ball which has the power to produce these Ideas in the understanding I call them *Qualities*.⁸⁰

The last sentence here is syntactically much simpler and less ambiguous than its counterpart in the *Essay*.⁸¹ If we use it as a guide to the interpretation of §8 then it would seem that it is whiteness, coldness and roundness that are the subjects to which the word 'they' referred on both occasions. Locke was saying that *as sensations* whiteness, coldness and roundness exist in the mind, and *as powers* they exist in bodies.

Problems of a rather different kind are presented by §11 of same chapter. In the fourth edition this is very short and succinct:

The next thing to be consider'd, is how *Bodies* produce *Ideas* in us, and that is manifestly *by impulse*, the only way which we can conceive *Bodies* operate in.

This brevity had been achieved by the excision of earlier material. In the first edition Locke had written that:

The next thing to be consider'd, is how *Bodies operate* one upon another, and that is manifestly *by impulse*, and nothing else. It being impossible to conceive, that *Body* should operate on what it does not touch, (which is all one to imagine it can operate where it is not) or when it does touch operate any other way than by *Motion*.

More than one commentator has suggested that it was Newton's influence that caused Locke to retreat from seeing impulse as the only way that bodies can act to the more cautious view that it is the only way in which we can conceive of them acting: what had started as a claim about the physical world is turned into one about us.⁸² It is an interpretation that gains credibility from Locke's confession to Stillingfleet of what had changed his mind:

It is true, I say, 'that bodies operate by impulse, and nothing else.' And so I thought when I writ it, and can yet conceive no other way of their operation. But I am since convinced by the judicious Mr. Newton's incomparable book,

that it is too bold a presumption to limit God's power, in this point, by my narrow conceptions. The gravitation of matter towards matter, by ways inconceivable to me, is not only a demonstration that God can, if he pleases, put into bodies powers and ways of operation, above what can be derived from our idea of body . . . but also an unquestionable and every where visible instance, that he has done so. And therefore in the next edition of my book, I shall take care to have that passage rectified.⁸³

This was duly done in the fourth edition.

All this seems straightforward enough, but the original passage in the Epitome from which §11 was derived suggests that matters may be rather more complicated. Here Locke wrote that:

The next thing to be considered is how bodys operate one upon another & the only way intelligible to me is by impulse; I can conceive noe other.

(fol. 54^r)

This is not at all what the standard view of Locke's development would lead one to expect. It appears that as early as the draft Epitome Locke was consciously describing the primacy of impulse in physical explanation as being grounded in our ability to conceive: indeed both the statement here and its translation in the *Abrégé* are in one respect more 'subjectivist' than the final version or in the fourth edition of the *Essay*, with Locke using the first-person singular rather than the first-person plural.⁸⁴

It is very unlikely that these views on impulse were in any way influenced by Newton. If the early dating of the draft Epitome argued for above is accepted then no influence is possible: the *Principia* was not published until July 1687. The review of the *Principia* usually (and plausibly) attributed to Locke appeared in the same volume of the *Bibliothèque universelle* as the *Abrégé*, though in the March number.⁸⁵ It was probably written too late even to influence the text of the *Abrégé*, and there are no signs either in the review or in the rather superficial notes that Locke made on the *Principia*⁸⁶ that he was yet aware of the deeper implications of Newton's theory.

Conclusion

One of the problems that confronts anyone hoping to give an account of the writing of the *Essay* is a severe shortage of evidence for the crucial decade or more between the finishing of Draft B (1671, perhaps completed 1672) and Draft C (1685). There is good evidence that Locke had not laid the *Essay* aside during this time. While he was in Paris in 1678 he had with him a 'Folio de Intellectu'⁸⁷ which cannot have been either Draft A or Draft B, and presumably contained material more recent than in either. This manuscript may have accompanied Locke to Holland,⁸⁸ along (probably) with Draft B⁸⁹ and perhaps other material as well. One draft that he did not take with him was a large volume left with James Tyrrell – 'your foul copy' as Tyrrell described it.⁹⁰

What any of these lost volumes contained has however until now been a matter of almost pure conjecture, only weakly regulated by information from Locke's journal and other notebooks. If the arguments set out above for an early dating of the draft Epitome are accepted, then Brounower's copy acquires much more importance than it has hitherto been supposed to possess: it would be the only document that provides any positive information about how the *Essay* took shape during the long interval between Draft B and Draft C. How the arguments set out above will be regarded cannot be foreseen, but one thing should at least be clear: both the French and the English texts of the Epitome deserve very much closer attention than they have hitherto been given.

Notes

- 1 *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, January–March 1688, 8, pp. 49–142; bibliographical details in J.S. Yolton 1998, pp. 322–3. Though Locke's contribution was in the January number it is clear from the physical composition of the volume that all three parts must have been issued together: both the February and March numbers begin in the middle of gatherings (sig. H3^v, p. 174; sig. Q5^r, p. 367). If the publication dates of the two volumes that followed are any guide, volume 8 probably came out in early or mid-April (new style), *Correspondence*, III, pp. 487, 506.
- 2 *Correspondence*, III, pp. 482–3. Molyneux sent his question again directly to Locke on 2 March 1693, *Correspondence*, IV, p. 651.
- 3 G. Bonno 1990, p. 76 and J.W. Yolton 1956, p. 22. For other reactions see *ibid.*, pp. 1–2, 50–1.
- 4 *Abrégé D'un Ouvrage intitulé Essai Philosophique touchant L'Entendement*, Amsterdam, 1688. See J. S. Yolton 1998, pp. 323–4. This was printed from the same setting of type that had been used in the journal, though with altered running titles, signatures and page numbers; two new preliminary leaves contain a title-page and dedication to Pembroke. Only a very small number seem to have been printed and copies are now extremely rare: Jean Yolton has traced only three, one of which is discussed below.
- 5 *Correspondence*, III, pp. 359, 388–9. Unless otherwise indicated, dates are old-style.
- 6 Strictly speaking this is the title only of the off-print but it is customary to use it for both the French printings. The name 'Epitome' was used by Locke and Furlly in their letters, *Correspondence*, III, pp. 352, 359, 388, and by Locke in the Epistle to the Reader of the *Essay*, p. 10, l. 27. In this article 'Epitome' will be used for the work in general and *Abrégé* for the French translation (the modern French spelling has been preferred to the original *Abregé*).
- 7 Another source was Le Clerc's review of the *Essay* in a later issue of the *Bibliothèque universelle*, April–June 1690, 17, pp. 399–427. This was not so much a review in the usual sense as an abridgement of Book I of the *Essay*, designed to supplement the extremely brief account in the *Abrégé*.
- 8 There is an Italian translation in M. Sina 1979.
- 9 King 1830, II, pp. 231–93. A text taken from the 1884 edition is available on the Web: <<http://www.philosophypages.com/locke/k000.htm>> (accessed 30 May 2003).
- 10 In volume 2 of the *Drafts for the Essay concerning Human Understanding and Other Philosophical Writings*, to be edited by G.A.J. Rogers.
- 11 For example in III. viii Brounower was apparently unable to read Locke's hand and left a space for Locke to complete the words 'they dispence', MS Locke c. 28, fol. 66^v; King, p. 269.
- 12 An example of material that certainly cannot have been dictated is the extensive reports on chemical preparations in MS Locke c. 44. On this aspect of Brounower's work see J.R. Milton 1994.

- 13 The chapter numbers used here are those in the Epitome and do not always coincide with those in the published *Essay*: (i) the chapter on solidity (II. iv in 1690) appears as ch. xvii in the Epitome, in the same position, though not with the same number, that it had in Draft C (it is missing in MS Locke c. 28 but appears in the *Abrégé*); (ii) III. vii ‘Of Particles’ is absent (this may have been a very late addition to the *Essay*, as it is not mentioned in the list of chapters at the end of the volume in the first edition); (iii) III. viii is placed at the end of Book III as ch. x, with III. ix–xi being numbered as chs vii–ix; (iv) ‘Of wrong Assent, or Errour’ (IV. xix in 1690) appears as ch. xvii, with IV. xvii and IV. xviii being numbered as chs xviii and xix respectively.
- 14 This formed ch. xx in the *Abrégé* but has no number in the manuscript. It was begun by Brounower on the last line of fol. 82^v and then continued by Locke in the right margin of the same page and on the stub of fol. 83^r. It seems that Locke wished to delete something that Brounower had written and did so by cutting away most of the final leaf, leaving only the margin.
- 15 The headings for the first and last of these (‘Lib: 1’; ‘Lib. 3’) are above the text and were probably written before the material that follows; the first line of Book III is also in Locke’s hand. The heading for Book II (‘Lib. 2’) is in the margin and was probably added later, along with the chapter numbers.
- 16 The only information about its earlier history comes from King (p. 231): ‘On opening the MS. copy of the Essay on Human Understanding, dated 1671, I found the following paper without title or date . . .’. This suggests that it was included with Draft B (MS Locke f. 26), which itself seems not to have been bound until after its deposition in the Bodleian Library.
- 17 An exception is the phrase ‘to doe it well’ added in quire C, fol. 68^r.
- 18 ‘An Extract of a Book, Entituled, A Philosophicall Essay upon Human Understanding . . . By Mr. Lock’, J. Dunton 1692; pp. 162–79; Wing D 2635, details in J.S. Yolton 1998, pp. 324–6.
- 19 J.S. Yolton 1998, pp. 155–69.
- 20 P. King 1829, pp. 362–98.
- 21 In the summary of II. xxi King has ‘Every man experiences in himself that he can move his hand or tongue, which before was at rest . . .’ (p. 246), while the manuscript reads ‘experiments’ (fol. 58^r); there is a similar change in II. xxiii (p. 251, fol. 59^v).
- 22 King, II, p. 261; MS Locke c. 28, fol. 63^v. There were worse mistakes in the 1829 edition, where Locke’s treatment of cohesion in II. xxiii was marred by King’s transcription of two occurrences of ‘the aether’ as ‘the other’ (op. cit., p. 373); this was rectified in the 1830 edition.
- 23 Since the account of solidity appears as ch. xvii in the *Abrégé*, these chapters correspond to ix, x and xi in the *Essay*.
- 24 Chs xxviii–xxxii in the first edition of the *Essay*, xxix–xxxii in later editions.
- 25 The only difference between the two is that ch. xvii in the *Abrégé*, on solidity, is not mentioned in the list of chapters on fol. 57^r of the manuscript.
- 26 The chief drawback with this otherwise attractive suggestion is that the conjugate of this missing leaf would have been in the first half of the quire, and there is no sign here that the text has been disturbed.
- 27 This is the beginning of the first sentence of *Essay* IV. x. 1: ‘Though God has given us no innate *Ideas* of himself . . .’. The words in Locke’s hand at the top of fol. 81^r seem to have been written before Brounower started copying ch. xi; if not, a space was left for them.
- 28 There are the following divergences from the first six sections as they appeared in 1690: (i) a short preamble is added; (ii) the final two sentences of §2 in the *Essay* (pp. 619.28–620.6) are missing; (iii) § 6 of the *Abrégé* corresponds to the second half of §5 in the *Essay* (pp. 620.27–621.3); (iv) §7 in the *Abrégé* corresponds to §6 in the *Essay* (excluding p. 621.11–24 added in the second and fourth editions).
- 29 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 63^r; King, II, p. 259.

- 30 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 81^r; King, II, p. 287.
- 31 *Essay* IV. i. 4, pp. 525.24–526.2.
- 32 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 55^{r-v}; King, II, p. 240.
- 33 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 54^r; King, II, p. 237.
- 34 *Essay* II. viii. 23, p. 141.3–5.
- 35 *Correspondence*, III, pp. 354, 389.
- 36 ‘Mr. Coste m’a lû cette Version d’un bout à l’autre avant que de vous l’envoyer, & que tous les endroits que j’ai remarqué s’éloigner de mes pensées, ont été ramenez au sens de l’Original . . .’, *Essai philosophique concernant l’entendement humain*, Amsterdam, Henri Schelte, 1700, sig. ***1^r.
- 37 Bodleian Library, Locke Room, shelf-mark 6. 64.
- 38 J.S. Yolton 1996. This is now in the Library Company of Philadelphia, shelf-mark Sev. Loc/ Log2370. D4; the authors of this article have not been able to inspect it and have relied on Jean Yolton’s description. It is perhaps the copy that Locke left among his books in London when he moved to Oates, MS Locke b. 2, fols 153^r, 155^v; LL 1802^a.
- 39 J.S. Yolton 1996, pp. 150–1; *Abrégé*, p. 136.
- 40 The *Method for a Commonplace Book* raises even more difficult problems in that it exists in English, French and Latin versions.
- 41 A manuscript copy was sent to Pembroke in August 1687, *Correspondence*, III, p. 251, but there seems to be no evidence whether it was the English or the French version.
- 42 Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MA 998. A text will appear in volume 2 of the *Drafts for the Essay concerning Human Understanding and Other Philosophical Writings* in the Clarendon Edition; we are very grateful to Professor G.A.J. Rogers for allowing us use of a typescript he has prepared. There is a valuable analysis of the structure and contents of Draft C in R.I. Aaron 1971, pp. 55–73.
- 43 MS Locke c. 28, fols 53^v, 55^r; King, II, pp. 235, 239.
- 44 These are the ideas subsequently characterised as simple modes.
- 45 Complex ideas are first mentioned in ch. xi of the *Epitome* but the main account is not until ch. xxii.
- 46 In the *Abrégé* the three chapters on relations were not numbered separately but were given as one continuous section with the numbers XXV, XXVI, XXVII at the beginning.
- 47 Draft C II. viii–xiii. See R.I. Aaron 1971, pp. 63–6.
- 48 This is not to say that Locke had written nothing about these topics; rather that he had not decided where his account ought to be placed in the *Essay*. See Draft B, §§23–4, in Locke 1990.
- 49 Draft B, §§103, 104, 129, 141.
- 50 ‘The former sort, whereof I have above given several instances I call *simple modes*’ MS Locke c. 28, fol. 60^v; King, II, p. 253. There are no earlier occurrences of the phrase, though in ch. xxi Locke announced that he would mention one more simple idea (power) and then ‘put an end to this part of simple Ideas & their modes’, MS Locke c. 28, fol. 58^r; King, II, p. 246.
- 51 For example the chapter ‘Of the Modes of Thinking’ (II. xix) has the title in Draft C, ‘Of the simple modes of Thinking’ (ii. xxiii), cf. R.I. Aaron 1971, p. 66.
- 52 Draft C II. xxvi; *Abrégé*, pp. 72–4, *Essay* II. xxii.
- 53 MS Locke c. 28, fols 60^r–61^r; King, II, pp. 253–4.
- 54 Draft C II. xix, xx; *Essay* II. xvi, xvii.
- 55 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 56^v; King, II, p. 243. Brounower subsequently (the correction is in different ink) replaced ‘& because’ by ‘Whereas’, marking the start of a new sentence.
- 56 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 56^v; King, II, pp. 242–3. The last phrase, ‘of space it doth that of immensity’ was added later by Brounower; it is required for the passage to make sense and had presumably been omitted inadvertently.
- 57 This passage was in turn derived from Draft B, §115.

- 58 Boyle's verdict, reported to Locke by David Thomas, was that 'the aphorismes are very methodicall but . . . the author either knew not or concealed the menstruum [solvent] for the greate worke', *Correspondence*, III, p. 453.
- 59 MS Locke c. 28, fols 57^v–58^r; King, II, p. 246. The first part of this is rather clearer in the *Abrégé* (p. 70): 'La *Joi*e est un plaisir que l'ame ressent, lors qu'elle considere comme assurée la possession d'une bien present, ou futur'.
- 60 Draft C II. xxiv. 7.
- 61 *Essay* II. xx. 7, p. 231.7–15.
- 62 MS Locke c. 28, fol 54^{r-v}; King, II, pp. 237–8. The passage was substantially revised for the *Abrégé* (p. 57):

Nous pouvons concevoir par la même voie de quelle maniere l'idée de la couleur & de l'odeur d'un Violette peut être produite en nous, aussi bien que celle de la figure. C'est par un mouvement particulier produit dans l'organe par l'impulsion de particules d'une certaine grosseur, figure, nombre & mouvement, & continué jusqu'au cerveau: car il n'est pas plus difficile de concevoir que Dieu peut attacher l'idée d'une couleur, ou d'une odeur, à des mouvements, avec lesquels elles n'ont aucune ressemblance; qu'il n'est difficile de concevoir qu'il a attaché l'idée de la douleur au mouvement d'un morceau de fer, qui divise nôtre chair, auquel mouvement la douleur ne ressemble en aucune maniere.

Perhaps the most significant change lies in the claim that it is no more difficult (rather than no more impossible) to conceive how God could attach the idea of colour to movements to which it bears no resemblance.

- 63 Draft C II. vii. 15.
- 64 *Essay* II. viii. 13, pp. 136.23–137.2.
- 65 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 59^r; King, II, p. 250.
- 66 LL 290; MS Locke b. 2, fols 44^r, 86^v, 93^r. When the book was bought is unknown, though it was in Locke's possession by 1686. This reference to Bernoulli is an example of valuable detail found in the Epitome but missing from the *Essay* (and from Draft C).
- 67 Copies of Books III and IV were sent in England in October and December 1686 respectively, *Correspondence*, III, pp. 54, 88.
- 68 *Correspondence*, II, p. 671, cf. p. 674.
- 69 For example the summary of III. vii (*Essay* III. ix) proceeds only as far as what became §13; there is nothing whatever corresponding to §§14–23.
- 70 MS Locke c. 28, fol. 81^v; King, II, p. 289.
- 71 Locke deleted the word 'whether' to indicate the point of insertion but the sense requires it to be retained after the addition 'but when . . . our wills'.
- 72 J.S. Yolton 1998, pp. 305–6, 310–12, 315.
- 73 *Bibliothèque universelle*, July–August 1686, 2, pp. 315–40; J.S. Yolton 1998, pp. 318–19.
- 74 J. Bennett 1971, pp. 27–8; Bennett discusses the issue further in Bennett 1996, esp. pp. 75–7.
- 75 P. Alexander 1985, p. 115.
- 76 T. Lennon 1998.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 78 Quoted by T. Lennon, *ibid.*, p. 16.
- 79 A detailed account of Coste's translation lies outside the scope of this article, but even a cursory comparison with the *Abrégé* shows that he made considerable use of his predecessor's work.
- 80 MS Locke c. 28, fols 53^v–54^r; King, II, pp. 236–7. In the *Abrégé* this runs as follows:

J'Appelle *idée* tout objet immédiat, toute perception qui est dans nôtre esprit, quand il pense. J'appelle *qualité* du sujet la puissance, ou la faculté qu'il a, de produire une certaine idée dans l'Esprit. Ainsi j'appelle *idées* la blancheur, la froideur & la

rondeur, entant qu'elles sont des perceptions, ou des sensations qui sont dans l'Âme; & entant qu'elles sont dans une balle de neige, qui peut produire ces idées en nous, je les appelle *qualitez*.

(pp. 55–6)

- 81 Or indeed its counterpart in Draft C (II. vii. 10), which is very close to the *Essay* except that the final clause 'which *Ideas* . . . in us' is missing.
- 82 M. Ayers 1991, 2, p. 152; R.S. Woolhouse 1983, p. 171.
- 83 *Works*, IV, pp. 467–8.
- 84 Le Clerc's translation diverges slightly from the English text in the draft *Epitome*, though the meaning is the same: 'Ce que l'on doit considerer après cela, c'est la maniere dont les corps agissent les uns sur les autres. Pour moi je n'y conçois aucune chose que l'impulsion' (*Abrégé*, p. 56). The first sentence of this was taken over, unaltered, by Coste.
- 85 *Bibliothèque universelle*, January–March 1688, 8, pp. 436–50.
- 86 MS Locke c. 31, fols 99–100; MS Locke c. 33, fols 19–20.
- 87 Journal 2 July 1678, MS Locke f. 4, p. 183. 'De Intellectu' was Locke's working title for the *Essay*.
- 88 Journal 30 November 1684, MS Locke f. 8, p. 230; cf. MS Locke f. 29, p. 34.
- 89 'Adversaria 1661', the commonplace book containing Draft A, seems to have stayed in England; there are no entries in it dating from Locke's exile in Holland.
- 90 *Correspondence*, II, p. 610, IV, p. 385; cf. III, p. 256. 'Foul' was being used in the obsolete sense listed in the *OED* (Foul, 3): '*Foul copy*: a first copy, defaced by corrections'.

2 Locke on method in natural philosophy

Peter R. Anstey

There is a significant amount of historical and archival evidence that Locke conceived of natural philosophy in Baconian terms as the compilation of natural histories.¹ It is not surprising, therefore, when we turn to the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* to find that an important part of his prescription for the method of natural philosophy is the construction of natural histories. In his few sustained treatments of method in natural philosophy in the *Essay*, and in occasional *obiter dicta*, Locke appears to give pride of place to the construction of natural histories. For example, in IV. xii. 10 Locke tells us that the way to improve our knowledge of the nature of bodies is:

only by Experience and History, which is all that the weakness of our Faculties in this State of Mediocrity, which we are in in this World, can attain to . . . Experiments and Historical Observations we may have, from which we may draw Advantages of Ease and Health, and thereby increase our stock of Conveniences for this Life: but beyond this, I fear our Talents reach not, nor are our Faculties, as I guess, able to advance.

(Essay, p. 645)²

For Locke, natural philosophy proceeds only by ‘Experiments and Historical Observations’, that is, by the assembling of facts that constitute natural histories. Again in section 12 Locke says,

In the Knowledge of Bodies, we must be content to glean, what we can, from particular Experiments: since we cannot from a Discovery of their real Essences, grasp at a time whole Sheaves; and in bundles, comprehend the Nature and Properties of whole Species together. Where our Enquiry is concerning Co-existence, or Repugnancy to co-exist, which by Contemplation of our *Ideas*, we cannot discover; there Experience, Observation, and natural History, must give us by our Senses, and by retail, an insight into corporeal Substances. The Knowledge of Bodies we must get by our senses, warily employed in taking notice of their Qualities, and Operations on one another . . .

(Essay IV. xii. 12, p. 647, underlining added)

In this chapter I will argue that, for Locke, given our lack of epistemic access to real essences, the compilation of natural histories is constitutive of that part of natural philosophy that pertains to material substances and that he regards hypotheses and analogical reasoning as having a minor and subservient role to these histories; they serve to augment and stimulate the construction of these histories. This is not the only thing that Locke prescribes for the method of natural philosophy, but it is the central component in how he conceives the whole enterprise. This, however, is at odds with a widely held interpretation of Locke. For the trend seems to have been to follow Laudan in claiming that, for Locke, hypotheses lead the way in natural philosophy and that Locke's talk of natural history is better regarded as an accretion not to be taken too seriously.³ I am not the first to argue for the prominence of natural histories in Locke's account of natural philosophy,⁴ but I do hope to approach the subject in a fresh way and to bring to it some new evidence and arguments.

Essay IV. xii. 9–12: exegesis and paraphrase

Chapter xii of Book IV is entitled 'Of the Improvement of our knowledge'. It begins by criticising the Scholastic view that knowledge is built upon maxims or principles. Locke's claim is that this is a dangerous approach to extending knowledge not only because the principles might be false, but also because that is not how knowledge is actually acquired. Knowledge of the certainty of principles, as of anything else, depends on the perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas and not blindly swallowing principles. The way to improve our knowledge is 'to get and fix in our minds clear, distinct and complete Ideas, as far as they are to be had, and annex to them proper and constant Names' (§6).

So general and certain truths are found in the habitudes and relations of abstract ideas (§7). Thus moral principles may be shown to be demonstratively certain (§8). But what about our knowledge of substances, that is, ordinary objects? Locke tells us that in this case 'our want of *Ideas*, that are suitable to such a way of proceeding, obliges us to a quite different method' (§9). The method used to gain knowledge of principles does not work here. We need to turn from our own thoughts to the things themselves: '*Experience here must teach me*, what Reason cannot: and 'tis by trying alone, that I can certainly know, what other Qualities co-exist with those of my complex *Idea*' (§9, underlining added). He then illustrates the point with the example of gold. Locke reiterates the point that experience yields certain knowledge as he rounds off section 9; 'I must apply my self to *Experience*; as far as that reaches, I may have certain Knowledge, but no farther'.

We then come to section 10. Let me quote and paraphrase IV. xii. 10–12 in order to get the flow of Locke's argument. He begins by saying,

§10. I deny not, but a Man, accustomed to rational and regular Experiments, shall be able to see farther into the Nature of Bodies, and guess righter at their yet unknown Properties, than one, that is a Stranger to them.

But such guessing still leads to judgment and opinion, not knowledge. Experience and history are the only ways of improving our certain knowledge of substances in our present condition, because we cannot have any general knowledge like that which we find in the other sciences.

We are able, I imagine, to reach very little general Knowledge concerning the Species of Bodies, and their several Properties. Experiments and Historical Observations we may have, from which we may draw Advantages of Ease and Health, and thereby increase our stock of Conveniences for this Life: but beyond this, I fear our Talents reach not, nor are our Faculties, as I guess, able to advance.

(Ibid., underlining added)

This is because ‘our Faculties are not fitted to penetrate into the internal Fabrick and real Essences of Bodies’ (§11). Rather, they are fitted to ‘discover to us the Being of a GOD, and the Knowledge of our selves, enough to lead us into a full and clear discovery of our Duty . . .’ (§11). Therefore we should ‘employ those Faculties we have about what they are most adapted to, and follow the direction of Nature’. Locke would not, however, ‘be thought to dis-esteem, or *dissuade the Study of Nature*’ (§12). He would only say that ‘we should not be too forwardly possessed with the Opinion, or Expectation of Knowledge, where it is not to be had’. What then of principles and hypotheses? He that shall consider,

how little general Maxims, precarious Principles, and Hypotheses laid down at Pleasure, have promoted true Knowledge, or helped to satisfy the Enquiries of rational Men after real Improvements . . . towards the Knowledge of natural Philosophy, will think, we have Reason to thank those, who in this latter Age have taken another Course, and have trod out to us, though not an easier way to learned Ignorance, yet a surer way to profitable Knowledge.

(*Essay IV. xii. 12, p. 647*)

Of course it is the likes of Boyle and others who have trod out this ‘surer way to profitable Knowledge’. So ends the first half of the most important passage in the *Essay* on the method of natural philosophy.

In summary, then, experience and observation, the two central components of natural history, yield the only certain knowledge we can have of bodies. Earlier in Book IV this sort of knowledge is characterised as sensitive knowledge (IV. iii. 2–5, 21) and as experimental knowledge (IV. iii. 29 and IV. vi. 7).⁵ This knowledge is particular and not general. Hypotheses, such as Cartesianism or corpuscularianism, are not knowledge in natural philosophy, neither are the guesses that good experimenters make about unobservable qualities and the relations between such qualities.

Locke and hypotheses: *Essay* IV. xii. 13

The interpretation of Locke's account of method in natural philosophy outlined above seems to fly in the face of those commentators such as Laudan and Farr who have found a crucial role for hypotheses in Locke. Laudan's claim is that Locke 'insists that the enunciation of analogical hypotheses is the most productive and theoretically fertile method which the sciences possess' (L. Laudan 1981, p. 63). Let us turn, then, to *Essay* IV. xii. 13 which follows directly from where we left off.

The general direction of Locke's argument clearly indicates that the section on hypotheses is a concession, almost a digression, as it is sandwiched between two positive statements of method in natural philosophy. Note the following expressions in context:

'Not that we may not . . . make use of any probable *Hypothesis* whatsoever';

they are 'at least great helps to the Memory';

but we need to be very careful here for a weakness of the mind is that 'the mind would always have Principles to rest on';⁶

and

'most (I had almost said all) of the *Hypotheses* in natural Philosophy' are doubtful conjectures.

Then follows the adversative

'But . . . the *ways to enlarge our knowledge* . . . seem to me, in short, to be these two . . .'

These are not the expressions of a positive, clearly articulated hypotheticalism in natural philosophical reasoning. They are not the 'way of hypothesis' or 'the method of hypothesis', they are not an enunciation of the method implicit in the practice of the great 'Master-Builders' of the Epistle to the reader. The central methodological thesis of section 12 is that one should proceed by compiling natural histories. In the Contents this section is entitled 'But must beware of Hypotheses and wrong Principles'. Section 13 then tells us that hypotheses may be helpful occasionally, but watch out: they have a very bad track record so far and, indeed, that way of thinking can reflect a form of intellectual laziness. For the mind is wont to grasp principles without due wariness.

Hypotheses and analogical reasoning

There is another passage which is commonly adduced as evidence that Locke prescribed a method of hypothesis in natural philosophy. It is the discussion of analogical reasoning in *Essay* IV. xvi. 12. Some commentators conflate Locke's

discussion of analogical reasoning with his comments on hypotheses. Laudan, for example, speaks of Locke's 'enunciation of analogical hypotheses' and deals with the passage from IV. xvi. 12 as if it is continuous with IV. xii. 13 (L. Laudan 1981, p. 63).

It is my contention, however, that the two are different and that the distinction between them is important. Let us first clarify how Locke uses the term 'hypothesis'. Like the notion of idea, the term 'hypothesis' seems to have a rather broad semantic range in Locke's writings. The term and its cognates appears no less than thirty-nine times in the *Essay* alone. Its primary referent in the *Essay* is to particular doctrines that are nested in or implied by what we would call theories. They might be theories of the nature of matter or the sources of knowledge, and so on. For example, Locke spends considerable effort arguing against the Cartesian hypothesis that the mind always thinks (*Essay* II. i. 9–20, pp. 108–16). However, Locke also uses the term 'hypothesis' to refer not just to individual doctrines within a 'theory' but to the cluster of doctrines that make up the theory itself. Cartesianism, Epicureanism and corpuscularianism are all hypotheses (*Essay* III. x. 14, p. 497 and IV. iii. 16, p. 547).

By contrast, the term 'analogy' and its cognates, which only appears nine times in the *Essay*,⁷ normally refers to a type of reasoning rather than a particular doctrine or cluster of doctrines. In the context of Locke's theory of knowledge, it consists in reasoning from effects to causes on the basis of resemblances or reasoning from the relations of qualities among observable objects to the relations between qualities of unobservable objects. In modern terms it is a form of inference to the best explanation; what some philosophers call ampliative inference or abduction.

Locke gives some examples of analogical reasoning in *Essay* IV. xvi. 12. It is to them that we now turn. The first is

observing that the bare rubbing of two Bodies violently one upon another, produces heat, and very often fire it self, we have reason to think, that what we call Heat and Fire, consists in a violent agitation of the imperceptible minute parts of the burning matter . . .

(*Essay* IV. xvi. 12, pp. 665–6)

Locke could be characterised here as reasoning from the analogical principle of 'same effect, same cause'. This principle would then be an instance of what he calls the 'rule of analogy'.⁸ He is assuming the existence of insensible particles, and inferring that the quality of heat at the unobservable level is analogous to that at the observable level; that is, it is caused by motion. The second example is very similar to the first only it has to do with the refraction of light.

The third example is rather different. Locke claims that among observable creatures there is a 'gradual connexion of one with another, without any great or discernable gaps between' of rationality and perceptivity. He continues,

Observing, I say, such gradual and gentle descents downwards in those parts of Creation, that are beneath Man, the rule of Analogy may make it

probable, that it is so also in Things above us, and our Observation; and that there are several ranks of intelligent Beings, excelling us in several degrees of Perfection . . .

(Ibid.)

This example is also an application of analogy in natural philosophy. It differs from the first two in that it does not appeal to resemblance between effects and causes. He argues that the sequential and incremental variation of a quality across observable particulars suggests the same variation across unobservable particulars. It is a kind of ‘great chain of being’ argument.⁹ Thus, Locke’s talk here of the ‘rule of Analogy’ suggests that his conception of analogical reasoning is very broad indeed, encompassing as it does the two very different types of examples he uses.

Now, Locke does not use the term ‘hypothesis’ in connection with this discussion of analogy except at the end of the passage where he claims that analogy is the best ‘rise of Hypothesis’. In what sense does Locke consider analogy to give rise to hypotheses? Hypotheses and analogical reasoning are often closely related. The corpuscular hypothesis is derived from analogical reasoning and corpuscular explanations proceed by analogical reasoning on a case by case basis. Individual cases of analogy serve to confirm or extend the hypothesis. This is what Locke is referring to when he says that analogy is the best ‘rise of Hypothesis’ (*Essay* IV. xvi. 12, p. 666). But of course many hypotheses do not contain any analogical component at all. Indeed, many corpuscularians regarded this as a weakness of such hypotheses as substantial forms. So there is no necessary connection between analogy and hypotheses. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the *Essay* that Locke regarded instances of analogical reasoning as employing hypotheses.

Now, some corpuscularians, like Boyle and the later Newton, maintained that to explicate an unobservable quality is just to explain it by appeal to qualities that are already clearly understood or about which we are already familiar.¹⁰ Thus, for them, not only was their corpuscularian hypothesis derived from analogical reasoning, but any further determinable or determinate explanation of unobserved qualities must conform to this ‘familiarity condition’. We know that Locke regarded the corpuscular hypothesis as the most intelligible that we have. It may even be that part of its attraction to him lay in the manner in which it is derived from analogical reasoning. Indeed, Locke’s claim that analogy is the *only* help we have when it comes to unobservable qualities, if strictly interpreted, implies that Locke accepted the familiarity condition. If this line of reasoning is correct, we can then flesh out the sense in which Locke regarded the corpuscular hypothesis as uniquely intelligible. It is the most intelligible precisely because it explains unknown qualities in terms of known ones.

Uses of analogical reasoning and hypotheses in natural philosophy

Locke furnishes us with a range of uses for hypotheses. The first, which he repeats in a number of places, is that hypotheses ‘if they are well made, are at least great

helps to the Memory' (IV. xii. 13). (The fact that it is placed first is itself another hint of how just distant Locke is from a modern method of hypothesis.) This use for hypotheses seems rather strange to our ears, particularly if one follows Laudan in believing that, for Locke, hypotheses are the best method for advancing the sciences. But Locke has already claimed in this very chapter that this is also a function of principles in general. He tells us that principles and general rules 'disburden the Memory of the cumbersome load of Particulars' (*Essay IV. xii. 3*).

The idea seems to be best illustrated by a medical example. An hypothesis might be wildly speculative but help the physician to order the symptoms of a disease in his memory or memorise the treatment regime for a particular ailment. Unhappily, Locke never gives us a concrete example of this. But he does come quite close in a letter to Thomas Molyneux of 20 January 1693 in which he says,

Upon such grounds as are the establish'd history of diseases hypotheses might with less danger be erected, which I think are so far useful, as they serve as an art of memory to direct the physician in particular cases, but not to be rely'd on as foundations of reasoning, or verities to be contended for; they being, I think I may say all of them, suppositions taken up gratis, and will so remain, till we can discover how the natural functions of the body are perform'd . . .
(*Correspondence, IV, p. 629*)

The idea is that a physician may entertain distinct and even incompatible hypotheses about diseases because of their practical utility as 'distinct arts of memory in those cases'. As such, they are 'artificial helps to a physician, and not as philosophical truths to a naturalist' (*Correspondence, IV, p. 630*).¹¹

The second use of hypotheses in natural philosophy is that they 'often direct us to new discoveries' (*Essay IV. xii. 13*). Once again, Locke does not give any examples, but rather is concerned in this passage to caution us in their use. There are, however, some very clear examples in works of natural philosophy that Locke read. Take, for instance, Boyle's assessment of Linus' funicular hypothesis, namely that an invisible string held up the column of mercury in the Torricellian apparatus.¹²

As for uses of analogy, in matters such as the cause of magnetism, generation and movement in animals, '*Analogy* in these matters is the only help we have, and 'tis from that alone that we draw our grounds of Probability'. He concludes his discussion by saying

This sort of Probability [i.e. analogy], which is the best conduct of rational Experiments, and the rise of Hypothesis, has also its Use and Influence; and a wary Reasoning from Analogy leads us often into the discovery of Truths, and useful Productions, which would otherwise lie concealed.
(*Essay IV. xvi. 12, pp. 666–7*)

As with hypotheses, then, analogical reasoning can lead us to the discovery of new truths. By a 'discovery of new truths' Locke can only mean new matters of fact

derived from experiment and observation. Locke also adds that analogy can give rise to hypotheses and also lead to new productions, by which he seems to mean new phenomena in nature. This may be a new chemical reaction or the creation of a partial vacuum in an air-pump, and so on. Furthermore, in the letter to Thomas Molyneux mentioned above, Locke speaks of the importance of observation for the physician who can then ‘by analogy argue to like cases, and thence make himself rules of practice’. The idea seems to be that in, say, therapeutics, a rule of thumb can be established on the basis of resemblance of symptoms being treated in similar ways. But, throughout, Locke is clear that the use of analogical reasoning is often little more than a directed form of guesswork.¹³

In summary, then, hypotheses aid the memory and direct us to new discoveries and analogy gives rise to hypotheses, leads to the discovery of new truths, novel phenomena and to procedural rules in, say, therapeutics. It must be stressed that the aids to memory are aids to memorising histories; that the new discoveries and the novel phenomena arise in the formation of natural histories; that the procedural rules derived from analogy arise from histories. There is not natural history and then some additional method of knowledge acquisition. Hypotheses and analogical reasoning find their domain of application in the compilation of natural histories.

Natural philosophy and the method of natural history

It is helpful to compare Locke here with Bacon and Boyle. According to Bacon ‘by far the noblest end of *Natural History* is to serve primarily for the founding of philosophy’ (Bacon 1996, p. 105).¹⁴ That is, ‘to be the basic stuff and raw material of the true and legitimate induction . . . a proper preparative (*parasceve*) for the founding of philosophy’ (ibid.). By contrast, there is no indication in Locke that natural histories are preparatory for and the foundation of natural philosophy. Rather, given our current epistemic limits, Locke appears to consider the compilation of natural histories to be constitutive of natural philosophy.¹⁵ Thus Locke never even discusses the next stage in the Baconian programme, that is, the inductive method.¹⁶ Of course, Locke would also reject Bacon’s form and essence ontology and the prospects of demonstrative knowledge that derives from them. But this is not because he rejects essences *simpliciter*, but rather because he denies that we can have any epistemic access to them. It is not that the deductivism of Bacon is absent in Locke, but rather that Locke is far more sceptical about the range of resources available for the understanding to work on.

How, then, does Locke compare with Boyle? In his most detailed treatment of natural histories, Boyle tells us that the preliminary to any history should include summary statements or ‘a short survey’ of the relevant hypotheses of philosophers such as the Cartesian, Epicurean and Peripatetic. This is because the natural history might ‘amplify & correct them’. Furthermore,

the knowledg of differing Theorys, may admonish a man to observe divers such Circumstances in an Experiment as otherwise ’tis like he would not heed; and sometimes too may prompt him to stretch the Experiment farther then

else he would (and so make it produce new *Phenomena*) & partly because these additional *Phenomena*, and accuratenes which these Theorys will ingage the Experimenter to imploy about some Circumstances, will conduce to make the History both more exact and compleat in it self, and more ready for use, and more acceptable to those that love to discourse upon *Hypotheses* . . .

(Boyle to Oldenburg, 13 June 1666, Boyle 2001, 3, p. 171)¹⁷

Thus, for Boyle, there is a reciprocal relation between hypotheses and histories. Hypotheses might be corrected or extended by natural histories and, in turn, experiments used in compiling natural histories might be directed to produce new phenomena.

The contrast with Locke here is very important. Boyle, in his experimental treatises, would explicitly state the various theories pertaining to the quality or phenomenon under investigation in order both to test the hypotheses and to extend the range of the experiments. Locke, by contrast, nowhere prescribes the elaboration of such theories. Rather, he frequently cautions against them. For Boyle, the elaboration of hypotheses is an essential component in the compilation of a natural history. For Locke, there is no *substantive* interplay of a particular natural philosophical system (say corpuscularianism) and the development of a natural history. Nor, in contrast to Boyle, does Locke anywhere elaborate upon what constitutes a good or an excellent hypothesis.¹⁸ Indeed, unlike Boyle, Locke appears to have no conception of what we would call a working hypothesis. That is, a proposition that may or may not be related to a theory which has empirical consequences which may be tested experimentally. For Locke, natural history is not the hand-maiden or nursing mother of natural philosophy, nor is it to be developed in relation to the best theories of the day. Yet all this is rather abstract. Let us turn, then, to a concrete example from Locke's writings in which he employs the notions of hypothesis and analogy. It is the case of acids and alkalis and its importance lies in the fact that it is the only hypothesis about the submicroscopic, other than the corpuscularian theory of matter, that Locke discusses in any depth.

Locke on the nature of acids and alkalis

Locke penned a review of Boyle's *Specific Medicines* in the *Bibliothèque universelle et historique* for his friend Jean Le Clerc. It was published in French in 1686 and in English in 1692 and will be our entry point into Locke's views on acids and alkalis.¹⁹ Before discussing its contents, however, it is best to set it in context by discussing some of the issues that motivated Boyle's *Specific Medicines*.

It is well known that Boyle was interested in the nature of acids and alkalis. He was the first to publish the fact that indicator tests can be used to distinguish them. However, by the 1670s a theory of matter had emerged which used as its primary explanatory resource the principles of acidity and alkalinity. This theory was not merely a new form of classification arising from the study of chemical reactions involving acids and alkalis, but a rival to the Aristotelian four element theory and the Paracelsian *tria prima*.²⁰

The acid and alkali hypothesis stood as a well-developed theory of matter in its own right and arose as a competitor to the corpuscular theory of Robert Boyle which denied that there were any such principles in nature. Boyle therefore attacked it in a short essay entitled 'Reflections upon the Hypothesis of Aclali and Acidum' published in his *Mechanical Origine of Qualities* (1675). One of Boyle's targets was, no doubt, François André who in 1672 had published his version of the theory entitled *Entretiens sur l'acide et sur l'alcali*. André was quick to respond to Boyle's attacks, addressing them in a thoroughly revised second edition of his book (1677). The dispute was over whether acids and alkalis acted by a principle or quality of acidity that was irreducible or whether they acted by qualities that were ultimately reducible to the mechanical affections of bodies. In other words, do we need to posit a special quality of acidity or is it just that acids share some common structural feature in the make-up of their corpuscles? Boyle held the latter view and André the former.

Now, Locke had a copy of André's book and commented in his journal on 19 September 1679 that 'I feare his Doctrine wants proofs and that he does not always reason clearly' (K. Dewhurst 1963, p. 174). Clearly, Locke was unimpressed, though he conceded that the book contained some 'very good experiments'. Boyle returned to the issue of the nature of acidity and alkalinity in his *Specific Medicines*, published in 1685, though he does not mention André explicitly. Let us turn, then, to Locke's review of the 1686 Latin edition of this work.²¹ Locke, mirroring Boyle, begins with a short historical sketch of the shift in explanations about the qualities of bodies. Once occult qualities were appealed to to explain certain qualities. Now

It was but in this latter Age, that People began to Discourse according to the Rules of Geometry, and to explain by Properties; by which we clearly conceive the different Effects of Bodies, the most universal Properties of Body and Extension, and Figure and Motion.

This is clearly a description of the corpuscular theory of qualities. Locke tells us that it is Boyle's intention to show that the corpuscular hypothesis is at least consistent with the common notion of specific medicines. We are interested in the section relating to acids. Locke summarises Boyle approvingly saying,

all such *Menstruums* act by their Figure, Bigness or Solidity, or by some other such like sensible Property, which is manifestly included in our Notion of a Body, and not by certain sensible Qualities of their Humidity and Acidity. An infinite number of Experiences persuade us that this is so; for whereas cold Water dissolves the White of an Egg, which the Spirit of Vinegar, of Salt, or the Oyl of Vitreal coagulates; the Spirit of Urine dissolves in a trice the filings of Brass, which the Spirit of Vinegar does but slowly; and on the contrary, the Spirit of Vinegar dissolves Crabs Eyes in a moment, upon which the Spirit of Piss had no Effect at all . . . Common Oyl, that cannot dissolve a very Egg-Shell, dissolves Brimstone, which is more than *Aqua fortis* can do.

(J. Dunton 1692, p. 185)²²

But then Locke departs from Boyle's text and draws the following conclusion.

If there was nothing but Humidity and Acidity required for the dissolution of Bodies, *Aqua fortis* and *Aqua regalis* would be universal Dissolvers, whose force few Bodies could resist. They wou'd dissolve all such as are not extraordinary Solid. Whereas the quite contrary happens, because Dissolvers act by the figure of their Particles, it is not always proper to disunite the Particles of all sorts of Bodies.

(Ibid., p. 185)

Locke here is glossing Boyle's conclusion and giving it a more polemical twist than does Boyle. Indeed, Locke's comments are closer to those of Boyle in the 'Alcali and Acidum' treatise than those of the work being reviewed. Locke's conclusion is clearly directed against the sort of view of acidity propounded by the likes of André. He is using experimental data to argue against the 'acid hypothesis'. Locke's claim is that the corpuscular explanation in which 'Dissolvers act by the figure of their Particles' is more consistent with the experimental data than the acid hypothesis. It is interesting to see Locke helping himself to the corpuscular hypothesis, something which he does again, for instance, in the discussion of primary and secondary qualities in the *Essay* (II. viii, pp. 132–43).²³ What is relevant for our purposes is that Locke, tracking Boyle with some degree of deference, regards the results of chemical experiments as having implications for hypotheses about the unobservable qualities of bodies. In this case, experiment and observation bear on the domain of the unobservable realm in so far as Locke is able to play one hypothesis off against another.

Locke retained strong views on the acidity hypothesis. It appears again in section 40 of *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, this time in connection with analogy.

§40. *Analogy*. Analogy is of great use to the mind in many cases, especially in natural philosophy; and that part of it chiefly which consists in happy and successful experiments. But here we must take care that we keep ourselves within that wherein the analogy consists. For example, the acid oil of vitriol is found to be good in such a case, therefore the spirit of nitre or vinegar may be used in the like case. If the good effect of it be owing wholly to the acidity of it, the trial may be justified; but if there be something else besides the acidity in the oil of vitriol, which produces the good we desire in the case, we mistake for that analogy which is not, and suffer our understanding to be misguided by a wrong supposition of analogy where there is none.

(*Conduct, Works*, III, p. 275)

Locke is using a similar example to the one found in his review a decade earlier; just because one acid has a particular effect implies neither that all acids will have that effect nor that it is acting by its property of acidity. Here he is giving us an example of an analogy over-reaching itself which will 'suffer our understanding to be misguided'. As with his other references to analogical reasoning, there is a strong

note of caution and, like his comments on the acidity hypothesis in the review, he is concerned with experimental observations arising from the behaviour of acids in chemical reactions. The focus is on the phenomenal level and the caution pertains to the danger of making a false analogy with regard to the quality of acidity.

This example of analogy serves to augment those given in the *Essay* which were discussed above. Indeed, it is a little more complex than the other three and will repay closer scrutiny. We could analyse this example as using the analogical principle of same effect implies same cause. Alternatively, the example could be rationally reconstructed as an instance of Mill's method of agreement. Acid A has effect e , acid B has effect e and acid C has effect e , therefore acidity is the cause of e . Locke's point would then be explained in terms of the usual limitations of the method of agreement. Finally, one could rationally reconstruct Locke's example of analogy as an instance of the hypothetico-deductive method. Sulphuric acid when applied to a particular substance has effect e , the acid and alkali theory posits that all acids have similar effects, therefore we can test the hypothesis that nitric acid and ascertic acid when applied to the same substance will have effect e , and so on. The point is that we can reconstruct the example to suit our preferred form of scientific inference. Locke, however, used it as an example of analogical reasoning and nothing more. If hypotheses are in view at all it is only because of Locke's residual antagonism to the acid and alkali hypothesis.

Finally, the acid and alkali hypothesis appears again in Locke's correspondence. An important example is the letter to Thomas Molyneux of 20 January 1693 which, as we have seen, reinforces Locke's points about hypotheses and analogy made in the *Essay*. In extolling the virtues of Sydenham's method of compiling histories of diseases, Locke goes on to say,

I fear the Galenists four humors, or the chymists sal, sulphur, and mercury, or the late prevailing invention of acid and alcali, or whatever hereafter shall be substituted to these with new applause, will upon examination be found to be but so many leaned empty sounds, with no precise determinate signification.

(*Correspondence*, IV, p. 629)

Locke's ongoing opposition to the acid and alkali hypothesis is striking. His remedy for such 'castles in the air' is to follow the method of natural history which

is a work of time, accurateness, attention, and judgment; and wherein if men, thro' prepossession or oscitancy mistake, they may be convinced of their error by unerring nature and matter of fact.

(*Ibid.*)

The foregoing survey of Locke's discussions of the acid and alkali hypothesis serves very nicely to illustrate his comments on hypotheses and analogy in the *Essay*. The hypothesis of acid and alkali, like the *tria prima* or Aristotle's four elements, functions as a speculative explanation of the behaviour of observable bodies by positing the existence of unobservable qualities or principles. Locke argues against

it by appeals to observation and experiment and by appeal to another such hypothesis which appears more consistent with the experimental data. This is analogous to his use of the corpuscular hypothesis in elaborating his primary and secondary quality distinction in the *Essay* and reveals that Locke is prepared to entertain hypotheses about the unobserved material realm, even if most of them, if not all, are ‘castles in the air’.

The example of analogical reasoning about acids in *Conduct* reveals that Locke is applying this reasoning at the phenomenal level in a way which might produce a novel effect and which (we can surmise) may have implications for a hypothesis like the acid and alkali theory. It is a very clear example of the sort of reasoning referred to in *Essay* IV. xvi. 12. The discussion also contains a warning about analogy overreaching itself. Indeed, each of these discussions, apart from the review which simply criticises a particular hypothesis, contains warnings and cautions about either the use of hypotheses or analogy. The letter to Molyneux is clear about the natural historical context in which hypotheses and analogy should be situated. In short, all the features of the discussion of hypotheses and analogy in the *Essay* appear in this clutch of discussions of acids and alkalis. Together they confirm the overriding cautions that Locke applies to them and the natural historical context in which they are carried out. None of them suggest that Locke was committed to a Laudanian-type method of hypothesis.

Locke and King Arthur

Before concluding, there is one more very interesting site of evidence for Locke’s views on hypotheses and natural history. It occurs in a series of letters between himself and William Molyneux. In his letter of 27 May 1697, William Molyneux after singing the praises of the poet Sir Richard Blackmore, and his recently reissued poem *King Arthur*, mentions to Locke that he had asked Blackmore to compose a philosophical poem. He goes on to mention Blackmore’s dislike of philosophical hypotheses and says

Were I acquainted with Sir R. Blackmore I could assure him . . . that I am as little an Admirer of Hypotheses as any Man, and never proposed that thought to him with a Designe that a Philosophick Poem should run on such a strain. A Natural History of the Great and Admirable Phænomena of the Universe is a subject, I think, may afford sublime Thoughts in a Poem.

(*Correspondence*, VI, p. 134)

In his reply of 15 June 1697, Locke concurs with Molyneux.

I have always thought, that laying down, and building upon hypotheses, has been one of the great hindrances of natural knowledge; and I see your notions agree with mine in it. And, though I have a great value for Sir R. Blackmore, on several accounts, yet there is nothing has given me a greater esteem of him, than what he says about hypotheses in medicine, in his preface to *K. Arthur*,

which is an argument to me that he understands the right method of practising physick; and it gives me great hopes he will improve it, since he keeps in the only way it is capable to be improved in; and has so publickly declared against the more easie, fashionable, and pleasing way of an hypothesis, which, I think, has done more to hinder the true art of physick, which is the curing of diseases, than all other things put together.

(*Correspondence*, VI, p. 144)

Needless to say, Locke gives as an example the hypothesis of ‘acid and alcali’. So what then did Blackmore say in his (revised) preface?

the raising of an Hypotheses in Philosophy obtains little more Credit with me, than the erecting a Scheme in Astrology; and the Judgments and Decisions that are given upon them seem to me alike Precarious and uncertain. . . . A clear and penetrating Understanding, Cultivated and Matur’d by repeated, Diligent Observation, will in my Opinion, make a more able and accomplish’d Physitian, than any *Philosophical Scheme* that has yet obtain’d in the World.

(*King Arthur*, Preface, pp. ix–x)

The correspondence continues with a reply from Molyneux who says of Blackmore’s views on hypotheses, ‘I am wholly of his opinion . . . however the History and Phaenomena of Nature we may venture at’ (*Correspondence*, VI, p. 164). Locke rounds the correspondence off (at least on this point) by reiterating,

there was nothing that I so much admired him for, as for what he says of hypotheses in his last [preface]. It seems to me so right, and is yet so much out of the way of the ordinary writers, and practitioners in that faculty . . .

(*Correspondence*, VI, p. 190)

Conclusion

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the body of scientific knowledge is the largest body of knowledge we have. In many circles it is also regarded, apart from the a priori knowledge of mathematics, as having the highest epistemic credit-rating. John Locke is commonly interpreted to be working as an under-labourer to the likes of some of the founders of this modern scientific edifice, Boyle, Huygens and Newton. And many have claimed that he conceived his philosophical task as somehow providing an epistemological justification of their exploits and successes. It is of particular interest, then, to determine just how Locke thought that natural philosophical knowledge could be acquired. The interpretative trend, at least since the 1960s, has been to view his pronouncements on hypotheses and analogy as placing him at the very beginning of the new ‘way of hypothesis’; a precursor to the hypothetico-deductive method to be sure, but on the right track nonetheless. If the argument of this chapter is correct, Locke was not developing a kind of ‘proto-hypothetical method’ of knowledge acquisition in natural

philosophy. He was working rather with a Baconian conception of the knowledge of natural objects, but a mitigated Baconian conception at that. For he has no time for Baconian induction²⁴ and little time for Boyle's robust reciprocal relation between hypothesis and experiment. He did see a role for hypotheses in aiding memory and discovery. But the burden of memory to be relieved was the vast array of matters of fact and the discoveries of hypotheses and analogy were additions to natural history.

Having said this, let me, in conclusion, come to Locke's defence. First, there are two aspects of Locke's account of natural philosophy which I have not discussed here. One is the fact that natural histories, in addition to experiment and observation, contain testimony from experienced witnesses. Such testimonies, no matter how well credentialled the witness, can never be more than probable opinion. Thus, natural histories contain not just sensitive knowledge and the probabilities gleaned from analogical reasoning, but also probable testimony. Second, no mention has been made in this chapter of the contribution of mathematics to natural philosophy. Yet it is well known that the acceptance of a role for mathematics in natural philosophy became more pressing as Locke came to terms with Newton's achievement in the *Principia*.

In addition to these further aspects of Locke's view of natural philosophy, there is a very real problem with much seventeenth-century science of which Locke's own interests and expertise made him acutely aware. This is the gap between, as we would put it, experimental results and theory. There can be no doubting that Boyle made significant advances in pneumatics and chemistry. But, as Alan Chalmers (1993) has argued, in the strict sense, these achievements owed very little, if anything, to his corpuscular hypothesis.²⁵ The yawning gap between the hypothesis and the actual experiments and observations could not be bridged in Locke's day (see M. Ayers 1991, I, p. 118). As Leibniz commented of Boyle in *New Essays on Human Understanding*, he

does spend rather too long on drawing from countless fine experiments no conclusion except one which he could have adopted as a principle, namely that everything in nature takes place mechanically — a principle which can be made certain by reason alone, and never by experiments, however many one conducts.

(Leibniz 1996, pp. 455–6)

Locke's comments that no hypotheses will ever make a science of bodies show that he was acutely aware of this gap. Indeed, if we take chemistry, it was only by the accumulation of more and more matters of fact about such things as chemical affinities and the development of experimental techniques such as those involved in eighteenth-century pneumatic chemistry, that inroads began to be made such that experimental programs could actually test hypotheses. There is a sense then in which Boyle's views on the relation between experiment, natural history and hypothesis were an adumbration of what was to come, but rarely if ever applied to his science. By contrast, Locke, whose conception of natural philosophy owed more

to the past, had a more realistic and considered grip on the epistemic status of the relation between experiment and theory in his day.²⁶

Notes

- 1 This evidence is surveyed in P.R. Anstey 2002a.
- 2 For *obiter dicta* see *Essay* III. xi. 24 and 25. See also *STCE*, §193, p. 248.
- 3 See L. Laudan 1967, R.S. Woolhouse 1971, D.E. Soles 1985, J. Farr 1987, and N. Wolterstorff 1996, p. 34. Soles says that on the question of the status of hypotheses in Locke, ‘Laudan has put the problem to rest’, 1985, p. 361, n. 37. See also G. Buchdahl 1969, pp. 211ff.
- 4 The most important attempt to establish the role of natural histories in Locke is John Yolton’s 1970.
- 5 *Pace* R.S. Woolhouse 1994, p. 165 who regards this as mere opinion.
- 6 Note Bacon’s similar sentiments in *New Organon*, Book I, aphorisms XIX and XX in Bacon 1859, IV, p. 50.
- 7 See also Locke’s Journal entry for 26 June 1681, Locke 1936, pp. 117–18 for an early reference to analogical reasoning.
- 8 It might be objected that the principle ‘same effect therefore same cause’ is itself an hypothesis and that Locke’s analogical reasoning is an instance of the method of hypothesis, especially since it appears as Hypothesis II in the first edition of Newton’s *Principia*, Newton 1687, p. 402. Hypothesis II is ‘Ideoque effectuum naturalium ejusdem generis eadem sunt causæ’. But this objection is undercut on two grounds. First, the appeal to the principle is my gloss on Locke’s thought processes here. It is not mentioned explicitly in the text. And second, the objection actually begs the question. I am arguing that the claim that Locke’s analogical reasoning is hypothetical reasoning have been anachronistically foisted on him.
- 9 So G. Buchdahl 1969, p. 214. For a similar argument see *Essay* II. ii. 3, p. 120.
- 10 See my discussion of Boyle on explanation in Anstey 2000, pp. 54–8. For Newton see the 3rd Rule for Natural Philosophy in Book III of the *Principia*, in Newton 1999, p. 795. Note, too, the following manuscript comment of Newton on an earlier version of this rule, ‘This seems to be the foundation of all Philosophy. For otherwise one could not derive the qualities of imperceptible bodies from the qualities of perceptible (bodies)’, quoted from I.B. Cohen 1966, p. 176.
- 11 See also Locke’s Journal 22 July 1678,

I have no doubts that to cure each species of disease a fixed method or specific remedies are necessary. Once these are ascertained, then the Rules which the dogmatists have built up out of their hypotheses of the humors, plethora, etc., may be very useful in applying the method or the remedies, modifying them according to the patient’s particular constitution

quoting the translation of P. Romanell 1984, p. 139.

- 12 *A Defence of the Doctrine touching the Spring and Weight of the Air*, Boyle 1999–2000, 3, pp. 30ff.
- 13 *Essay* IV. iii. 29, p. 560, IV. vi. 13, p. 588 and especially IV. viii. 9, p. 615.
- 14 Quoting from *A Description of the Intellectual Globe*.
- 15 So Romanell 1984, p. 198.
- 16 The closest Locke comes to discussing Bacon’s inductive stage is a possible allusion in *Conduct*, §13, *Works*, III, pp. 233–4.
- 17 See also *Essay* XIII of ‘Texts and fragments of essays relating to *The Usefulness of Natural Philosophy, Part II, section 2*’, Boyle 1999–2000, 13, pp. 350–4.
- 18 The closest he comes is in a manuscript entry entitled ‘Method’ (J. Farr 1987,

- pp. 70–2). For a denial that Boyle was a Baconian, at least with respect to the role of hypotheses, see L. Laudan 1981, pp. 33–44. For the contrary claim see R.-M. Sargent 1986. For my part, I do not believe that the terms of the debate between Laudan and Sargent provide us the best way in to an understanding of Boyle’s views on method in natural philosophy. For Boyle’s tracts on hypotheses see, for example, ‘The Requisites of a Good Hypothesis briefly Consider’d’, Boyle 1999–2000, 13, pp. 270–2 and ‘MS Notes on a Good and an Excellent Hypothesis’ in Boyle 1991, p. 119.
- 19 The review appeared in *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, 1686, 2, pp. 263–77 and in English in J. Dunton 1692, pp. 184–7.
- 20 For background see M. Boas [Hall] 1956.
- 21 Locke owned a copy of the English edition of *Specific Medicines*. The book’s full title followed by Locke’s usual description including size, date and number of pages, ‘8° London 85. p. 225’, is found on p. 146 of MS Locke d. 9 in the Bodleian Library. He then quotes a reported remedy for heart palpitations from p. 128 of *Specific Medicines* on p. 288 of the same notebook.
- 22 See *Specific Medicines*, Boyle 1999–2000, 10, p. 371.
- 23 See also L. Downing 1998, pp. 387–96.
- 24 I am not claiming that Locke did not engage in what modern philosophers have come to call inductive inferences, that is inferences from the observed to the unobserved. Rather I am claiming that Locke does not refer to Bacon’s peculiar conception of induction which is not equivalent to the modern conception.
- 25 For some reservations about Chalmers’ thesis see P.R. Anstey 2002b and A. Pyle 2002.
- 26 I would like to thank J.R. Milton, Lisa Downing and the participants of the Sydney symposium on Locke in July 2001 for their helpful comments on this chapter.

3 Willem Jacob 's Gravesande's philosophical defence of Newtonian physics: on the various uses of Locke

Paul Schuurman

Introduction

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch Republic formed the cradle of major contributions to the development and diffusion of innovations in natural philosophy. Herman Boerhaave (1638–1738), professor of medicine and chemistry at Leiden university, brought his experimental method to international renown while Willem Jacob 's Gravesande (1688–1742) and Petrus van Musschenbroek (1692–1761) made similar contributions in the field of physics. These Dutchmen were all influenced by British scientific and philosophical innovations. In 1715, eight years after having obtained a doctorate in law at Leiden university, 's Gravesande travelled to London as secretary to a Dutch legation. By that time he was already more interested in mathematics and physics than in law. In the English capital he met Isaac Newton and was made a fellow of the Royal Society. Back in the Netherlands he was appointed professor in mathematics and astronomy at Leiden University in 1717, but in fact he taught physics in general. 's Gravesande became a European celebrity whose fame rested on his lectures, which were illustrated by countless experiments, and on his textbooks, especially the lucid *Physices elementa mathematica, experimentis confirmata. Sive Introductio ad Philosophiam Newtonianam* (1720–1).¹ Newtonian physics started its successful career on the Continent in the Netherlands well before Voltaire commenced his campaign of popularisation of the British genius. In 1734 's Gravesande was made *professor totius philosophiæ*. This broad assignment resulted, two years later, in the publication of a general philosophical textbook, called *Introductio ad Philosophiam, Metaphysicam et Logicam continens* (1736).² The *Introductio* can be read as an epistemological and methodological defence of Newtonian physics. The influence of John Locke on this defence is unmistakable. Yet I shall argue that 's Gravesande made use of other sources as well, that his use of Locke is very circumspect and qualified, and that these qualifications are related to a fundamental discrepancy between the precise requirements of an effective epistemological and methodological defence of Newtonian physics and the actual content of Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*.

Locke and Newton: the problem

Before the problem can be addressed, it may be useful to give a short characterisation of Locke's epistemology and methodology. According to Locke, all ideas are either simple or complex, and all complex ideas are either modes, or ideas of substances or relations.³ Of special relevance here is the difference between modes and ideas of substances.⁴ These different kinds of complex ideas allow for different classes of certainty that are produced by completely different kinds of methods. Modes are 'such complex *Ideas*, which however compounded, contain not in them the supposition of subsisting by themselves' (*Essay* II. xii. 4, p. 165). Modes do not imply a relation between ideas in our head and things outside us. The absence of this supposition means that there is no difference between the nominal essence and the real essence of modes; we can have completely adequate ideas of an ellipse or a triangle. Modes permit certain knowledge. An important category of modes is formed by the abstract ideas of mathematics, and the method suited for the study of modes is that of Euclid's geometrical demonstration. Locke, in accordance with many contemporaries, is an admirer of this method and claims that it can also be used in ethics, provided we start with precise definitions of basic concepts such as 'property' or 'injustice'.⁵

In the case of ideas of substance we are less fortunate. Ideas of substance imply a relation between ideas in our head and things outside us. The problem with substances is that since we have no knowledge of their real essence, we are in the dark about the necessary coexistence of the qualities that flow from this essence. This problem holds for both material and immaterial substances. Of substances we can have no certain knowledge but only probable knowledge, or in Locke's words, opinion or belief. In the case of substances, Locke prefers his 'Historical, plain Method'.⁶ This method has three components.⁷ First, there is the importance of experience. Locke points out that in the case of material substances, as opposed to modes, 'the want of *Ideas* of their real *Essences* sends us from our Thoughts to the things themselves, as they exist' (*Essay* IV. xii. 9, p. 644). Second, Locke's method is historical. Like other contemporaries, he uses the term 'history' in both a general and a particular way. The general way is consistent with the primary connotation of the Greek word *ἱστορία*, meaning inquiry or investigation, or the report containing the results of such an inquiry.⁸ In addition, Locke uses the word 'history' in the more limited sense of events happening in time, or the result of an inquiry into these events.⁹ The diachronic nature of the object of Locke's inquiry is matched by the step-by-step method by which he tries to investigate it; the properties of material or immaterial substances cannot be grasped at a time in 'whole Sheaves' (*Essay* IV. xii. 12, p. 647). Third, although Locke's step-by-step history of substances has a limited scope of generalisation, this is compensated by the fact that it can have great practical value in providing us with 'Advantages of Ease and Health' (*Essay* IV. xii. 10, p. 645).

Locke's *Essay* has often been hailed as a philosophical defence of the new mechanistic science of nature in general and of Newtonian physics in particular.¹⁰ Already in the later 1690s, British and Continental contemporaries had started to

mix up the ideas of Newton and Locke.¹¹ However, the distinction between modes and ideas of substances and between the methods related to these objects cause grave problems for anyone trying to use the *Essay* for a philosophical defence of Newtonian physics as a science. First, physics pertains to material substances, and since according to Locke substances will not permit more than probable knowledge, while science consists of certain knowledge, we see him, on more than one occasion, uttering serious doubts about the possibility of scientific knowledge in the field of what he calls experimental philosophy, however useful the advances in this discipline may be in our daily life.¹² Second, in addition to this well-known reservation there is the question of how to relate Locke's two methods to Newtonian physics. In the preface to the first edition of the *Philosophiæ naturalis principia mathematica* (1687) Newton had written that 'the basic problem of philosophy seems to be to discover the forces of nature from the phenomena of motions, and then to demonstrate the other phenomena from these forces' (Newton 1999, p. 382).¹³ This method suggests two distinct stages, one having an inductive character and the other having a deductive character. In the 'Queries' to the *Opticks* (1717) these two stages are described as analysis and synthesis respectively:

The analysis consists in making experiments and observations, and in drawing general conclusions from them by induction, and admitting of no objections against the conclusions, but such as are taken from experiments, or other certain truths. . . . And the Synthesis consists in assuming the causes discovered, and established as principles, and by them explaining the phænomena proceeding from them, and proving the explanations.

(Newton 1779–85, IV, pp. 263–4)

These two elements of Newton's method, analysis and synthesis, coincide broadly with Locke's two methods. Both Locke's historical, plain method and Newton's analysis imply a kind of induction,¹⁴ while the former's method of mathematical demonstration coincides with the latter's method of synthesis. However, whereas in the case of Newton we are speaking of two stages of one and the same method for one natural philosophy, in the case of Locke we have one method for ideas of substances and another method for modes. Or, to put it in another way, given Locke's distinction between ideas of substances and modes, and given the two different methods that are associated with these different kinds of ideas, it is difficult to give a Lockean defence of a Newtonian physics that can be considered a science and that takes into account the methodological elements of both empirical induction and mathematical demonstration.

Moreover, it should be stressed that the Lockean divide between certain knowledge of modes that can produce science and mere opinion or belief concerning ideas of substances is absolute and not a matter of degrees.¹⁵ Admittedly, Locke gives a detailed discussion of the several degrees and grounds of probability, but these degrees in no way impinge on the fundamental 'difference between *Probability* and *Certainty, Faith* and *Knowledge* . . .' (*Essay* IV. xv. 3, p. 655). Even the highest degree of probability, where 'The concurrent experience of all other Men with

ours, produces assurance approaching to Knowledge' still *is* not knowledge (*Essay* IV. xvi. 6, p. 661 (title of section)).

But if Locke does not think that physics can be made into a science, why does he mention *φυσική* as the first of the three sciences in the general division in the last chapter of the *Essay*? This science is very broad and consists of all things, both material and immaterial, that could possibly be the object of the human understanding. Here Locke does not want to deliver verdicts on the possibilities of knowledge of material substances; this is borne out by the qualification about 'whatsoever' in the following quotation: 'The end of this [*φυσική*], is 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, and Figure, *etc.*'¹⁶ Consequently, Locke's views on physics in this chapter do not contradict his earlier point that 'how weighty and considerable a part soever of Humane Science' the knowledge of material substances may be, it 'is yet very narrow, and scarce any at all' (*Essay* IV. iii. 10, p. 544).

Admittedly, each of the three times that Locke mentions Newton in the *Essay*, he seems to be rather more positive about the status of physics. However, in these rare and late bouts of optimism, based on admiration for Newton's recent achievements, he does not retract his fundamental and older dichotomy between modes and ideas of substances that had been at the basis of his persistent qualms about the possibilities for a scientific physics. Locke had started work on his *Essay* as early as 1671, Newton's *Principia* was published only in 1687 and the *Essay* was published shortly afterwards, in 1689. Moreover, in one of his references to Newton in the *Essay*, where he admittedly mentions Newton's 'Advancement of Sciences', Locke does not speak about his advances in physical knowledge, but only about Newton's advances in what Locke calls 'Mathematical Knowledge' (*Essay* IV. vii. 3, p. 599). In *Some Thoughts concerning Education* (1693) he seems aware of the tension between his early scepticism and Newton's recent triumphs, but here again he stresses the mathematical character of Newtonian physics:

Though the Systems of *Physicks*, that I have met with, afford little encouragement to look for Certainty or Science in any Treatise, which shall pretend to give us a body of *Natural Philosophy* from the first Principles of Bodies in general, yet the incomparable Mr. *Newton*, has shewn, how far Mathematicks, applied to some Parts of Nature, may, upon Principles that Matter of Fact justifie, carry us in the knowledge of some, as I may so call them, particular Provinces of the Incomprehensible Universe.

(*STCE*, §194, p. 248)

Finally, in the unfinished *Of the Conduct of the Understanding* (started in 1697) the 'admirable discovery of M^r Newton that all bodys gravitate to one an other' is accorded the certain status of 'fundamental truths that lie at the bottom as the basis [*sic*] upon which a great many others rest', along with 'Our Saviours great rule that we should love our neighbour as our selves' (Locke 2000b, par. 84).¹⁷ Locke's tendency to use hyperbolic praise as soon as he comes to speak of Newton is well

known and prompted Barbara Shapiro to the observation that 'With the "incomparable Mr. Newton", probability might become certainty. With Newton, Locke leaves the language of the probable, and even the morally certain, for that of demonstration and certitude' (B.J. Shapiro 1983, p. 60).¹⁸ What Shapiro does not seem to realise is that this late admiration and its related certainty claims imply trouble at the very root of Locke's taxonomy of ideas.¹⁹

's Gravesande's solution

Now that the problem for a Lockean defence of Newtonian physics has been outlined, it is possible to continue with 's Gravesande's solution. Although 's Gravesande in his *Introductio ad Philosophiam* does not mention Locke by name, he subscribes to various Lockean tenets.²⁰ It is notable that although he tries to give a defence of the scientific character of Newtonian physics, his argument starts with the Lockean distinction that we have identified as a major obstacle for any such undertaking in the first place. In the *Introductio* he distinguishes between the *evidentia* (evidentness) of mathematics and other sciences that are concerned with ideas considered by themselves, and the *evidentia* that is provided by ideas of things outside our mind.²¹ However, although 's Gravesande takes over the Lockean criterion for the distinction between modes and ideas of substances, he cannot agree with the subsequent separation between the two methods that are associated with these different categories of ideas.²² For the Newtonian 's Gravesande it is imperative that both methods be considered as two mutually related elements of one and the same science. Thus he writes in the 'Præfatio' to the *Physices elementa mathematica* 'In Physics then we are to discover the Laws of Nature by the Phænomena, then by Induction prove them to be general Laws; all the rest is to be handled Mathematically' (in 's Gravesande 1721, p. xvi).²³ Indeed, it is in this preface that we can witness the exact point at which 's Gravesande, after having expressed very Lockean reservations about the knowledge of substances, begins to diverge from Locke's views by expressing optimistic views about physics as a science that are no longer Lockean. He still echoes Locke when he writes 'What Substances are, is one of the things hidden from us. We know, for instance, some of the Properties of Matter; but we are absolutely ignorant, what Subject they are inherent in ('s Gravesande 1721, p. xi).²⁴ However, while still striking Lockean chords about the limits of human knowledge, he then continues:

The Study of Natural Philosophy is not however to be contemn'd, as built upon an unknown Foundation. The Sphere of humane Knowledge is bounded within a narrow Compass. . . . Though many things in Nature are hidden from us; yet what is set down in Physics as a Science, is undoubted. From a few general Principles numberless particular Phænomena or Effects are explain'd, and deduced by Mathematical Demonstration. . . . How much soever then may be unknown in Natural Philosophy, it still remains a vast, certain, and very useful Science.

('s Gravesande 1721, pp. xii–xiii)²⁵

While Locke would have subscribed to the proposition ‘that what is set down in Physics as a Science, is undoubted’, he would have continued with the sceptical remark that hardly anything that actually *is* set down in physics will meet this criterion. Against this, ’s Gravesande is more optimistic and he describes natural philosophy as a ‘vast’ science. So, although ’s Gravesande uses Locke’s criterion for the distinction between science and probability, he does not share Locke’s reservations about physics as a science.

’s Gravesande’s arguments for the scientific status of Newtonian physics consists of three steps. In the first step he claims that the propositions of the new physics produce not mere probability, but moral *evidentia*. *Evidentia* is ‘the criterion of truth’,²⁶ and moral *evidentia* can be produced by propositions that suppose a relation between ideas and things outside our minds. Against this, mathematical *evidentia* refers only to comparisons between ideas and other ideas.²⁷ The terminology of ’s Gravesande’s distinction between moral and mathematical *evidentia* goes back to Descartes’ distinction, made at the end of the *Principia philosophiae*, between moral certainty and absolute certainty. The difference between these types of certainty is expressed more clearly in the French translation of the *Principia* by the Abbé Picot (1647), authorised by Descartes himself, than in the Latin original. In this version, it is stated that ‘. . . moral certainty is certainty which is sufficient to regulate our behaviour, or which measures up to the certainty we have of matters relating to the conduct of life which we never normally doubt, though we know that it is possible, absolutely speaking, that they may be false’ (Descartes 1984–5, I, p. 289, n. 2).²⁸ Against this, ‘Absolute certainty arises when we believe that it is wholly impossible that something should be otherwise than we judge it to be’ (ibid., I, p. 290).²⁹

’s Gravesande amends this Cartesian distinction in two important ways. First, his distinction between mathematical and moral *evidentia* is made along the lines of Locke’s distinction between modes and ideas of substances. This goes against the argument of Descartes, who thinks that although the principles of his physics pertain to ideas of (material) substance, they nevertheless are absolutely certain and not merely morally certain.³⁰ Second, since ’s Gravesande follows the Lockean distinction between modes and ideas of substances, he cannot ascribe mathematical certainty to physics. Instead, he ascribes moral *evidentia* to Newtonian physics, while at the same time he claims more certainty for this category than Descartes. He stresses this claim by distinguishing between what Cartesians and others had called ‘moral *certainty*’ and what he calls ‘moral *evidentia*’. According to ’s Gravesande, the common meaning of ‘moral certainty’ is not more than ‘great probability’. Against this, he maintains that the persuasion that follows moral *evidentia* is as great as the persuasion that follows mathematical *evidentia*.³¹ As a consequence, since moral *evidentia* is different in principle from mere high probability, ’s Gravesande’s discussion of mathematical *evidentia* in the *Introductio* in II. I. xii and moral *evidentia* in II. I. xiii is followed by a separate discussion of probability in II. I. xvii–xix.

Naturally there remains a question about how ’s Gravesande defends his strong claims about moral *evidentia*. This problem is addressed in the second step of his argument. He holds that moral *evidentia* can be produced only after a circumspect

use of our senses, of testimony and of analogy. First, concerning the senses, he points out that since there is no necessary connection between things themselves and the ideas of these things produced by our senses, we should attempt to make frequent and repeated observations and compare the ideas that are produced by our different senses. When the observations of several senses coincide, the chance of a subsequent error is very slight. 's Gravesande rejects the opinions of philosophers who, from the fact that our individual senses sometimes lead us to error, conclude that all sensual knowledge is imperfect.³² Second, he stresses the importance of testimony, provided that the witness was not deceived himself, that he has not tried to deceive us, that he expresses his thoughts clearly and that he is clearly understood.³³ Third, reasonings that are based on analogy can produce knowledge that is certain. Analogy is based on the general principle that the universe is governed by general and constant laws. This implies that the same causes have the same effects and it also implies that properties of bodies that are so strongly connected to these bodies that they admit neither intensification nor remission in all cases that we have observed, must be considered as properties of all bodies.³⁴ The three principles of moral *evidentia* are mutually related one to the other, and moral *evidentia* will only be produced when they are used jointly.³⁵

It is not difficult to discern influences of Locke on 's Gravesande's discussion of the senses, of testimony and of analogy. In Book IV, ch. xv, 'Of Probability' of the *Essay*, Locke states that the grounds of probability are 'conformity with our own Experience, or the Testimony of others Experience' (*Essay* IV. xv. 4, p. 655 (title of section)). And in the next chapter, on the degrees of assent, he points out that 'In things which Sense cannot discover, Analogy is the great Rule of Probability' (*Essay* IV. xvi. 12, p. 665 (title of section)). However, in 's Gravesande's discussion of analogy, the two implications of the general principle that the universe is governed by general and constant laws, clearly coincide not with the contents of Locke's *Essay*, but with Newton's Second and Third Rule of the 'Regulæ philosophandi'.³⁶

In spite of Locke's influence on 's Gravesande's use of the triad of senses, testimony and analogy, the fundamental difference between the two remains that where 's Gravesande claims moral *evidentia*, which is certain, Locke had only claimed that belief based on the coinciding reports of our senses and of testimony 'rises to Assurance', but still *is* not knowledge. In the third and last step of his argument, 's Gravesande tries to place the Lockean triad, and the category of moral *evidentia* with it, on an ultimate foundation. Although he claims that the moral *evidentia* of Newtonian physics is as great as mathematical *evidentia*, he admits that this *evidentia* is produced in different ways. In the case of mathematical ideas, and other modes, certainty can be produced directly, by a comparison of the ideas in our mind. Against this, the moral *evidentia* of Newtonian physics is based on a divine guarantee of the reliability of the Lockean triad. In the *Introductio* 's Gravesande points out that God, in his sovereign goodness, has given us an abundance of goods during our brief sojourn on Earth; that by giving us senses He has enabled us to make use of these goods; and that He would contradict himself if He would lead into error the very creatures to whom He has accorded these goods. Our senses

lead us to the knowledge of truth because this is the wish of God; thus, there can be complete persuasion about the conformity between things outside us and the sensual ideas by which these things are represented.³⁷ In a similar way God has made the use of testimony and the use of analogy marks of truth.³⁸ 's Gravesande had used the same argument in his *Oratio de evidentia* (1724, in 's Gravesande 1734). In this oration he points out that the argument is based on the assumption that God is infinitely good and that this can be proved with mathematical *evidentia*. In this way he is even able to suggest that his category of moral *evidentia* is ultimately reducible to a form of mathematical *evidentia*.³⁹

's Gravesande had already presented his argument in a more specifically physical context in the preface to the *Physices elementa* where he defends Newton's use of analogy in the Second and Third Rule of the 'Regulæ philosophandi'. 's Gravesande here writes:

The return to *Physics*: we are in this Science to judge by our Senses, of the Agreement that there is betwixt Things and our Ideas. . . . We cannot immediately judge of all Physical Matters by our Senses. We have then recourse to another just way of reasoning, though not Mathematical. It depends upon this Axiom; (namely) *We must look upon as true, whatever being denied would destroy civil Society, and deprive us of the Means of Living*. From which Proposition the second and third rules of the *Newtonian Method* most evidently follow.

('s Gravesande 1721, p. xv)⁴⁰

So, after, as a first step, claiming moral *evidentia* for Newtonian physics, and after, as a second step, underpinning this claim with Locke's triad, 's Gravesande tries in the third and last step of his defence to give an ultimate and solid foundation for this triad and thus also for the moral *evidentia* that it is supposed to produce, by formulating what has been aptly called his 'survival axiom'.⁴¹

There are several possible sources for 's Gravesande's survival axiom. A version of this axiom had already been produced by the British theologian and scientist Humphrey Ditton (1675–1715) in his *A Discourse concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (1712). Since Ditton tries to show the truth of Christ's resurrection, and since this doctrine is based on testimony, he gives special attention to this form of proof; he goes to great lengths to show that 'There is no Decrease of the Probability or Credibility of Testimony deliver'd by faithful, careful, and knowing Witnesses; tho propagated through a Series of Ages, ever so far continu'd' (Ditton 1712, p. 164, Prop. xvi). It is thus with a distinctly theological agenda that he formulates the survival axiom:

And because the Author of Nature has not made the World after such a manner, nor cannot permit that we should be deceiv'd, in Cases where it is made strictly just and rational for us to yield the Assent of our Minds: Therefore, we can be sure, *That in all Cases (especially in those of great Importance)*

where the Evidences come up to those Conditions; we shall not be deceiv'd, in assenting to the Truth of things, as made out to us by those Evidences. And from all this, we can fairly conclude, That the Foundations of Moral Evidence . . . are not precarious and uncertain, but most securely laid, in the nature and Order of things. Q.E.D.

(H. Ditton 1712, p. 188)

A long and admiring abstract of Ditton's book had been published shortly after its appearance in the *Journal littéraire*,⁴² a journal that 's Gravesande had established himself in 1713 and that would make a substantial contribution to the early spread of Newton's physics in Europe. 's Gravesande's biographer Jean Allamand (1713–87) assumes that he was the author of the review.⁴³ However, 's Gravesande might have hit on his theologically based survival axiom without the direct help of Ditton. The use of God's properties as an epistemological guarantee for certain or at least probable knowledge of nature is present in various forms in Descartes, Locke and Newton.

Descartes' experiment of radical doubt leaves him with the Archimedean point of the *cogito*; he then uses the existence of his own mind for the existence of God. God is the source of all truth, and God guarantees that we will not be deceived in all things of which we have a very clear and very distinct perception. In the preface to the French edition of the *Principia philosophiae* he states that he has used these metaphysical principles to deduce the principles of his physics:

These are all the principles that I make use of with regard to immaterial or metaphysical things, and from them I deduce very clearly the principles of corporeal or physical things, namely that there are bodies which are extended in length, breadth and depth, and which have various shapes and move in various ways. Here, in total, are all the principles which I use to deduce the truth of other things.

(Descartes 1984–5, I, p. 184)⁴⁴

When Locke discusses the uses of analogy in the *Essay* IV. xvi. 12, he points to the existence of a great chain of being that seems to warrant the use of analogy:

Observing, I say, such gradual and gentle descents downwards in those parts of the Creation, that are beneath Man, the rule of Analogy may make it probable, that it is so also in Things above us, and our Observation; and that there are several ranks of intelligent Beings, excelling us in several degrees of Perfection, ascending upwards towards the infinite Perfection of the Creator, by gentle steps and differences, that are every one at no great distance from the next to it.

(*Essay* IV. xvi. 12, p. 666)

Locke here mentions only the existence of spiritual beings above us, but the context of the section leaves no doubt that the existence of gradual connections, which allows the use of analogy, applies not only to 'immaterial Beings without us' but

also to the invisible micro-structural causes of the ‘Works of Nature’ (ibid., p. 665). Moreover, Locke’s belief in a great chain of being is part of a world-view in which ‘the infinite Power and Wisdom of the Maker’ (III. vi. 12, p. 447) has created a universe that can be understood because He has imposed the same order on different levels; and this assumption is also at the heart of ’s Gravesande’s survival axiom.⁴⁵

Similar views pervade Newton’s ‘Regulæ philosophandi’. In Rule I he writes ‘No more causes of natural things should be admitted than are both true and sufficient to explain their phenomena’ and in the explanation to this rule he continues: ‘As the philosophers say: Nature does nothing in vain, and more causes are in vain when fewer suffice. For nature is simple and does not indulge in the luxury of superfluous causes’ (Newton 1999, p. 794).⁴⁶ This simplicity of nature, which forms the foundation of ‘the analogy of Nature’ in Rule III, is a reflection of God’s simplicity; here again, the possibility of explaining the physical world is given theological sanction.⁴⁷

Evaluation

In an evaluation of ’s Gravesande’s philosophical defence of Newtonian physics, the first thing that springs to mind is its eclectic character, which is typical of Dutch natural philosophy at the beginning of the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ It is, for instance, noteworthy that ’s Gravesande borrows freely not only from Locke, but also from Descartes, which seems to drive further nails into the coffin of the defunct distinction between Cartesian rationalism and Lockean empiricism.⁴⁹ The Republic was the home of a Cartesianism that was less dogmatic and not as inimical to experimental physics as its French counterpart, and this allowed Dutch philosophers to consider Descartes and Locke not as adversaries but as joint defenders of an alternative logic of ideas in which new principles of correct reasoning were used to attack the sterile intricacies of traditional Aristotelian learning in general and scholastic logic in particular.⁵⁰ In the Republic, eclecticism was often considered a commendable attribute. In 1738 the French translation of ’s Gravesande’s *Introductio* received a flattering review in the *Journal des Sçavans* expressing the expectation that ‘With the help of this work they [students] will be able to make more progress and better understand Locke, Leibniz, Malebranche etc. We know of no better *Introduction to philosophy*’.⁵¹

However, although the *Introductio* was eclectic, ’s Gravesande gives a coherent and original defence of Newtonian physics. The present chapter has pushed forward an already existing trend in the evaluation of the relation between Locke and Newton. In the traditional picture, Locke was the indebted partner who learned much from Newton, whilst Newton learned hardly anything from Locke. In a revisionist picture, first defended by G.A.J. Rogers (1978, pp. 217–32), it is pointed out that each wrote his most important work independently from the other and that their philosophical views were the result of a common outlook rather than the result of one having greatly influenced the other. The conclusion of the present chapter is that Locke and Newton have to be dissociated even further.

Locke's basic distinction between modes and ideas of substances, his belief that only the former and not the latter can result in scientific knowledge, and the split between an inductivist method for substances and a mathematical demonstration that is reserved for modes, form very fundamental but neglected problems for any Lockean defence of a Newtonian physics that is supposed to be a science and that is supposed to make use of both induction and deduction. 's Gravesande could have circumvented this problem entirely, by producing a philosophical defence of Newtonian physics in which the basic Lockean criterion for the distinction between modes and ideas of substances is left out altogether. Yet we have seen him subscribing to this criterion. His solution to the subsequent problems caused by the chasm between modes that permit mathematical *evidentia* and substances that permit mere probability, is the generation of a separate and intermediate category of moral *evidentia*. This category pertains not to modes, but to substances, and yet it claims *evidentia*. Moral *evidentia* is not based on a simple and direct examination of our ideas, as is the case with modes, but on the triple use of senses, testimony and analogy, which in its turn is based on a divinely guaranteed survival axiom. Thus moral *evidentia* amounts to more than mere probability. Moreover, once it is assumed that, thanks to the survival axiom, induction can amount to scientific knowledge, the certain generalisations that are based on induction can subsequently be used as the basis for mathematical demonstrations. In this way 's Gravesande's defence of moral *evidentia* can be seen as a defence of Newtonian physics *as a science* that includes both the inductive and the deductive elements that belong to the *method* of this science. 's Gravesande's reasoning is paradoxical. His non-Lockean conclusion concerning the scientific character of Newtonian physics is corroborated by various individual arguments that are clearly borrowed from Locke.

Finally, it should be noted that the very concept of 'science' had changed by the time 's Gravesande wrote his defence of Newton's physics. Locke still belonged to a tradition, both Aristotelian and Cartesian, in which the science of physics was to produce a certain understanding of nature by an understanding of its causes or its essence.⁵² If Descartes and Locke had different views about physics as a science, this was not about its definition, but merely about its chances of success. Descartes believed that knowledge of the hidden causes of nature was possible. By contrast, Locke had grave doubts about this project and thus he was pessimistic about the chances of physics being made a science. 's Gravesande goes a step further and the result is again paradoxical. He regains Descartes' optimism by rejecting the traditional notion of science that had still been embraced by both Descartes and Locke.⁵³ 's Gravesande admits, together with Locke, that we are at a loss to know whether the general laws of nature 'flow from the Essence of Matter' ('s Gravesande 1721, p. xii),⁵⁴ but contrary to Locke he thinks that physics can still be called a science as long as its general laws are as successful in saving the phenomena as Newton's physics had proved to be, even though he admits that 'we cannot penetrate any further into the Knowledge of Causes' ('s Gravesande 1721, p. xiii).^{55, 56}

Notes

- 1 The edition used here is W.J. 's Gravesande, *Physices elementa mathematica, experimentis confirmata. Sive introductio ad philosophiam Newtonianam*. Editio tertia duplo auctior. Leiden: J.A. Langerak and J. and H. Verbeek, 1742 (hereafter *Physices elementa*).
- 2 The edition used here is W.J. 's Gravesande, *Introductio ad philosophiam; metaphysicam et logicam continens*. Leiden: J. and H. Verbeek, 1737. Editio altera (hereafter *Introductio*).
- 3 *Essay* II. xii. 3, pp. 164–5.
- 4 For a recent and full discussion of Lockean modes and ideas of substances, which however does not address the problem discussed in the present chapter, see M. Ayers 1991, II, pp. 1–128.
- 5 *Essay* IV. iii. 18, pp. 549–50.
- 6 *Essay* I. i. 2, p. 44 and IV. xii. 10, p. 645.
- 7 See P. Schuurman 2001a, pp. 439–65. For a somewhat different treatment of the subject see P. Romanell 1991, pp. 476–87. For the importance of Locke's co-operation with Thomas Sydenham (1624–1689) for his historical method cf. J.C. Walmsley 1998.
- 8 For the use of 'history' by Locke and some predecessors see J.G. Buickerood 1985, p. 157, n. 4.
- 9 *Essay* II. xii. 15, p. 162: 'And thus I have given a short, and, I think, true *History of the first beginnings of Humane Knowledge*; whence the Mind has its first Objects, and by what steps it makes its Progress to the laying in, and storing up those *Ideas*, out of which is to be framed all the Knowledge it is capable of'.
- 10 For a brief survey of this traditional view see G.A.J. Rogers 1978, pp. 217–18.
- 11 Cf. M. Feingold 1988, p. 297.
- 12 See *Essay* IV. iii. 26–9, pp. 556–60 and IV. xii. 10, p. 645, see also E. McCann 1994, p. 67: 'Locke is unique among the seventeenth-century champions of mechanism in emphasising the severe limitations on our ability to deliver mechanistic explanations of natural phenomena'.
- 13 Newton 1972, I, p. 16: 'Omnis enim philosophiæ difficultas in eo versari videtur, ut a Phænomenis motuum investigemus vires Naturæ, deinde ab his viribus demonstremus phænomena reliqua'.
- 14 This does not imply that Locke and Newton agreed on the precise kind of induction. Whereas Locke's induction did not go much beyond the rough qualitative observations of a doctor examining his patient, Newton was more bent on the generation of quantitative results, based on reproducible experiments.
- 15 See M. Ayers 1991, I, pp. 93–4: 'to attribute to Locke the notion of a continuum between knowledge and belief. . . would be to fail to take into account the absolute nature of his distinction between them'; against this see M.J. Ferreira 1986, pp. 211–12 and B.J. Shapiro 1983, p. 267, who regards Locke as a main contributor to 'the erosion of the traditional dichotomy between "science" and "probability"' between 1550 and 1700.
- 16 *Essay* IV. xxi. 2, p. 720.
- 17 I.e. §43 in the conventional numbering by sections.
- 18 Cf. M. Ayers 1991, I, p. 118, who presents a more wary Locke, even when faced with Newton's achievement: 'It [Locke's wariness] helped not only to sweep away "rubbish", but to inject into the interpretation of Newton's admired theory, at its inception, a healthy dose of scepticism and self-criticism'.
- 19 One possible Lockean solution for the problems caused by the divide between modes and ideas of substances may be contained by the third category of complex ideas, i.e. relations. Relations pertain to ideas of substances as well as modes, and include the physical concepts of cause and effect and of time and place. Moreover, 'The *Ideas* then of *Relations* are capable at least of being more perfect and distinct in our Minds, than those of *Substances*' (*Essay* II. xxv. 8, p. 322). However, the epistemological and methodological

- possibilities of a Lockean defence of Newtonian physics along the lines suggested by the category of relations, are explored neither by Locke himself nor by 's Gravesande.
- 20 For instance, see 's Gravesande's discussion of identity in the *Introductio* I. I. vii and of the Molyneux Problem in the *Introductio* II. I. xiv, pp. 156–8; also, he muses about our ability to determine 'ubi mortalium cognitionibus limites ponantur' (1742, I, p. 11); and in the *Oratio de matheseos . . . usu*, p. 8, in 's Gravesande *Orationes tres* (1734) he stresses the need of looking for intermediate ideas in the art of reasoning. Finally, compare his reply to scepticism about the existence of material bodies in his *Oratio de evidentia*, p. 19, in 's Gravesande, *Orationes tres*, with Locke, *Essay* IV. ii. 14, pp. 536–8; cf. G. Gori 1972, p. 235, n. 18.
- 21 *Introductio* II. I. xii, p. 144: 'quæ versantur circa Ideas in se consideratas' and *Introductio* II. I. xiii, p. 148: 'Ideas rerum, extra mentem'.
- 22 Strictly speaking, 's Gravesande uses the Lockean criterion for the distinction between modes and ideas of substances not for the terms 'mode' and 'substance' themselves (these terms are defined in a conventional Aristotelian way, see *Introductio* I. I. ii, p. 8), but for the distinction between different kinds of sciences, i. e. mathematics and physics. For 's Gravesande on mathematical and moral *evidentia* see also C. de Pater 1995.
- 23 *Physices elementa*, p. x: 'In physicis ergo per Phænomena naturæ leges sunt detegendæ; per inductionem pro generalibus habendæ; de cetero mathematice ratiocinandum'.
- 24 's Gravesande, *Physices elementa*, p. iv: 'Substantiæ quid sint inter nobis ignota referendum est. Quasdam ex. gr. materiæ proprietates novimus, sed in quo subjecto hæreant hæc nos omnino latet'; cf. *Introductio* I. I. ii, p. 8.
- 25 *Physices elementa*, pp. v–vi:

Non tamen, ut ignoto fundamento nixum, contemnendum Philosophiæ naturalis studium. Limitibus arctis circumscribitur mentis humanæ cognoscendi capacitas. . . . Si in Physicis nos multa latent, quæ in hac scientia traduntur certa sunt. Ex paucis generalibus principiis innumera Phænomena peculiaria explicuntur; hæcque ex illis mathematicâ demonstratione deducenda sunt. . . . Quæcumque ergo habeat ignota Physica, vasta & certissima est, nihilominus hæc scientia, & maxime utilis.

- 26 *Introductio* II. I. xii, p. 143: '*Evidentiam esse Criterium Veri*'.
- 27 *Introductio* II. I. xiii, p. 149 and *De evidentia*, p. 20:

Videtis, AA. NN. Moralem Evidentiam, persuasionemque inde oriundam, spectare ad convenientiam inter ideas in Mente nostra & res ipsas extra nos; dum Mathematica Evidentia versatur circa convenientiam quæ datur inter comparisonem idearum & quam habemus hujus, comparationis idearum.

- 28 *Les Principes de la philosophie*, IV, §205, in Descartes 1996, IXB, p. 323: 'c'est à dire suffisante pour regler nos mœurs, ou aussi grande que celle des choses dont nous n'auons point coutume de douter touchant la conduite de la vie, bien que nous sçachions qu'il se peut faire, absolument parlant, qu'elles soient fausses'.
- 29 *Les Principes de la philosophie*, IV, §206, Descartes 1996, IXB, p. 324: 'L'autre sorte de certitude est lors que nous pensons qu'il n'est aucunement possible que la chose soit autre que nous la jugeons'.
- 30 *Les Principes de la philosophie*, IV, §206, Descartes 1996, IXB, p. 324.
- 31 *Introductio* II. I. xvii, p. 182. 's Gravesande's distinction between 'certainty' and '*evidentia*' is not only different from Descartes, but also from Locke, who seems to use 'certainty' and 'evidence' as synonyms, *Essay* I. i. 3, p. 44. See also *Essay* II. xi. 1, p. 155; IV. ii. 1, p. 531; IV. ii. 14, p. 538; IV. vii. 4, p. 593; IV. vii. 10, p. 597; and IV. vii. 12, p. 604.
- 32 *Introductio* II. I. xiv, p. 168.
- 33 *Introductio* II. I. xv, pp. 170–7.

34 *Introductio* II. I. xvi, pp. 177–9.

35 *Introductio* II. I. xvi, p. 180.

36 Newton 1999, pp. 795–6; for this particular influence on 's Gravesande, cf. C. de Pater, 'Inleiding', to 's Gravesande 1988, p. 44 and de Pater 1994, p. 2, pp. 257–94.

37 *Introductio* II. I. xiii, pp. 151–2: 'Sensus ergo sunt Criterium Veri; quia Deus hoc ita voluit; quare Persuasio de convenientiâ Idearum, quas Sensibus acquirimus, cum rebus quas repræsentant, integra est'.

38 *Introductio* II. I. xiii, pp. 153–4.

39 *De evidentia*, p. 21:

Deum autem voluisse Sensus, Testimonium, & Analogiam, talia esse fundamenta & illum non frustra hoc voluisse, non erit demonstratu difficile, argumentis Mathematicè perspicuis. Talibus constat argumentis Deum esse, huncque esse bonum, & quidem in summo gradu. Hinc deducimus illum voluisse, ut Homines iis utantur commodis quæ ipsis largitus eat; iis autem rebus, quæ ad vitam in superficie Telluris ducendam, ubi Deus ipse Homines collocavit, necessariæ sunt, uti non posse demonstrabimus, nisi memorata admittamus criteria Veri, unde patebit hæc talia esse.

40 *Physices elementa*, p. viii:

Ut ad Physicam redeamus, in hac de convenientia rerum cum ideis sensibus judicandum. . . . In Physicis de omnibus non possumus immediate sensibus iudicium ferre; datur & alia legitima, licet non Mathematica, ratiocinandi methodus, hoc axiomate nixa: *Pro vero habendum omne, quod si negetur, societas inter homines destruitur, aut his vivendi ratio adimitur*. Ex qua propositione, quæ à nemine in dubium vocare potest, regulæ philosophandi *Newtoniana* secunda & tertia evidentissime deducuntur.

41 The term 'overlevingsaxioma' is used by C. de Pater, 'Inleiding' to 's Gravesande 1988, p. 41.

42 *Journal Littéraire*, I (1713), pp. 391–435 (2nd edn, The Hague: T. Johnson, 1716).

43 J.N.A. Allamand, 'Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de Mr. 's Gravesande', in 's Gravesande 1774, pp. lvii–lviii.

44 *Les Principes de la philosophie*, Descartes 1996, IXB, p. 10:

Ce sont là tous les Principes dont je me sers touchant les choses immatérielles ou Métaphysiques, desquels je déduits tres-clairement ceux des choses corporelles ou Physiques, à sçavoir qu'il y a des corps estendus en longueur, largeur & profondeur, qui ont diuerses figures & se meuuent en diuerses façons. Voyla, en somme, tous les Principes dont je déduits la verité des autres choses'. For God as an epistemological guarantee see also *Les Principes de la philosophie*, IV, §206, *ibid.*, p. 324: 'Dieu estant souverainement bon & la source de toute verité, *puisque c'est luy qui nous a créés*, il est certain que la *puissance ou faculté* qu'il nous a donnée pour distinguer le vray d'avec le faux, ne se trompe point, lors que nous en vsons bien & qu'elle nous monstre *euidemment qu'une chose est vraye*.

Cf. P. Schuurman 2001b, pp. 262–81.

45 Cf. J.E. McGuire 1970, pp. 33–5.

46 Newton 1972, II, p. 550:

Causas rerum naturalium non plures admitti debere, quam quæ & veræ sint & earum phænomenis explicandis sufficient. Dicunt utique philosophi: Natura nihil agit frustra, & frustra sit per plura quod fieri potest per pauciora. Natura enim simplex est & rerum causis superfluis non luxuriat.

- 47 Cf. J.E. McGuire 1970, pp. 36–42 and G.A.J. Rogers 1999, pp. 221–35.
- 48 Cf. G.B. Wiesenfeldt 1999, p. 312.
- 49 Given this context it is interesting to notice 's Gravesande's prudent course in the debate about innate ideas: 'Omnibus igitur, quæ de Origine Idearum exposuimus, perpensis; nihil de hac ipsâ determinatum hactenus esse, concludo', *Introductio* I. II. xix, p. 104. And when he states 'Mens nostra simplices acquirit Ideas per sensus, aut attendendo ad proprium statum', *Introductio* II. I. ii, p. 109, the phrase 'attendendo ad proprium statum', seems to leave open the possibility of knowledge based on a Cartesian *cogito*. This argument is indeed presented explicitly in 's Gravesande's *De evidentia*, p. 12:

Cum omnis cognitio a cogitatione pendeat, ante omnes alias ipsius Ingenii ideas in Mente nostra hæret, & Intelligentiæ proprietatem notiones omni extraneo deficiente auxilio acquirimus. . . . Cogito ego; id est datur quid intelligens, inde deduco hujus primum auctorem ab æterno esse & in infinitum intelligentiâ superare quam produxit Intelligentiam.

- 50 Cf. G. Gori 1972, p. 43 and p. 182 and P. Schuurman (forthcoming).
- 51 'Avec ce secours ils seront en état d'aller plus loin, & de bien entendre *Locke, Leibniz, Malebranche* &c. Nous ne connoissons point de meilleure *Introduction à la Philosophie*', *Journal des Sçavans*, 116 (September 1738), p. 80.
- 52 Cf. C. Hakfoort 1995, p. 181: 'Though Descartes' metaphysics and natural philosophy were at odds with Aristotelian orthodoxy, his goals and methods were much less so. He continued to strive for a complete as well as certain picture of the world'.
- 53 Cf. E.G. Ruestow 1973, pp. 130–1.
- 54 *Physices elementa*, p. v: 'Circa has in obscuro est, an ex materiæ essentia fluant'.
- 55 *Physices elementa*, p. vi: 'quando ad leges generales pervenimus, non ulterius in causarum cognitionem penetrare possimus'.
- 56 This chapter was first presented as a paper at the conference 'New Work on the Philosophy of John Locke', Sydney, 9–11 July 2001. I would like to thank the participants in the conference and also Stéphanie Helfferich, Dr Henri Krop, Dr Han van Ruler, Sami-Juhani Savonius and, above all, the late Professor Jan Folkers for their helpful remarks.

Part II

**Moral and political
philosophy**

4 Locke's concept of justice

Kiyoshi Shimokawa

Although Locke seldom uses the word 'justice', a particular concept of justice seems to underlie his political theory. The purpose of this chapter is to identify that concept, and clarify it. I shall first try to establish the identity of Locke's concept of justice by exploring some of its historical sources. Then I shall clarify his concept by providing a reconstruction of it, and considering its special application. This chapter is intended to show that he has a unitary concept of justice, albeit one that manifests variable specific features at different levels of his political theory.

In what follows, my task is expository and reconstructive rather than evaluative or critical. But the account I offer is intended to fill a lacuna that still exists in Locke scholarship. In contrast with the extensive debate about Locke's theory of the original acquisition of property, his view of justice has received relatively little attention. The relevant literature is scarce, indeed. Only a few scholars, such as R.H. Cox (1963), R. Polin (1963), J. Dunn (1968) and I. Harris (2000), have given substantial treatments of what Locke says about justice. They have tried to determine the role or status of justice in his political thought, and explored some of the existing connections between his claims about justice on the one hand, and those about property, charity, and the law of nature on the other. They have gone some way towards clarifying the place of justice in Locke. Nevertheless, those previous attempts seem to suffer from one major flaw. They have neglected to discuss *conceptual* problems pertaining to justice per se, while largely concentrating on questions about the relationship between the duty of justice and other duties. In fact, no previous attempt seems to have offered an analysis of Locke's concept of justice. Since his concept is left indeterminate, we remain uncertain whether what scholars have discussed under the topic of justice is really a matter of justice for Locke.

Take, for instance, Ian Harris' recent and most extensive treatment. Though he makes interesting suggestions as to how Locke might have derived (what Harris regards as) the duty of justice, he shows a very limited interest in conceptual problems. Harris begins by stating that 'Locke's idea of justice was quite straightforward' (2000, p. 49). He then quotes from Draft B of the *Essay* Locke's definition of just action, i.e. 'the conformity between an action & the rule of propriety', while reminding us that 'propriety' (i.e. 'property') should be understood here in the sense of 'a right to any thing'. Indeed, this understanding of property is based on the most

extensive definition of ‘property’ that Locke himself offers in the *Essay* (IV. iii. 18, p. 549). However, Harris quickly ends this conceptual inquiry by stating categorically that for Locke, ‘justice denoted a duty to preserve rights’ (2000, p. 49). His brief conceptual inquiry leaves us with a few unresolved questions. First of all, given the ordinary concept of property as an exclusive right, we may ask whether justice, as Locke conceived of it, is really a matter of preserving rights in general. Second, we should ask what is really involved in the idea of preserving rights; in particular, what instruments are to be used to preserve them. Third, even if justice can be said to be a matter of preserving rights in a certain sense, what connections are there between justice on the one hand, and a law and a judge on the other? Fourth, is there any other special feature of Locke’s concept of justice? Harris does not provide answers to these basic conceptual questions, nor can we get much help from the earlier attempts by others.¹ Yet in order to conduct a fruitful discourse about the place of justice in Locke, it is absolutely necessary to provide answers to these questions and have a solid understanding of what he meant by justice.

In this chapter I shall be addressing these basic conceptual issues, which have so far been neglected.² In carrying out the task of conceptual clarification, I shall also exhibit the significant extent to which Locke’s concern with justice shapes his political theory. Since he seldom uses the word ‘justice’, we cannot identify his concept simply by relying on the appearance of the word. So I shall use a historical method, and try to discover in his writings the elements which are commonly found in the historically evolved, Western concept of justice. After those elements are shown, I shall proceed to reconstruct Locke’s concept by showing how he combines those elements, and further consider his special application of it.

Three elements of justice: an historical account

Pace Harris, Locke’s concept of justice is a *complex* one. John Finnis’ suggestion serves as a useful starting point for identifying any complex concept of justice. Finnis suggests that the historically evolved concept of justice commonly has three elements: (1) other-directedness or inter-subjectivity; (2) duty or what is owed or due to another, and correspondingly, what that other person has a right to (which roughly means what is his own, or at least his due by right); and (3) equality or proportionality (Finnis 1980, pp. 161–3). I shall give below a brief historical account of each of the elements, and show that each element is found in Locke in a particular form. In so doing, I shall indicate some of the sources he is likely to have utilised. It is not my intention to determine precisely what his sources are, nor do I wish to suggest that every theorist mentioned below equally influenced him. But it is plausible to suggest that Aristotle, Cicero, Hooker, Hobbes, and Grotius are some of the major sources for Locke’s concept of justice. In the following account, Grotius and Aristotle receive more attention than the others, since their concepts seem to be of particular significance to Locke.

The first element of other-directedness or inter-subjectivity is found in ancient philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle and Cicero. Plato interprets justice in the soul as consisting in the harmonious, mutual relationship of three parts of the soul,

i.e. the rational, the appetitive, and the spirited (Plato 1997, 443d–e). Aristotle uses the concept of universal justice to designate the whole of the other-directed virtue (Aristotle 1995, 1129^b27–1130^a13). In *De Officiis* Cicero stresses the social character of justice when he suggests that justice in general is concerned ‘with the conservation of human society, with giving to each his own, and with faithfulness to agreements one has made’ (I. 15).³ Modern theorists also share the view that justice is essentially an inter-subjective concept. As Locke remarks, Hooker builds ‘the Duties they [sc. men] owe one another’ upon the natural equality of men, deriving ‘the great Maxims of Justice and Charity’ from that equality (*TT* II. ii. 5, p. 288). Since justice, as distinct from charity, has to do with refraining from harming others, it is obviously an inter-subjective concept. In *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Grotius highlights the social character of justice when he refers to the *οἰκείωσις* of the Stoics, and states that ‘this maintenance of the social order . . . which is consonant with human intelligence, is the source of *jus* properly so called’ (Prolegomena, 8, see also 6). Hobbes’ *Leviathan* stresses, in a different manner, that justice and injustice are the ‘qualities, that relate to men in society, not in solitude’, and that they are ‘none of the faculties neither of the body, nor mind’ (1996, XIII. 13).

Now Locke takes over the first element of justice, and refers to the virtue of justice as a ‘great Social Vertue [sic]’ (*STCE*, §110, p. 170). He emphasises that ‘Justice and Truth are the common ties of Society’ (*Essay* I. iii. 2, p. 66). But he prefers to express the other-directedness or inter-subjectivity of justice as a *reciprocal* or *mutual* relation, since he thinks of the other-directed relation as equally applicable to all parties under consideration. Locke states that the end of political society is ‘the mutual *Preservation* of their [sc. men’s] Lives, Liberties and Estates, which I call by the general Name, *Property*’ (*TT* II. ix. 123, p. 368). This ‘mutual’ preservation reflects the element of reciprocity which is embedded in his concept of justice. It should be added that Locke frequently removes the adjective ‘mutual’, and subsumes the element of reciprocity under the general idea of the preservation of property. But what is really at issue is the *mutual* preservation of property.

The second element of justice is the duty toward another man, or correspondingly, the right of another man. As we can see in the quotation from Cicero above, justice is often defined as *suum cuique tribuere* (giving to each man his own or his due). This formula or its variant is attributed to Simonides in Plato’s *Republic* (1997, 331d–332d). Another variant, favoured by legal theorists, is Ulpian’s oft-quoted statement, *iustitia est constans et perpetua uoluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi* (Mommsen *et al.* 1985, 1. 1. 10). But one of Locke’s important sources is Hobbes, who seizes upon a shorter, scholastic version of the formula, *the constant will of giving to every man his own*. Hobbes immediately derives from it the proposition that ‘where there is no *own*, that is, no propriety, there is no injustice’ (1996, XV. 3). Locke presupposes a similar formula of justice, when he presents a demonstrable proposition that ‘*Where there is no Property, there is no Injustice*’ (*Essay* IV. iii. 18, p. 549).

Suum can be interpreted by reference to one’s duty or another’s right. But Locke interprets *suum* primarily as a particular species of right called property, and constructs a property-based concept of justice. Grotius gave a strong impetus in encouraging this mode of thinking. He interpreted *suum* as another’s right in the

proper or strict sense of the word. He called this right a faculty (*facultas*) and used it as the basis of his concept of justice. Grotius' view of justice and rights has been discussed by a number of commentators in recent years,⁴ but it still seems necessary to point out what Locke has taken over from him. Grotius distinguishes three senses of the Latin term *jus*, and what specifically concerns us is its second sense. *Jus* in the second sense has reference to a person. It is 'the moral quality of a person, which makes it possible to have or to do something justly (*Qualitas moralis personae, competens ad aliquid juste habendum vel agendum*)' (Grotius 1995, 1. 1. 4).⁵ *Jus* understood in this sense can be rendered as 'a right' in English, as distinct from a law or a state of being just. Grotius goes on to distinguish between two kinds of moral quality or right: the perfect kind is called a faculty while the imperfect one is called an aptitude (*aptitudo*). The faculty comprehends a power over oneself (*libertas*) or over others, ownership (*dominium*) of things with various degrees, and contractual rights (1. 1. 5). This faculty is the basis of expletive justice (*justitia expletrix*), which he regards as 'justice properly or strictly so called' (1. 1. 8. 1). Justice in the proper or strict sense means to give to each what is his own, where 'his own' is understood as something that he has a faculty over. On the other hand, an aptitude or an imperfect right, according to Grotius, should be excluded from the sphere of strict justice. It should be treated as a concomitant of 'the virtues which do good to other people, such as the generosity, compassion, and foresight of a female ruler (*rectricis*)' (1. 1. 8. 1). The imperfect right concerns whether each receives something according to his merit, or whether each receives what is fitting.

Grotius' concept of justice decisively influenced Locke in enabling him to form a property-based concept. Grotius makes expletive justice a matter of abstaining from another man's faculty or its objects, and of restoring them if they are violated. It should be noted that his expletive justice requires that the object of another man's faculty be restored if damaged. He even acknowledges that expletive justice can be called restorative justice (Grotius 1995, 1. 1. 8. 1). If anyone has damaged another man's faculty or its object, justice requires that he make good the loss (2. 17. 1–3). Now if we replace 'faculty' by Locke's term 'property', we obtain his view that justice is a matter of preserving (i.e. abstaining from, and restoring) another man's property. When Locke says, 'Where there is no property, there is no injustice', he is certainly adopting the prior definition of injustice as 'the Invasion or Violation of that right [sc. property]' (*Essay IV. iii. 18*, p. 549). The preservation of another's property means, in the first instance, that one refrains from invading another man's property in his person or goods.⁶ As Locke says, the first precept of the law of nature requires that 'no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions' (*TT II. ii. 6*, p. 289). This implies that everyone ought to preserve any other's property (in his person and goods) in the minimal sense of leaving that property unharmed. But his notion of preservation also contains the more extensive sense of preservation, i.e. that of settling any dispute of rights, and restoring rights if they are violated. In his discussion of conquest, Locke says that if 'Justice is denied', 'my Son' or 'his Son may renew his *Appeal*, till he recover his Right' (*II. xvi. 176*, p. 404). As we shall see later, he also speaks of the right to seek reparation as belonging to the victim whose right has been violated.

Before we finish considering the second element of justice, we should note that Locke takes over from Grotius (among others) the view that justice is closely bound up with the use of force. Grotius himself does not specify the standard by which we judge whether a moral quality is perfect or not. Later interpreters follow Pufendorf in interpreting the perfect right as something that can be protected by the use of force, and the imperfect right as something that can be realised through voluntary acts of generosity or mercy. Grotius seems to think, on factual rather than definitional grounds (J.B. Schneewind 1998, p. 79 n. 40), that it is necessary to protect the perfect right by the use of force, whether it is the force of law or of arms, while the imperfect right cannot be claimed at court or in war. Grotius also holds that the extralegal force of arms can be legitimately used in a just war (Grotius 1995, 2. 1. 3, 2. 1. 6, 2. 1. 11). For Locke, the legal use of force in punishment is legitimate, but (as we shall see below) the extralegal appeal to heaven is also legitimate in a state of war.

Now let us finally consider the third element of justice, i.e. equality or proportionality. The expression 'equality or proportionality' is used to capture the elastic, Greek notion of equality that embodies both arithmetic equality (as in $2=2$) and geometrical equality or proportionality (as in $2:3=4:6$). This elastic notion seems to arise because the Greek word *ἴσος* itself means both equal and equitable or fair (Aristotle 1982, p. 256 n. a).⁷ But for our purpose, we only need to focus on the simple idea of arithmetic equality that figures most prominently in Aristotle's idea of corrective justice.

Aristotle, says Locke, is 'allowed a Master in this Science [of politics], and few enter upon the Consideration of Government, without reading his *Politicks*' (*Correspondence*, VIII, p. 58). But his *Nicomachean Ethics* as well as *Politics* seems to have influenced Locke. In his famous discussion of 'particular justice', Aristotle draws a distinction between distributive justice and corrective justice. The former concerns 'distributions of honour or money or the other things that fall to be divided among those who have a share in the constitution', while the latter 'plays a corrective⁸ part in transactions' (Aristotle 1995, 1130^b30–1131^a1). Distributive justice sustains a geometrical equality between citizens by distributing to each according to his *ἀξία* or merit. As we have seen, this is the kind of justice which Grotius has excluded from the sphere of strict justice. Corrective justice seeks to establish an arithmetical equality by taking away unjust gains, and then giving them back to the one who has suffered. It seeks to restore the initially supposed equality of human beings. Human transactions may be voluntary as in sale, purchase, usury, pledging, lending, etc.; or involuntary as in theft, adultery, assault, robbery, murder, etc. Of the nature of corrective justice, Aristotle says the following:

[T]he law looks only to the distinctive character of the injury, and treats the parties as equal, if one is in the wrong and the other is being wronged, and if one inflicted injury and the other has received it. Therefore, this kind of injustice being an inequality, the judge tries to equalize it; for in the case also in which one has received and the other has inflicted a wound, or one has slain and the other been slain, the suffering and the action have been unequally

distributed; but the judge tries to equalize (*ισάξειν*) things by means of the penalty or loss (*ζημία*),⁹ taking away from the gain of the assailant. . . . therefore corrective (*ἐπανορθωτικόν*)¹⁰ justice will be the intermediate between loss and gain. This is why, when people dispute, they take refuge in the judge; and to go to the judge (*ἐπὶ τὸν δικαστήν*) is to go to justice (*ἐπὶ τὸ δίκαιον*).

(Aristotle 1995, 1132a4–20)¹¹

Corrective justice, then, is the justice administered by a judge. To use Hobbes' phraseology, this is 'the justice of an arbitrator' (1996, XV. 15). Hobbes also holds that the proper name for this type of justice is equity (XV. 15; 23–4).¹² Aristotle seems to follow the Greek custom in considering corrective justice within the context of civil law, but the basic idea involved is a straightforward one. Justice consists in the equal or impartial treatment of litigants by a judge, and the judge serves to eliminate any injury or unjust gain from transactions by interpreting and applying a law. It is this basic idea of Aristotle's corrective justice that gets transmitted to Locke.

There are other views of Aristotle that seem to embody the idea of equal treatment, though they do not fall under corrective justice. Aristotle analyses the concept of justice (or the just, *τὸ δίκαιον*) into legality (*τὸ νόμιμον*) and equality or proportionality (*τὸ ἴσον*). Legality concerns universal justice rather than particular justice, and it has to do with an equal law. Aristotle also considers the view that justice is simply a matter of reciprocity (*τὸ ἀντιπεπονθός*) (Aristotle 1995, 1132^b22–28). This reciprocal justice concerns an equality in economic dealings, especially the equality brought about by the use of money. He expresses the view that '[m]oney . . . acting as a measure, makes goods commensurate and equates them' (1133^b15–16). These views of Aristotle involve the idea of an equal law or measure, though they are not so obviously linked to an impartial judge or litigants as is corrective justice.

Let us now see that Locke does take over the idea of equal or impartial treatment. He bundles equity and justice together when he speaks of the majority of men as 'no strict Observers of Equity and Justice' (*TT* II. ix. 123, p. 368). This may be taken to suggest that his concept of justice has a certain affinity to Hobbes' equity or Aristotle's corrective justice. But if we look for two of the concrete notions that embody the idea of equal or impartial treatment, i.e. the notion of an impartial judge, and that of an equal law or measure, it becomes clear that Locke makes an extensive use of that idea. First, let us see the vast extent to which he uses the notion of an impartial judge. Every man in the state of nature, says Locke, is 'both Judge and Executioner of the Law of Nature' (II. ix. 125, p. 369) or 'Judge, Interpreter, and Executioner of it' (II. xi. 136, p. 377). But 'Self-love will make Men partial to themselves and their Friends' (II. ii. 13, p. 293), or 'Passion and Revenge is very apt to carry them too far, and with too much heat, in their own Cases; as well as negligence, and unconcernedness, to make them too remiss, in other Mens' (II. ix. 125, p. 369). Since there is no '*known and indifferent Judge*, with Authority to determine all differences according to the established Law' (*ibid.*), men seek to remedy this

inconvenience by uniting themselves into a commonwealth or political society, and by setting up 'a Judge on Earth, with Authority to determine all the Controversies, and redress the Injuries, that may happen to any Member of the Commonwealth; which Judge is the Legislative, or Magistrates appointed by it' (II. vii. 89, p. 343). Locke repeatedly stresses that political society is distinguished from the state of nature in having 'a common establish'd law and judicature to appeal to, with Authority to decide Controversies between them [sc. the members of a political society], and punish Offenders' (II. vii. 87, p. 342; also §§90 and 91). The primary function of political society is to serve as an impartial judge over all disputes of rights that arise between its members.

Second, if we turn to the notion of an equal law or measure, we find in Locke the view that justice has one law or measure that is equally applicable to different parties. In referring to Hooker's 'great Maxims of Justice and Charity', Locke quotes the statement that '*those things which are equal, must needs all have one measure*' (TT II. ii. 5, p. 288). The state of nature, he says, lacks an established 'Law', which is 'received and allowed by common consent to be the Standard of Right and Wrong, and the common measure to decide all Controversies between them' (II. ix. 124, p. 369). Locke also explicates the biblical notion of 'justice' (*δικαιοσύνη*, rendered as 'righteousness') in terms of 'an exact obedience to the Law' (*Reasonableness*, p. 12) or 'a perfect Obedience' (ibid., p. 17). The link between justice and law is exhibited in Locke's tentative definition of justice in the *Essay*, i.e. 'such a treatment of the Person or Goods of another, as is according to Law' (*Essay* III. xi. 9, p. 513). The idea of justice as equal treatment is significant for Locke's theory of toleration. He states, *Justitiae mensura benevolentiae et charitatis officiis cumulanda* (*TOL*, p. 78/9), which means that 'the measure of justice is to be added to the duties of benevolence and charity'.¹³ Locke is claiming here that Christians and pagans are to be treated equally under a law regardless of their religion, so his point is that the impartial treatment needs to be added to the mere duties of benevolence and charity.

The notion of an equal law or measure plays a role in chapter v of the 'Second Treatise'. It sets limits to the legitimate acquisition of property. There are many references to a common law, or measure, or rule in his theory of original appropriation. After stating that a man may acquire a property in external objects by his own labour, Locke refers to this norm as 'this Law of reason' (TT II. v. 30, p. 307) or 'this original Law of Nature for the *beginning of Property*' (ibid.). In the beginning of the world, the 'Law Man was under' was 'rather for *appropriating*' (35, p. 310). Locke also makes mention of '[t]he measure of Property, Nature has well set, by the Extent of Mens *Labour, and the Conveniency of Life*' (36, p. 310), or 'the *Rule of Propriety, (viz.)* that every Man should have as much as he could make use of' (36, p. 311). The limits of non-spoilage and use are called 'the common Law of Nature' (37, p. 313) or the '*measures*' (38, p. 313). These references suggest that those acts of appropriation, performed in accordance with the common law, rule, or measure, are to be regarded as just.¹⁴ This notion of just action even conforms to the definition Harris quoted from Draft B of the *Essay* (which I noted at the beginning of this chapter), i.e. 'the conformity between an action & the rule of propriety'.

The notion of an equal law or measure also appears in Locke's discussion of the just price, where he says that 'justice has but one measure for all men' ('Venditio 1695', Locke 1991, II, p. 496). In commenting on the problem of clipped silver coins, he stresses the significance of a fixed equal measure, claiming that '[t]he Standard once settled by publick Authority, the quantity of Silver establish'd under the several denominations . . . should not be altered [sic] till there were an absolute necessity shewn of such a change' (*FC*, p. 415). In Locke's view, the quantity of silver is 'the Measure of Commerce' (*ibid.*, p. 410), and the commonwealth should act as a referee of economic transactions by fixing this measure and upholding it impartially. This view is reminiscent of Aristotle's notion of reciprocal justice, which implies that money is a universal equaliser. But it also shows that the notion of an equal law or measure, as forming part of the idea of equality, figures prominently in Locke's concept of justice.

A reconstruction of Locke's concept

Having discussed each of the traditional elements of justice, we now proceed to reconstruct Locke's concept of justice by showing how he combines or synthesises those elements. To put the three elements together, we may initially state that for Locke, justice is the mutual and equal preservation of property. But we can make this initial formulation simpler by removing the adjective 'mutual'. Justice, then, is the equal preservation of property. As I noted earlier, Locke subsumes the element of reciprocity under the idea of the preservation of property. Similarly, we may say that this element is built into his notion of a law, and thus forms part of the element of equality. In order to eliminate any subordination or dependence from human beings, Locke uses a general strategy of placing all human beings under the law of nature (*TT* II. ii. 4, 6). This law requires them to be independent of one another, and it secures their reciprocal relationship because it is *equally* binding upon all human beings. Likewise, the positive laws of a country serve to secure the reciprocal relationship of all of its subjects. Thus given Locke's notion of an equal law as a device to secure human reciprocity, the element of reciprocity gets absorbed into the element of equality.

Let us elaborate and qualify the simple formula of justice as 'the equal preservation of property'. First of all, we need to be clear about the meaning of the term 'property' which we have been using. Locke used the term 'property' in the broad sense of a man's 'life, liberty, and possessions [or estates]', as well as in the narrow sense of material possessions alone. He used another locution to express the same broad sense, according to which each man has a property in his person and goods. A careful analysis is actually needed for a proper understanding of his concept of property. Though I cannot offer such an analysis here, it is important to note that 'property' means *an exclusive right of disposal or its objects*.¹⁵ The exclusive right implies that its objects belong exclusively to a particular human being; that its exclusiveness can only be cancelled (under normal circumstances) with the consent of the right-holder; and that it is to be effectively protected by the use of force. If this right is violated, strict justice demands that it be restored. As such,

property is distinct from non-exclusive moral rights, such as the common right of everyone and the right of charity. The former is the right that any member of the human species originally had in common with Adam, to take and make use of an indefinite portion of the world (*TT* II. v. 27–30, I. iv. 24, I. ix. 86–7), while the latter is a poor man's 'right to the Surplusage of his [sc. another man's] Goods', or 'a Title to so much out of another's Plenty, as will keep him from extream want, where he has no means to subsist otherwise' (I. iv. 42, p. 188). I should like to stress that property should not be confused with a right in general. Locke himself confusedly stated in the *Essay* that 'property' is 'a right to any thing', but as Leibniz rightly pointed out, this definition obliterates the ordinary seventeenth-century distinction between an exclusive right and a common right.¹⁶ Perhaps, Locke merely wanted to stress that property is a right whose objects are not restricted to material possessions. Yet as it stands, Locke's celebrated definition of property in the *Essay* is too extensive, and it does *not* count as the authentic definition that is applicable to 'property' in the *Two Treatises*. In the *Two Treatises*, Locke consistently thinks of property as the exclusive right of disposal, and he is not faithful to the confused definition of the *Essay*. I have drawn attention to this point here because it has misled a number of recent commentators.¹⁷ As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, Harris accepts Locke's confused definition as authentic, and claims that 'justice denoted a duty to preserve rights'. Yet justice in the strict sense does *not* concern the preservation of all sorts of rights. If it did, it would make nonsense of the sharp contrast that Locke draws between property and the common right, or between justice and charity (*TT* I. iv. 42, Locke 1991, II, pp. 496–500).¹⁸

Second, a careful reading of Locke's writings reveals that the sphere of strict justice actually involves not only a property (in one's person and goods), but also other legally enforceable natural rights, such as the right of inheritance and contractual rights. First, let us consider the right of inheritance. Locke says, '*Justice* gives every Man a Title to the product of his honest Industry, and the fair Acquisitions of his Ancestors descended to him' (*TT* I. iv. 42, p. 188). This statement is an application of the formula of *suum cuique tribuere*. We can obtain Locke's statement by substituting for *suum* the following two natural rights, i.e. the right to own the product of his honest industry, and the right to inherit his ancestors' acquisitions. Locke's theory of original appropriation grounds the former right, while the God-given 'desire . . . of propagating' the human species (*TT* I. ix. 88, p. 224) is the ultimate ground of the natural right of inheritance. Second, Locke includes contractual rights in the sphere of justice. In discussing the problem of the clipping of silver coins, he says that if the public authority allows the clipped silver coins to circulate, then the landlords and creditors are deprived of part of what their contracts specify as their due. It would be 'a publick failure of Justice' (*FC*, pp. 415–6), says Locke, to transfer someone's right and possessions in such an arbitrary manner. Like the right of inheritance, contractual rights are also natural insofar as 'Truth and keeping of Faith belongs to Men, as Men, and not as Members of Society' (*TT* II. ii. 14, p. 295; also, II. xiii. 116 and II. xvi. 195). This makes one wonder whether we should revise the simple formula of justice, and state that justice is 'the equal preservation of property, together with the right

of inheritance and contractual rights'. This is the exact way of putting Locke's view. But since the simple formula is easy to remember, we may stick to it while keeping in mind that 'property' in this simple formula should be taken to include the property that arises from, or gives rise to, the right of inheritance and contractual rights.¹⁹

Third, we should clarify what the 'equal preservation' means. We have already touched upon what it is to preserve property. The preservation of property should be placed in the context of possible disputes. It should be understood as a continuous process of negating or eliminating injustice, i.e. avoiding any violation of exclusive rights of disposal, settling controversies over those rights, and restoring them if they are violated. On the other hand, the idea of equality involved here is that of formal equality, i.e. of treating like cases alike. As we have seen, this idea is exemplified in an impartial judge and an equal law or measure. Locke's concept of justice, then, is a combination of the idea of preserving property and that of formal equality. Justice, or the equal preservation of property, is the equal or impartial mode of leaving, determining, and restoring property, as exemplified in the treatment of litigants by an impartial judge who applies an equal law. Property is the basis of justice in the sense that justice is unintelligible without the existence of a property. But the distinguishing feature of justice is to be found in the equal or impartial mode of settling the disputes involving properties in persons and goods. To confirm the connection between justice and the settling of disputes, we should look at Locke's sociological account of the origin of the institution of justice. On his account, the unequal expansion of properties in external goods, initially introduced by the use of money, increases the frequency of disputes of rights among the members of a given society. It is this frequency of disputes that first gives rise to a more or less stable institution of justice.²⁰

Justice in political society

Having made these preliminary remarks, I now proceed to describe in detail how Locke conceives of justice. To do so, we need to look first at how he conceives of justice in political society. For it is only in political society, rather than in the state of nature or any other transitional state, that the equal or impartial mode of preserving property gets really established. In the state of nature, justice is administered *only imperfectly*. We begin with Locke's statement about the civil magistrate's duty of justice. He says in *Epistola de Tolerantia*:

It is the duty of the civil magistrate to preserve in a good condition [*sartam tectam servare*], by the laws enacted impartially for all, the just possession of these things that belong to this life, for all the people in general and for every one of his subjects in particular. If anyone wants to violate these laws, contrary to civil law and morality [*contra jus fasque*²¹], his presumption is to be checked by the fear of punishment, consisting in the deprivation or diminution of those goods which otherwise he could and ought to enjoy.

(*TOL*, pp. 66/7, Gough's translation has been revised)

In this passage, Locke advances the claim that the civil magistrate, or what he calls 'the Legislative' in the *Two Treatises*,²² has the duty to maintain justice. Here he expresses the magistrate's duty in terms of the equal preservation of every subject's property. First, justice consists in preserving 'for every one of his subjects in particular' 'the just possession of these things that belong to this life', i.e. preserving every man's property in the broad sense of the word. Locke applies here the formula of *sum cuique tribuere* and claims that justice consists in preserving for each subject what is his own. Second, justice consists in treating all subjects equally, or more specifically, by the impartially enacted laws. Justice requires impartial treatment without fear or favour, and it consists in treating like cases alike. In all forms of government, says Locke in the 'Second Treatise', the supreme authority or the legislative ought to 'govern by *promulgated establish'd Laws*, not to be varied in particular Cases, but to have one Rule for Rich and Poor, for the Favourite at Court, and the Country Man at Plough' (*TT II. xi. 142*, p. 381). If we combine the first idea of preserving property with the second one of equal treatment, then we obtain his concept of justice as the equal preservation of property.

Locke states the magistrate's duty of justice as one of the chief limits imposed upon the supreme power of any commonwealth. His following statement reveals that the duty or obligation of justice is diametrically opposed to arbitrary rule:

The *Legislative*, or Supream Authority, cannot assume to its self a power to Rule by extemporary Arbitrary Decrees, but *is bound to dispense Justice*, and decide the Rights of the Subject *by promulgated standing Laws, and known Authoris'd Judges*.

(*TT II. xi. 136*, p. 376)

As Locke states here, the idea of equal or impartial treatment gets embodied in its effective instruments, i.e. promulgated standing laws and authorised judges. Settling a dispute of rights ('decid[ing] the Rights of the Subject') is an aspect of the process whereby property is preserved. Thus this statement about the limit of the legislative authority confirms once again that for Locke, justice is the equal preservation of property.

The passage quoted from the *Epistola* suggests that there is a further feature of Locke's concept of justice, which may not be captured by the simple formula of 'the equal preservation of property'. Locke holds that the equal preservation of every subject's property is effectively established by the fear of punishment, and indeed, his concept of justice is inextricably linked to the notion of an effective use of force. In discussing Grotius' concept of justice, I have indicated this connection. Locke constantly bundles justice and force together, holding that it would be 'in vain' (*II. ii. 7*, p. 289) if justice remained unrealised in this world. Locke's journal entry (dated 14 February 1684), which contains extracts from Cicero's *De Officiis*, may serve as an interesting piece of evidence for the close connection he establishes between justice and force. Under the head of 'Justitia', Locke wrote:

Justitiae primum munus est, ut ne cui quis noceat nisi lacessitus iniuria, deinde ut communibus pro communibus utatur, privatis autem ut suis. Tertium ut propulsit aliis quibus infertur, si possit injuriam.

(MS Locke f. 8, p. 9)

In English, these may be rendered as follows:

The first office of justice is that no man should harm another unless he has been provoked by injury, and the second is that one should use common goods as common, but private ones as one's own. The third office is that one should, when possible, repel an injury and defend the others upon whom it is inflicted.

Locke was reading and quoting from Cicero's *De Officiis*, partly in order to prepare himself to write the Latin prose of the *Epistola*, and this extract even appears to have a connection with the passage I have quoted from it. The first two offices of justice are stated by Cicero himself in *De Officiis* I. 20, but the third office is *not* what he stated in the same place.²³ Actually, *Locke added it himself* on the basis of what Cicero said elsewhere (presumably in I. 23). This, together with Locke's frequent remarks about punishment, suggests that he is inclined to think of justice as inseparable from the use of force in punishing the violators of a property. In this respect, Locke's concept of justice is similar to Grotius' idea of expletive justice, while being dissimilar to Aristotle's idea of corrective justice. Thus, it is plausible to suggest that for Locke, force is not only an effective means, but also an indispensable means of preserving property.

It is necessary to specify who plays the role of an impartial judge and punisher in political society. Locke gives different answers at different levels. Here we only consider his answers at the levels where he presumes the normal administration of justice to take place. At one level, he says that when everyone who joins a political society 'hath quitted this natural Power [to judge of, and punish breaches of the law of nature], and resign'd it up into the hands of the Community', 'all private judgement of every particular Member [comes to be] excluded' (*TT* II. vii. 87, p. 342). Thus 'the Community comes to be Umpire, by settled standing Rules, indifferent, and the same to all Parties' (*ibid.*). 'And by Men having Authority from the Community, for the execution of those Rules, [the community] decides all the differences that may happen between any Members of that Society, concerning any matter of right; and punishes those Offences which any member hath committed against the Society, with such Penalties as the Law has established' (*ibid.*).²⁴

At another level, Locke explains the rise of the legislative and executive power, and claims that the legislative agent comes to have a judicial power. Everyone 'who has enter'd into civil Society, and is become a member of any Commonwealth' 'has thereby quitted his power to punish Offences against the Law of Nature, in prosecution of his own private Judgment'. But in so doing, every man has given up 'the Judgment of Offences' 'to the Legislative in all Cases, where he can Appeal to the Magistrate', while also giving 'a right to the Commonwealth to imploy his

force, for the Execution of the Judgments of the Commonwealth, whenever he shall be called to it' (II. vii. 88, pp. 342–3).²⁵ This is indeed a complex account. To understand it properly, we should see that the natural power of punishment (which everyone is said to have 'quitted') presupposes everyone's natural judicial power. I shall say more about this power later, but it is the power to act as judge in the state of nature. So Locke's point is that the legislative acquires the judicial power via the community (to which everyone, in the first instance, has transferred his natural judicial power), while the commonwealth (i.e. community) retains the power to punish offenders after it arises from the transfer of everyone's natural power of punishment.

It may be thought strange that Locke treats the legislative power as the judicial power. For the legislative branch of government makes laws, and it seems to constitute a branch distinct from the judiciary. Some commentators have even pointed out that the judiciary, in Locke's view, belongs to the executive branch of government.²⁶ But this is misleading. The legislative agent can certainly perform a judicial function as it retains the supreme power within a commonwealth. Otherwise, there would be no point in imposing the obligation of justice upon the legislative power as Locke does. It is true that the legislative and executive power 'come often to be separated' (II. xii. 144, p. 383), and if that happens, judges work within the executive branch of government. Even in this case, however, the legislative agent has the supreme power 'to which all the rest are and must be subordinate' (II. xiii. 149, pp. 384–5). Historically speaking, Parliament in England did perform a judicial function as 'High Court of Parliament'.²⁷ But what is more important is that Locke does not place the judiciary in a fixed branch of government. He rather establishes a particular relationship of subordination among the powers. Even the legislative power is subordinate to the community or the people, which is the collective body that erects the legislative power and 'perpetually retains a *Supream Power* of saving themselves' (149, p. 385). The community can remove or alter it, and place it in a different part of the community; or else, it can perform a judicial function and punish offenders by itself. Thus the community, the legislative, and its lower magistrates in the executive branch can act as judges and punish offenders. Since the community is synonymous with what Locke calls the commonwealth or society, and since political society appears to be equal to the community with a legislative power placed somewhere (hence, with a particular form of government),²⁸ we can affirm that Locke conceives of all these collective entities primarily as justice-dispensing institutions.

Justice in the state of nature

We now turn to Locke's account of the state of nature, and confirm that he uses the same concept of justice. But we should be aware that the state of nature does not offer the same instruments for attaining the equal preservation of property. In the state of nature, there is neither a known, established law that men have accepted as a common measure, nor a known, impartial judge who settles disputes. These are two defects of the state of nature (*TT* II. ix. 124–5). Another defect Locke

states is that there is no ‘*Power* to back and support the Sentence when right, and to *give* it due *Execution*’ (126, p. 369). Given the three defects of the state of nature, Locke cannot require men to perform the strict duty of justice. Instead, he requires that everyone should strive, ‘as much as he can’ (II. ii. 6, p. 289), to preserve any other’s property equally by executing the law of nature, according to the dictates of ‘calm reason and conscience’ (8, p. 290). Here the calm reason and conscience is the surrogate for an impartial judge. The law of nature is the equal measure for all human creatures, just as the promulgated standing laws serve as the equal measure for all subjects of a commonwealth. In place of the magistrate’s power of punishment, everyone in the state of nature has the executive power of the law of nature.

Before we see how these instruments operate in the state of nature, let us see whether there is anything like the natural obligation of justice. The law of nature ‘willeth the Peace and *Preservation of all Mankind*’ (II. ii. 7, p. 289). It ‘obliges every one’ (6, p. 289), so everyone has the general obligation to preserve all mankind. This general obligation implies specific obligations. As we have seen, Locke specifies the first precept of the law of nature as the obligation to avoid mutual harm, i.e. one’s obligation to refrain from invading another’s property. This amounts to the minimal obligation of justice, which simply requires non-interference with another’s property. Every human being has this minimal obligation of justice because everyone, as God’s workmanship and His property, is obliged to obey his will; and because God, as the maker of the law of nature, prohibits any *mutual arbitrary use* among the members of the human species.²⁹ In Locke’s own words, men are made to ‘last during his [sc. God’s], not one another’s Pleasure’; they are not ‘made for one another’s uses’ (ibid.). Locke also states other natural obligations. First, he says, ‘[e]very one . . . is *bound to preserve himself*’ (ibid.), but this is not an obligation of justice since it is only a self-regarding obligation. Second, ‘when his own Preservation comes not in competition’, he ought ‘as much as he can, *to preserve the rest of Mankind*’ (ibid.). This is a maximal obligation of justice, which requires everyone to preserve the property of every other member of the human species ‘as much as he can’. Its extent is limited only by the prior obligation of self-preservation.

Now what are the instruments for performing the minimal and maximal obligation of justice? First, everyone in the state of nature has a power to punish transgressors, i.e. the executive power of the law of nature. Without the executive power, the law of nature would ‘be in vain’ (7, p. 289). This power is given so that ‘all Men may be restrained from invading others Rights, and from doing hurt to one another, and the Law of Nature be observed’ (ibid.). Everyone equally has the power to ‘preserve the innocent and restrain offenders’ (ibid.), because the state of nature is a state of perfect equality where ‘there is no superiority or jurisdiction of one, over another’ (7, p. 290). Locke also says that this power of punishment is based on ‘the Right he [sc. every man] has to preserve Mankind in general’ (8, p. 290, see also 11).

Second, everyone in the state of nature has a power to act as judge. This is the ‘natural judicial power’ I spoke of earlier. Though Locke himself does not use that

expression, the power of punishment clearly presupposes it. Everyone is 'both Judge and Executioner of the Law of Nature' (II. ix. 125, p. 369), and everyone has 'by Nature a Power . . . to judge of, and punish the breaches of that Law [of nature]' (II. vii. 87, pp. 341–2). Indeed, Locke's claim that everyone has the natural judicial power is an antithesis to the Hobbesian view that a particular man should monopolise that power.³⁰ Everyone can exercise this power not only in the case of other men's disputes, but also in his own case. This natural judicial power, if exercised in his own case, is called 'a liberty to judge of his Right' (II. vii. 91, p. 345). Locke claims that everyone has this liberty together with a liberty 'to defend his Right', or 'to maintain it' 'according to the best of his Power' (*ibid.*, see also II. ii. 13). Nevertheless, the natural judicial power is essentially a power to make calm and reasonable judgments. Speaking of the power of punishment, Locke says that it is 'no Absolute or Arbitrary Power, to use a Criminal when he has got him in his hands, according to the passionate heats, or boundless extravagancy of his own Will' (II. ii. 8, p. 290). Rather, it is a limited power 'only to retribute to him, so far as calm reason and conscience dictates, what is proportionate to his Transgression' (*ibid.*). The contrast Locke draws between arbitrary power and the limited power corresponds to the one between the supreme authority's arbitrary rule and its obligation of justice. In his view, the power of punishment should be limited by the natural requirement of justice that one ought to give back to the offender 'what is proportionate to his Transgression', according to the dictates of calm reason and conscience. The scope of 'what is proportionate to his Transgression' is to be determined by each man's calm reason and conscience. Locke highlights the role of reason when he describes the state of nature as the state where 'Men liv[e] together *according to reason*, without a common Superior on Earth, with Authority to judge between them' (II. iii. 19, p. 298, emphasis added). Similarly, he describes the transgressor as living by 'another Rule, than that of *reason* and common Equity, which is that measure God has set to the actions of Men, for their mutual security' (II. ii. 8, p. 290). Thus in the state of nature, calm reason together with conscience plays the role of an impartial judge that we find in political society.

Locke further identifies 'what is proportionate to his Transgression' with what is useful for '*Reparation* and *Restraint*' (*ibid.*). Reparation and restraint are 'the only reasons' (*ibid.*) that can justify punishment, which is the lawful act of doing harm to another human being.³¹ As to the restraint, Locke says that punishment serves to 'make him [sc. a transgressor of the law of nature] repent the doing of it, and thereby deter him, and by his Example others, from doing the like mischief' (*ibid.*). The idea of reparation, on the other hand, is connected with that of injury done to a particular man. When someone has received an injury or damage, the injured party has 'besides the right of punishment common to him with other Men, a particular Right to seek *Reparation* from him that has done it' (10, p. 291). This right of reparation 'belongs only to the injured party' (11, p. 314), and it is the right of 'appropriating to himself, the Goods or Service of the Offender' (11, p. 292). Whereas the right of punishment rests on the right to preserve all mankind, the right of reparation is grounded upon the '*Right of Self-preservation*'

(ibid.). Furthermore, ‘any other person who finds it just, may also joyn with him that is injur’d, and assist him in recovering from the Offender, so much as may make satisfaction for the harm he has suffer’d’ (10, p. 291).

Let me summarise Locke’s account of justice in the state of nature. Everyone has the obligation to leave any other’s property unharmed, and the obligation to preserve it as much as possible, when it does not conflict with his self-preservation. Everyone equally has the power to act as judge, and the power to execute the law of nature according to the dictates of calm reason and conscience. On the other hand, any particular victim can seek reparation by the right of reparation, with the assistance of anyone else who finds it just. Locke’s concept of justice operates in this complex manner. But it is clear that this concept combines the idea of preserving (i.e. leaving, determining, and restoring) property with the reasonably modified idea of equal or impartial treatment, while it also incorporates the use of force as an effective and indispensable means of establishing the equal preservation of property.

A special application of Locke’s concept: an appeal to heaven

In this final section, I discuss a special application of Locke’s concept of justice. He applies it to what he calls ‘a state of war’. Unlike political society or the state of nature, this is the state where there is no administration of justice at all. So it seems that Locke’s concept of justice cannot find any application in the state of war. Nevertheless, he does make an active use of certain elements of his concept of justice in developing an account of an appeal to heaven. This is an account of how an appeal can be made to God’s tribunal in the state of war, or under the circumstances where there is no recognisable administration of justice on earth. Since it is an account of an appeal to justice, Locke is bound to use his concept of justice in some way. To this extent, we are justified in treating him as applying his concept of justice to the state of war. By considering his account of an appeal to heaven, we can shed further light on the significance of particular elements of his concept of justice, such as the role of judges, the use of force, and the restorative aspect of justice that depends on the pre-existing right called property.

What Locke calls an appeal to heaven is commonly understood by recent commentators as the equivalent of ‘the last resort’ to arms,³² or an act of ‘taking up arms to resist oppression’.³³ Much earlier, Hume simply equated it with ‘war and violence’.³⁴ For Locke, however, an appeal to heaven is an appeal to God’s court of justice, which appeal takes a specific form of fighting in this world, i.e. of using force to defend one’s right on the basis of one’s conscientious judgment. As this indicates, Locke’s account of an appeal to heaven has a more complex structure than is usually thought.

According to Locke, one can appeal to heaven only in a state of war. But a state of war can arise both in political society and in the state of nature, as he says that ‘*Force without Right, upon a Man’s Person, makes a State of War*, both where there is, and is not, a common Judge’ (*TT* II. iii. 19, p. 299). Illegitimate force ‘*upon a Man’s*

Person' is not the sole cause of a state of war. Even if someone uses force to deprive another man of his liberty or his possessions, this can give rise to a state of war because there is no reason to suppose that he would not destroy the life or person of that man (18–19). Once a war arises, it is difficult to put an end to it unless there is a common judge between contending parties; indeed, 'one great *reason of Mens putting themselves into Society*, and quitting the State of Nature' is precisely 'to avoid this State of War' (21, p. 300). Yet even in political society, a state of war arises if the judiciary exists only in name and denies any remedy for the injuries done 'by a manifest perverting of Justice, and a barefaced wresting of the Laws, to protect or indemnify the violence or injuries of some Men, or Party of Men' (20, p. 299). Those who are 'appointed to administer Justice' may fail to 'protect and redress the innocent, by an unbiased application of it, to all who are under it' (20, pp. 299–300). '[W]herever this is not *bona fide* done, *War is made upon the Sufferers*', and if they have 'no appeal on Earth to right them [sc. violence and injury]' in this situation, 'they are left to the only remedy in such Cases, an appeal to Heaven' (20, p. 300).

Locke elucidates the notion of an appeal to heaven by referring to the story of Jephthah³⁵ in the book of Judges of the Old Testament:

Had there been any such Court, any superior Jurisdiction on Earth, to determine the right between *Jephtha* and the *Ammonites*, they had never come to a State of War, but we see he was forced to appeal to *Heaven*. *The Lord the Judge* (says he) *be Judge this day between the Children of Israel, and the Children of Ammon*, *Judg.* 11. 27. and then Prosecuting, and relying on his *appeal*, he leads out his Army to Battle:

(*TT* II. iii. 21, p. 300)

Locke notes that in the controversies of this kind, there is an important question to be asked, i.e. '*who shall be Judge?*' He states that nobody is really asking who shall decide the controversy. For 'every one knows what *Jephtha* here tells us, that *the Lord the Judge*, shall judge. Where there is no Judge on Earth, the *Appeal* lies to God in Heaven' (ibid.). Moreover, Locke says that nobody is really asking who shall judge 'whether another hath put himself in a State of War with me, and whether I may as *Jephtha* did, appeal to Heaven in it' (ibid.). For it is clear that 'I my self can only be Judge in my own Conscience, as I will answer it at the great Day, to the Supream Judge of all Men' (ibid.; cf. *TOL*, p. 128/9). It is worth noting here that Locke's account involves two distinct judgments. First, every man judges in his own conscience whether another party has put himself in a state of war with him, and whether he may use force to settle the dispute. At this level, there is no common judge, and every man acts as judge in the inner court of his conscience. The judgment made is bound to be subjective, however conscientiously it may be made. Second, God alone is the supreme judge who can objectively or impartially judge whether every man's judgment and his consequent actions are right. God's tribunal is the final one, where (as Locke confirms in the *Essay* as well as in the *Epistola de Tolerantia*) '*the secrets of all Hearts shall be laid open*' and 'every one shall receive

according to his doings' (*Essay* II. xxvii. 26, p. 347 and *TOL*, p. 128/9). Locke's attempt to combine the two judgments can be seen most clearly in the following passage from the 'Second Treatise':

He [sc. God] alone, 'tis true, is Judge of the Right. But *every Man* is *Judge* for himself, as in all other Cases, so in this, whether another hath put himself into a State of War with him, and whether he should appeal to the Supreme Judge, as *Jephtha* did.

(*TT* II. xix. 241, p. 445)

Locke goes on to locate the question '*who shall be Judge?*' in the context of seventeenth-century English politics, and refers to the three types of situations where an appeal to heaven can be made. The first situation is where a dispute arises concerning the exercise of a king's prerogative. Where a king, as part of his prerogative, exercises a power to determine the place, time, or duration of the parliament, and the convening of the parliament depends on his will, there is 'no Judge on Earth' authorised to settle the disputes that arise between the king and the parliament. In this situation '[t]he People have no other remedy . . . but to *appeal to Heaven*', for (besides there being no common judge) 'the Rulers, in such attempts [to harm the people by his prerogative] . . . do that, which they have not a right to do' (II. xiv. 168, p. 397). '[W]here the Body of the People, or any single Man, is deprived of their Right, . . . and have no Appeal on Earth, there they have a liberty to appeal to Heaven, whenever they judge the Cause of sufficient moment' (*ibid.*). The constitution of the society does not grant the people any superior power to be judge, but they reserve a power to judge whether they can justly appeal to heaven:

[T]hey have, by a Law antecedent and paramount to all positive Laws of men, reserv'd that ultimate Determination to themselves, which belongs to all Mankind, where there lies no Appeal on Earth, *viz.* to judge whether they have just Cause to make their Appeal to Heaven. And this Judgment they cannot part with, it being out of a Man's power so to submit himself to another, as to give him a liberty to destroy him; God and Nature never allowing a Man so to abandon himself, as to neglect his own preservation.

(*TT* II. xiv. 168, p. 398)

Locke's view of the 'ultimate Determination' appears to parallel his claim that every individual has 'the supreme and final power of judging for himself' about his salvation (*TOL*, p. 124/5). Prior to Locke, Philip Hunton claimed that every man should be considered to reserve to himself a moral power of judgment.³⁶ In the passage quoted above, however, Locke suggests that *the people's* reservation of the ultimate power of judgment is grounded on the prohibition of one man's unlimited submission to another, which prohibition in turn rests upon the natural obligation of self-preservation. He does not make clear how *every individual's* obligation can be the ground of *the people's* ultimate power. In fact, Locke leaves

unexplained whether, or how, an individual man can retain the ultimate power of judgment against the people as a collective body. He establishes a fictitious identity between the judgments of a commonwealth (hence, of the people) and those of each particular member, when he says that 'the Judgments of the Commonwealth' 'are indeed his [sc. each member's] own Judgments, they being made by himself, or his Representative' (II, vii. 88, p. 343). So it is plausible to interpret Locke as claiming that the people, whose judgments can be treated as identical with each particular member's, retain the ultimate power to judge whether they can justly make an appeal to heaven. Locke's target, unlike John Stuart Mill's, is not a tyranny of the majority but a tyrannical government. This is why he opposes *both* the judgments of the commonwealth *and* those of its members to arbitrary power.

The second type of situation is where a conqueror has made an unjust war on the conquered. When a conqueror has made an unjust war, the conquered can appeal to heaven:

[T]he Conquered, or their Children, have no Court, no Arbitrator on Earth to appeal to. Then they may *appeal*, as *Jephtha* did, to *Heaven*, and repeat their *Appeal*, till they have recovered the native Right of their Ancestors, which was to have such a Legislative over them, as the Majority should approve, and freely acquiesce in.

(*TT* II. xvi. 176, p. 404)

The third situation is where 'a Controversie arise[s] betwixt a Prince and some of the People, in a matter where the Law is silent, or doubtful, and the thing be of great Consequence' (II. xix. 242, p. 445). Locke says that 'the proper *Umpire*, in such a Case, should be the Body of the *People*' (ibid.). The people, who have deputed a trustee (i.e. a prince), retain a right to judge whether their 'Trustee or Deputy' has acted contrary to their trust (240, p. 445). However, 'if the Prince . . . decline that way of Determination, the Appeal then lies no where but to Heaven' (242, p. 445). In making this appeal, 'the *injured Party must judge* for himself, when he will think fit to make use of that Appeal, and put himself upon it' (ibid.). With reference to the second and third situations, Locke again leaves unexplained whether, or how, each individual man (*vis-à-vis* the people as a collective body) can judge the occurrence of an unjust war or the violation of his right. On the whole, he wants to stress that *the people* can judge, but he moves rather indifferently between the people and each injured party himself.

One further feature of Locke's account of an appeal to heaven deserves special notice because it reveals its connections with justice. Locke assures the reader that the admission of an appeal to heaven is not 'a perpetual foundation for Disorder' (*TT* II. xiv. 168, p. 398). He says that 'this operates not, till the Inconvenience is so great, that the Majority feel it, and are weary of it, and find a necessity to have it amended' (ibid.). But he offers a justice-based explanation to counter the objection that it causes 'endless trouble'. First, it would cause no more trouble 'than Justice does', and 'He that troubles his Neighbour without a Cause, is punished for it by the Justice of the Court he appeals to' (*TT* II. xvi. 176, p. 404). Second, an appeal

to heaven requires that anyone making that appeal have a perfect confidence or assurance in doing the right thing:

he that *appeals to Heaven*, must be sure he has Right on his side; and a Right too that is worth the Trouble and Cost of the Appeal, as he will answer at a Tribunal, that cannot be deceived, and will be sure to retribute to every one according to the Mischiefs he hath created to his Fellow-Subjects; that is, any part of Mankind.

(Ibid.)

This argument against the ‘endless trouble’ objection rests on Locke’s firm belief that God dispenses justice perfectly, rendering to each exactly what is his own.

Having clarified Locke’s account of an appeal to heaven, we should see its connections with his concept of justice. An appeal to heaven is an appeal to God’s court of justice, with the conscientious judgment of an injured party to take up arms, for restoring what he sees as his right. And as we have seen, Locke emphatically claims that the people can judge, when he links his account to practical politics. This account highlights a few features of Locke’s concept of justice. First, the role of judges is of paramount importance. Locke would have accepted Aristotle’s remark (quoted earlier), ‘to go to the judge is to go to justice’. Locke frequently raises the question ‘*who shall be Judge?*’ not only because he takes justice to be a mode of settling disputes, but also because he is deeply concerned with the workings and limits of the actual institution of justice. Ideally, a judge should be impartial, but where we cannot find such a judge, we need to find a surrogate. We should recall that in discussing justice in the state of nature, Locke has used calm reason and conscience as the surrogate for a known, authorised, impartial judge. In explaining the nature of an appeal to heaven, he makes use of the notion of each man’s inner court of conscience and that of God’s tribunal. It is not clear whether we should attach any importance to the fact that he leaves aside calm reason. Perhaps, Locke leaves out calm reason because it cannot play a very effective role in a state of war. Whatever the case may be, he is convinced that God acts as the perfectly reasonable judge in the final tribunal.

Second, we should look at the close connection between justice and the use of force. In political society or in the state of nature, the use of force in punishment is justified as a means of achieving reparation and restraint, i.e. as an effective means of preserving property. In the situations where one makes an appeal to heaven, the justification of the use of force takes a different form. For nobody can objectively claim that a particular use of force is really the effective way to sustain or recover the just order of things. The use of force is seen only as the last resort. It is treated as the ‘only’ method left for recovering or restoring what the injured party sees as his right. As Locke says, the victim is ‘left to the only remedy’, i.e. an appeal to heaven (*TT* II. iii. 20, p. 300). He explicitly states that ‘there can be no pretence for Force’ in the situation ‘where the injured Party may be relieved, and his damages repaired by Appeal to the Law’. The force is

'only to be used, where a Man is intercepted from appealing to the Law' (II. xviii. 207, p. 421).³⁷

Third and finally, an appeal to heaven is justified subjectively from the viewpoint of an injured party, and it is for this subjective justification that Locke's property-based concept of justice is needed. Locke holds that the subjective justification is the only possible form of justification for human beings on earth, while the objective one is available only in God's tribunal. Though he does not spell out what is involved in the subjective justification, it is plausible to suggest that in his view, an injured party is justified in restoring what he regards as his prior right (i.e. his property) because he has the natural right to seek reparation. Justice requires that a common judge redress his injury, but where there is no common judge on earth, this requirement of justice is satisfied by an injured party's own act of enforcing the right of reparation.

Locke's account of an appeal to heaven has frequently been treated in isolation from his concept of justice. A simple reason for this may be that many commentators no longer share Locke's firm belief that there exists God's tribunal. But another reason seems to be that many confuse an appeal to heaven with the right of resistance. It is fairly clear that the two are distinct though they both concern the legitimate use of force. The right of resistance is a right against specific parties or targets, such as a king or the king's government (II. xviii. 203–8), and it is closely bound up with the right of self-defence which is to be exercised in a state of war (II. xix. 232). This view has no direct connections with an appeal to God's tribunal. Furthermore, the right of resistance can be exercised, where there *is* a common judge as well as where there is none, while an appeal to heaven can take place *only* where there is no common judge.³⁸ Finally, its justificatory grounds are very different from those of an appeal to heaven.³⁹ What I have done above is to reconsider Locke's account of an appeal to heaven by linking it to his original concern with justice. By doing so, I have shown how he used various elements of his concept of justice, and how some of its salient features figured in that account. It is clear now that his concept of justice plays a very important and extensive role in shaping his political theory. Indeed, Locke projected its role well beyond the limits of political society or those of the worldly institution of justice.

Notes

- 1 R.H. Cox (1963) pulls together Locke's various remarks on justice, but he does not offer a careful analysis of his concept of justice. Nor does R. Polin attempt one, though he makes suggestions about the relationship between justice and a law and judges. For his remarks, see Polin, 1963, pp. 273–83. J. Dunn makes a historical remark that 'the reduction of justice to the guarantee of property' is 'a perfectly traditional extrapolation from the notion contained in Ulpian's famous axiom', but he only adds that this reduction is 'compatible with a wide range of substantive interpretations' (1968, p. 77) without addressing the kind of conceptual questions which I have stated.
- 2 In this chapter, I use a great deal of the material that I presented in chapter 6 of Shimokawa 2000 (written in Japanese), the chapter entitled 'Locke's concept of justice and his theory of justice'. There I tried to clarify his concept of justice and examine it critically, while I also offered an account of his theory of the origin and limits of the

- institution of justice. Although there is substantial overlap between that chapter and this chapter, I have definitely shifted the focus to conceptual problems. I have decided to concentrate on clarifying Locke's concept of justice, because upon reading I. Harris 2000 I have felt that there is a real need to clarify it.
- 3 Cicero wrote 'in hominum societate tuenda tribuendoque suum cuique et rerum contractarum fide' (1975, I. 15 [p. 16]). Here I have produced my own translation, on the basis of Miller's in Cicero 1975 and Atkins' in Cicero 1991.
 - 4 For instance, R. Tuck 1979, pp. 58–81 and J. Finnis 1980, pp. 206–7.
 - 5 Here and elsewhere, I revise Kelsey's translation in Grotius 1995 whenever I find it appropriate to do so.
 - 6 The extensive sense of 'property' is employed here, which will be explained later at the beginning of the next section.
 - 7 Also, see J.O. Urmson 1990, p. 80, where three senses of *ἴσος* are distinguished.
 - 8 In Aristotle 1995 the word 'rectifying' is used as a translation of *διορθωτικόν*, but I have replaced it by a more common adjective 'corrective'.
 - 9 The word *ζημία* means 'loss', 'damage', which is an equivalent of the Latin *damnum*. It also means a penalty in money or a penalty in general. See Liddell and Scott 1997. Also see Aristotle 1982, p. 274 n. d.
 - 10 The Greek word used here is not *διορθωτικόν*, though one may expect it from Aristotle's frequent use of it. But since the words *ἐπανορθωτικόν* and *διορθωτικόν* apparently mean the same thing, we may use the same English word 'corrective' in both cases. In Aristotle 1995, 'corrective' is used for *ἐπανορθωτικόν* while 'rectificatory' or 'rectifying' is reserved for *διορθωτικόν*.
 - 11 This quotation is from Aristotle 1995, but I have modified the English translation in one place. I replaced 'penalty' with 'penalty or loss' in light of the meaning of *ζημία* noted above in note 9 (and in this I followed Rackham in Aristotle 1982).
 - 12 To complicate the matter, however, Hobbes himself equates distributive justice with the justice of an arbitrator, and then goes on to say that the proper name for distributive justice is equity (1996, XV. 15, pp. 23–4).
 - 13 Popple and Gough misconstrue the meaning of this sentence. Popple takes Locke to be saying that the duties of benevolence and charity must be added to the measure of justice, as we can see in the following translation of his: 'Nay, we must not content our selves with the narrow Measures of bare Justice: Charity, Bounty, and Liberality must be added to it' (*PTOL*, p. 31). It is a mistake, however, to read into Locke's Latin sentence the view that the measure of justice is narrow and needs to be expanded. Gough's translation is also affected by Popple's mistake (*TOL*, p. 79). Raymond Polin correctly renders Locke's original Latin in his French translation (*FTOL*, p. 25).
 - 14 See *TTII*. v. 46, lines 28–30, p. 318. Locke indicates that the accumulation of property is just if it stays within the limits of non-spoilage and use, when he says, 'the exceeding of the bounds of his just Property not lying in the largeness of his Possession, but the perishing of any thing uselessly in it'.
 - 15 A detailed analysis of Locke's concept of property together with a criticism of current interpretations is provided in K. Shimokawa 2000, pp. 69–105. For a much shorter version of the analysis, see Shimokawa 1995, pp. 15–22.
 - 16 Leibniz 1996, p. 384.
 - 17 See, for instance, J. Tully 1980, pp. 60–1, 112–15, J. Waldron 1988, pp. 158–9 and A.J. Simmons 1992, pp. 226, 240. For the correction of this misinterpretation, see K. Shimokawa 2000, pp. 73–4 and 1995, p. 16. This misinterpretation stems, at least in part, from Tully's imprecise use of Barbeyrac's remarks on Locke. See Barbeyrac 1729, p. 4 n. b and Pufendorf 1729, p. 364 n. 3, and compare them with what Tully says in Tully 1980, pp. 7, 73, 75.
 - 18 It should be added that Locke occasionally appeals to the more attenuated sense of 'justice' by claiming that if the non-performance of a charitable act results in the death of a poor man, it is almost the same as an act of injustice. The sense of 'justice' invoked

- here might be called the adverbial sense of 'justice'. Locke resorts to this adverbial sense, when he says that a poor man's 'right' of charity 'cannot justly be denied' (*TTI*. iv. 42. line 6, and line 16 for 'justly', p. 188). However, this attenuated, adverbial sense of 'justice' does not affect the point that I made in this paragraph. What I have discussed is the strict sense of 'justice', which is distinct from the attenuated sense. It goes without saying that what is contrasted with charity is the strict sense of 'justice'.
- 19 Similarly, when Grotius states the sphere of strict justice, it is actually more extensive than the mere preservation of faculty. See Grotius 1995, *Prolegomena*, 8.
 - 20 Locke's rudimentary sociological account can be reconstructed out of the following passages: *TT* II. v. 48–50, II. viii. 107–8, *3TOL*, p. 225 and *2TOL*, p. 121.
 - 21 I have rendered *jus fasque* here as 'civil law and morality'. It can also be rendered as 'civil law and natural law'. See P.G.W. Glare 1992, 'fas', 3 and 3b.
 - 22 For Locke's definition of *magistratus* (magistrate), see *Two Tracts on Government*, Locke 1967, pp. 125, 187, 212. This is synonymous with the term 'Legislative' used in *TT* II. xi.
 - 23 See Cicero 1975, I. 20 (p. 22). Also, Cicero 1991, I. 20 (p. 9).
 - 24 Elsewhere Locke also speaks of every man as 'resign[ing]' 'his Executive Power of the Law of Nature' to the publick' (*TT* II. vii. 89, lines 2f, p. 343), or 'giv[ing] up' his executive power 'into the hands of the Society' (II. ix. 131, line 3, p. 371).
 - 25 Here it may be proper to note Locke's use of the words 'force' and 'Commonwealth'. By 'force' Locke primarily means physical force. Everyone in the state of nature has a right to employ it in order to administer justice. Once a society or a commonwealth is established, every individual gives this right to it. He 'engages his natural force, (which he might before employ in the Execution of the Law of Nature, by his own single Authority, as he thought fit) to assist the Executive Power of the Society, as the Law thereof shall require' (*TT* II. ix. 130, p. 398). Locke also holds that the legislative or some other branch of government has a right to employ the 'force' of a 'Society' or a 'Community' or a 'Commonwealth' (II. i. 3, ix. 131, xii. 143, xii. 148, xiii. 155), but this collective force seems to be a sum of the forces of individual human beings (II. vii. 88, line 24, p. 343). For his use of the notion of 'force', see also *Essay* II. xxviii. 9–10, pp. 352–3; *TOL*, p. 124/5; *2TOL*, pp. 119, 120, 122; *3TOL*, pp. 211–3, 217. As for the word 'Commonwealth', Locke explains its meaning in *TT* II, x. 133. He uses it to refer to 'any Independent Community', regardless of the form of government it takes.
 - 26 Even W. von Leyden (1981, p. 126), who provides a very careful interpretation of Locke's text, attributes to him the view that 'the executive branch of government has the right not only to punish but also to judge' (emphasis in the original).
 - 27 C.H. McIlwain 1979, chs 3 and 4.
 - 28 Besides the term 'Commonwealth' explained in note 25 above, there are other terms Locke uses, such as 'society', 'community' and 'political society'. 'Society' is a general term covering any relation or union of human beings, including a '*Conjugal Society*' between man and woman (*TT* II. vii. 78–83), a society between parents and children (84), a society between master and servant (85) and a political society (87–9). But Locke also uses the term 'society' in a narrower sense, to designate the collective body established for the mutual preservation of its members' properties, i.e. lives, liberties and possessions. 'Society' in this sense is identical with 'Community'. They are different names for the same collective body that functions by exercising one will, i.e. the will of the majority (II. viii. 95–9), for the preservation of the properties of its members. It is also called 'the People', with a focus on the persons constituting it. The 'Society' or 'Community' places a legislative power in a specific part of it, and thereby determines a particular form of government (II. x. 132). 'Political Society' (II. vii. 77, 86, 87; viii. 99; etc.) or 'Politick Society' (ii. 15; vii. 84, viii. 106; etc.) is synonymous with 'Civil Society' (vii. 85, 87, 88, etc.) or 'Body Politick' (vii. 89, 95, etc.). Whereas the 'Society' or 'Community' or 'the People' is considered a collective agent to form a government, 'Political Society' and its synonyms seem to imply that the collective body

- is already or necessarily under some form of government. Locke is indebted to George Lawson in forming the above-mentioned notion of community. For this, see J.H. Franklin 1978, pp. 69–75, 123–5, etc. But we may also treat Locke’s notion as a simplified version of Pufendorf’s idea of *civitas* as a moral person (Pufendorf 1995, 7. 2. 4–13, 1. 1. 13).
- 29 It is important to note that *this* is Locke’s own argument, found in *TT* II. ii. 6 (where he explicitly derives the minimal obligation of justice). I. Harris argues that this obligation and other related ones can be derived from the conjunction of the golden rule and the natural desire of self-preservation. To do so, he starts with Locke’s quotation from Hooker in *TT* II. ii. 5 (Harris 2000, pp. 59–66). I cannot examine Harris’ argument here. But even if the argument turns out to be a successful one as a reconstruction, it is *not* the argument Locke actually deployed to ground the minimal obligation of justice.
- 30 W. von Leyden 1981, pp. 110–4.
- 31 In *2TOL* Locke states the following two conditions as the justificatory grounds for punishment in political society. ‘First’, the punisher ‘has commission and power’ to inflict punishment, and ‘Secondly, . . . it be directly useful for procuring the greater good’. He says, ‘Whatever punishment one man uses to another, without these two conditions, whatever he may pretend, proves an injury and injustice, and so of right ought to have been let alone’ (*2TOL*, p. 112). These two conditions look different from the two reasons stated in *TT* II. ii. 8, i.e. reparation and restraint. But we can make Locke’s statements coherent by interpreting ‘the greater good’ as an equivalent of ‘reparation and restraint’, and ‘commission and power’ as the transfer of everyone’s executive power of the law of nature to the community.
- 32 J.W. Gough 1973, p. 150.
- 33 A.J. Simmons 1993, p. 149 n. 7.
- 34 Hume 1985, p. 483.
- 35 Grotius refers to the Jephthah story in his account of the just war (1995, 1. 2. 2. 2).
- 36 For Hunton’s view of the moral power of judgment, see ‘Extracts from *A Treatise of Monarchy* (1643)’ in D. Wootton 1986, p. 188. Compare, however, his endorsement of passive obedience (Wootton 1986, p. 207) with Locke’s claim about an appeal to heaven. Locke owned Hunton’s work (LL 2013). Locke also read Filmer’s detailed criticism of Hunton, ‘The Anarchy of a Limited or Mixed Monarchy’. For Filmer’s critical discussion of the question ‘Who shall be judge?’ and of Hunton’s view of the moral power of judgment, see Filmer 1991, pp. 150–4.
- 37 For a similar contrast between settling disputes by force and settling them by argument, see Cicero 1975, I, 34, Grotius 1995, 1. 2. 1. 6.
- 38 The right of resistance is what Locke calls ‘the *Right of resisting*’ (*TT* II, xviii. 208, lines 3f, p. 422) or ‘the Right of War, a liberty to kill the aggressor’ (II. iii. 19, lines 18f, p. 298). This right is exercised against the aggressor who has brought about a state of war. Locke explicitly states that anyone can exercise the right of resistance against an aggressor in a society where there *is* a common judge, if the aggressor allows him no time to appeal to the court for a remedy or if there is an impending irreparable damage (II. iii. 19, lines 19ff, pp. 298f; II. xviii. 207, lines 21ff, p. 422). On the other hand, an appeal to heaven presupposes the *absence* of a common judge. Locke holds that such an appeal can be made in the situation where the existing institution of justice seriously perverts justice and fails to offer remedies (II. iii. 20). So we must interpret the absence of a common judge broadly, so as to include the malfunctioning or serious failure of the existing institution of justice.
- 39 Locke seems to offer two justificatory reasons for the right of resistance. First, the right of resistance is justified by reference to the clause that is added to the purpose of the law of nature, i.e. ‘when all cannot be preserv’d, the safety of the Innocent is to be preferred’ (*TT* II. iii. 16, p. 297). Second, it is justified because those aggressors ‘who are not under the ties of the Common Law of Reason’ and ‘have no other Rule, but that of Force and Violence’ may be treated as ‘Beasts of Prey’ (*ibid.*), hence, they may

be killed. Thus the right of resistance is linked to the protection of the innocent, and the killing of the dangerous aggressors. Clearly, then, this right should be treated as distinct from the act of appealing to heaven, which is justified as the only available method of restoring what an injured victim sees as his right.

5 Locke, liberalism and empire

Duncan Ivison

In 1992 the High Court of Australia ruled in *Mabo vs. State of Queensland (2)* that ‘native title’ rights to land survived the British settlement of Australia. This is rightfully seen as a landmark case in Australian history. It not only brought Australian jurisprudence on these questions more into line with that of Canada, the United States and New Zealand (as well as contributing to the development of that jurisprudence), but also had a profound impact on public debate in Australia. In his lead decision, Chief Justice Brennan (as he then was), along with Justices Deane and Gaudron, emphasised the importance of rejecting the notion of *terra nullius* as a starting point for reconciling the common law with the fact of prior indigenous *dominium*.¹ Strictly speaking, however, the Court did not reject the concept in international law, since it did not question the sovereignty of Australia in any fundamental way. In fact, it accepted that Australia was a territory acquired by settlement at common law.² What it did do – and it was indeed tremendously important – was recognise, as courts in Canada, New Zealand and the United States had done,³ that native title was in fact part of the common law.

In other words, the Court distinguished between questions of property rights and the question of sovereignty. The absence of any explicit treaties between the indigenous peoples of Australia and the Crown, as well as the Court’s acceptance of the ‘act of state’ doctrine grounding the indivisible sovereignty of the state, meant that it balked at drawing any links between native title and claims about the ‘inherent’ sovereignty of indigenous people.⁴ Can such a distinction be maintained? Is it a case of simply trying to slip native title into the existing structure of Australian property law, or are there deeper political and constitutional questions at stake? Jeremy Webber has argued for the latter, and claims that *Mabo* represents the beginning of a ‘quite different relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians of significance beyond the bounds of land law’ (J. Webber 2000, p. 61). What it involves, argues Webber, is not only the recognition of a previously unacknowledged form of title in land but also recognition of accompanying forms of legal and political autonomy in relation to those lands and thus a ‘mediation’ of the sovereignty of the state.⁵

Whatever the ultimate outcome of this legal and political argument (and I think Webber is right), it encapsulates a debate that was at the centre of early modern discussions of empire: the relation between justifications of *imperium* and *dominium*.⁶

It is arguably around the shifting sands of these two notions that much of the ideology of British empire, from the sixteenth century onwards, is played out. As David Armitage has put it, ‘the problem of uniting *dominium* and *imperium* would persist . . . as the fundamental and ultimately combustible dilemma at the core of British imperial ideology’ (D. Armitage 2000, p. 94).

One of the most intriguing and original developments in recent work on John Locke has been the attempt to place Locke’s political, moral and social theory in the context of these early modern debates on empire. The first aim of my chapter will be an attempt to synthesise and draw out some of the main conclusions of this research. There is no question of reducing Locke’s intentions in the *Two Treatises*, in particular, entirely to this colonial context. But to simply ignore the internal and external evidence of his engagement with the arguments, policies and politics of England’s colonial expansion would be equally negligent. How and in what ways was Locke engaging with the colonial project?

The second aim of this chapter is more speculative and theoretically ambitious. What does the ‘colonial reading’ of Locke suggest about the relationship between liberalism and colonialism in general? This question, in turn, rests on a related set of issues in the history of political thought. If the history of conceptions of the state has been central to the history of early modern and modern political thought written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a time of the consolidation and proliferation of the nation state, then what happens to our histories of the state today when its death, or at least ill-health, is frequently pronounced? One response, by intellectual historians, has been to reconnect many of these early modern canonical discussions of the state with transnational processes and histories; in short, to connect the history of the state to histories of empire.⁷ One of the fascinating consequences of doing so is to begin to rewrite the history (or at least pre-history) of liberalism.

Background arguments

An important background to the justifications of colonialism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the language and conceptual apparatus of Renaissance humanism, which has been the focus of a number of important recent studies. Richard Tuck has argued that Renaissance writers were willing to ‘countenance a wealth of possible indirect injuries as justifications for armed intervention in other peoples’ affairs’ (R. Tuck 1996, p. 7 and 1999), on the grounds of securing and pursuing glory for their country. Opposition to these arguments came from the theologians, and especially the School of Salamanca. Thus ‘on the eve of the seventeenth century’, writes Tuck, we have two quite distinct traditions of thinking about imperialism – theological and humanist – ‘with the humanist approach corresponding . . . much more closely to the actual practice of the conquering European nations’ (R. Tuck 1996, p. 12).⁸ And so when Hugo Grotius, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, amongst others, took up the model of relations between natural men in the emerging language of ‘modern’ natural rights in the seventeenth century, it was this humanist account they turned to, argues Tuck, and not the

more critical theological one. There is another side to humanism, however, which recent scholarship on sixteenth-century English imperialism has been at pains to point out. If the pursuit of glory was a central humanist concern, so was a concern with corruption and thus a deep anxiety about the consequences of colonisation.⁹ This was particularly true of some of the earliest English colonial ventures in the Americas in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Such anxiety was short-lived, but nevertheless complicates considerably the standard picture of the origins of English colonisation in the Americas.

So there is an interesting historical question as to where to situate Locke in the context of these early modern arguments about *imperium* and *dominium*. It is clear he was deeply involved in matters concerning England's expansion into the New World, both intellectually and personally,¹⁰ but how does his mature moral and political theory reflect this involvement, if at all? And more generally, what does it suggest about the relationship between colonialism and liberalism, if Locke is taken to be a canonical figure in the pre-history of liberal thought?

To begin with, consider three general arguments justifying colonisation at play in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries:

- 1 *The argument from conquest.* In essence, the argument from conquest tied the extension of sovereignty to the propagation of the Christian faith, and hence the legitimacy of waging war against those who were perceived to reject Christianity and thus the foundations of natural law. The Spanish empire was engaged in just such a 'self-styled war of conquest' (A. Pagden 1998, pp. 39 and 65ff). Their early claims to the New World rested, in part upon the rather dubious authority of a papal grant (made by Pope Alexander VI in 1493), which presented 'such islands and lands . . . as you have discovered or are about to discover' from one who claimed sovereignty 'over all the world' (*ibid.*, p. 39). The idea was, in its strongest form, that the Pope, as true heir of the Roman emperors, not only enjoyed sovereignty over the whole world but rights of ownership as well. This kind of justification did not go very far, however, since it presumed the Pope had the appropriate jurisdiction in the first place, which of course many rejected. Moreover, how could such authority be said to exist over both Christians and non-believers, including the Amerindians, for example, who may never even have heard of the Pope, or even Europe for that matter. So *imperium* and *dominium* over the Amerindians had to be grounded in something less ambiguous; hence the attempt to justify it according to natural law. If the arguments linked to papal bulls went nowhere, then sovereignty over the Indians and rights to their lands lay with claims about their lack of reason and 'barbarity'. A 'pre-emptive strike' against such people was justified if their practices and 'sins' were contrary to human nature; these practices constituted an injury against properly civil men, even if only indirectly. Injury against the innocent justified aggressive intervention, even if those who were apparently harmed did not actually ask for help. Thus Juan Gines Sepulveda, Chaplain and official historian to the Emperor, claimed in 1540 that the Indians were not civil beings because they consistently violated

the law of nature insofar as their laws, practices and institutions were contrary to nature.¹¹ ‘Crimes against nature’, in this sense, justified depriving them of their natural rights: ‘the natural law grants *dominium* to all those who are civil beings over all those who are not’ (cited in A. Pagden 1987b, p. 92). It was these and other arguments which the Spanish Dominicans – the School of Salamanca or ‘second scholastic’ – contested over the middle course of the sixteenth century. Francisco de Vitoria (c.1492–1546), for example, acknowledged that the ‘Indians’ have ‘properly organised cities, a recognisable form of marriage, magistrates, rulers, laws, industry, commerce, all of which require the use of reason’ (*De Indis*, cited in A. Pagden 1986, p. 68).¹² Bartholome Las Casas (1484–1566), the closest we have to a defender of Amerindian property rights in these debates (albeit always within the political limits of a legitimate Spanish occupation and evangelisation of the Americas), argued that the kind of sovereignty and ownership (*dominium rerum*) presupposed by the Spanish crown could only be claimed if the Amerindians ceded their natural rights voluntarily.

- 2 *The argument from grace.* Another justification of empire that rested on the dispensation of a higher authority was the argument from grace: i.e. ‘that no one can have civil *dominium* if he is in a state of mortal sin’ (cited in A. Pagden 1987b, p. 83). This Lutheran account of *dominium* maintained that the authority of the prince depended not on God’s laws but upon his grace, and thus if one fell from grace then he might be legitimately deposed by his subjects and replaced with a more godly prince. Thus no non-Christian – which obviously includes Amerindians – could hold legitimate *dominium* of his lands (or anything else, for that matter). Not surprisingly both the Spanish Dominicans and later, English Protestant theorists, resisted these arguments. For one thing, *dominium* derives from the fact that man is a rational being, and thus tying it to grace suggests he can lose this status (and the natural rights that go with it) simply by sinning. Although some acts are so bad that whoever commits them can be legitimately considered as something less than a man, this was not necessarily true of the practices and beliefs of the Indians (*ibid.*, p. 84). The main problem, however, was that the argument was too broad, for ‘any theory grounded upon the supposed “godliness” of individuals – rather than the natural law – could be used to legitimate any claimant immodest enough to think himself a “godly ruler”’ (A. Pagden 1998, p. 40).¹³ The potential for political instability and tyranny was obvious. This was something Locke himself made very clear in the *Letter Concerning Toleration*, which argued forcefully against the claim that civil power had authority in matters of conscience: ‘No man whatsoever ought therefore to be deprived of his Terrestrial Enjoyments, upon account of his Religion. Not even *Americans*, subjected unto a Christian Prince, are to be punished either in Body or Goods, for not embracing our Faith and Worship’ (*PTOL*, p. 43, discussed by D. Armitage 2000, pp. 97–8).¹⁴
- 3 *The argument from res nullius.* The argument from *res nullius* has its roots in Roman law, wherein all ‘empty things’, including unoccupied lands (*terra nullius*), were said to remain the common property of mankind until put to proper use

(A. Pagden 1998, p. 42). This idea, and the ‘agriculturalist’ arguments that were eventually pressed along with it, became ‘the most powerful and most frequently cited legitimization of the British presence in America, and it was to be employed later, in a modified form, to justify British incursions into both Africa and Australia’ (ibid., p. 47).¹⁵ Discovery and effective occupation of any part of America not already occupied by a Christian ruler, where settlement was warranted by a charter or grant, gave secure title to those lands against other European nations. But the doctrine of discovery applied only where the lands were genuinely uninhabited, or as it was eventually formulated in its ‘enlarged’ version, where the lands were ‘practically unoccupied, without settled inhabitants or settled law’.¹⁶ It followed, therefore, that in order to gain sovereignty and *dominium* over any indigenous nations on those lands, a number of things would have to happen. First, the Indian nations would have to be persuaded to submit themselves to the *imperium* of the European sovereign, and then to sell their lands or parts thereof to it. But that required mutual consent and recognition of some kind (i.e. treaties), which, by definition, invalidated the application of *terra nullius*. Failing that, somehow, the actual presence of the indigenous peoples would have to be rendered legally irrelevant; hence the application of the ‘enlarged’ doctrine of discovery that denied indigenous peoples effective ownership and jurisdiction over their lands.

Locke made a sustained and important contribution to the development of the argument from *terra nullius*, as James Tully, Barbara Arneil, Anthony Pagden, Richard Tuck and David Armitage have shown. He rejected, as we have seen, the argument from grace. And the argument from conquest was problematic for a mixture of conceptual and empirical reasons. For Locke, conquest could not provide a stable justification for *dominium* because, in part, the political culture of England itself was the creation of a conquest in which a ‘continuity theory’ of constitutional law had been applied (*TT* II. xvi. 180).¹⁷ Conquest delivered *imperium* but not *dominium*, and was, in general, a difficult basis upon which to build a legitimate commonwealth (*TT* II. xvi. 175, 184). The English, for the most part, came to see their colonial enterprises as commercial and agricultural rather than militaristic. Although the very first English settlements along the Eastern seaboard of America were styled along classical lines as founding new commonwealths, these humanist ambitions were soon dashed against the harsh reality of the situation on the ground. By the 1690s, as we shall see, English theorists integrated their justification of colonialism and their analysis of the best way of governing their extended territories into the emerging discourse of political economy (Spain providing the sobering example of expansionism gone bad).¹⁸

This provides an important context for the ‘colonial’ reading of chapter v of the ‘Second Treatise’.¹⁹ Chapter v attempts to answer an important question of natural jurisprudence, namely, how we come to have private ownership of something originally given to the world in common. But it also provides, argues Tully and others, a powerful justification for dispossession of Amerindian lands. How, precisely, did Locke’s arguments do so?

Locke's argument

For Locke, of course, the 'great and chief end' of political society is the 'mutual Preservation of . . . Lives, Liberties and Estates' (*TT II*. ix. 123, p. 368). Property arises in external things in virtue of our having prior property in our person and our labour, which we 'mix' with previously un-owned objects thus founding exclusive property – although not specifying the degree of control we have over it (save that we can exclude others from it as long as we use it (*TT II*. v. 27, 38, 44)).²⁰ In conditions of abundance, these private acts of appropriation harm no one (and do not require another's consent), since everyone's claim right to make use of the world God gave to us can be met. In conditions of greater scarcity, these acts need not leave anyone worse off given the two provisos Locke thinks follow from his moral argument about our natural freedom, and his economic argument about the productivity gains of adding value through labour (*TT II*. v. 40–2, 33, 36).²¹ With population growth and an increasing scarcity of available land, and thus increasing 'inconveniences', some end up being excluded from their inclusive claim right to property, since with the introduction of money (which Locke claims is consensual) some can trade their surplus for cash and claim rights to their enlarged possessions on the grounds that they are making use of them (*TT II*. v. 50).²² The introduction of civil law is meant to settle and regulate property in these new conditions. On entering a community, men 'give up all their Natural Power to the Society which they enter into' to be regulated by the will of the community of which they are now a part, and which has as its end the preservation of mankind (*TT II*. xi. 136, xv. 171). A Commonwealth comes to have jurisdiction over a territory then, when

By the same Act therefore, whereby any one unites his Person, which was before free, to any Commonwealth; by the same he unites his Possessions, which were before free, to it also; and they become, both of them, Person and Possession, subject to Government and Dominion of that Commonwealth, as long as it hath a being.

(*TT II*. viii. 120, p. 366)

The rules governing property, although now conventional, are ultimately to be in accordance with natural law; they are legitimate only insofar as they have received the consent of those subject to them. As Locke argues, the '*Municipal Laws of Countries . . . are only so far right, as they are founded on the Law of Nature, by which they are to be regulated and interpreted*' (*TT II*. ii. 12, p. 293).²³ Thus whereas man's original inclusive claim right to property referred to the whole *world*, it now refers to the boundaries of the polity he has consented to join. These boundaries are, in turn, settled by contracts or treaties between nations in which members of each society give up rights of fair access to the other's territory.²⁴

Two crucial moves in this argument are of relevance to English claims in the Americas. First, even if, strictly speaking, the Indian 'Nations' (as he refers to them) are not in a raw state of nature, they in fact 'exercise very little Dominion, and have

but a very modest Sovereignty'. What societies do exist are not genuine civil societies ('the *Kings* of the *Indians* in America . . . are little more than *Generals of their Armies*' (*TT II*. viii. 108, p. 357)²⁵), and their members remain, for all intents and purposes, in a state of nature with regard to other European nations. This potentially legitimates taking aggressive action against those Indian nations who refused to cede their lands, on the grounds that by doing so, they violated natural law (*TT II*. ii. 9).

Locke's second move is to tie ownership very tightly to use and to labour. This served to block Amerindian claims to lands they did not use in the appropriate sense of the term. With the invention of money, property becomes mobile and thus 'surplus producing civil societies could . . . acquire rights over far more than the individual's due share without invading that of his neighbor' (A. Pagden 1998, p. 45).²⁶ Since Amerindians did not live in properly civil societies and did not cultivate the land, they could not legitimately expand their *dominium* beyond what they could use (*TT II*. v. 30). Furthermore, Locke claimed that the market and commercial systems developed in the light of the (consensual) introduction of money are justified because of the clear advantages commercial development brings to mankind (*TT II*. v. 34, 37–44). 'Labour . . . puts the *difference of value* on every thing', argues Locke (*TT II*. v. 40, p. 314); indeed, nine-tenths of those 'conveniences' useful to men are produced through labour as opposed to unimproved nature. As is clear from the text, Locke's point of comparison throughout this discussion in chapter v is with Amerindian societies, wherein a 'King of a large and fruitful Territory there feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day Labourer in *England*' (*TT II*. v. 41, p. 315 and J. Tully 1993a, pp. 161–5). It follows, therefore, that Aboriginal people do not have genuine property in their extended lands (as much as they have in the deer they catch, or the crops they sow), and equally, no proper jurisdiction over them, for government (and thus jurisdiction) ultimately tracks the ownership of land:

But since Government has a direct Jurisdiction only over the Land, and reaches the Possessor of it, (before he has actually incorporated himself in the Society) only as he dwells upon, and enjoys that: *The Obligation* any one is under, by Virtue of such Enjoyment, *to submit to Government, begins and ends with the Enjoyment.*

(*TT II*. viii. 121, p. 367)²⁷

From a Lockean perspective, individuals (and states) have rights of access to land and natural resources which trump jurisdictional claims over uncultivated territory. The bottom line is this: Locke's argument either presupposes that America was legally vacant at the time of European contact, or, that the Indian nations they encountered, even if they were societies (but not *civil* societies) did not possess any form of 'lesser international title' sufficient to exclude others from their territories.²⁸ The moral justification here rests on the not implausible claim that expropriation from the commons makes more people better off than if it is left untouched, or more precisely, underdeveloped.²⁹ And it was put forward by Locke, and by others

before him (like Hugo Grotius), as an argument that ought to compel agreement from the Indians as much as other Europeans, insofar as they were capable of recognising the right to self-preservation (and the duty to preserve mankind) upon which it rested. As we have seen, failing to recognise these natural duties left the 'offender' of natural law potentially open to justified punitive action.³⁰

Now it is clear that both of these moves in Locke's argument cannot be reduced exclusively to the colonial context. The right to punish in the state of nature is meant as much for domestic consumption, in the light of arguments over the right to punish tyrannical monarchs (e.g. Charles II) through armed revolt.³¹ This is crucial to the leading themes of the *Two Treatises* overall, which are an attack on absolutist and arbitrary government, and the defence of a constitutionalist theory of popular sovereignty and resistance. Tying property to labour and productive use also served important domestic purposes, as Richard Ashcraft and Mark Goldie have argued, as it suited a radical Whig political agenda to which Locke was contributing; that is, a defence of the industrious and trading part of the nation against those 'idle, unproductive and Court-dominated property owners' (R. Ashcraft 1986, pp. 264, 280–1 and pp. 264–81 *passim* and M. Goldie 1980, 1, pp. 195–236).

But to argue, therefore, that the consequences of Locke's arguments for England's imperial expansion were peripheral to the *Two Treatises*, and that chapter v, in particular, referred to America and Indians for illustrative or metaphorical purposes only is far too quick. The external and internal evidence supports a more complex reading. Locke wrote with an eye to *both* the domestic and international consequences of his arguments, just as Grotius, Pufendorf and Hobbes had done, simply because it was difficult (as it still is) to keep the domestic and international apart, especially when addressing the nature and justification of the state.³² He accepted, as is particularly clear from his writings on commercial and imperial policy, that the well-being of England depended on her securing a foothold in world trade, and that meant an effective and productive system of colonies and plantations, among other things. So, together with his detailed knowledge of and engagement with the internal affairs of Carolina and the colonial system as a whole; his extensive reading and reference to a wide range of colonial texts, histories and travel reports; and his engagement with the leading political theories of colonisation in his day, the evidence suggests that the *Two Treatises* (and especially chapter v of the 'Second Treatise') was written, in part, to justify the dispossession of indigenous peoples' lands as much as it was to justify the positive rights of ownership versus other European states, as well as defend a theory of limited government and popular sovereignty. Whatever Locke's explicit intentions, it was clear that throughout the eighteenth century, and even well into the nineteenth, the 'agriculturalist' justification of dispossession was associated with and formulated in the terms of the arguments found in chapter v of the 'Second Treatise'.³³ Needless to say the argument was often deeply unpersuasive, not only according to the Indian nations to whom it was directed, but to many colonists, colonial officials and imperial policy-makers as well.

Early modern liberalism

What has all this got to do with liberalism? Liberalism is an invention of the nineteenth century of course, but it clearly has early modern roots. And the early history of modern liberalism is located squarely in the history of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European political discourse. John Rawls, for example, identifies the historical origins of political liberalism in the ‘Reformation and its aftermath, with the long controversies over religious toleration in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Something like the modern understanding of liberty of conscience and freedom of thought began there’ (J. Rawls 1993, p. xxiv). But is the connection merely chronological? As I argued above, Locke wrote with an eye on both domestic and international contexts. To establish any deeper connection between liberalism and colonialism, this point needs to be examined further.

There are (at least) *three* problems and hence sources of political argument in early modern Europe relevant to the early history of liberalism, and of Locke’s place in that history: (1) the political theories developed in relation to protracted struggles against absolutism and arbitrary government (in England, for example, between King and parliament, and debates over the nature of the constitutional settlement); (2) the political theories developed in light of the devastating consequences of the Thirty Years War and the hostility between rival confessional states, each with their own (persecuted) religious minorities; and (3) the challenges posed by the emergence of commercial society, and particularly the struggle to combine a commitment to the public good with the dynamic but potentially socially corrosive effects of commerce and trade.³⁴

In relation to (1) and (3), debates over the character of the early modern origins of liberalism have been shaped over the past thirty years by the apparent opposition between ‘liberalism’ and republicanism, and often between conflicting interpretations of the centrality (or not) of Locke to the early modern roots of these supposedly conflicting languages of politics. In *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, C.B. Macpherson located the roots of liberalism in the possessive agency he argued was at the centre of the political theories of Hobbes and Locke (and present, to varying degrees, in those of the Levellers and James Harrington): i.e. ‘that man is free and human by virtue of his sole proprietorship of his own person, and that human society is essentially a series of market relations’. Liberal society is nothing less than a ‘calculated device for the protection of . . . property and the maintenance of an orderly relation of exchange’ (C.B. Macpherson 1962, pp. 270, 3). Locke is thus central to liberalism, according to Macpherson, because he consolidates the political theory of possessive individualism in such a way that allows for the later full blown emergence of liberal bourgeois capitalism.

J.G.A. Pocock, on the other hand, took aim at what he called the ‘myth of John Locke’³⁵ – that everything in intellectual life after 1688 could be explained by Locke’s presence in this context – and instead emphasised a complex ‘non-Lockean republic of letters’³⁶ and alternative set of political languages, that had their roots in ancient constitutionalism, classical republicanism, as well as worries about corruption, politeness, civility and sociality. In particular, Pocock’s excavation of

an alternative language of civic humanism emphasised the central role of civic virtue in securing the common good against tyranny, and hence the dangers of commercial society and the exclusive pursuit of ‘interest’. Pocock’s extraordinary thesis was that this ‘Machiavellian moment’ in Northern European political thought then migrated to the New World and helped shape the ideological origins of the American revolution. Moreover, it provided a new, much richer and more detailed landscape upon which to re-place Locke’s *Two Treatises*, and thus gain a more complex understanding of Lockean thought in this context (J. Tully 1993b, 253–5).

It turns out that Locke’s position in relation to the Liberal–Republican debate over early modern and modern political thought is much more ambiguous than originally thought.³⁷ If the ancient forms of political economy and virtue were inappropriate to a time of rapidly changing domestic and geopolitical circumstances, that is not to say they were completely jettisoned. Steve Pincus has argued that defenders of the English Commonwealth in the 1650s melded discussions of virtue with ones about interests, and mixed arguments for the common good with claims for material improvement. They combined a commitment to commerce and the politics of interest with a republican conception of liberty (*salus populi* not *Majesta Imperii*). It is this amalgamation, suggests Pincus, that constitutes the origins of liberal political philosophy: the desire to be ‘modern, commercial, and polite on the one hand and to defend the common good on the other’ (S. Pincus 1998, p. 735).³⁸ Locke becomes, on this reading, a kind of modern republican.³⁹ His project can be seen as emblematic of an attempt by many political thinkers during the mid to late seventeenth century to blend a commitment to some of the principles and ideals of the humanist republican tradition with the newly emerging commercial society.

Is this reading persuasive? I think it is, for two reasons. On the one hand, Locke’s political theory of consent, limit and resistance – a scheme central to radical Whig and republican writers of the early 1680s and 1689 – entailed that ‘[the legislative power] in the utmost Bounds of it, is *limited to the publick Good* of the Society’ (*TT II*. xi. 135, p. 375). The boundaries of the law of nature – that mankind ought to be preserved – are the ‘rule of virtue and vice’ (*TT II*. ii. 7, iii. 16, xi. 134–5).⁴⁰ Natural law commands what is in the best interests of mankind as a whole, and this leads to ‘public happiness’ by helping secure the preservation and prosperity of society (*Essay I*. ii. 6). Locke hovers between naturalistic and supernatural means of getting men to act rationally in this sense,⁴¹ but the importance of acting so as to benefit society, and not only oneself, remains clear.

On the other hand, since most people most of the time have great difficulty in clearly discerning their obligations under natural law, and hence in promoting the public interest, a complex array of forms of government were required to keep partiality and corruption in check. This was a consequence of having to combine an essentially hedonistic psychology, as outlined in the *Essay*, with a non-egoistic moral theory.⁴² To do so meant that the virtue of which classical republicans spoke belonged to a distant ‘Golden Age’, which was impossible to maintain with the development of money, expanding populations, growing trade and along with it, the rise of ‘Ambition and Luxury’ which reshaped human desires (*TT II*. viii. 111, pp. 360–1, see also v. 37, viii. 107, 110). But this did not mean men were no

longer required to act in such a way that promoted the common good or ‘public happiness’.⁴³ Instead, it meant providing a different account of the nature of virtue to suit both the philosophical programme outlined in the *Essay* and the new political, social and economic circumstances of late seventeenth-century England.

Re-placing Locke in this wider early modern context has consequences as well for our understanding of his international political theory (2). Locke was writing in the immediate aftermath of the treaties of Westphalia. These treaties were intended to tie the various European states into a system of reciprocally guaranteed security by minimising the grounds for interference in each other’s affairs, in essence, by guaranteeing their territorial sovereignty. Conflict could not be eliminated, but it could at least be regulated by a principle of non-interference. What occurred outside of Europe, however, in areas where no sovereign states (or civil societies) existed, was a different matter. States could pursue their extra-territorial expansionist ambitions without necessarily upsetting the balance of powers within Europe, although intra-European disputes over these territories quickly arose. In short, Westphalia helped constitute not only the international *system* of states, but also the sovereignty of the states themselves; that is, their exclusive and pre-eminent right to govern their territories and the populations therein.⁴⁴

As David Armitage has argued (2000, pp. 125–45), one of the defining concerns of British imperial ideology from the late sixteenth century onwards was the difficulty of combining *libertas* with *imperium*. The classic discussion of this dilemma – and one that received considerable attention in seventeenth-century debates over empire – was found in books I and II of Machiavelli’s *Discorsi* (Machiavelli 1989, I, pp. 209–11, 334–9). There Machiavelli basically offered three options for the prince to consider with regard to expansion. First, be like Rome and tolerate the ‘tumults’ that come with *libertas*, including the quest for greatness (*grandezza*) through expansion. But this also meant inevitable decline, since expansion entailed the extension and expansion of military command and thus risked the potential of a constitutional overthrow and the servitude of the people (hence the deterioration of *libertas*). Second, be defensive (like the German republics), and curb one’s desire for expansion. But this left one vulnerable to more ambitious and voracious neighbours. Finally, emulate Sparta, Athens or Venice, whose laws provided more for internal stability as opposed to imperial expansion, but this left one vulnerable to necessity and blocked the possibility for genuine greatness. For Machiavelli, not surprisingly, the only option was to be like the Romans, but this meant that *imperio* and *libertà*, ultimately, were incompatible.

Locke appears, in this context, as one of the many writers who by the 1690s were offering a potential solution to this dilemma. By then it was argued that states could no longer afford to choose whether or not to be expansive or defensive, trading or not, prepared for war or not – they had to be all of these in order to survive. The Spartan and German options were, in other words, not genuine options. But as much as commerce and trade risked importing corruption, they also offered a way to greatness without the military expansion that Machiavelli claimed led to inevitable collapse, since commerce depended more on freedom, and particularly

freedom of the seas (which in turn depended on maritime power), than armies or military rule. Liberty was required for successful commerce and commerce was the cause of greatness: 'wealth no longer lay in land but in trade and the population required for extensive manufacture' (Armitage 2000, pp. 165 and 143. See also *TT* II. v. 42). And labour and trade, not force, as we have seen, were the ultimate basis, according to Locke, of England's *dominium* in the New World. The mere accumulation of land was not the point, but rather its proper use and population. A flourishing colonial system thus formed a crucial part of England's reason of state, an example of the complex integration of domestic and international policy concerns that Locke was helping to shape.

Liberalism and empire

How is this meant to echo through to modern conceptions of liberalism? First, at a very general level, it demonstrates how the problem of cross-cultural evaluation and negotiation has formed a crucial aspect of the liberal problematic for much longer than many have thought. Second, the expropriation and near-extirpation of aboriginal peoples represents one among other of the 'original sins' of the founding of liberal democracies, at least in North America and Australasia. All political foundings are based on violence and injustice of some kind. But the cultural, political and legal presence and persistence of indigenous peoples has forced liberal democratic societies, to varying degrees, to confront this past both intellectually and practically. It is one of the historical legacies of wrongdoing, like slavery, with which states ostensibly committed to liberal values struggle to address in terms of those values.⁴⁵

For critics of liberal political theory, the fact that the early modern roots of liberalism are linked so explicitly to the justification of colonialism has important consequences for thinking about liberal political theory today. It does so most obviously in circumstances where early modern assumptions still inform legal doctrines that affect the proprietary interests of indigenous peoples. But some have argued that there are deeper philosophical connections as well. The crucial connection, it seems, is between colonialism and the language of subjective rights. This is so for two reasons. First, in order to define the nature and scope of rights, claims have to be made about the nature of persons, and particularly about those qualities or powers to which the rights refer, or are intended to protect.⁴⁶ This means drawing a distinction between those who are eligible for rights and those who are not, and between those who display and are capable of exercising the relevant powers and capacities and those who are not. Second, and more generally, all theories about rights ultimately depend on controversial claims about the wider purpose of rights and how they fit into more general conceptions of moral and political order. In both instances, the filling out of ostensibly liberal claims about the subjective rights of persons against arbitrary treatment by the state (and their fellow citizens) provides ample room for the introduction of less than impartial constraints on who is eligible to claim certain rights, and ultimately, what kind of society the language and practice of rights is meant to promote.

Richard Tuck (1987 and 1994), for example, draws an explicit connection between the emergence of the ‘modern’ idea of natural rights (i.e. radically subjective rights), liberalism and modern European expansionism. For Tuck, the autonomous rights-bearing agent at the heart of liberal individualism is a product of seventeenth-century theorising about the nature of the autonomous *state* acting in the international sphere. The sovereign individual is the ‘traditional cousin of the sovereign state’, argues Tuck, and especially the aggressive, violent and minimally constrained version described by Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, and Vattel.⁴⁷ Thus the connection between liberalism and imperialism is not merely chronological but metaphysical. That is, the analogy between the sovereign state and the sovereign individual acting on the basis of their natural rights, constrained by the recognition of the basic rights of others (but not much more than that), represents an influential vision of liberal freedom. This ideal of liberal agency may now be subject to criticism, especially as our conception of international order begins to approach more closely that of a law-governed civil society, but we can only really grasp these developments, Tuck argues, if we understand how the ideal emerged in the first place. And in moving away from it, he intimates, we will have to rethink our basic conceptions of rights and the notion of liberal agency that underpins them, along with our conceptions of domestic and international political order.

Another argument tracing the deep connections between liberalism and colonialism trades on the apparent paradox of liberal universalism: that is, how universalistic premises applied to politics (for example, that every man is naturally free and possesses ‘natural political virtue’, *TT* II. ii. 4, viii. 116–19) can result in particularistic and exclusionary practices and institutions (U.S. Mehta 1997, p. 60 and 1999). The gist of this argument is that lying behind the universal ascription of basic capacities to all human beings there lies a ‘thicker set of social credentials that constitute the real bases of political inclusion’ (U.S. Mehta 1997, p. 61). Thus, ‘what is concealed behind the endorsement of these universal capacities are the specific cultural and psychological conditions woven in as preconditions for the actualisation of these capacities’ (*ibid.*, pp. 61–2 and B. Arneil 1996, pp. 210–11). The spaces between universal capacities and the pre-conditions required for their actualisation, argues Uday Singh Mehta, are where ‘liberal strategies for exclusion’ operate. In order to be considered eligible for political inclusion, the ‘universal subject’ must develop his capacities in such a way so as to match the underlying purposes of the rights to which he is apparently ‘naturally’ entitled (*Essay* II. xxviii. 10–12). Thus Locke ascribes to the Indians a natural freedom, but denies their communities the status of civil societies. Bhikhu Parekh summarises this argument by claiming that whilst Locke’s principle of equality ‘offered at least some moral protection to Indians, it offered them no *political* protection’ (B. Parekh 1995, p. 92). The gap between ‘egalitarian interpersonal morality and an inegalitarian political and international morality is central to Locke’s thought’, argues Parekh, ‘and indeed to most of the liberal tradition’ (*ibid.*, p. 92). Universalist premises are inevitably shaped by cultural and historical particulars in their application, which means that universal standards are often, paradoxically, applied in culturally

specific ways. Some populations, or segments of the population, are capable of governing themselves through liberty and others not. This was true of those peoples who fell outside the Westphalian state system (such as the indigenous populations of the East and West Indies), as well as for some within it, such as the chronically unemployed (B. Hindess 2000).⁴⁸

Early modern theorists would understand the disjuncture Parekh identifies as the gap between the law of nature and the law of nations. Kant, for example, struggled with the difference between the need for *individuals* to exit the state of nature and submit to a lawful sovereign, and the problems involved in showing how *states* could be brought to do so.⁴⁹ And it is a disjuncture that political philosophers continue to struggle with today, liberal and otherwise. The task of reconciling the *imperium* and *dominium* of the liberal democratic state with the pre-existent *dominium* and *imperium* (and alterity) of indigenous peoples presents a complex strand of this problem.

But do the arguments of Tuck and Mehta establish both necessary and sufficient conditions for thinking that there are deep philosophical connections between liberalism and colonialism, or more strongly, that there is an equivalence between them? The concept of autonomy is indeed central to the liberal tradition, and it can be traced back to theories about the autonomous agency of states and their right to declare war against, and appropriate the lands of, indigenous peoples. But this establishes only a necessary and not sufficient condition for the claim about deep connections between liberalism and colonialism. For autonomy is not the only value central to liberalism, and even if it was, there are different and less bellicose traditions of thinking about the ontology of states and individuals within liberal thought.⁵⁰ Moreover the picture of the unconstrained, autonomous sovereign at the heart of the Westphalian system is itself empirically dubious. From the seventeenth century onwards there have been regular and various conventions, treaties, contracts and norms imposed on states (often through force, but also by invitation) that constrain their relations over those they rule (S.D. Krasner 1999, pp. 73–104). Even Vattel, for example, in a passage Tuck himself cites, argued that if the tyrannical rule of a sovereign led to internal revolt, ‘any foreign power may rightfully give assistance to an oppressed people who ask for its aid’ (Vattel 1916, II. 4. 56). Norms of international recognition, for example, often included – and still do – constraints on the treatment of minorities, as did the treaties of the peace of Westphalia themselves.⁵¹ The motivation for imposing (or voluntarily contracting into) these constraints often had little to do with justice, of course, and more to do with necessity, e.g. maintaining system stability or advancing the particular interests of states. But this suggests that the norm of autonomy at the centre of Tuck’s vision of the ‘belligerent post-Renaissance state’ lying behind liberalism was often – even in the middle of the seventeenth century – decoupled from actual practice. Autonomy, understood as the exclusion of external actors from determining or influencing domestic authority structures,⁵² has been compromised ever since 1648.

Similarly, the conjunction between certain universalist premises and the denial of the political reality and humanity of indigenous peoples may demonstrate a necessary condition for establishing an equivalence between liberalism and

colonialism, but not a sufficient one. For it is also the case that rights, embodying as they often do a conjunction between universalistic premises and culturally specific elaborations of them, have been turned around and used by indigenous peoples to criticise previously unacknowledged cultural and social partialities embodied in liberal norms and institutions.⁵³ Moral discourse is more supple and indeterminate and thus more difficult to pin down entirely within clearly delineated cultural bounds than the critical argument admits. The conclusion to be drawn, therefore, is not to deny that there are any deep connections between liberalism and colonialism – there clearly are – or to reject ‘liberalism’. Rather the demand should be for more historically attuned accounts of the conceptual and ideological character of liberalism, and normatively speaking, for more genuinely intercultural variations of it.⁵⁴

The colonial reading of Locke’s *Two Treatises* is an exercise in the excavation of the pre-history of liberalism.⁵⁵ It is especially valuable for drawing attention to the complex inter-relations between domestic and international concerns in early modern political thought, as I have emphasised above. The connections between liberalism and colonialism, both historical and conceptual, suggest that liberal theorists are often faced with the task of reconciling their commitment to individual freedom with the practical task of governing complex populations – some close at hand and others at a distance – that may or may not be susceptible to liberal forms of government. Thus liberalism is concerned not only with promoting individual and collective freedom, but also with various forms of government understood in the broadest sense of the term, that is, as mechanisms for regulating and disciplining freedom.⁵⁶ The motivation for asking these kinds of questions of Locke is to ask how this pre-history might have shaped liberalism’s present and thus its future. It clearly has shaped liberalism’s present, most notably through the persistence of indigenous peoples’ legal and political claims today. But since liberalism is a complex bundle of sometimes conflicting attitudes, beliefs and theories, and above all a ‘vital, politically, morally, and ideologically engaged [real historical movement]’, then by definition it will always be unclear ‘where its extension ends’ (R. Geuss 2001, pp. 69–71). It has a nominal as opposed to real essence. Liberalism is shaped by its history, both distant and more recent, but not determined by it.⁵⁷

Notes

- 1 66 ALJR (1992) 408 at pp. 418, 429, 451.
- 2 *Mabo*, pp. 417–18, 434. See *Cooper v Stuart* (1889) 14 App Cas 286 at 291 re. the status of a settled colony as it applied to Australia. See also Justice Gibbs in *Coe v Commonwealth* (1979) 53 ALJR at p. 408: ‘It is fundamental to our legal system that the Australian colonies became British possessions by settlement and not by conquest’. If the court had rejected *terra nullius* it would have questioned the settled status of Australia and thus opened up the possibility of an even more radical rethinking of the basis of property law. This was not a path the Court was willing to take; rejecting the settled colony doctrine risked fracturing the ‘skeleton of principle which gives the body of our law its shape and internal consistency’ (p. 416, see further pp. 418–20).

- 3 The *Royal Proclamation* (1763) came close to recognising Aboriginal nations as self-governing and possessing *dominium* over their lands and played an important role in the influential Marshall cases: see *Johnson v McIntosh* 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543 (1823), especially at 593 and *Worcester v the State of Georgia* 31 U.S. (6 Pet.) 515 (1832). In *Johnson*, Marshall argued that the rights of the original inhabitants 'were, in no instance, entirely disregarded; but were necessarily . . . impaired'. In *Worcester*, he acknowledged that their status as 'nations' or states was never extinguished, but that a 'weak state, in order to provide for its safety, may place itself under the protection of one more powerful, without stripping itself of the right of self-government'. Thus the Indian nations became 'domestic dependent nations' in American constitutional law. In Canada, it was not really until the 1973 *Calder* decision that 'Aboriginal title' or 'Indian title' was clearly acknowledged as arising from the common law. See *Calder et al. v Attorney General of British Columbia* (1973) 34 DLR (3d) 145. Compare the earlier *St Catherine's Milling and Lumber Co. v R* (1888) 14 App Cas 46, in which Lord Watson claimed that the 'tenure of the Indians was a personal and usufructuary right, dependent on the good will of the Sovereign' (at 56).
- 4 See *Mabo and Seas and Submerged Lands case, New South Wales vs. Commonwealth* (1975) 135 CLR 337 and *Coe v Commonwealth of Australia* (1993) 118 ALR 193 (HC), 198–200. For an important recent Canadian case see *Delgamuukw v. R* (1991) 79 D.L.R. (4th) 185 and then on appeal, *Delgamuukw v British Columbia* (1997) 3 S.C.R. 1010. In the appeal, the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en amended their claim for both 'ownership' and 'jurisdiction' over the territory in question (some 58,000 square kilometres of British Columbia), to one of Aboriginal title over it. In allowing the appeal, the Court went on to try and specify more precisely the content and nature of Aboriginal title.
- 5 J. Webber 2000. See also D. Ivison 1997a.
- 6 For early modern understandings of *imperium* see D. Armitage 1998, pp. 103–4 and on *dominium* see J. Tully 1980, pp. 69–71.
- 7 See especially D. Armitage 2000, pp. 1–23 and J. Tully 1995b.
- 8 On the theme of Renaissance humanism more generally, see his 1993, especially chs 1–3.
- 9 A. Fitzmaurice 1999 and 'The Machiavellian argument for colonial possession', forthcoming. See also D. Armitage 1998.
- 10 On his personal involvement see M. Cranston 1984. For some of his colonial writings, see Locke 1997, especially pp. 160–81 (*The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina*, 1669), 252–9 ('Atlantis', 1676–9) and 272 ('Carolina', 1679). Another relevant essay, not in Locke 1997, is 'Some chief grievances of the present constitution of Virginia' (1696). See also Locke 1991, 2, pp. 487–92 especially 'For a Generall Naturalization'. On the colonial reading of Locke more generally, see J. Tully 1993a, especially pp. 140–1, 1993b, B. Arneil 1996, R. Tuck 1999, pp. 166–81 and D. Armitage 2000, pp. 97–8, 163–9. As noted, Locke helped draft *The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina* in 1669–70 for his patron, the Earl of Shaftesbury, who was a leading figure in the founding and running of the colony, and acted as Secretary to the Lord Proprietors between 1668–75. He was made a landgrave (i.e. nobleman) in the 'aristocracy' of Carolina in 1671. For further discussion of the Constitution see Locke 1993, pp. 41–4; a copy of the 1669 version is provided on pp. 210–32. Locke was also familiar with (and extensively criticised) William Penn's colonial venture in Pennsylvania, whose constitution Penn gave to Locke in Holland in 1686 (see the comments quoted in Cranston 1984, pp. 261–2. For further discussion see R. Tuck 1999, pp. 177–8). Locke was an investor in the slave-trading Bahamas Company and the Royal African Company (Cranston 1984, pp. 115). He wrote extensively on matters of trade, including serving as Secretary to the Council of Trade and Plantations (1673–4) and was an active member of the Board of Trade (1696–1700). He was, as Cranston (1984, p. 119) puts it, 'easily infected with Ashley's zeal for commercial imperialism'. For a discussion of some of Locke's activities on the Board of Trade, see M. Goldie's Introduction to Locke 1997,

pp. xxvi–ii, D. Armitage 2000, pp. 163–9 and D. Ivison 1997b, pp. 122–33. D. Armitage is preparing the forthcoming Clarendon edition of all of Locke’s colonial writings. Armitage has also established that Locke’s involvement with *The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina* extended well beyond the 1670s, including a redrafting in 1682. In fact, Armitage argues that there is a case for dating the writing of chapter v of the ‘Second Treatise’ to around this time as well, and hence that Carolina was a crucial colonial context for the discussion of property there. I am indebted to David Armitage for discussions on these matters, and for allowing me to read his important forthcoming paper, ‘Locke’s Carolina Revisited’. He should not be held responsible, however, for how I go on to develop some of these themes below.

- 11 For a discussion see A. Pagden 1986, pp. 109–18.
- 12 Vitoria goes on to qualify this claim, however, and ultimately to argue that although the Indians are not beasts or natural slaves, they are akin to natural children, and thus justifiably under the tutelage of the King of Spain.
- 13 See also A. Pagden 1987b, pp. 82–8.
- 14 See also Locke’s criticism of Filmer’s argument concerning God’s grant to Adam grounding the *imperium* of absolute monarchs: *TT* I. v. 24; discussed in J. Tully 1980, p. 60.
- 15 In relation to Australia see A. Frost 1981, pp. 513–23 and H. Reynolds 1992, pp. 15–18, 74–6.
- 16 *Cooper v Stuart* (1889) 14 App Cas 286 at 291 as per Lord Watson.
- 17 This is discussed in J. Tully 1993a, pp. 154–5. See also the discussion in B. Arneil 1996, ch. 6.
- 18 For a superb discussion of this Machiavellian background see D. Armitage 2000, ch. 5.
- 19 As D. Armitage, B. Arneil and J. Tully point out, more than half of the references to America, Americans and Indians are found in chapter five (*II*. v. 26, 30, 36, 37, 40, 41, 43, 48, 49).
- 20 See J. Tully’s account of the ‘maker’s right’ argument in his 1980, pp. 104–24. For criticism see A.J. Simmons 1992, pp. 252–60.
- 21 On the debate between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ community see A.J. Simmons 1992, pp. 238–41 and J. Tully 1995a, pp. 110–12.
- 22 With the introduction of money, labour is gradually disconnected from ownership.
- 23 The ‘art of government’ is the ability of legislators to make laws conformable as possible to natural law given the particular historical, cultural and practical circumstances of the polity.
- 24 The key discussion is *TT* II. v. 45.
- 25 Compare *TT* II. viii. 102, where Locke expresses doubts about the Indian nations in America being commonwealths at all.
- 26 See also J. Tully 1993a, pp. 160–6 and B. Arneil 1996, pp. 146–50. Note that labour is crucial for the *beginning* of ownership of property (as a means of tracking value), but becomes separable from it with the invention of money.
- 27 See the discussion in R. Tuck 1999, p. 176.
- 28 The phrase is from B. Slattery 1991, pp. 686–7.
- 29 For a contemporary variation on this Lockean theme see D. Schmitz 1991, especially ch. 2.
- 30 Emmerich de Vattel, author of the most popular textbook on international law in the eighteenth century summarised this last argument in a brutally clear fashion:

The cultivation of the soil . . . is . . . an obligation imposed on man by nature. The whole earth is designed to furnish sustenance for its inhabitants; but it can not do this unless it be cultivated. Every nation is therefore bound by natural law to cultivate the land which has fallen to its share. . . . Those peoples . . . who . . . disdain the cultivation of the soil . . . fail in their duty to themselves, injure their neighbours, and deserve to be exterminated like wild beasts of prey.

- See Vattel 1916, at I. 7. 81. See also II. 7. 97, where he argues that ‘the savage tribes of North America had no right to keep to themselves the whole of that vast continent’. See also H. Reynolds 1992, pp. 17–18. For the background to this language associated with the right to punish in the state of nature see R. Tuck 1999. Some of the language here is reminiscent of the sections in the *Two Treatises* that deal with the right to wage war against those who violate the law of nature; see especially *TT* II. iii. 16. J. Tully and R. Tuck both argue that, read against the background of Renaissance humanism, this doctrine helped to legitimate aggression against the Indians, including in Carolina (see for example *TT* I. xi. 130 and Tully 1993a, pp. 142–5). Tuck, in particular (1999, pp. 171–7), argues that Locke, like Grotius and Hobbes, used the same explicit comparison between the international realm and the state of nature, and the same willingness to countenance aggressive action (including pre-emptive strikes) on the basis of not only actual but potential harm. But it is not clear from the *Two Treatises* at least, that Locke endorses aggressive *pre-emptive* strikes, as much as he does the natural right of self-defence and punishment. For example, he emphasises retribution ‘what is proportionate to his Transgression’ and ‘so far as calm reason and conscience dictates’ for the purposes of ‘*Reparation and Restraint*’ (II. ii. 8, p. 290). However Locke does acknowledge that a man has the right to ‘*kill a thief*, who has not in the least hurt him, nor declared any design upon his Life, any farther then by the use of Force, so as to get him in his Power’ (II. iii. 18, p. 297); and that a ‘declared design of force’ and not just force itself, where there is ‘no common Superior on Earth to appeal to for relief’ (II. iii. 19, p. 298), gives a man the right of war versus an aggressor. But this still seems short of the kind of arguments we find in Grotius and Hobbes. See Hugo Grotius 1738 at II. 20. 40 and Thomas Hobbes 1998, pp. 10–11.
- 31 See the discussion in R. Ashcraft 1986, pp. 305–12.
- 32 This dual focus is emphasised by D. Armitage, R. Tuck, M. Goldie and J. Tully as well. For a general discussion of this problem in political theory see R.B.J. Walker 1993.
- 33 For evidence of its use in the eighteenth century, see R. Tuck 1999, p. 182–4 and J. Tully 1993a, pp. 166–76. See also Marshall’s (see note 3) rejection of Locke’s agriculturalist argument, appealed to by the defendants in *Johnson and Graham’s Lessee v McIntosh*, especially pp. 569–70, 588–92 and in *Worcester v Georgia*, p. 517. In an 1830 letter to the counsel assisting the Cherokee Nation in its suit against the state of Georgia (the second of the influential Marshall cases), James Madison wrote, echoing Locke: ‘[B]y not incorporating their labour and associating fixed improvements with the soil [the Cherokee] have not appropriated it to themselves, nor made the destined use of its capacity for increasing the number and the enjoyment of the human race’, quoted in G.E. White 1988, p. 721. See also B. Slattery 1991. H. Reynolds (1992, pp. 74–6) points out that the agriculturalist argument was well-known and ‘popular’ throughout colonial Australia in the first half of the nineteenth century, though ‘[i]t was a strange argument to advance in a pastoral country where only a tiny proportion of the land was under crop’.
- 34 See for example C.B. Macpherson 1962 and S. Holmes 1995.
- 35 J.G.A. Pocock 1980 and ‘Authority and Property: The Question of Liberal Origins’, in Pocock 1985, pp. 103–24. Pocock does not deny the importance of Lockean arguments to the American rebel literature. His point is that Locke cannot be taken as the exclusive source for their arguments, nor that he should be seen as representing the core of American political ideology from the eighteenth century onwards.
- 36 The phrase is J. Tully’s: see his 1993b, p. 254.
- 37 This is shown brilliantly by J. Tully 1993b. See also S. Pincus 1998, pp. 705–36. Both J.G.A. Pocock and Q. Skinner acknowledge how, at times, Locke sits between these two languages of political thought: see for example, Pocock 1993, pp. 416–17 and Skinner 1989, pp. 114–16.
- 38 See also D. Armitage 2000, pp. 168–9.

- 39 For an interesting development of this theme, albeit along different lines than pursued here, see T. Pangle 1988.
- 40 See also *Essay* II. xxviii. 11. Locke's most extensive discussion of virtue is probably in *STCE*; see below, n. 43.
- 41 For more discussion see A.J. Simmons 1992, ch. 1, J. Tully 1993a, pp. 179–241, J. Dunn, 1969, pp. 192–9 and D. Ivison 1997b, chs 4–5.
- 42 For a defence of this non-egoistic reading of Locke's moral theory see J. Tully 1980, 103–4 and A.J. Simmons 1992, 37–47.
- 43 As he wrote in *STCE*, 'the great Principle and Foundation of all Vertue and Worth, is placed in this, That a Man is able to *deny himself* his own Desires, cross his own Inclinations, and purely follow what Reason directs as best, tho' the appetite lean the other way', §33, p. 103.
- 44 I am grateful to Barry Hindess for discussions concerning this point.
- 45 For further discussion of this problem see D. Ivison 2000.
- 46 There is obviously a connection between the language of rights and the emergence of capitalism, a claim central to Macpherson's interpretation of Locke. Thus, insofar as there is a connection between liberalism and capitalism, and then between the emergence of capitalism and colonialism, there is a deep connection between liberalism and colonialism. This issue deserves more careful consideration than I can give it here. The general problem is that, as an explanatory framework for early modern European expansionism, the assumption that colonialism is a product of the acquisitiveness inherent in capitalist relations risks overlooking or oversimplifying the complex historical and moral sources of argument tied to the justification of empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For some discussion see J. Tully 1993a, pp. 127–8.
- 47 R. Tuck 1999, pp. 14–15, 84, 195–6, 226, 233–4. See also J.B. Schneewind 1998, pp. 3, 483. Kant was the first to use and transform the notion of autonomy as it applied to states and explicitly apply it to individuals. Individuals are self-governing in the sense that they give themselves a law that necessarily also provides them with the motivation to obey it.
- 48 On Locke's own thoughts concerning the unemployed, see his 'Draft of a Representation Containing a Scheme of Methods for the Employment of the Poor' in Locke 1993, pp. 446–61.
- 49 'Toward Perpetual Peace' in Kant 1996a, p. 327.
- 50 Arguably in Kant, for example, although see the discussion in R. Tuck 1999, pp. 207–25 and P. Schroeder 2002. For contemporary discussions see J. Raz 1986 and C. Beitz 1999.
- 51 On the peace of Westphalia see S.D. Krasner 1999, pp. 79–82. *The Royal Proclamation* and the *Treaty of Paris* (both 1763), provide two examples of constraints on state action incorporated into international treaty-making. The *Proclamation* included a provision for the 'several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection', that they 'should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds'. The *Treaty of Paris* included provisions giving Catholic subjects in Canada the same rights as those in Britain, however meagre those were.
- 52 This definition of 'Westphalian sovereignty' is Krasner's, see S.D. Krasner 1999, pp. 20–5.
- 53 See for example the essays in S. Garkaw, L. Kelly and W. Fisher 2001 and R.A. Williams Jr 1990, pp. 660–704. For criticism of 'Aboriginal rights' from an indigenous perspective see T. Alfred 1999, pp. 57–9, 140.
- 54 See J. Levy 2000, especially pp. 212–16 and D. Ivison 2002.
- 55 Or perhaps the pre-history of the pre-history of liberalism. Regarding Locke as a liberal in any systematic sense is, of course, anachronistic. But the ideological role that Locke plays in the way liberalism marshals its past – his role in the liberal canon, in

other words – justifies the attention he receives here (and elsewhere), when asking questions about the nature of liberalism.

56 This theme is explored more fully in D. Ivison 1997b.

57 I am grateful to Peter Anstey for his invitation to participate in the symposium that led to this volume and to the other participants for their comments and questions. I am particularly indebted to David Armitage, Andrew Fitzmaurice, Barry Hindess and Ian Hunter for discussions about Locke and early modern theories of empire, and for their help and encouragement.

6 Locke's empiricist theory of the law of nature

John Colman

John Locke did not publish a treatise on ethics, but he did write one, the manuscript from the 1660s originally edited by W. von Leyden as *Essays on the Law of Nature* (Locke 1954). The works which did appear under his imprimatur include a good deal of material on morality, as do his notebooks, correspondence and other manuscripts. There is no doubt that Locke had an interest in questions of moral philosophy throughout his career. Further, we know from James Tyrrell that *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* was inspired by a discussion of 'the Principles of morality, and reveal'd Religion'.¹ And throughout the *Essay* our ability to know our moral duties is contrasted with our need to rely on probable opinion when it comes to the physical world. Does Locke's interest in morality issue in a theory of morality? He may, of course, have developed more than one theory (philosophers sometimes change their thoughts); the natural law theory of his youth and something different in his mature writings. Locke, however, continues to refer to the moral law of nature; notably in the 'Second Treatise of Government', but also in *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St Paul*, the last work that he prepared for the press. Locke's moral theory, so far as he has one, would then be some version of natural law theory. This is not to say his ideas on morality stayed exactly as they were when he wrote the *Essays on the Law of Nature*, only that he does not repudiate his early work. If, on the other hand, what he has to say in his published works is inconsistent with natural law theory he does not have a moral theory.

In recent times interpreters of Locke on morality have tended to group into two camps: those who maintain that Locke's thoughts on morality are consistent throughout – and especially that the epistemology of the *Essay* is compatible with the moral doctrine of the *Essays on the Law of Nature* – and those who maintain the contrary, that his later thoughts cannot be squared with his early doctrine. While those of the latter camp differ in their accounts of the import of Locke's remarks on morality, it will be convenient (following S. Zinaich Jr 2000) to refer to them as holding 'the irreconcilability thesis', and those of the former camp as holding 'the reconcilability thesis'.² I intend to defend the reconcilability thesis. As I have said, this commits me to the view that Locke is some sort of natural law theorist. I will outline what I take to be the main grounds for the irreconcilability thesis, and in all conscience they are strong grounds. I will argue that none of these show Locke to have rejected the leading idea of a moral law founded upon human nature.

However much his thought develops, he remains within the broad natural law tradition in moral philosophy.

I do not wish to argue that Locke's theory is true – that moral philosophers need go no further than his works to solve their problems – only that his thought is consistent. As a general conclusion my view is that Locke developed an empiricist natural law theory.

Characteristics of natural law theory

Moral theories which legitimately lay claim to the title of 'natural law' differ in many specifics; consider Stoic and Thomist conceptions of laws of nature. However, any natural law theory must exhibit at least the following features:

- 1 The rules or precepts of morality are universal, binding all human agents in all places at all times;
- 2 The content of these rules is founded upon a human nature that in the morally relevant respects is immutable;
- 3 This content is accessible to reason; more precisely to 'right reason' or the rational faculty properly applied;
- 4 The rules of natural law have moral authority over the rules of conduct in a given society – both legal enactments and socially accepted codes of conduct;
- 5 At least as the idea of natural law enters into Christian thought, God is the ultimate source of the law.

These features should not be taken as definitive of a natural law conception of morality, but they are, I believe, necessary conditions for any such conception (with the qualification regarding Christian thought in the fifth condition). They serve to distinguish natural law theory from conventionalist/relativist theories, according to which the only measure of right and wrong are the folkways which have developed in any given society, from the various subjectivist accounts of moral judgment, and from consequentialism.

The difference between natural law theory and consequentialism is worth further notice. According to consequentialism the moral rectitude of an act – the act which ought to be performed – is, very broadly, determined by the states of affairs consequent upon its performance. In the simpler versions of consequentialism, such as direct act-consequentialism, the agent ought always to choose the act which will, or at least is likely to, have the best consequences overall. (For the hedonistic utilitarian, the goodness of consequences is cashed in terms of the greatest happiness of the greatest number). So any occasion on which the agent acts (including the act of 'doing nothing') is a moral occasion; what he or she does is to be assessed as morally right or wrong.³ In other words, the agent is never in a morally neutral situation. Any deontological conception of morality such as the natural law conception necessarily leaves room for morally neutral action. A moral rule stipulates a kind of act which ought or ought not be done, e.g. (acts of) gratitude, theft, a lie. Agents, therefore, are called upon to make a moral choice only

when one or more of the alternatives open to them is prescribed or proscribed by a moral rule. We do, rightly or wrongly, think of many of the situations in ordinary life as ‘rule free’, that our choice between alternatives is morally indifferent. If the alternatives I have in mind can honestly be described as, say, taking a walk in the park or staying home to read Jane Austen, I have nothing to make a moral decision about, notwithstanding that there are other possibilities open to me which would make a greater contribution to overall goodness or value.

Grounds for the irreconcilability thesis

I do not intend here to examine in detail all of the arguments that have been put forward for the irreconcilability thesis. However, the following five features of Locke’s thought in the *Essay* appear to me to be the major grounds for the thesis.

- 1 In the *Essay* Locke’s account of morality is an unstable combination of moral relativism and a divine command theory. As a matter of fact the variable ‘law of opinion or reputation’ is the measure of moral rectitude:

Vertue and Vice are Names pretended, and supposed every where to stand for actions in their own nature right and wrong: . . . But yet . . . this is visible, that these Names, *Vertue* and *Vice*, in the particular instances of their application, . . . are constantly attributed only to such actions, as in each Country and Society are in reputation or discredit. . . . Thus the measure of what is every where called and esteemed *Vertue* and *Vice* is the approbation or dislike, praise or blame, which by a secret and tacit consent establishes is self in the several Societies, Tribes, and Clubs of Men in the World: whereby several actions come to find Credit or Disgrace amongst them, according to the Judgment, Maxims, or Fashions of that place.

(*Essay* II. xxviii. 10, p. 353)

This law of reputation is, then, the de facto law of right and wrong. However, Locke introduces this law alongside the ‘divine law’ and the ‘civil laws’. By reference to the first, actions are denominated sins or duties, to the second criminal or innocent (*Essay* II. xxviii. 7, p. 352). He says of the divine law that it

is the only true touchstone of *moral Rectitude*; and by comparing them to this Law, it is, that Men judge of the most considerable *Moral Good* or *Evil* of their Actions; that is, whether as *Duties*, or *Sins*, they are like to procure them happiness, or misery, from the hands of the ALMIGHTY.

(*Essay* II. xxviii. 8, p. 352)

God’s promulgation of His divine law is ‘by the light of Nature, or the voice of Revelation’ (*ibid.*). The divine law, then, is the *de jure* measure of moral right

and wrong. As it is made known by the 'light of nature' it is the law of nature; which it could not be were it promulgated only by 'the voice of revelation'. The law of reputation may be compared with, and corrected against the divine law *qua* revealed law, but that law *qua* rationally accessible law of nature appears to have dropped out of the picture. In his rebuttal of innate practical principles Locke quite clearly holds there to be a real diversity of morals; that conflict between the moral practices of different societies reflects conflicting moral beliefs and not wilful deviations from a universally accepted moral code. But were the divine law accessible to human reason without the aid of revelation it should be acknowledged in all societies, at least receiving lip service if not always followed in practice. That is, the law of nature should be one with the law of reputation. In the *Essay* it seems that Locke, as an honest empiricist, recognises the factual diversity of morals but ignores the implications of this for a natural law theory. He uses this diversity as a weapon against moral innatism but fails to see that it is equally effective against the law of nature. In effect he opposes the moralities established 'by a secret and tacit consent . . . in the several, Societies, Tribes, and Clubs of Men' to a law which is universally binding simply because it is God's revealed will for mankind. Revealed law, like the civil law, can be known only because it has been announced by the legislator.

- 2 One of the most important distinctions Locke makes in the *Essay* is that between ideas that are ectypes and those that are archetypes. In constructing the former the mind copies patterns given in nature. Ideas which are archetypes are themselves patterns to which things in the world may conform:

[They] are not Copies, nor made after the Pattern of any real Existence, to which the Mind intends them to be conformable, and exactly to answer. Those being such Collections of simple *Ideas*, that the Mind it self puts together, and such Collections, that each of them contains in it precisely all that the Mind intends it should, they are Archetypes and Essences of Modes that may exist; and so are designed only for, and belong only to such Modes, as when they do exist, have an exact conformity with those complex *Ideas*.
(*Essay* II. xxxi. 14, p. 384)

Moral ideas, including those of kinds of action which are the subject matter of moral rules, are archetypes.⁴ But if this is so how can they provide the content of a universal, immutable law of nature? As inventions of the mind they must rather belong to the variable content of the law of reputation.

- 3 In the *Essays on the Law of Nature* Locke talks of the law of nature as 'a fact . . . firmly rooted in the soil of human nature'; hence the universality and the immutability of the law. He adds that this is

not because nature or God (as I should say more correctly) could not have created man differently. Rather, the cause is that, since man has been made such as he is, equipped with reason and his other faculties and destined for

this mode of life, they necessarily result from his inborn constitution some definite duties for him, which cannot be other than they are.

(*ELN* VII, p. 199)

But moral duties cannot be derived from human nature *tout court*, for everything humans do, whether good or evil, expresses the capacity of their nature. How, then, can human nature be normative for human conduct? The usual answer within natural law theory draws upon the Aristotelian concepts of form and *telos*, or end. The form of a thing makes it to be the kind of thing it is, or have the nature it has. A thing's form is not simply its place in a taxonomic system; it includes its *telos* or the final state it will achieve if it fulfils the potential for development inherent in its nature. For instance, it is of the nature of an acorn to grow into an oak, though this does not always happen. Acorns which do so develop achieve their natural end. Similarly individual humans possess the form of humanity and the *telos* this includes. They are not merely biological beings growing from infancy to adulthood; they are agents possessed of reason. The fulfilment of their *telos* is the exercise of agency in accord with reason. Since when they act, human agents are faced with alternative courses of action, it is possible for them to act 'contrary to their nature'. So not everything humans do is *properly* human. It is the conduct which is properly human which is normative, or constitutes the content of the law of nature. In the *Essay* Locke rejects the Aristotelian theory of forms in favour of Robert Boyle's corpuscular theory according to which the nature of things – the qualities they exhibit and the ways they behave – are a function of their corpuscular structure. Locke has then jettisoned the main plank of a natural law theory of morality.

- 4 In the *Essay* Locke expounds a hedonistic theory of human action and of value. Again, neither is consistent with a natural law theory of morality. According to Locke, our desires are always shaped by pleasure and pain. The general object of the will comprises those things which give us pleasure and the avoidance of those which give us pain. We act, then, in ways we find pleasurable or believe to be necessary to achieve pleasure as a consequence, and we avoid acting in ways that are painful except when we believe them necessary to achieve a degree of pleasure which makes the pain worthwhile. Accordingly, Locke defines happiness, or the state we all wish to achieve, in terms of pleasure and the absence of pain:

Happiness then in its full extent is the utmost Pleasure we are capable of, and *Misery* the utmost Pain: And the lowest degree of what is called *Happiness*, is so much ease from all Pain, and so much present Pleasure, as without which anyone cannot be content.

(*Essay* II. xxi. 42, p. 258)

Locke defines value, or the good, in terms of his hedonistic theory of motivation:

what has an aptness to produce Pleasure in us, is that we call *Good*, and what is apt to produce Pain in us, we call *Evil*, for no other reason, but for its aptness to produce Pleasure and Pain in us, wherein consists our *Happiness* and *Misery*.

(Ibid., p. 259)

That happiness or well-being is the *summum bonum* or good, the realisation of which is proper to human nature, is a commonplace of natural law theory. Locke, however, emphasises the relative nature of pleasure and pain:

The Mind has a different relish, as well as the Palate. . . . For as pleasant Tastes depend not on the things themselves, but their agreeableness to this or that particular Palate, wherein there is a great variety: So the greatest Happiness consists, in the having of those things, which produce the greatest Pleasure; and in the absence of those, which cause any disturbance, any pain. Now these, to different Men, are very different things. . . . This, I think, may serve to shew us the Reason, why, though all Men's desires tend to Happiness, yet they are not moved by the same Object. Men may chuse different things, and yet all chuse right . . .

(*Essay* II. xxi. 55, pp. 269–70)

Happiness is not a definable good proper to human beings as the fulfilment of their humanity. It is not, therefore, something from which universal rules of conduct could be derived. What individuals ought to do, in a non-moral sense of 'ought', is whatever they find productive of pleasure or which avoids pain. That is, the natural rule of conduct is that each pursues his or her self-interest. That the law of nature is founded upon self-interest is a position Locke argues against in the eighth of the *Essays on the Law of Nature*. The psychology of action set out in the *Essay* is, therefore, sharply at odds with his early natural law theory.

- 5 Famously Locke maintains in the *Essay* that morality is capable of demonstration:

The *Idea* of a supreme Being, infinite in Power, Goodness, and Wisdom, whose Workmanship we are, and on whom we depend; and the *Idea* of our selves, as understanding, rational Beings, being such as are clear in us, would, I suppose, if duly considered, and pursued, afford such Foundations of our Duty and Rules of Action, as might place *Morality amongst the Sciences capable of Demonstration*: wherein I doubt not, but from self-evident Propositions, by necessary Consequences, as incontestable as those in Mathematicks, the measures of right and wrong might be made out, to any one that will apply himself . . .

(*Essay* IV. iii. 18, p. 549)

It is well known that Locke never produced such a demonstration. Nonetheless, his claim, which he never retracts, indicates a continued moral rationalism,

which is to be expected from a natural law theorist. However, Locke's grounds for the belief in a demonstrative morality is that our moral notions, like the ideas of the mathematicians, are archetypes invented by the mind and not intended as copies of any real existence. It seems that a demonstration of morality, could it be carried through, would elucidate only the 'man-made' law of reputation not the divine law.

In defence of reconciliation

In my defence I am not engaging with the above points serially or discretely, but am offering an interpretation of Locke's views on the connection between moral law and God, human motivation and obligation, and the diversity of morals which I believe is consistent with his continued allegiance to natural law moral theory.

Locke's conception of morality throughout his writings is legalistic and theocentric. This, we have seen, is consistent with a natural law conception. But what is most important about Locke's theological legalism is the account of moral obligation it encapsulates. In the course of his polemic against innate principles he cites three views of the foundation of the 'moral ought':

if a Christian, who has the view of Happiness and Misery in another Life, be asked why a Man must keep his Word, he will *give* this as a *Reason*: Because God, who has the Power of eternal Life and Death, requires it of us. But if an *Hobbist* be asked why; he will answer: Because the Publick requires it, and the *Leviathan* will punish you, if you do not. And if one of the old *Heathen* Philosophers had been asked, he would have answer'd: Because it was dishonest, below the Dignity of a Man, and opposite to Vertue, the highest Perfection of humane Nature, to do otherwise.

(*Essay* I. iii. 5, p. 68)

For Locke the Christian answer is the correct one:

the true ground of Morality . . . can only be the Will and Law of a God, who sees Men in the dark, has in his Hand Rewards and Punishments, and Power enough to call to account the Proudest Offender.

(*Essay* I. iii. 6, p. 69)

It should be noted that Locke is not saying that Christian morality differs in content from 'Hobbist' or 'Heathen' morality. Rather the difference is in the Christian conception of moral obligation.

God and moral obligation

It might seem that Locke reduces moral obligation to moral motivation and the latter to pure self-interest. Both the Christian and the Hobbist are motivated to do what is right out of a fear of punishment for wrong doing, the only difference

being that those cunning enough may be able to evade Leviathan's punishment but cannot evade God's. The heathen philosopher, on the other hand, is mistaken in supposing us ever motivated by a conception of the dignity and worth of moral behaviour. But Locke's analysis of the 'moral ought' is more subtle than this. Obligation to obey the law is prior to any motivation to obey: 'what Duty is cannot be understood without a Law; nor a Law be known, or supposed without a Law-Maker, or without Reward and Punishment' (*Essay* I. iii. 12, p. 74).

God's status as law-maker does not derive solely from His irresistible power to enforce obedience to His commands; it is founded in the 'right of creation': 'as when all things are justly subject to that by which they have first been made and also are constantly preserved' (*ELN* VI, p. 185).⁵ Were there no law-maker there could be no law and hence no obligation. As the divine moral law is superior to civil law, in that the latter may be measured and found wanting against the former, were there no God there could be no 'moral ought'.

In a *Commonplace Book* entry, dated 1693, Locke distinguishes between the 'morality' and the 'good' of actions:

That which has very much confounded men about the will and its determination has been the confounding of the notion of moral rectitude and giving it the name of moral good. The pleasure that a man takes in any action or expects as a consequence of it is indeed a good in the self able and proper to move the will. But the moral rectitude of it considered barely in itself is not good or evil nor any way moves the will, but as pleasure and pain either accompanies the action itself or is looked on to be a consequence of it. Which is evident from the punishments and rewards which God has annexed to moral rectitude or pravity as proper motives to the will, which would be needless if moral rectitude were in itself good and moral pravity evil.

('Voluntas', MS Locke c. 28, fol. 114)⁶

This passage reflects the hedonistic theory of motivation developed in the *Essay*. Locke's view may be put in terms of a 'moral ought' and a '(non-moral) motivational ought'. An individual morally ought (or ought not) do x if and only if x is prescribed (or proscribed) by the divine law. But even when acknowledged as something one morally ought to do, x gives rise to a motivational ought only insofar as the individual takes pleasure in doing x or looks to pleasure as a consequence of so doing (or to pain as a consequence of doing otherwise). That is, in Locke's opinion there is nothing *intrinsically* attractive in virtuous or right conduct and nothing *intrinsically* repellent in vice. The Christian who acknowledges morality as the law of God has sufficient motivation always to do what is right – if not the thought of divine rewards at least that of divine punishment, which it would be madness to hope to escape. Nevertheless, Locke is not committed to the thesis that when it comes to moral rectitude fear of punishment or hope of reward is the only consideration from which the motivational ought arises. On the contrary, according to his educational theory the main aim of education is to shape the pupil's character, via the mechanisms of praise and blame, such that he takes pleasure in being

virtuous and is repelled by vice.⁷ Education in virtue is possible because of our natural propensity to be pleased by the praise or esteem of others and pained by blame or disapproval. Rather than cowering children into the external practice of virtue by physical punishment or tempting them by rewards, the educator should utilise this propensity so that they esteem themselves on account of virtuous conduct and are ashamed of vice:

If by these Means you can come once to shame them out of their Faults . . . and make them in Love with the Pleasure of being well thought on, you may turn them as you please, and they will be in love with all the ways of Vertue.
(*STCE*, §58, p. 117)

Divine sanctions are, as it were, a motivation of the last resort, proper to move the will of the ‘proudest offender’ and sustain the virtuous person when the moral going gets rough or when the obedience to the divine law threatens shipwreck in this world. In the ordinary course of moral life the ‘well educated’ – whether Christian or not – will be motivated by an apprehension of moral rectitude. The heathen philosophers and their followers were mistaken only in supposing the motivating good of virtue internal to virtuous action; whereas the link between the good, or pleasure, when it exists in the mind of the agent, has been forged by education.

In the *Essays on the Law of Nature* Locke states that,

all obligation binds conscience and lays a bond on the mind itself, so that not fear of punishment, but a rational apprehension of what is right, puts us under an obligation, and conscience passes judgement on morals, and, if we are guilty of a crime, declares that we deserve punishment.
(*ELNVI*, p. 185)

It may appear that in this passage Locke does acknowledge an intrinsic link between the moral rectitude of an act and a specifically moral type of motivation. There is a difference between expecting to be punished on account of some act and the idea that the punishment is deserved. We may expect (unwarranted) punishment for an act we believe to be right or morally permissible; the thought of deserved punishment is consequent upon the belief that the act is morally wrong. The judgment of right or wrong, and hence of deserved punishment, is passed ‘at the tribunal of conscience’. Now a person’s conscience does surely have a motivational function, as witnessed by the painfulness of a bad conscience and locutions such as ‘I could not in conscience do that’. Nonetheless the inconsistency between what Locke says about obligation in the *Essays on the Law of Nature* and his later assertion that the moral rectitude of an act does not of itself move the will is, I believe, only apparent.

The point Locke is intent on making is that moral obligation does not derive from the mere power to enforce commands but from the commander’s right to do so. Were punishment alone sufficient to generate a ‘moral ought’ we would be

morally bound to obey anyone who happened to have power over us. But the idea of *deserved* punishment derives from the idea of an authority who has *rightful* power over us. Certainly, the threat of punishment no matter the hand from whence it comes is 'proper' to move the will. Locke is not concerned with the supposed motivating force of conscience. Rather he refers to conscience to mark the difference in attitude a person has towards disobedience to someone acknowledged as having a right to command and disobedience to the commands of 'a pirate or robber':

in the latter case, with the approval of conscience, he rightly had regard only for his own well-being, but in the former, though conscience condemned him, he would violate the right of another.

(Ibid.)

It is not, then, any moral rectitude *inherent* in an act which creates moral obligation, but the fact that it is commanded or forbidden by a rightful superior. That we are obligated to obey such a superior is not a moral law alongside others. Rather it expresses the 'formal cause' of moral obligation, 'namely the will of a superior. For we are bound to something for the very reason that he, under whose rule we are, wills it' (ibid.). Were we 'masterless men' there could be no moral ought. The existence of God, who as our creator has an inalienable right to promulgate laws for our conduct, is the fundamental feature of Locke's moral ontology.

The content of the moral law

For Locke the concept of moral obligation includes the concept of God's legislative will. As the formal cause of obligation His will binds 'effectively', but we cannot be under any obligation unless we know the content of the legislative will:

That thing binds 'terminatively', or by delimitation, which prescribes the manner and measure of an obligation and of our duty and is nothing other than the declaration of that will, and this declaration by another name we call law.

(Ibid.)

As God is not subject to any superior will He cannot be morally constrained to command one thing rather than another. Hence it seems the concepts of good and evil, right and wrong we have developed and use in making moral judgments cannot serve as a guide to God's will. From our point of view, His law will be completely arbitrary and so known only so far as He reveals it.

There is, however, a sense in which the divine law cannot be conceived as expressing an arbitrary will: it is a *law* enjoining a settled course of action, not a series of ad hoc commands like those of a drill-sergeant. God's creative will is unfettered in that He is not a demiurge making a world according to a pattern antecedent to His will. Nonetheless, His creation is a cosmos, all things within it

behaving in an orderly fashion so as to sustain the whole. As Locke puts it in one of his arguments for the existence of a moral law of nature in the first of the *Essays on the Law of Nature*:

[In this world] all things observe a fixed law of their operations and a manner of existence appropriate to their nature. For that which prescribes to every thing the form and manner and measure of working, is just what law is. . . . This being so, it does not seem that man alone is independent of laws while everything else is bound. On the contrary, a manner of acting is prescribed to him that is suitable to his nature.

(*ELNI*, p. 117)

The one consistent principle of action in human nature which Locke recognises in the *Essay* is the impulse in individuals to seek their own happiness. The manner of acting God prescribes for the human part of His creation must, therefore, *in some way* relate to this.

Further consideration of the idea of God and the purpose behind His creative activity reinforces the conclusion that the content of the moral law has to do with happiness. Human action is purposive in that the agent has some end in view in acting. The same can be said of God's creative activity. There are, however, two important respects in which the divine differs from human purposiveness. First, unlike us, God, being omnipotent, is not limited in the ends He may choose and achieve, and being omniscient whatever He does will be perfectly suitable to those ends. Second, whereas the ends we choose are typically things we lack and so desire, God's activity cannot be aimed at supplying any lack in Him. In a manuscript dated 1681 Locke states:

since God is eternal and perfect in his own being, he cannot make use of [his unlimited] power to change his own being into a better or another state; and therefore all the exercise of that power must be in and upon his creatures, which cannot but be employed for their good and benefit, as much as the order and perfection of the whole can allow each individual in its particular rank and station: and therefore looking on God as a being infinite in goodness as well as power, we cannot imagine he hath made any thing with a design that it should be miserable, but that he hath afforded it all the means of being happy that its nature and estate is capable of.

(*King*, II, p. 229)⁸

God's goodness here is not, in Locke's sense of the term, moral goodness. As God is not subject to a superior will, nothing He does can be said to be morally good. Rather this goodness in His creative act is a gratuitous out-flowing of His own good; that is, His perfect happiness. It can, then, be concluded by reason without the aid of revelation that the law God wills for human beings facilitates their happiness.

On Locke's hedonistic account what happiness is for human beings can only be known a posteriori; it cannot be discovered a priori from contemplation of the

concept of humanity. And we know from experience that the pleasures that make up happiness differ radically from person to person. If the divine law expresses God's will that humans be happy it seems that its fundamental precepts must be that we individually pursue whatever course of conduct leads to our own happiness. In the eighth of the *Essays on the Law of Nature* Locke argues against the thesis that 'every man's own interest is the basis of the law of nature'. Briefly his argument is that there could be no social existence were individuals duty bound always to pursue their self-interest. Within society there are conflicts of interest, so it is impossible that the self-interest of each and every individual could be fully achieved. A morality of pure self-interest would then be a morality of conflict. Such a rule of conduct would be practical only for individuals living in isolation one from another.

Locke's belief in the essentially social nature of human existence is explicitly stated in the 'Second Treatise of Government':

God having made Man such a Creature, that, in his own Judgment, it was not good for him to be alone, put him under strong Obligations of Necessity, Convenience, and Inclination to drive him into *Society*, as well as fitted him with Understanding and Language to continue and enjoy it.

(TT II. vii. 77, pp. 336–7)

By 'society' in this passage Locke does not mean political society but social life of the pre-political state of nature initially based around the family. Many commentators have pointed out a certain ambiguity in Locke's account of the state of nature. Sometimes he presents it as an idyllic state in which mutual aid and affection is the rule, at other times as close to a Hobbesian state of war. No doubt God has made humans such that they cannot survive in complete isolation, but He has also made them such that each individual is motivated by the desire for his or her own happiness. It seems then that social life, though necessary, will inevitably be fraught with discontent. However, for Locke social life is the backdrop for the individual's happiness. To understand this we need to look more closely at his hedonism.

Hedonism

Locke at times talks of pleasure (and so happiness) as if it were a kind of quasi-sensation produced in the agent by certain actions. But his hedonistic doctrine need not be interpreted in this way. Pleasure always has an object; we take pleasure in things, enjoy them or vaguely 'feel good about them'. Pleasure itself is not an object that might be isolated, viewed and pursued by itself. Locke, as we have seen, emphasises the huge variety of objects individuals find pleasant, and he is careful to include pleasures of the mind as well as of the body. Many of the former at least are communal in nature. To take one of Locke's examples: 'the pleasure of rational conversation with a Friend' (*Essay* II. xx. 18, p. 233). Obviously such activity involves the presence of more than one person, but further it involves each person having a genuine regard for the other. It is a mistake to suppose an exclusive

disjunction between self-regarding and other-regarding acts; for it may be true that the agent takes pleasure in doing x and would not do it were it not for the pleasure, yet x involves a genuine regard for others. Social pleasures such as friendship are a case in point.

Locke's hedonism, I suggest, may be understood in the light of a distinction between 'self-centred' action and persons and 'selfish' action and persons. An action is self-centred (on my definition) when the agent takes pleasure in it or looks to pleasure or the avoidance of pain as a consequence and performs the action because of this. Selfishness is rather a style of acting, as when the agent seeks pleasure or the avoidance of pain in disregard of the pleasure or pain of others. Locke is committed to the view that human action is self-centred. He is not committed to the view that it is always selfish. It is to be noted that a person's action may have no element of regard for others in it yet not qualify as a selfish act. For in many of the ordinary circumstances of life what we choose to do does not involve others. So, for example, my choice of a walk in the park in preference to Jane Austen has, all things being equal, nothing to do with anyone else. It was remarked earlier that only a natural law morality leaves room for action that is morally neutral. It may be added that any conception of morality that takes personal happiness as its central value must leave such room. For if on every occasion in which I made a choice there were to be some act which I morally ought to perform (an 'ought' which holds independently of what I would like to do at the time) I could never have the liberty to do as I please. But the happiness of persons is inseparable from their doing as they please at least some of the time.

Morality does, of course, curtail the liberty to do as one pleases. On the natural law conception, the bounds of liberty are reached on those occasions when some precepts of the law bear upon the agent; when some act open to their decision is of a kind she ought, or ought not, do. Locke's hedonism, as I have interpreted it, can accommodate other-regarding acts. It also explains the need for social existence to be governed by regulations external to the individual. Self-centred acts are not as such selfish, but all selfish acts are self-centred. There will then be a human capacity to act selfishly; a capacity which will be exercised in some degree by each person at one time or another. But one or two selfish acts do not make a selfish person – that is, someone who pursues a settled policy of gaining their own ends in disregard for the ends of others; or, in Kantian terms, someone who treats others merely as means. It does not need such settled selfishness to generate what Locke calls the 'inconveniences' of the state of nature. There is ample reason in the occasional selfishness of human beings to prompt the move into political society and the establishment of an impartial judge.

One reason, cited in the *Essays on the Law of Nature*, why self-interest or the individual's own advantage cannot be the basis of the law of nature is that, 'a great number of virtues, and the best of them, consist only in this: that we do good to others at our own loss' (*ELN* VIII, p. 207). While Locke's hedonism does not commit him to the view that human action is always selfish it is difficult to see how a regard for others founded in hedonism can extend to actions in which we do good to others knowing it to be at our own loss. Pure altruism appears to be ruled out.

Locke can, I think, develop two lines of reply, though they take his hedonistic account of motivation to (beyond?) its limits. In the first place there is vagueness in the idea of acting at one's loss. The completely selfish person pursues their own ends and considers their own loss to consist in anything that crosses or hinders this pursuit. Such complete and coolly calculating selfishness is perhaps more common in fiction than in real life. Even so, the disadvantages of a hindrance to one's own ends serves to centre the idea of doing good at one's own loss. An agent does x at her own loss for the good of another when she knows that so doing will hinder some end she has set herself and that it will be productive of someone else's good. Locke's hedonism accommodates individuals taking pleasure in things which of their nature involve the agent having a regard for others and their good. While anyone who suffers what they see as a personal loss will be to some degree pained thereby, the pain may be outweighed by the pleasure taken in an altruistic act. Locke's hedonism, then, does allow for cases in which persons knowingly put their own advantage second to the good of someone else. Second, as noted above, Locke maintains that persons may be educated so that they take pleasure in virtuous action.

Our natural hedonistic drive necessarily has objects but these are not fixed. Humans *learn* to take pleasure in a whole array of different things; and many of these objects of pleasure are socially constructed in the sense that they could not exist apart from social intercourse between persons.

Neither Locke's rejection of Aristotelian forms nor his hedonistic theory of motivation and value entail that he has given up his early allegiance to a natural law conception of morality. Rather the rejection of the one and the articulation of the other may be understood as part of a project to establish a strictly empiricist account of the law of nature and one which fits with the worldview being developed by those such as Boyle and Newton whom Locke hails as the master builders of knowledge. Locke's empiricism does not commence with the *Essay*; he was already a committed empiricist when he wrote the *Essays on the Law of Nature*. The law of nature is said to be known by 'the light of nature',

But since . . . this light of nature is neither tradition nor some inward moral principle written in our minds by nature, there remains nothing by which it can be defined but reason and sense-perception . . . sensation furnishing reason with the ideas of particular sense-objects and supplying the subject-matter of discourse, reason on the other hand guiding the faculty of sense.

(ELNIV, p. 147)

Reason working with data acquired by observation is the only source of our knowledge of human nature and the mode of life God intends for us.

There is no Aristotelian form of humanity that is knowable either a priori or which could be grasped in experience. This means there can be no knowledge of a *telos* inherent in human nature from which moral norms of conduct derive. What observation of human beings does make evident is that individuals pursue their own happiness, which they see as pleasure and the absence of pain, and that the

objects in which they take pleasure differ greatly from person to person. Although all aim at happiness, it is impossible to give an account of happiness in terms of some object or objects from which all humans by virtue of their nature take pleasure:

Hence it was . . . that the Philosophers of old did in vain enquire, whether *Summum bonum* consisted in Riches, or Bodily Delights, or Virtue, or Contemplation: And they might have as reasonably disputed, whether the best Relish were to be found in Apples, Plumbs, or Nuts; and divided themselves into Sects upon it.

(*Essay* II. xxi. 55)

While this subjective hedonism is incompatible with a natural law theory which depends on an Aristotelian doctrine of forms it does not mean that Locke's thought is outside the natural law tradition. Locke rejects the Aristotelian organic metaphor in favour of the mechanistic metaphor of the 'new science'. The innate hedonic drive in individuals is the spring of action, or efficient cause of their behaviour and we need look no further for an explanation of why they behave. Nonetheless, Locke's adoption of the corpuscular theory does not rule out explanations in terms of final causes. Boyle (unlike Descartes) does not reject final causes.

For Locke a final cause refers not to an inherent *telos*, but to the order God intends for the universe including the human world. To apprehend the law of nature we need to know what God has endowed us with at the creation and this knowledge can be acquired only by experience. Each individual may be said to have a personal *telos*: his or her own happiness. It is a further empirical fact that humans are social beings; so the happiness of individuals cannot be separated from their social existence. The capacity for selfishness inherent in hedonism means there must be rules governing and constraining the individual's personal quest for happiness within the social context:

Principles of Actions indeed there are lodged in Men's Appetites, but these are so far from being innate Moral Principles, that if they were left to their full swing, they would carry Men to the over-turning of all Morality.

(*Essay* I. iii. 13, p. 75)

But this does not mean that social life is always onerous for the individual; something grudgingly entered into out of the stark necessity of survival. Many of the things in which individuals in fact take pleasure are inseparable from social existence. Had God created human beings differently, the law of nature would have a different content. Were we self-sufficient solitary beings who found their happiness in isolation and who continued in that state there would have been no place for a moral law, at least none for precepts regarding one's conduct towards others. Similarly, morality would be unnecessary were all our natural appetites purely altruistic, if each of us in all we did, aimed at serving the welfare of other

persons. Though it is difficult to see how there could be a society of full-time altruists. Perhaps then the precepts of morality would enjoin self-interested actions!

Sometimes the rules of morality will demand of individuals that they act at their own loss. When the *felt* loss is considerable, doing one's own duty is onerous, and it would be logically odd to talk of the agent taking pleasure in the deed. The Christian however, who believes in rewards and punishments in an afterlife, will recognise that even in these circumstances conformity to the precepts of morality is a means to their own happiness. Indeed reward in the next life is an end common to all human beings notwithstanding the differences in the objects from which individuals derive their pleasure.

For that being intended for a State of Happiness, it must certainly be agreeable to every one's wish and desire: Could we suppose their relishes as different there as they are here, yet the Manna in Heaven will suit every one's Palate.

(*Essay* II. xxi. 65, p. 277)

The law of reputation

What has been said so far, while it does, I believe, reconcile Locke's hedonism and his analysis of moral obligation with what is required of natural law theory, does not meet what may be considered the main objection to reconciliation: his empiricist thesis that the law of reputation is the de facto measure of virtue and vice, and that moral concepts are creations of the (human) mind. In attempting to answer this I will begin with Locke's reasons for supposing the conceptions of moral actions to be made by the mind rather than discovered by experience.

The mind, being originally a *tabula rasa*, derives all its ideas or materials of thinking ultimately from experience. Most, however, are not originally given in experience. All concepts – Locke's general, abstract ideas – are the workmanship of the mind. The difference between ectypal and archetypal ideas or concepts is that in creating the first it endeavours to copy patterns given in nature and in creating the second it combines its ideas into a complex without the intention of representing anything given in observation. Locke's polemic against innate ideas in Book I of the *Essay* clears the ground of what he takes to be the only alternative to the *tabula rasa* conception of the mind. Since principles, whether speculative or practical, are articulations of ideas and as none of the latter is innate there can be no innate principles. The practical principles of morality must, therefore, have their origin in experience. As the divine law (whether positive revealed law or law of nature) is binding on everyone, it must, in some sense, exist objectively. It may well seem then that the ideas articulated in its principles should be ectypes or copies of moral entities which are in some way accessible to observation. The objectivity of the moral law *qua* law of nature consists in it being founded in an invariable human nature. As was remarked above, observation of human beings yields knowledge of how they in fact behave, or the behavioural capacities of human nature, but cannot yield norms for how they *ought* to behave. Ideas articulated in such norms cannot, therefore, be ectypes, or at least not wholly so. On Locke's taxonomy of ideas one

that is not ectypal is archetypal. So moral ideas of kinds of acts which ought or ought not be done are archetypes, collections of ideas put together by the mind itself to which human behaviour exhibited in reality may, or may not, conform.

The only constraint upon the mind's construction of archetypal ideas is that those it puts together be compatible one with another (so, for example, the mind cannot create the idea of a square triangle). Nonetheless, though the mind is free to create whatever 'fantastical' ideas it likes, in most cases archetypal ideas are devised because of some human interest or purpose. Being social creatures, humans have a fundamental interest in human action and its regulation. Hence very many archetypal ideas are of morally relevant acts. To say that the moral regulation of action is a fundamental human interest is not to imply that each and every person is interested in conforming their actions to the precepts of morality. But even the completely selfish person has an interest that other people should conform; selfishness thrives on the altruism of others.

Creation of moral ideas goes hand in hand with the creation of the law of reputation. In arguing against innate moral principles, Locke pays much attention to the differences in the content of this law in different societies:

He that will carefully peruse the History of Mankind, and look abroad into the several Tribes of Men, and with indifferency survey their Actions, will be able to satisfy himself, That there is scarce that Principle of Morality to be named, or *Rule of Vertue* to be thought on . . . which is not, somewhere or other, *slighted* and condemned by the general Fashion of *whole Societies* of Men, governed by practical Opinions, and Rules of living quite opposite to others.

(*Essay* I. iii. 10, p. 72)

Elsewhere, however, he states it as his opinion that there is considerable convergence in the content of the law of reputation as it exists in different societies:

though, perhaps, by the different Temper, Education, Fashion, Maxims, or Interest of different sorts of Men it fell out, that what was thought Praiseworthy in one Place, escaped not censure in another; and so in different Societies, *Vertues* and *Vices* were changed: Yet, as to the Main, they for the most part kept the same every where.

(*Essay* II. xxviii. 11, p. 356)

And in a reply to James Lowde added to the second edition of the *Essay* he says that in judging the morality of their actions by the law of reputation

Men . . . did not for the most part much vary from the Law of Nature, which is that standing and unalterable Rule, by which they ought to judge the moral rectitude and pravity of their actions, and accordingly denominate them *Vertues* or *Vices*.

(*Essay* II. xxviii. 11n, p. 355)

Here and in other places Locke's talk of the law of reputation and the divine law (revealed or law of nature) suggests two distinct standards of morality which may in some particular coincide in their content, so that what counts as a virtuous or a vicious act according to the one may similarly so count as the other. Locke may, however, be read somewhat differently, as concerned with how persons see the precepts of morality. Those who assess their actions in terms of the law of reputation see these precepts as what is socially approved or disapproved, and share society's approval or disapproval. Those who assess them in terms of the divine law see moral precepts as the law of God. The heathen philosopher perceives morality in the former of these ways, the Christian in the latter.

Locke's reason for supposing that those who judge actions according to the law of reputation will not much vary from the divine law is that 'nothing can be more rational, than to encourage with Esteem and Reputation that, wherein every one finds his Advantage; and to blame and discountenance the contrary' (*Essay* II. xxviii. 11, p. 356). This can be filled out in light of the interpretation of Locke's natural law theory put forward so far. Since God has created us as social beings motivated by the desire to be happy, He must intend us to behave in ways which enable individuals to achieve happiness within a social context. However, given their hedonistic drive and rationality humans need have no thought of God's intentions for them in devising moral concepts and rules which facilitate the quest for happiness within social life. So far as the morality they construct *does* facilitate this, it exhibits God's will, whether or not it is recognised as doing so. As this construction is carried out independently of divine revelation, it exhibits God's will as the 'unwritten' law of nature.

There are two obvious problems that this interpretation confronts. First, how can it be consistent with Locke's acceptance of the diversity of morals? Second, how can it be consistent with the immutability of the law of nature? In answer to the first, Locke emphasises the diversity of morals as part of his refutation of the doctrine of innate practical principles. Were the precepts of morality innate they would be universally acknowledged, at least in word if not in deed. In order to refute moral innatism Locke does not need to come up with incommensurable moralities which have no precepts in common, it is enough that he cite particular instances of acts thought virtuous in one society and vicious or indifferent in another. Further, Locke can explain such moral differences. Though moral precepts arise from the quest for happiness whole societies may, in various ways, be mistaken as to where happiness lies and the means to achieve it, just as the individual may be mistaken as to their own happiness.

Second, the law of nature is eternal and immutable and so universal throughout place and history. But this does not mean it consists of an array of precisely defined rules stating exactly what is to be done no matter what the circumstances of a society or the stage of social development. The fundamental precepts of the law are expressible in only broad terms, such as the rule that human life be preserved as far as possible (see *TT* II. iii. 16, pp. 296–7). Such precepts may be said to constitute 'the heads of virtue'. From these others of greater precision, such as a prohibition against certain forms of killing denominated murder, may be derived.

But this leaves room for dispute as to what these forms are. If I am correct in my interpretation of the role of hedonism in Locke's natural law theory, the derivation of more precise rules from fundamental precepts is to be carried through in terms of their promotion of happiness within the context of human society. This derivation may be considered the philosopher's project of 'demonstrating' morality, but it is also the development of rules of conduct in the course of social evolution. As Locke sees it in the 'Second Treatise of Government' this evolution is from 'that poor but vertuous Age' in which the family was the social unit to the flourishing commonwealth. (*TT* II. viii. 110, pp. 359–60). Growth of social complexity goes hand and hand with the growth of human desires and so with the sophistication of the human quest for happiness. *Ethicks*, as Locke defines it in the final chapter of the *Essay*, 'is the seeking out of those Rules, and Measures of humane Actions, which lead to Happiness, and the Means to practise them' (*Essay* IV. xxi. 3, p. 720).

The demonstration of morality

The idea of a science of morality which would yield moral knowledge as certain as the propositions of mathematics, in contrast to the 'moral certainty' Aristotle claimed to be all that could be hoped for in ethics, was in the seventeenth-century air.⁹ The way in which the ideas of God as supreme being and creator, and of our selves as His rational creatures enter into Locke's proposed demonstration of morality should be clear from the foregoing. But how the 'measures of right and wrong' follow from these 'by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematics' is obscure. Locke's hope for a demonstration is founded on his conception of moral notions as archetypes. In archetypal ideas there is no gap between the nominal essence, or pattern of simple ideas the mind has assembled, and the real essence of that which the idea is intended to signify.¹⁰ Thus, for example, there is nothing essential to an act of murder committed in the world other than what is contained in the idea of murder (constructed independently of any pattern presented in the world). Since the mind has an exact knowledge of what it has itself created the idea for which the term as 'murder' stands can be precisely defined, and the definitions will be a real definition of the act. It may seem that what Locke is after is a precise list of the notions intended to signify actions ranged under the general headings of 'prescribed' and 'proscribed' by the moral law. Were this to be achieved there could be no doubt as to our duties under the law.

The major difficulty facing this project has to do with Locke's conception of definitions as 'best made by enumerating those simple *Ideas* that are combined in the signification of the term Defined' (*Essay* III. iii. 10). While it is plausible that any moral vocabulary developed by beings such as we are will include notions such as 'murder', 'lie', 'kindness', 'honesty' and so on; it is not plausible that these can be defined by an enumeration of their simple, indefinable components. We can all tell lies and know what we are doing, but understanding what it is to lie is to grasp that notion in the complex relations it bears to other concepts, and ultimately to grasp the 'form of life' in which these relations are articulated.

Conclusion

As I have interpreted him in this chapter Locke's later thought on morality is reconcilable with his early treatise on the moral law of nature. More than its being merely reconcilable, I maintain that in the *Essay* Locke intends to develop an epistemology that accommodates morality. In fact he sets out an empiricist theory of the law of nature. Knowledge of the law is gained from experience, a view already stated in the *Essays on the Law of Nature*. But this experience is not observation of the world; it is rather the experience of social life by creatures bent on their own happiness. Locke's theory is naturalistic in that it makes no appeal to values existing in some metaphysical realm, or which are 'proper' to human nature as such. However his is a Christian naturalism. Were there no God there could be no moral obligation. Individuals may come to live moral lives from a love for virtue engendered by education or out of fear of censure, but it could not be said that they morally *ought* to live such lives. Locke never doubts that the precepts of the law of nature coincide with the rules of conduct God has revealed in the Scriptures. While not wanting to put too much weight on a comma it is worth noting that according to Tyrrell's marginalia the discussion which prompted the *Essay* concerned 'the principles of morality, and revealed religion' (i.e. not the principles of morality and the principles of revealed religion). It is a bold, but not too bold, conjecture that the original problem was the relation between the knowledge of our duties apart from revelation and God's commands set forth in Scripture. As we have this revelation there is no need to carry through the difficult philosophical task of demonstrating morality; which is just as well, for Locke never managed to clarify this task.¹¹

Notes

- 1 Marginal note in Tyrrell's copy of the *Essay* to the passage: 'Were it fit to trouble thee with the History of this Essay, I should tell thee that five or six Friends meeting at my Chamber, and discoursing on a Subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the Difficulties that rose on every side', 'Epistle to the reader', *Essay*, p. 7.
- 2 The most detailed defence of the reconcilability thesis is J. Colman 1983. In this chapter I have in mind arguments against this thesis in articles by D.E. Flage 2000, J.B. Schneewind 1994 and S. Zinaich Jr 2000. I hope these authors will pardon my not taking direct issue with their arguments. I have endeavoured to state their main objections to the reconcilability thesis in the third part without assignment to the specific author.
- 3 Philosophers sympathetic to a consequentialist conception of morality have developed various forms of indirect consequentialism in an attempt to avoid this 'no rest from the best' problem. Even so, it seems that on any consequentialist conception the agent has a moral obligation on every occasion to decide whether it is best to pursue good consequences directly or indirectly and to act accordingly. Locke's view on acting for the best and the demands of the moral law is expressed in a letter to Denis Grenville of 13 March 1678:

1 That all negative precepts are always to be obeyd;

2 That positive commands only sometimes upon occasions. But we ought to be

always furnished with the habits and dispositions to those positive dutys in a readynesse against those occasions;

- 3 That between these two i e Between *Unlawfull* which are always and *necessary* quoad hic et nunc which are but sometimes there is a great latitude, and therein we have our liberty which we may use without scrupulously thinkeing ourselves obliged to that which in itself may be Best.

(*Correspondence*, I, p. 559, cf., *ELN*, pp. 193–7)

In other words, when it comes to morality we are always on call, not always on duty.

- 4 In the case of archetypal ideas there is no gap between nominal essence, or the compound of simple ideas the mind constructs, and the real essence of any object corresponding to the idea. See *Essay* III. xi. 15; IV. xii. 8.
- 5 In the *Essays on the Law of Nature* Locke distinguishes three sources of

the authority and dominion which someone has over another, either by natural right and the right of creation, as when all things are justly subject to that by which they have first been made and also are constantly preserved; or by the right of donation, as when God, to whome all things belong, has transferred part of His dominion to someone . . . or by right of contract, as when someone has voluntarily surrendered himself to another and submitted himself to another's will.

(*ELN* VI, p. 185)

- 6 Quoted by J. Colman 1983, pp. 48–9, also by J.B. Schneewind 1994, p. 215.
- 7 ‘Tis Vertue then, direct Vertue, which is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in Education. . . . This is the solid and substantial good, which Tutors should not only read Lectures, and talk of; But the Labour, and Art of Education should furnish the Mind with, and fasten there, and never cease till the young Man had a true relish of it, and placed his Strength, his Glory, and his Pleasure in it’, *STCE*, §70, p. 132. Thus the well educated person does, like the heathen philosopher, value virtue for its own sake.
- 8 On Locke’s account of God’s right of creation He may ‘justly’ treat His creatures in any way He wants. Were the creator a Cartesian Evil Genius there would be nothing unjust in malevolent treatment. Locke apparently assumes that since God is by definition perfectly happy in Himself there can be no reason for Him to have other than benevolent intentions towards His creatures.
- 9 For a valuable contemporary overview of the idea of demonstrative morality see Barbeyrac 1729.
- 10 See *Essay* III. xi. 15; IV. xii. 8.
- 11 I am grateful to Peter Anstey and Angela Rosier for comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. I have also profited from Anna Taitlin’s extensive knowledge of the history of natural law theory.

Part III

Reason and religion

7 Locke's Christology as a key to understanding his philosophy

Victor Nuovo

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.

(Second Vindication, pp. 344–5)

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, and that I am proceeding according to his directive to consider how Locke's Christianity may assist our understanding of a particular text or more generally his concepts and arguments (J. Dunn 1990b, p. 11). 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 chapter 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.¹ Another variety is incarnational Christology. These two, I think, are the main types of Christology in the Christian tradition; the former has given the Christian religion its name and its sense of history or *Geschichtlichkeit*, whilst the latter has become the official Christology of Western orthodoxy and a catalyst for 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 actions, 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 being, which he makes available to his beneficiaries by assuming a human nature. There are other sorts of Christology, two of which will also concern us: one represents Christ as mediator between God and man, the other as a heavenly man, the founder of a new race, the second Adam. These different Christologies are not contraries and hence are not exclusive of each other, and they are often combined in systems of theology. Locke was doubtless familiar with two contemporary instances that combine the Messianic and incarnational Christology. One occurs in writings of John Lightfoot (1602–75), the great biblical commentator. Locke prized Lightfoot’s commentaries and cited them more than any other.² Another occurs in the writings of the Christian 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.³ In addition, notes recorded in one of Locke’s interleaved bibles show that, in the early 1670s, before his Christological thoughts had matured, Locke explored a Christology, Origenist in nature, that combined Messianic and incarnational features. In the end, although some elements of it recur in his later writings, he seems to have set it aside. 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 the first part of this chapter, I will present an account of Locke’s Christology and, to bring its features more distinctly in view, will compare it with one that is more purely incarnational. This comparison will not be general and vague, like the one just given, but will focus on particular texts: namely *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and the *Contra gentes* and *De incarnatione verbi* of St Athanasius.

In the second part, 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 authorised form. It would not be inappropriate to characterise Locke’s great work as a natural theology that complements the system of divinity presented in his theological writings.⁴ This is not to say that the whole *Essay* or various parts of it can not be lifted out of their theological frame and remain coherent and philosophically interesting. But then it would no

longer be the *Essay* as Locke intended it, but themes of Locke's great work, set in contexts that are different from his. Here again, we can look to John Dunn to show us how this can be done constructively. I refer to his reconception of Locke's contract theory. I find such a project attractive, but this is not my purpose here (J. Dunn 1990b, pp. 22–5).

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 *Letter on Toleration*.

One final methodological remark. In the second and third parts of this chapter, I will be viewing 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.⁵ This may have been precisely what Locke was acknowledging when he admitted to the authorship of his works in the codicil to his will.

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 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 this time, Locke had consulted the *Westminster Confession* and in a letter to Limborch, he mentions having read Calvin and Turretin on justification and found them incoherent (*Correspondence*, V, pp. 370–1). 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 (2000, pp. 29, 68f) has written that Calvin's *Institutes* became the prototype of Protestant systems of divinity. Its purpose was to provide a reliable guide to biblical study. 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.

One of the outstanding, some might say, notorious features of Locke's system of divinity is its frugality. It seems to consist of a single doctrine: that Jesus is the Messiah. But this is a misperception, one for which, it must be said, Locke bears some responsibility.⁶ The simplicity of the proposition belies the complexity of the attribution. So, it is necessary to enquire, What did Locke understand by this attribution?

In the first place, a Messiah is a king, an 'anointed King' (as the term itself signifies), '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*', to use some of Locke's attributions (*Reasonableness*, pp. 26 etc.). As Locke understood these titles, and I should add, with an understanding very much in agreement with current biblical scholarship,⁷ 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. Locke preferred to use the term 'Messiah' rather than 'Christ', to emphasise that it signified an office and not a mere surname (*ibid.*, pp. 23–36 and *passim*).⁸ 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, which Locke believed is entirely true. 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 waits the coming of the Messiah and the consummation of history, and takes care that one will be found to be an acceptable subject.

Mythic beliefs are agglutinative, that is, they join other narratives to themselves, depriving them of their independence whilst they enrich their own meaning and scope. One of these narratives features the first and second Adam; its theme is the founding and refounding 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', whose effect is to diminish the dignity of Adam, may wonder whether that conclusion was at all determinative of Locke's Christology. I shall address this question below. Here it is enough to note that although Adam is not depicted in the *Reasonableness* as a king, 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. Being the first of his species, he had no natural parents; he was not born but created. Likewise, Jesus, although he had a natural mother, had no natural father, but was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, Adam like Christ was the bearer of the image of God, so that, had he remained upright, he would have gained for himself and his posterity, immortality and bliss. The consequence of Adam's disobedience was mortality, which for him was punishment

for his disobedience; it extended to his posterity, not as punishment but as natural descent (*Reasonableness*, p. 10).⁹ Jesus, however, 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.¹⁰ Therefore, he was either immortal or he had by his innocence earned the right not to die. His death, therefore, was voluntary, although it was a duty of his office, which, together with other duties, he faithfully fulfilled; and this gained him his kingdom and the dignity of being the first born of a recreated immortal race of humanity.

In the light of Adam's connection with Christ, the theme of his original immortality becomes problematic. Locke's writings contain evidence that he reflected repeatedly on this theme (*ibid.*, pp. 6, 11, 113, 198–9, 206). His standard formulation of it is vague, for although he asserts clearly that Adam was created immortal, 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 Locke notes that bearing the image of God in this context simply means being immortal (*ibid.*, p. 113). In two places, Locke suggests that it was not because of an alteration of his nature that made Adam mortal, but a change of place and the state of being in that place, for it was in paradise that sufficient conditions of immortality and bliss were to be found. 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 (*ibid.*, p. 114). 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.

There remains another question concerning Jesus Christ, who, although like Adam, being a son of God, because of his origin, was nevertheless unlike Adam, also the Messiah, and as such was, unlike Adam, pre-existent, and so not a mere man (*Adversaria Theologica* 94, V. Nuovo 2002, pp. 26–7). Since the Virgin Mary was merely the repository of the Messiah, what sort of being was deposited there? The 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. Locke's 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 when combined comprise a rather sophisticated Christology of Alexandrian or Origenist pedigree, a mixed Christology, incarnational and Messianic, but with more of the former. This was not Locke's Christology. He acknowledges a source only by the letter G. The overall scheme in which this Christology is situated is trinitarian. There are three subsistences in the Godhead: the Father, who is also the creator, the Word, and the Spirit. 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 incarnate in the virgin

Mary's womb. Even after its incarnation, it remained joined to the Word. Although it is beyond doubt that Locke was keenly interested in this Christology, it does not seem that he made it his own.¹¹ Nevertheless, traces of it recur in remarks written during the last decade of his life. In the 'Adversaria Theologica 94' 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' (V. Nuovo 2002, p. 27). In his paraphrase and accompanying 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' (*Paraphrase and Notes*, II, p. 487). 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 (*ibid.*, II, pp. 616f. n.).

The second narrative that features in Locke's Messianic narrative concerns the Mosaic 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.¹² But as the founder of a new constitution or covenant, and lawgiver, the Messiah's role repeats on a larger 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. 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.

On Locke's account, during the Messianic interregnum, God established an earthly state, a theocracy, that he ruled directly.¹³ Here the law was established in all its rigour and its successor, the Messianic Kingdom was restored. During its time, this, the Jewish Kingdom, was a beacon of monotheistic righteousness in the darkness of pagan immorality. Its rituals and customs were supposed to have been designed by God to wean and safeguard the people of Israel from paganism (*Paraphrase and Notes*, II, p. 617n). This particular institution was to remain in effect until the coming of the Messiah. Its decisive end, Locke believed, occurred in 70 CE, with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which he equated with Christ's second coming. 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.¹⁴ It was prophetically foretold, most recently by Jesus' own veiled prediction and hence it is the consequence of a particular providence.¹⁵ Locke also

describes it as an act of vengeance against the Jewish nation that 'put an end to their Church, Worship, and Commonwealth'. 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 harmonise 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 event directed against the Jewish religious commonwealth and its peculiar privileges. There is no mention of collective guilt or of justified hostility against Jews (*Reasonableness*, p. 95). Locke was no anti-Semite, but neither was he a philo-Semite, and it should be noted that his characterisation of ancient Judaism is not one that most Jewish scholars would accept.

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: 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 happens by chance. The salvation that Jesus enacts has been promised by God, and the particular actions and events of his coming have been foretold by divinely inspired prophets. In his long discussion of Messianic reticence, Locke stresses the fact that Jesus' strategy was designed to fulfil 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 fulfilment 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.

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 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 (*A Discourse of Miracles*, V. Nuovo 2002, p. 48). 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.¹⁶

In the *Reasonableness* Locke downplayed the priestly office of Christ on the grounds that according to the Gospel record Jesus attached little significance to it. But this was not always his opinion, nor did he continue to adhere to it. Around 1675, in an addition 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, a mediational or transactional Christology.¹⁷

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 characterises 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.

This seems an appropriate place to discuss Locke's position on the doctrine of Satisfaction. This doctrine specifies that by his perfect obedience and voluntary death, Jesus Christ satisfied the justice of God, which was necessarily offended by sin, and thereby opened up the way of salvation.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ Yet here too, Locke seems to have changed his mind. 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. 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* (*Second Vindication*, p. 465). 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 of Adam who were under death The justice of gods law being satisfied that he might impute righteousness to them that beleived.

(*Reasonableness*, Appendix I, p. 199)

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

Next I note the primary differences between Locke's Messianic Christology and Athanasius' incarnational one and reflect on the philosophical significance of these differences.

Reading through St Athanasius' *Contra gentes* and *De incarnatione verbi*, one is struck by the fact the same Messianic narrative that I have just surveyed may be found there also. The crucial difference between the two varieties of Christology becomes evident when we read their respective accounts of the work of Christ. 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 each describes the circumstances of the Fall and the ensuing predicament of mankind that made him in need of a deliverer differently. 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 seem to mean that this original knowledge of God is merely conceptual, but rather that it is a means by which, if kept pure, the mind is led beyond the sensible world to contemplate the *λόγος* itself, the Son, who is the expression of the ineffable Father (Athanasius, *Contra gentes*, § 2). 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 that he not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 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 characterised as metaphysical and legal respectively.

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 few thoughtful individuals might realise a proper intellectual and moral understanding of God. Both agree, following St Paul, that the visible world presents unmistakable evidence of its creator. Athanasius remarks that, notwithstanding the souls of all mankind have become 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' (Athanasius, *Contra gentes*, § 34). In Locke's case, although perfect obedience is so unlikely as to be virtually impossible, this is not because mankind lacks the capacity to discover God and his law and choose to obey it. Even among Adam's posterity, the right to immortality remains. Still, both agree that the saving work of Christ is in certain respects necessary.

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 original and archetype of the image of the Father, 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.

(Athanasius, *De incarnatione verbi*, § 13)

According to Locke, the work of the Messiah consists primarily of kingly actions. He publishes the divine law, which although not quite unknown, had become obscure and lacked a proper foundation (*Reasonableness*, p. 146); 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. Only atheists are to be absolutely excluded from this mercy.²⁰

Although Locke expected that in the world to come, mankind might advance to a more perfect cognitive state, where the being of all things and the divine nature itself might be objects of direct spiritual or pure intellectual perception, he never suggests that Adam possessed this capacity and lost it on account of the Fall. Moreover, it is just by means of those intellectual capacities that we have, those that are delineated in the *Essay* and shown there to be sufficient to dispel all threat of scepticism, that Locke believed that mankind is able to discover in the visible creation evidence sufficient to prove the being and attributes of God, to discover likewise the divine law and to authenticate and understand the biblical revelation, by which the work of the Messiah and the benefits that accrue to us because of it are set forth. So, Locke's Messianic Christology might be styled as Christology within the limits of human understanding. In sum, whereas Athanasius' Christology is the work of a Christian Platonist, Locke's is the work of a Christian virtuoso. The term is from the title of a work by Robert Boyle that Locke most likely read in manuscript. According to Boyle, a Christian virtuoso is an experimental philosopher who shuns speculative hypotheses or conceptual schemes and attends only to matters of fact as he directly perceives them or learns of them by reliable testimony. He is therefore able to accept as fact things that otherwise might seem to others and himself as unlikely. Discoveries of this sort make him docile, and amenable to revelation. Already convinced by natural evidence of the existence and attributes of God, the Christian virtuoso approaches Scripture with the same thoroughness and care for detail that he brings to his natural investigations.²¹

Before closing this section, I have one more observation to make. As already noted, Athanasius and Locke were agreed on the essential soundness of the human intellect after the Fall. Athanasius was a pre-Augustinian, whereas Locke's views may be classified as Arminian. This view of the soundness of the human mind in spite of the Fall has consequences for Christology. This admission implies that for some, namely, all who have not received the Gospel, faith in the Messiah is not a necessary condition of salvation. Locke admits this in the *Reasonableness*, in response to a hypothetical objection that it seems unjust that God would establish a new law of faith whose benefits would be denied to persons who never heard of Christ. Locke's response is that in those instances, reason or the light of nature would suffice. 'He that made use of this Candle of the Lord, so far as to find what was his Duty; could not miss to find also the way to Reconciliation and forgiveness, when he had failed of his Duty.' Of course, Locke hastens to add that the burden is on each individual to be guided by this light and not to let it be extinguished, but this exhortation presupposes that reason retains a sufficient competence (*Reasonableness*, pp. 139f).²² One of the advantages of a Messiah is that in addition to his special Messianic duties, he restores the principles of natural religion with a clarity and authority that no philosopher can match. But once reminded of these principles, reason can still confirm them. And what reason can confirm, it might also have discovered, and in some instances, in the case of select philosophers, it did (*Reasonableness*, pp. 144, 156). This leaves Locke in an awkward situation, and his attempt to extricate himself from it may seem unsatisfactory to some, although

I must admit I quite like it. In the end, he affirms both the sufficiency of reason and the necessity of a Messiah. The former position he defends not by putting reason above revelation but by falling back on the mercy of God (*ibid.*, pp. 140f); the latter by appealing to the wisdom of God, which, of necessity, transcends our understanding (*ibid.*, pp. 141f). The Messiah is obviously necessary because God has decided that he will restore that part of his kingdom that was lost by sin and rebellion through him. The will of God is enough to make it necessary and the wisdom of God should be sufficient to persuade one to ask no more. Moreover, it is likely that those mysterious transactions between God and his anointed were designed to benefit not just Christians, but all mankind, so that it might be said that Christ's death and resurrection, which may have figured in those transactions, was for the benefit of everyone, but that only those to whom the Gospel has been preached must believe it.

Locke's Christology and the *Essay*

According to Locke, then, and to many of his contemporaries who were neither strict Calvinists nor Socinians, Christianity must ally itself with natural theology. Christians must be ready to confirm that part of the Messiah's teaching that restores our knowledge of God and our duty to him by the light of nature. Where then do we find Locke's natural theology? We find it 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 fifty-four. 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 fifty-four 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 necessary to construct 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* contains a natural theology.

But I should like 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* 94. There he subsumed all of the content of the *Essay* under theology. Although this is far from sufficient to justify my claim, there is other evidence that may help to tip the scales in my favour. 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 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* and appears early in his drafts of the *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 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 Episcopius as an aid to clarify his own divided thoughts on whether the human soul was material or immaterial (*Adversaria Theologica* 94, V. Nuovo 2002, pp. 28–31). 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 (*Correspondence*, V, pp. 237–8). 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 fulfil 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 happiness of man kinde’(V. Nuovo 2002, p. 3).²³

Locke’s Christology and the *Two Treatises* and the *Letter Concerning Toleration*

At first glance, the conceptual connection between *Two Treatises of Government* and Locke’s Christology may appear problematic. Consider the matter of 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, and denies the latter, thereby denuding the person of Adam of its mythic attire. 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 realised the allusion, and that in his mind the arguments of the ‘First Treatise of Government’ and the political theory of the second, justified the diminution of Adam’s dignity and the denial to him of any sacred 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 authorised 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 first part of the *Reasonableness*. To do so would presuppose that the ‘First Treatise’ presents a political argument in biblical theological dress.²⁴ 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 the *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.

- 1 Throughout his writings, Locke maintains his commitment to a law of nature, i.e. to a divinely authorised 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.²⁵ 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.

I return now to questions: 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? As noted in *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, Locke credits Jesus with restoring our understanding of the law of nature, with respect not only to its content but also to its rigour. In short, the law of nature is restored and with it reason. It is as though reason were authorised to confirm the law of nature, now delivered in revelation, and in its confirmation of it rediscovers its powers. This is an instance, I think, of Locke's dictum that reason is natural revelation and revelation is reason enlarged. (*Essay IV. xix. 4*, p. 698) The enlargement of reason has to do more with matters of fact concerning the consequences subsequent to the revolt of angels and Adam's disobedience. In short, the law of nature is retained in Locke's Christology, but 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 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; hence, the term 'covenant'. But the Gospel reveals something more, namely, that God is bound to facilitate the fulfilment 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 favour 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.²⁶

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 (J. Tully 1991, p. 622).²⁷ 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 an act of the same sort, not however on grounds of worldly convenience but as a means of gaining God's favour 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; 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 respect to a civil state, for unlike the clergy, magistrates retain the right to claim the obedience from their subjects and to coerce them if necessary. 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.²⁸

An early application of the principle of political individualism to the theory of the church occurs in some notes that Locke took while reading Hooker's *Laws of*

Ecclesiastical Polity, circa 1682 (MS Locke d. 10, 'Lemmata Ethica', pp. 43–4, V. Nuovo 2002, p. 80).²⁹ 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 Saviour, and by submitting to his law. I have hypothesised elsewhere that Locke's characterisation 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. Hooker described the Gospel, that is, 'the doctrine that teacheth salvation by Jesus Christ, *Evangelium æternum, 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 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 circa 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 finally 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 practised 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 authorised 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 emphasised 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 (1690, p. 2) was the earliest on record to make this charge. 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 dogmatic minimalism, 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 shall conclude this section by defending Locke from this charge. Doing so will lead us farther into Locke’s Christology, for the defence 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 (*TOL*, pp. 65, 115). 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 as a motive. But Locke considered this inadequate (*Reasonableness*, p. 144).³⁰ 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.³¹

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 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 previous sections of this chapter, I have attempted to provide a detailed account of Locke's Christology and to show how it may serve as a light that

illuminates the pathways of his intellectual life. In conclusion, I think it can be said that Locke's Christology, although 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 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 (2000, ch. 24, pp. 448–76), has rightly written, to that group of moderate scholars and virtuosi whose aim was to use the new learning to sustain Christianity and its institutions.³² 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.³³ 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, 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, fulfilers of its true meaning. In sum, Locke's Christian philosophy gave substance and direction to English liberal theology.

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.³⁴

In conclusion, 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 (*Essay II. xxvii. 26*, p. 346). 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 (*TT II. ii. 7*, p. 312). 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 (Kant 1997, §III, pp. 53–66). 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.³⁵ 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.³⁶

Appendix

I am grateful to Mrs Mary Clapinson, Keeper of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, for permission to publish the following texts from Locke's Manuscripts. This chapter was complete and almost ready to go to press when, following a lead provided me by J.R. Milton, I was able to discover G's identity. He is almost certainly Nicholas Gibbon the younger (1605–97) a clergyman, of Royalist persuasion but with a conciliatory disposition. A detailed account of the evidence leading to this conclusion and of Locke's interest in his theological writings and of the form in which Locke knew them is given in my *John Locke: Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity and other Theological Writings*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, forthcoming. The identification of Gibbon makes possible adding another note (On Hebrews 9: 11) from Gibbon which is followed by his surname.

G citations in Locke's interleaved Bible [Bodleian shelf mark: Locke 16. 25]

Gen. I. 2: *Spirit of God* i e The Energy of God the Creator. G

John 1. 15: Ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν [for he was before me]. he 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: ἰ ὁ ὢν [*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: ἰ ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ i e *who was in the heavens*. 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 ἐγὼ εἰμι [*before Abraham was, I am*] i e His soule created & united to the Word the 2^d subsistent of the Godhead vid. 1 Cor. 15. 47.

1 Cor. 15. 47: Ἐξ οὐρανοῦ [*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.

Titus 2. 11: Grace of god i e The Energy of the word or 2^d Subsistent.

Heb. 9. 11 οὐ ταύτης τηῆς 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 epouranium. This is meant in this place & Eph: 1.10 for Christ conferring grace established the standing angels 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 2^d Subsistent God the Word. G
 1 John 5. 11: *Eternall life* i e the energy of God the Word. G
 Rev. 3. 14: Ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ *The begining [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

Note: There is also a G. citation in the Adversaria 1661 [MS Film 77 (1661 Notebook), p. 18].

Deus Is spoken of in Scripture sometimes as 1^o in Essence Coloss 2.2. mystery of god. 2^o in subsistences itd. Father. 3^o 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.

Notes

- 1 On the meaning of the term 'Messiah' in various biblical contexts see W. Horbury 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.
- 2 J. Lightfoot's *A Chronicle of the Times and Order of the Texts of the Old Testament* and *The Harmony, Chronicle and Order of the New Testament*, Lightfoot 1684, I, pp. 1–389, offer an instance of this. These works provide a history of the work of redemption from creation to the end of the biblical period; they are a scholar's version of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. A recurring theme is Messianic prophecy and fulfilment. This history begins with a statement of divine purpose in all that would follow: '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'.
- 3 For Locke's notes on Knorr von Rosenroth's *Adumbratio kabbalae Christianae*, 1684, see Locke's manuscript 'Dubia circa Philosophiam Orientalem' (Bodleian MS Locke c. 27, fols 75–9).
- 4 See V. Nuovo 2002, pp. xxiv–vi and pp. 245–56, 'A List of theological places in *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*'.
- 5 A good example of this is Locke's *Two Treatises*. Even if Locke wrote the 'Second Treatise' before the first, he came to see that the first was logically prior.
- 6 The charge that in the *Reasonableness*, Locke reduced Christianity to a single doctrine, was first made by John Edwards 1695, p. 105. See also *Reasonableness*, p. 109.
- 7 See W. Horbury 1998. See also E. Schürer 1987, II, pp. 448–554. This should be taken as a tribute to Locke's biblical scholarship.
- 8 Note that Locke regularly uses the Authorised Version when citing biblical texts, but also, when quoting Messianic passages from it, regularly replaced 'Christ' with 'Messiah'.
- 9 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.

- 10 The distinction drawn here may not have been that simple, however. Jesus was still descended from Adam through his mother, albeit that the seed of the Messiah was miraculously implanted in her. See below, note 12.
- 11 Locke's G citations are given below in the Appendix.
- 12 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. Cf. J. Lightfoot 1684, I, p. 211: '*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*'.
- 13 *Reasonableness*, p. 144. *TOL*, pp. 116–17.
- 14 Cf. *Reasonableness*, p. 94. Locke's interpretation of the distinction between ὁ νῦν αἰών (the present age) and ὁ μέλλων αἰών (the age to come) was appropriated from Lightfoot.
- 15 Jesus' veiled remarks about the destruction of the temple.
- 16 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, pp. 679–84.
- 17 For Locke's comment in the 1667 'Essay concerning Toleration', see *Adversaria* 1661 (MS Locke Film 77, p. 270). I am grateful to J.R. Milton for calling this reference to my attention. I borrow the term 'transactional' from Locke, *Reasonableness*, p. 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 (BOD Locke 9. 107). They are transcribed in V. Nuovo 2002, pp. 238–41.
- 18 See the *Westminster Confession*, ch. 8, §5, p. 22.
- 19 J. Edwards 1695, p. 112; *Vindication*, p. 6.
- 20 Cf. below on toleration.
- 21 Robert Boyle, *The Christian Virtuoso, I*, in Boyle 1999–2000, 11, pp. 281–327 There are, among Locke's manuscripts, notes on a theological work by Boyle, which almost certainly was a manuscript version of this work. See Bodleian MS Locke c. 27, fol. 67. For an account of this, see M.A. Stewart 1993, pp. 21–34, and P. Anstey 1988, pp. 5–7.
- 22 Cf. also *Paraphrase and Notes*, on Rom. 1: 19, 20, II, p. 507.
- 23 Quoting from the text of the *Conduct* established by Paul Schuurman, Locke 2000b, p. 193.
- 24 This is the Straussian view; see M.P. Zuckert 1979.
- 25 Locke 1954, pp. 110–11; *Essay* II. xxvii. 8, p. 352.
- 26 There is an interesting parallel here between the justice and charity in the *Two Treatises*. Cf. S. Buckle 1991, pp. 159–60. Also Buckle's workmanlike model of the idea of property suggests that the purpose of mankind on earth is to restore so far as he is able to conditions of paradise, see *ibid.*, p. 158.
- 27 On the notion of 'possessive individualism', see C.B. Macpherson 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 labour. For an appreciative yet critical and historically sensitive account of the Macpherson notion see, J. Tully 'After the Macpherson thesis' in Tully 1993a, pp. 72–95.
- 28 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.
- 29 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. 29'. I am grateful to J.R. Milton for calling this text to my attention and for providing me with a transcript of it.
- 30 Cf. also 'Error', Bodleian MS Locke Film 77, pp. 320–1, transcription in V. Nuovo (2002), pp. 81–3 and 'Sacerdos', Bodleian MS. Locke Film 77, p. 93, transcription in Nuovo 2002, p. 17.
 - 31 It may be useful here to clarify 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. Compare R. Ashcraft 1987, p. 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 knowledge of what is best.
 - 32 Others in this group mentioned by Israel are Robert Boyle, Jean Le Clerc, Philippus van Limborch and Richard Simon.
 - 33 Modern liberal Christianity is not a purely modern phenomenon. As I hope to show in a book on Locke's theology now in preparation, it is a sort of 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 understood, Locke's theology must be viewed in this context.
 - 34 See N. Wolterstorff 1996 and my review in Nuovo 1997, pp. 334–8. See also my Introduction to Nuovo 2002, pp. xxvi–ix.
 - 35 See Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the boundaries of mere reason* in Kant 1996b. This work represents Kant's attempt to show the 'reasonableness' of Christianity. In this instance however, Kant brings Christianity within the bounds of reason, whereas Locke does not and yet argues that Christianity with all its supernatural parts is reasonable.
 - 36 I am grateful to Peter Anstey for useful editorial corrections and suggestions on this chapter, and to J.R. Milton, who also read the chapter in its entirety and made important critical comments and suggestions.

8 Lockean logic

Kenneth Winkler

Locke denies that syllogism is the proper instrument of reason, and that disputation is a sure way – or even a useful way – of unearthing or expounding truth. A mind cluttered with moods and figures is no better off, he thinks, and probably a good deal worse off, than a mind trained to exercise, directly, the ‘native Faculty’ on which the perception of validity in any case depends (*Essay* IV. xvii. 4). In this essay I examine the implications of these views for education in logic – for the writing of textbooks, for the design of university curricula, and for the habits of thought those already ‘educated’ should stamp out or encourage. It may look at first as if Lockean logic *cannot* be taught, that a Lockean education in reasoning must be one of benign neglect: leave our faculties alone, Locke seems to say, and they will not mislead us. But Locke’s interest in education was intense, and his confidence in its ameliorative power was enormous. He resisted Molyneux’s plea that he turn the *Essay* into a logic ‘accommodated to the usual Forms’, and to the prevailing curriculum of universities in England, Ireland, and Scotland, but he did compose a different kind of logic, ‘formless’ by traditional standards, whose rules and precepts are more challenging – and more useful – than the rules in the textbooks it sought to replace. In the eighteenth century the task urged on Locke by Molyneux was taken up by university teachers and popular pedagogues: Isaac Watts, Edward Bentham, William Duncan, and Thomas Reid. Each sought to combine a more or less extreme version of Cartesian or Lockean intuitionism with the formalism of the tradition. The teaching of Lockean logic was, in ways I hope to clarify, a distinctively ‘ethical’ enterprise, one that resembled ancient portraits of the teaching of moral virtue. The textbooks Locke used as a student at Oxford demanded more exactness than their subject permitted (a tendency Aristotle warns against at *Nicomachean Ethics* 1094^b12ff); the result was a disastrous narrowing of the subject’s scope.¹ The teaching of logic raised, for Locke and the eighteenth-century writers who followed in his wake, some of the same questions raised for the ancients by the teaching of virtue. ‘Is virtue something that can be taught?’ Meno asks Socrates (*Meno* 70a). ‘Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else?’ Locke believes that reasoners can be educated only *through* practice, and that its success depends on a native faculty of insight whose standards are shaped by a community.

I begin in the first section with a brief review of attempts by Locke's contemporaries to adapt the logic of the *Essay* to the requirements of a university education. I then turn in the second section to Locke's remarks on the teaching of reasoning in *Some Thoughts concerning Education*. I follow this with an examination, in the next section, of Locke's own 'logic' – his essay *On the Conduct of the Understanding*. The fourth section is devoted to more or less creative attempts by Watts, Bentham, Duncan, and Reid to blend the intuitionism of Locke's *Essay* (and, in the case of some, of the Port Royal *Logique*) with the textbook tradition. In the final section I examine two currents of criticism. The first is represented by Edward Stillingfleet and Peter Browne, who accused Locke of obliterating the very existence of deductive inference or validity. The second is represented by David Hartley and Joseph Priestley, whose associationism made them uneasy with Locke's ocular metaphors, and drew them towards a formalistic (though non-Aristotelian) conception of inference.

Molyneux and Wynne

Locke was unwilling to modify the *Essay* for use in universities; his contempt for the usual 'methods of learning' persuaded him there would be little point in doing so. Yet he was mildly supportive of an effort to abridge the *Essay* for the use of students, and the encouragement he gave to the project is a first piece of evidence that despite his disdain for traditional training in logic, Locke was convinced that our reasoning faculty could be improved or 'educated'.

In a letter of advice (dated 22 December 1692) on the second edition of the *Essay*, William Molyneux suggested a new project. 'Your next', he wrote,

should be of a Model wholly New, and that is by Way of Logick, something accommodated to the Usual Forms, together with the Consideration of Extension, Solidity, Mobility, Thinking, Existence, Duration, Number, etc. and of the Mind of Man, and its Powers, as may make up a Compleat Body of what the Schooles call Logicks and Metaphisicks.

(*Correspondence*, IV, p. 601)²

Locke's response, in a letter dated 20 January 1693, was unenthusiastic. 'I am fully convinced', Molyneux wrote in reply,

by the Arguments you give me for not turning your Book into the Scholastick form of a Logick and Metaphisicks; and I had no other reason to advice the other, but meerly to get it promoted the easier in our Universitys; One of the Businesses of which Places is to Learn according to the Old Forms.

(2 March 1693, *ibid.*, p. 649)

These forms aside, he thought, there was no better logic than the *Essay*. 'I know no Logick that Deserves to be Named [as reading for young gentlemen]', he wrote several months later, 'but the Essay of Humane Understanding' (12 August 1693, *ibid.*, p. 715).³

Despite his refusal to re-cast the *Essay* for student use, three years later Locke told Molyneux that a younger scholar, John Wynne, was at work on a related task: ‘an abridgment [of the *Essay*] is now making (if it be not already done) by one of the university of Oxford, for the use of young scholars, in the place of an ordinary system of logick’ (26 April 1695, *Correspondence*, V, p. 351). Wynne’s abridgement appeared in 1695. In a letter of dedication addressed to Locke, Wynne expresses the hope that his imperfect abridgement will ‘afford such helps for the improvement of reason, as are perhaps in vain sought after in those books which profess to teach the *art of reasoning*’ (Wynne 1794, p. viii). Locke’s letters to Molyneux and Wynne show that he had at least *some* sympathy for this pedagogical purpose.

The teaching of reasoning in Locke’s *Some Thoughts concerning Education*

Reasoning is best learned, Locke thought, not by memorising moods, figures, and rules, but by practice and example. And practice, he held, should never take the form of disputation, whose eristic emphasis promotes bad habits.

Locke’s discussion of the teaching of reasoning comes nearly at the end of *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, and he begins by explaining why he has so far said so little about it. It is

because of the little advantage young People receive [by it]. For I have seldom or never observed any one to get the Skill of reasoning well, or speaking handsomly by studying those Rules, which pretend to teach it: And therefore I would have a young Gentleman take a view of them in the shortest Systems could be found, without dwelling long on the contemplation and study of those Formalities. Right Reasoning is founded on something else than the *Predicaments* and *Predicables*, and does not consist in talking in *Mode* and *Figure* it self. But ’tis besides my present Business to enlarge upon this Speculation. To come therefore to what we have in hand; if you would have your Son *Reason Well*, let him read *Chillingworth*; and if you would have him speak well, let him be conversant in *Tully*, to give him the true *Idea of Eloquence*; and let him read those things that are well writ in *English*, to perfect his Style in the purity of our Language.

(*STCE*, §188, p. 240)⁴

‘All . . . things of practice’, he later explains, are to be learned ‘not by a few, or a great many Rules given; But by Exercise and Application according to good Rules, or rather Patterns, till Habits are got, and a facility of doing it well’ (§189, p. 242). Practice of a sort can begin surprisingly early, because reasoning – even with young children – is ‘the true Way of Dealing with them’ (§81, p. 142). Children appreciate reasoning as soon as they understand language; they ‘love to be treated as Rational Creatures sooner than is imagined’ (*ibid.*). ‘But when I talk of *Reasoning*’, he warns, ‘I do not intend any other, but such as is suited to the Child’s Capacity and Apprehension’ (*ibid.*). Children are not ‘capable of *Reasonings* from remote

Principles'. Nor can they 'conceive the Force of long Deductions: The *Reasons* that move them must be *obvious*, and level to their Thoughts, and such as may (if I may so say) be felt, and touched' (ibid).

Predicaments, moods, and figures are of little or no use, but disputation is positively dangerous. Locke urges the friend to whom the *Thoughts* are addressed 'not to let your Son be bred up in the Art and Formality of Disputing, either practising it himself, or admiring it in others' (§189, p. 241). The dangers are two. First, disputation can make a student excessively sceptical, and disrespectful of reason or argument. A child may end up 'questioning every thing, and thinking there is no such thing as truth to be sought, but only Victory in Disputing' (ibid). It is unbecoming 'not to yield to plain Reason, and the Conviction of clear Arguments' (ibid). Second, the artificiality of disputation draws the student's attention away from things themselves.

Truth is to be found and supported by mature and due Consideration of Things themselves, and not by artificial Terms and Ways of Arguing: These lead not Men so much into the discovery of Truth, as into a captious and fallacious use of doubtful Words, which is the most useless and most offensive way of talking, and such as least suits a Gentleman or lover of Truth of any thing in the World.

(Ibid.)

Locke's emphasis on practice – and on the non-eristic setting that educators should provide for it – is one of the main ingredients of the positive logic he develops in *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*.

Locke's logic as an ethics of judgment

Since the time of Locke, wrote Thomas Reid, 'logic has been much improved, chiefly by his writings' (Reid 1863, II, p. 709). Locke's message, he explained, is that 'the improvement of our reasoning power is to be expected much more from an intimate acquaintance with the authors who reason the best, than from studying voluminous systems of logic'. 'But if he had meant that the study of logic was of no use', Reid observed, 'he surely would not have taken the pains to have made so considerable an addition to it by his "Essay" . . . and by his "Thoughts on the Conduct of the Understanding"' (ibid.). If *reason* is taken in the broadest sense – so that it covers the full range of our intellectual powers – then the *Essay* is certainly Locke's foremost contribution to logic. But the *Conduct* has a stronger claim on the status of 'logic' in the usual sense: it is brief enough to substitute for traditional compendia; it is normative rather than speculative, a handbook of sharply stated rules rather than a desultory 'essay' or inquiry; and *reason* in the narrow sense – *reason* as reasoning – receives proportionately more attention there than in the *Essay*.⁵

The *Conduct* takes Locke's earlier emphasis on practice and places it in the context of what Alex Neill has called Locke's *epistemic individualism*, and of his emphasis

(seemingly opposed to his individualism) on the role of one's *epistemic community*.⁶ 'Knowing', Locke proclaims on p. 251 of the *Conduct*, 'is seeing', and things known must be seen for oneself. Too many educators are guilty of '*principling* their children and scholars' (my emphasis), which 'amounts to no more but making them imbibe their teacher's notions and tenets by an implicit faith' (p. 277). The aim of education is to promote not conformity or obedience but freedom of mind, and this freedom can be most effectively instilled if it is given to the student, in carefully controlled doses, even as he is learning.

The freedom of mind Locke is seeking can be nurtured and maintained only through conversation, whose power to enhance freedom is increased as the range of participating voices is enlarged. Seekers after truth should not 'narrow and blind their own prospect' (p. 210). 'Let not men think there is no truth but in the sciences that they study, or books that they read. To prejudge other men's notions, before we have looked into them, is not to show their darkness, but to put out our own eyes'. 'Try all things', Locke urges, echoing St Paul, but 'hold fast that which is good'. 'Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances'; it is best used by those who do not narrow the range of conversations, spoken or written, which they join (p. 211). 'We see but in part', Locke reminds us, again echoing St Paul,

and we know but in part, and therefore it is no wonder we conclude not right from our partial views. This might instruct the proudest esteemer of his own parts, how useful it is to talk and consult with others, even such as come short of him in capacity, quickness, and penetration.

(p. 208)

These passages may suggest that even though we need interlocutors if we hope to acquaint ourselves with the widest spectrum of views, our capacities themselves – the 'touchstones' we carry with us – owe nothing to others at all. But the tendency of Locke's emphasis on practice is to break down the barrier between views on the one hand and capacities for judging them on the other. We learn to reason by debating particular opinions; our capacities can therefore be shaped or re-shaped by any conversation in which we find ourselves. At the same time he underscores freedom of mind, Locke underscores what Neill has called 'self-mastery' (1989, pp. 235–6).⁷ One important component of self-mastery is reflection or self-observation. In conversing with others, Locke thinks, we should examine our habits and the habits of those we converse with. We should ask ourselves which habits assist the search for truth and which impede it. And we should then ask ourselves whether we have formed the habits we observe to be of use. Locke is committed to the view that the faculty of intuition, narrowly considered, is natural and unimprovable, but as his comments on the value of mathematical study indicate, we can improve the habits that regulate its exercise. The habit of separating distinct ideas, for example, can be educated or improved by the very conversations that propose views for our adoption. To emphasise the educative role of conversation

(and the experimentation conversation makes possible) is to emphasise experience in an unexpectedly wide sense. It is not the ‘private’ experience of an isolated intellect, such as the mind being stocked with ideas at the beginning of Book II of the *Essay*, but an experience enlarged by conversation with others. It is, furthermore, an experience rich in normative matter, in judgments regarding the success or failure of strategies for the pursuit of truth.⁸

I can illustrate these points by turning to one of the challenging (and somewhat unexpected) precepts Locke puts forward in the *Conduct*. He urges at one point, for example, that we strive to remain ‘indifferent’:⁹

We should keep a perfect indifferency for all opinions, and not wish any of them true, or try to make them appear so; but being indifferent, receive and embrace them according as evidence, and that alone, gives the attestation of truth. They that do thus, *i.e.* keep their minds indifferent to opinions, to be determined only by evidence, will always find the understanding has perception enough to distinguish between evidence and no evidence, betwixt plain and doubtful.

(pp. 266–7)

Locke’s apparent appeal to experience – ‘they that do thus . . . will always have perception enough’ to find the truth – should be taken at face value. Experience teaches us that partiality distorts our judgment. Any aspect of experience that teaches this involves conversation, because apart from conversation, partiality or distortion cannot be detected. Locke is well aware that perfect indifference is beyond us; ‘I aim’, he writes, ‘at no such unattainable privilege’ (p. 267). He is recommending a humanly possible heightening of indifference. And we know, by experience, that it can improve our judgment.

No doubt every reader of the *Conduct* will be impressed by different rules, by those that speak more or less directly to his or her habits of mind. The point of this illustration is to establish that Locke’s precepts for the conduct of the understanding, though they rest on experience, have an ethical force we are less likely to find in the lifeless rules of standard logical handbooks. Locke’s precepts prompt self-examination. The passages quoted cause us to reflect on our tendencies, and on how well (or how poorly) they have served us in the past. We begin to wonder whether we have been misled by favoured conclusions (or by favoured studies or methods, an allied danger Locke identifies on p. 244), and whether the significance of an item has been magnified, illicitly, by our passionate engagement.

The sketch I have so far provided helps to locate and clarify the remaining themes that dominate the *Conduct*. Throughout the book Locke compares the culture of the understanding to the culture of the body. ‘Nobody is made any thing by hearing of rules’, he writes, ‘or laying them up in his memory; practice must settle the habit of doing, without reflecting on the rule; and you may as well hope to make a good painter or musician extempore, by a lecture and instruction in the arts of music and painting, as a coherent thinker, or a strict reasoner, by a set of rules, showing him wherein right reasoning consists’ (p. 215). Practice is able to

form the mind and body only because each of us is part of a community where success is commended. Our mental and physical achievements are often mistaken for ‘natural endowments’, Locke explains, because they are not ‘got by rules’, and because ‘those who excel in . . . them never purposely set themselves to the study of [them], as . . . art[s] to be learnt’ (p. 214). But in every case it was in fact ‘some lucky hit, which took somebody, and gained him commendation, encouraged him to try again, inclined his thoughts and endeavours that way, till at last he insensibly got a facility in it, without perceiving how; and that is attributed wholly to nature which was much more the effect of use and practice’ (pp. 214–15). Here Locke comes very close to suggesting that we may not be able to codify or articulate the secrets of our success. We can sometimes abstract useful rules, but they do not tell the whole story – no more in reasoning than in painting or dance.

A second prominent theme in the *Conduct* is the advantage of study in mathematics. It should be taught, Locke proposes, to all who have ‘the time and opportunity’, not to make them mathematicians but to make them reasonable creatures (p. 220). The study of mathematics teaches us to separate distinct ideas, to dismiss irrelevancies, to take account of all that is relevant, and to weather long deductions (pp. 224–5). Locke recognises that the skill of a reasoner is often compartmentalised or modular. He observes that ‘he who can reason well to-day, about one sort of matters, cannot at all reason to-day about others, though perhaps a year hence he may’ (p. 220). This recognition is consistent with the diminished role Locke assigns to general or transcendental principles. Success in mathematics can be transferred to other domains not because the axioms of mathematics underlie every field of study, but because the habits of mathematicians are everywhere of use (p. 222).¹⁰

Although he recommends that ‘in all sorts of reasoning, every single argument should be managed as a mathematical demonstration’ (p. 222), Locke recognises that in probable reasoning a single argument can never be decisive. Nonetheless in every sort of reasoning ‘the connexion and dependence of ideas should be followed, till the mind is brought to the source on which it bottoms, and observes the coherence all along, though in proofs of probability one such train is not enough to settle the judgment, as in demonstrative knowledge’ (pp. 222–3):

Where a truth is made out by one demonstration, there needs no farther inquiry: but in probabilities, where there wants demonstration to establish the truth beyond doubt, there is it not enough to trace one argument to its source, and observe its strength and weakness, but *all* the arguments, after having been so examined on both sides, must be laid in balance one against another, and, upon the whole, the understanding determine its assent.

(p. 223, emphasis added)

The difference between demonstrative and probable reasoning – a third prominent theme in the *Conduct* – returns us to the need for conversation. This difference lies at the root of a fourth theme: the limitations of education in ‘the way of disputing’, and the value of the ‘civil conversation’ Locke elsewhere opposes

to disputation.¹¹ Even learned men sometimes have ‘little or no notion’ of probable reasoning. This is no surprise, since scholastic disputation

leads them quite away from it, by insisting on one topical argument, by the success of which the truth or falsehood of the question is to be determined, and victory adjudged to the opponent or defendant; which is all one as if one should balance an account by one sum, charged and discharged, when there are an hundred others to be taken into consideration.

(p. 223)

They misguide their understandings who hunt ‘after arguments to make good one side of a question, and wholly . . . neglect and refuse those which favour the other side’ (p. 235). The solution is not to collect and learn arguments by heart (p. 236), but to join a wide range of non-eristic conversations. One lesson of the *Essay* is that the scope of probable reasoning is very wide; the wider it is, the more inhibiting are the habits of the wrangler.

The last of the central themes in the *Conduct* is that the association of ideas in the mind should be *content-driven*. It should not be the result of prejudice or individual idiosyncrasy. Those who seek truth, Locke writes, must

never suffer any ideas to be joined in their understandings in any other or stronger combination than what their own nature and correspondence give them, and that they often examine those that they find linked together in their minds, whether this association of ideas be from the visible agreement that is in the ideas themselves, or from the habitual and prevailing custom of the mind joining them thus together in thinking.

(p. 277)

Only a mind responsive to content can conform its beliefs to things themselves (p. 255). In its emphasis on the need to rise above wayward associations, Locke’s *Conduct* resembles Spinoza’s *Ethics* and his *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*. In this section my aim has been to show that it also resembles these books in its ethical orientation, and that its precepts, though remote from the principles at the core of traditional logic texts, meet some of the needs of students of the art of reasoning.¹²

Locke and the textbook tradition: Watts, Bentham, Duncan and Reid

In this section I follow Lockean themes and tendencies as they emerge in several eighteenth-century textbooks and compendia. Two of these texts, judging from the large number of printings in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were very popular. The remaining two, though used less widely, reflect the university teaching of their authors, who had long and influential academic careers. Isaac Watts, author of the *Logick* of 1725, was a writer of hymns, educational manuals, and works of popular divinity. His *Logick* ran through at least thirteen editions in

the following forty years, and a sequel, the *Improvement of the Mind*, ran through at least five. William Duncan was a professor of philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen, from 1753 until 1760, the year of his death. His *Elements of Logick*, first published in 1748, had at least eight editions before 1800. Edward Bentham, a tutor at Oriel College, Oxford from 1732 to 1752, and the Regius Professor of Divinity at the university from 1763 until his death in 1776, published his *Reflexions upon the Nature and Usefulness of Logick* in 1740. A second edition appeared in 1755, and in 1773 he published *An Introduction to Logick, Scholastic and Rational*. In the Preface to the *Introduction* Bentham explained that

the following Treatise was compiled, and the much greater part of it printed, long ago, by an Academical Tutor, for private use: it being his practice to initiate his Pupils in all parts of Philosophy, by the help of an English Introduction, adding thereto, in course, the Latin Definitions and principal Questions, with their explication.

(p. i)

Thomas Reid was regent (and later professor) at King's College, Aberdeen from 1751 until 1764, when he was appointed to Adam Smith's chair as professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow. He held the chair until his death in 1796. His 'A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic' was published by Lord Kames in 1774 in his *Sketches of the History of Man*.¹³ These eighteenth-century logics are more or less Lockean (and more or less creative), but each author presents far more of the standard material than Locke does in either the *Essay* or the *Conduct*, and in each case the material is arranged in a more traditional way.

Before turning to the logics themselves I need to say a word about the difficulty of determining the extent of Locke's influence. In each case there is internal evidence, in the form of explicit references and nearly verbatim borrowings, of Locke's formative role. But there were other sources for each of the themes or tendencies I identify: the traditional logics themselves, where 'Lockean' themes, though less pronounced, are sometimes present; pre-Lockean logics influenced by Descartes, such as the Port Royal *Logique*, to which Watts and Duncan both refer; Francis Bacon's widely-quoted remarks on the pressing need to renovate logic; works such as Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants*, which, by precept and example, called attention to the scope of probable reasoning, and to its status *as* reasoning; and a long tradition of complaint, ancient and modern, regarding the method of disputation and the pretensions of 'technical' logic.¹⁴ In view of these influences all I can safely say is that the textbooks I have chosen develop themes also prominent in Locke, and that the numerous references, allusions, and borrowings make it reasonable to suppose that Locke's writings are at least in part responsible for this.¹⁵ A baseline of sorts is provided by the textbooks described by Wilbur Samuel Howell and W. Henry Kenney, typified by Sanderson's popular *Compendium*, in which these themes are absent or largely undeveloped.¹⁶ A check is furnished by continental logics, such as Jean-Pierre Crousaz's *A New Treatise of the Art of Thinking*, in which Locke's influence is more muted, and by more backward-looking logics published

in Britain well into the eighteenth century, such as John Wesley's *A Compendium of Logic*, which is largely a translation of Henry Aldrich's *Artis Logicae Compendium*, or Gilbert Buchanan's *Logica: In Usum Juventutis Philosophiam Studentis*.¹⁷

Formalism versus intuitionism

Duncan, Watts, and Reid are all committed to the ocular metaphors so conspicuous in Descartes and Locke. The most extreme case is Duncan, who speaks of deductive connection as a variety of coherence 'manifest at first sight' (Duncan 1764, p. 241).¹⁸ Self-evidence, whether in single propositions or deductive steps, is nothing but a 'ready View of the unavoidable Connection between some Ideas' (p. 191). 'Intuitive judgments', he explains, 'need no other distinguishing Marks, than that Brightness which surrounds them; in like manner as Light discovers itself by its own Presence, and the Splendor it universally diffuses' (p. 191). Relations between ideas are 'seen and discerned by the Mind' (p. 314). '*Science*', Duncan writes, 'implies Perception and Discernment, what we ourselves see and cannot avoid seeing' (p. 320).

If we can trust our eyes perhaps formal demonstrations will not be necessary. It may be suspected, Reid writes,

that any attempt, by any method, to demonstrate that a syllogism is conclusive, is an impropriety somewhat like that of attempting to demonstrate an axiom. In a just syllogism, the connection between the premises and the conclusion is not only real, but immediate; so that no proposition can come between them to make their connection more apparent. The very intention of a syllogism is to leave nothing that is necessary to a complete demonstration. Therefore, a man of common understanding, who has a perfect comprehension of the premises, finds himself under a necessity of admitting the conclusion, supposing the premises to be true; and the conclusion is connected with the premises with all the force of intuitive evidence. In a word, an immediate conclusion is seen in the premises by the light of common sense; and where that is wanting, no kind of reasoning will supply its place.

('A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic',
Reid 1863, II, pp. 700–1)

For a similar reason Watts argues that it is not always necessary to reduce a valid argument to a familiar valid form.

Despite their willingness to stand on intuition, Duncan, Watts, and Reid provide a basic account of the syllogistic forms. Watts (1725, pp. 286–8) and Duncan (1764, pp. 230–1) refer interested readers to the Port Royal *Logique* for a full explanation of the moods and figures, and for demonstrations of the rules proper to each. Yet all four of the logics follow traditional texts in providing a general account of syllogistic validity. The traditional account took two steps: a general principle (or pair of principles) was provided for syllogisms in the first figure; and rules were then provided for reducing syllogisms in other figures to the first. The eighteenth-century logics all appeal to the same general principle, but in some it receives a decidedly

Lockean formulation. According to Bentham's version of the general principle, 'as far as any two ideas agree to any third, so far they agree with one another' (1773, p. 52).

The appeal to a general principle may appear non-Lockean. But one can, in scientific fashion, identify the general principles upon which reasoning turns, without suggesting that pieces of reasoning depend on those principles for their justification. In fact we will later see Locke (in his reply to Stillingfleet) make in effect this very point. My contention here is that we find in the Lockean logics of the eighteenth century a more or less extreme commitment to intuitionism. At the same time we find a common drive towards unification or simplicity, and a common recognition that validity is a matter of form.¹⁹ Each writer follows tradition in tracing the validity of forms to a general principle; each nonetheless believes that the principle itself can be known by intuition, which can support verdicts of validity on its own. All four authors are relaxed about reducing arguments to standard-form syllogisms; the validity of arguments, they agree, is often evident enough without reduction.

Practice and example; rules and their utility

Like Locke, all four of the textbook authors believe there is no substitute for practice. 'Tis the Habit alone of Reasoning', Duncan writes, 'that makes a Reasoner'. A reasoner improves, he explains, by becoming 'conversant in those Sciences where the Art of Reasoning is allowed to reign in the greatest Perfection' (1764, p. 224). The chief example of such a science is mathematics, and on pp. 225–7 Duncan quotes Locke's praise of mathematical study. Despite his emphasis on practice Duncan is firmly convinced of the utility of rules, orthodox as well as Lockean. The rules of syllogistic logic help us when we judge demonstrations (pp. 267–8), and rules akin to those put forward in Locke's *Conduct* are helpful even in the apparently no-holds-barred context of invention or discovery (pp. 278–313).

Reid admits that a man 'without rules' may acquire 'a habit of reasoning justly', but practice 'joined with rules' will do more for us than practice that takes place without them (1863, II, p. 710). Rules enable us to detect and correct our errors (p. 710). It is inevitable that rules with the power to prompt critical self-reflection will be abstract; in a good textbook, Reid argues, rules must be illustrated 'by a variety of real and striking examples taken from the writings of good authors' (p. 711). Reid is not merely objecting (as Arnauld and Nicole had done in the Port Royal *Logique*) to the cooked-up examples of earlier textbooks. He is combining the need for rules with a Lockean insistence on the epistemic priority of the particular.

Reid is sensitive to two of the tensions that shape Locke's *Conduct*. The first is the tension between the epistemic authority of the community and the individual. The second is the tension between the axiomatic structure of mathematics and the non-demonstrative character of the inquiries for which it serves as a model. Reid values mathematics largely because of the habits we can import from mathematics into fields such as mechanics, jurisprudence, and politics. In this he follows Locke. But Reid is also impressed with the support mathematical evidence provides for the emerging independence of the individual. At first, he writes, 'we see that the reason

of children yields to authority, as a reed to the wind; nay, that it clings to it, and leans upon it, as if conscious of its own weakness' (p. 709). The study of mathematics takes the child beyond this by acquainting him with 'a kind of evidence that has no need of authority to strengthen it'. The child 'exults so much in this new state of independence, that he spurns at authority, and would have demonstration for everything, until experience teaches him that this is a kind of evidence which cannot be had in most things; and that, in his most important concerns, he must rest contented with probability' (p. 710). Scepticism is another possible response to a disappointed demand for certainty.

Degrees of evidence; scepticism

Evidence that falls short of absolute certainty is of more than traditional importance in the eighteenth-century logics, as it was for Locke himself. The Lockean logicians agree that students of natural and moral philosophy have to settle for less than the self-evident axioms and iron-clad inferences of mathematics. Watts, for example, catalogues the different degrees of assent and evidence on pp. 300–1 of the *Improvement*. 'Perhaps', he writes there, 'there are a thousand Gradations in our Assent to the Things we believe' (1725, p. 301). Assent to intuitive or demonstrative certainties is not the only kind that can be rationally regulated. Watts' three rules for '*judging of Probabilities*', for example, are as follows (p. 306):

- 1 THAT which *agrees most with the Constitution of Nature* carries the greatest Probability in it, where no other Circumstance appears to counterpoise it.
- 2 THAT which is *most conformable to the constant Observations of Men, or to Experiments frequently repeated*, is most likely to be true.
- 3 In Matters of Fact . . . where neither Nature, nor Observation, nor Custom gives us any sufficient Information on either Side . . ., then we may derive a Probability [from testimony].

In many cases the accumulation of reinforcing testimony 'will', Watts writes, 'arise to the Degree of *moral Certainty*'.

All four authors are impatient with scepticism. According to Bentham, for example, a reasonable man will be satisfied with the kind of proof the case at hand permits (1773, p. 75). 'The suggestion of a mere *possibility*, that the thing *may* be otherwise' is not 'a sufficient cause of doubting; nor are we justifiable in questioning the *existence* of things merely because we are not able to explain the *nature* of them' (p. 75). If reason 'pretends to interpose' and to inspect the credentials of sensation, 'it must be to examine whether there be any failure in the *act* of Sensation' (p. 65). Reason cannot, that is, pronounce on sensation itself.

Leibniz, Butler, and Hume all complained about the primitive state of inductive logic in the early eighteenth century.²⁰ But it seems that the Lockean logicians saw things in a somewhat different light. The 'inductive logic' of the eighteenth-century textbooks does look pretty thin.²¹ But Lockean *deductive* logic (the really useful part, at any rate) is equally thin. Leibniz, Butler and Hume seem to be looking for

something *like* the syllogism, some systematic way of assigning probabilities. From a Lockean viewpoint their hope is misguided.²² We need to work at probable reasoning, Locke and his followers agree, and we need to identify and reinforce sound inductive habits. But there is no reason to think we can devise an algorithm or metric for the evaluation of inductive inference. The detail of the orthodox logic books exaggerates the discrepancy between levels of development in the two domains. The domain of deduction is not significantly better off. One objection to this complacency is that mathematics *is* better off than any other branch of inquiry. But a plausible Lockean response is that the syllogism is of limited use even in mathematics (for this rejoinder see Reid 1863, II, pp. 701–2). And mathematics is not, in any case, better off because its truths are demonstrable; it is better off because of ‘mathematical’ habits of thought, which can be carried over intact into new domains.

The normative and the descriptive

In reviewing Locke’s *Conduct* I emphasised its ‘natural–historical’ character, its reliance on a value-laden experience of epistemic success and failure. The same reliance is present to some degree in Reid, but it is most marked in Duncan, who explains in the Introduction to the *Elements* that in order to learn how to apply our powers ‘justly’ and ‘with Advantage in the Search of Truth’, we must resort to observation (1764, pp. 12–13).²³ He describes logic as ‘the history of the human Mind’ (p. 4), but it is a history no less normative than descriptive.

If . . . we set ourselves carefully to observe, what it is that makes [one man] succeed so well [in the search for truth], and how the others come to miscarry, these Remarks [i.e. observations] will furnish us with an Art of the highest Use and Excellency in the Conduct of Life.

(p. 13)

It is, as he goes on to explain, ‘the precise Business of *Logick*, to explain the Nature of the human Mind, and the proper Manner of conducting its several Powers’ (p. 13). Rules for the conduct of the understanding must be brought into reflective equilibrium with our judgments in particular cases. Without rules we are likely to conduct our lives by ‘mere Habit’, in a ‘mechanical’ manner uninformed by knowledge ‘of the Grounds and Reasons, upon which the several Rules of Investigation are founded’ (p. 305). The ultimate ground on which they rest is ‘the Procedure of our own Minds’ (p. 305).²⁴

There is one Lockean theme that the Lockean logicians do *not* develop. It is poorly developed even in Locke, but it has the power to unify several of the other themes, and it may help to explain why inductive arguments cannot be expected to meet the standard set by formally valid syllogisms. On Locke’s view of deductive inference, what are sometimes called ‘major premisses’ are dispensable. Descartes claimed not to need the major premiss ‘whatever thinks, exists’, in order to be sure (in or through thinking) of his own existence; Locke claims not to need such premisses at all, because the inferring mind can move immediately from idea to

juxtaposed idea. Probable reasoning, Locke often suggests, works in the same basic way: the mind moves from one idea to another, and on some occasions, as Locke observes at *Essay* IV. xvii. 16, p. 685, intermediate ideas ‘tie the Extremes so firmly together, and the Probability is so clear and strong, that Assent as necessarily follows it, as Knowledge does Demonstration’. Locke does not deny that any piece of demonstrative reasoning can be *reconstructed* as a syllogism.²⁵ The interesting question is whether every piece of *probable* reasoning can be so reconstructed. The major premiss in such a reconstruction would not, of course, be intuitively known. It would be a premiss along the lines of one of Watts’ rules for inductive inference, or Hume’s sought-for propositional link between past and future. But Locke gives no indication that such a reconstruction would be appropriate. (It goes without saying that he does not think we need it for the sake of justification.) And if it is not appropriate, then a leading argument for inductive scepticism falls by the wayside. It is no objection to a probable argument that the missing major premiss cannot be stated, or that once stated, it is itself in need of inductive support.

Locke does not always give the same account of deductive and probable reasoning. At *Essay* IV. xvii. 5, for example, he suggests that in probable reasoning we look beyond the terms of the proposition at issue to confirming and disconfirming proofs and circumstances. This suggests that the mind does *not* move directly from idea to idea; its transitions are mediated by observation and experience. The same instability is apparent in Sir Geoffrey Gilbert’s *Abstract* of the *Essay*, where reasoning is initially defined as ‘the putting together of Ideas, according to their apparent or probable Agreement or Disagreement’. This definition is expressly designed to accommodate all forms of reasoning, but later on Gilbert makes the undermining observation that in probable reasoning, agreement or disagreement ‘is found by Observation and Experience only’, rather than in ‘the Intuition or View of the Ideas themselves’ (Gilbert 1752, pp. 24, 44). Yet even if probable reasoning forces us to look beyond the terms of whatever proposition is at issue, neither Locke nor Gilbert suggests that what we are seeking is a major premiss. Their attitude is in stark contrast with that of James Oswald, who writes (in a passage quoted by Priestley) that ‘in every just inference there is a reference to some well-known truth, by the help of which the inference is made, and on the truth of which its justness depends’ (Priestley 1774, p. 223).²⁶ Lockean inferences, by contrast, are made without mediating truths, and may resist being reformulated so as to involve such truths. Their integrity as pieces of probable reasoning may actually depend on this.²⁷

Critics of Lockean logic: Stillingfleet and Browne, Hartley and Priestley

In his exchange with Stillingfleet Locke emphasises his conservatism – the modesty of his attack on traditional logic and the continuity of his own account with the principles underlying the syllogism, however much the fascination with mood and figure might obscure them. He does not say that syllogism is useless, he explains, only that it is less useful than we imagine (*Works*, IV, p. 385). He does not say that

certainty never depends on syllogism, only that it does not always (pp. 386–7). And he does not say that general maxims could never be used in demonstration, only that they are not always necessary (p. 408).

Stillingfleet's primary objection is that Locke overthrows Aristotle's 'method of certainty', which rests, the Bishop says, on the principle that two things agreeing with a third thing also agree with one another. On Stillingfleet's view demonstration always depends on general principles, a claim he takes Locke (not always consistently) to deny.²⁸ Locke replies (p. 383) that the principle Stillingfleet finds in Aristotle is also central to the *Essay*, and the passages to which Locke points – IV. ii. 2 and xvii and xv – seem, at least at first, to support him. At IV. ii. 2, p. 532 for example, he explains that we resort to demonstration when the mind cannot 'perceive [the] Agreement or Disagreement' of ideas by 'immediate Comparison' or 'Juxta-position':

Thus the Mind being willing to know the Agreement or Disagreement in bigness, between the three Angles of a Triangle, and two right ones, cannot by an immediate view and comparing them, do it: Because the three Angles of a Triangle cannot be brought at once, and be compared with any other one, or two Angles; and so of this the Mind has no immediate, no intuitive Knowledge. In this Case the Mind is fain to find out some other Angles, to which the three Angles of a Triangle have an Equality; and finding those equal to two right ones, comes to know their Equality to two right ones.

Our certainty of the general principle can only rest, he then argues (pp. 383–4), on our perception of the agreement, a point Aristotle also made, or would have made if it were not so obvious.

But Locke's reply is far from satisfying. Stillingfleet's point is that Aristotle's method of certainty depends on a *general* principle, and he objects to Locke's 'method' because the principle is discarded: even if it is *exemplified*, it is not represented in the demonstration. Locke claims to acknowledge the principle, but in order to assign it the foundational role it has (according to Stillingfleet) in Aristotle, Locke must say that the general principle is better known than its instances, and that knowledge of any instance rests on *prior* knowledge of the generalisation. But Locke does not believe this; the whole drift of Book I, and of his attack on the syllogism in Book IV, is to deny it. Though he is right to tell Stillingfleet that he does not 'exclude' general principles from demonstrations (pp. 408–9), he admits even there that in his view they are not always necessary (p. 408). It is noteworthy that Stillingfleet's complaint cannot so easily be made against Locke's eighteenth-century followers (with the probable exception of Reid), because each invokes the general principle in developing Aristotelian meta-theory.

Should Locke grant that a general principle is always necessary? Or is it enough for him to say that in seeing that x (the sum of three angles) equals y (the sum of 'some other Angles'), and that y in turn equals z (the sum of two right angles), we see that x equals z , so that we have no need of the principle that two things equal to a third thing are equal to each other?

His characteristic metaphors do provide Locke with some support here. We can see that one thing (a coloured shape, perhaps) is equal in size to a second, and that the second is equal to a third, even if we cannot see the equality of the first and third when we compare them directly. We can imagine a series of coloured shapes – ‘tangrams’, as they are sometimes called – each a rearrangement of parts of its predecessor in the series. (As a game for children tangrams come as cut-out shapes. On intelligence tests they are presented as a series of diagrams, each a transformation – or candidate transformation – of the last.) It may be evident that each arrangement stands in the required relation to its predecessor (roughly, *being composed of congruent parts*) even though it comes as a surprise that the terminal shapes stand in that relation. The series of shapes is the visual analogue of a Lockean demonstration, and the equality of the terminal shapes is the visual analogue (perhaps even a strict example) of a demonstrable (and non-self-evident) conclusion. But there are at least two difficulties in this appeal to vision; each calls attention to the potential need for the kind of general principle that Stillingfleet takes to be essential.

The first difficulty is that each step in the visual ‘demonstration’ needs to be ‘carried over’ to the next. Each step is, of course, as proof of a particular relationship, independent of the prior ones. But in order for our inspection of the series to count as ‘proof’ that the terminal items are appropriately related, we need to see each step in the context of the rest. Otherwise we will know no more in the end than that the last shape is appropriately related to its predecessor. Now what do we require in order to see each step in its context? Stillingfleet makes the very plausible suggestion that we require a general principle: any two things stand in the required relation if each stands in that relation to a third. Locke’s alternative response is less persuasive. ‘I see that *this* equality joined to *that* equality yields a *third* equality’, he must say, ‘but I see it *only in this case*. I do not need to know the general principle, or if I do, I know it in knowing the instance’.

One problem with this answer is that Locke is now claiming to intuit more than he intuited at first: along with connections between ideas, he is claiming to intuit connections between connections.²⁹ But there is a more serious problem, one that takes us to the second difficulty in Locke’s appeal to vision.

In the geometrical case presented at *Essay IV. ii. 2*, the so-called ‘instance’ – the item Locke describes as ‘a Triangle’ – is already arguably general. It is picked out by description, and not by observation or ostension. And it is supposed to tell us something about all triangles – all possible triangles – and not merely to intimate some fact about itself alone. Locke explains this by appealing to selective attention: the mind abstracts or prescind from irrelevant detail, and considers the triangle (to borrow a way of speaking from Berkeley’s very similar account) ‘so far forth’ as triangle.³⁰ The particular triangle can therefore serve as the indifferent representative of its kind. We must invoke the same capacity for selective attention in order to make sense of the Lockean account of what it is for an intuition to occur in the context of a proof. In order to see that two equalities yield a third equality I must consider all three *as* equalities. There are innumerable relations between any two ideas; to see each step of the proof in context is to dismiss irrelevant

relations and focus on the only one (equality in the present case) that matters. It is only this that allows us to regard the proof as a justification. If our conclusion is challenged we will not mutely display our ideas; we will use words to pick out the aspects or features to which we were responding. ‘ x is equal to z ’, we will say, ‘because x is equal to y and y to z ’. Stillingfleet’s question is whether this appeal to equality does not press us on to the general. The pair of equalities can be a reason in this case only if they *would* be a reason in any case.

Perhaps Stillingfleet’s point can be made more compelling if we ask exactly what, in a Lockean demonstration, we are supposed to be intuiting. We cannot be intuiting all possible triangles; in that case we would be knee-deep in generalisations at the outset. Locke’s official answer is that we are intuiting *aspects* or *features* of the particular shapes before us. But ‘aspect’ talk is ambiguous. If the aspect is known to be shared with other triangles, we are once again committed to generalisations. Yet if it is (and is known to be) an aspect of one figure only, how do we venture beyond it? Even if the generalisations to which Stillingfleet draws attention are not consciously recounted as the proof proceeds, a legitimate challenge can force us to acknowledge them.

Stillingfleet may therefore be right to suggest that there is some connection between entailment (necessity or demandingness) and generality. As James Oswald says in a passage quoted by Priestley, in mathematical demonstration we see the *reason* for the conclusion.³¹ The conclusion is grounded or explained, and the mind is thereby brought to rest. But if we have isolated a feature or property that accounts for a truth in one case it must be a feature or property that could (we know) play a corresponding role in other cases. In the activity of reason-giving – or in the context of challenge and justification in which it has its life – there is built-in pressure towards generalisation.³²

Peter Browne is troubled by some of the same features of Lockean logic that worry Stillingfleet. The governing theme in his attack on Locke is the wide scope of our mental activity. Browne thinks Locke overestimates our passivity not only in inference (where, on the Lockean view as he sees it, the following of a conclusion simply impresses itself upon us) but in apprehension (where even the complex conceptions that take rise from the mind’s activity are improperly classified, Browne thinks, as passive ideas). Browne rejects the Lockean definition of knowledge as the perception of agreement or disagreement among ideas, and with it the corollary – drawn by Locke at *Essay* IV. xvii. 9 – that reason deserts us where we have no ideas. In Browne’s view these maxims exclude three forms of creative activity they should not exclude: knowledge of *complex notions* or *conceptions*, which differ from what Browne calls ‘*Compounded Ideas*’ because they involve more than the largely passive recombination of sensations; knowledge of things spiritual and immaterial; and ‘all true *Illation*, or the *Actual* inferring one thing from another; and in effect all Knowledge whatsoever that is not *Intuitive*’ (1727, p. 422).³³ Instead of syllogism, Browne writes, Locke gives us ‘a mere naked *juxta-Position* of Ideas’, ranged for the ready and convenient view of the intellect (p. 422). It is all done ‘at one *Glance*’, without ‘*Express* or even *Mental* deduction or *Illation*’ (p. 423). Juxtaposition, Browne goes on to say, is but the half-grown embryo of syllogism (p. 425). He wants us to

distinguish clearly between two steps: the grasping of premisses, and the active drawing of conclusions.

The first of Browne's specific objections is that Locke's view makes it a mystery why we need intermediate ideas at all. 'To give this intellectual Form of *Seeing* without Argumentation, all the *Play* imaginable', he writes,

let us suppose that the Mind hath a native *Faculty* or *Eye*, for that kind of perception in respect of the Coherence or Incoherence of *Some* of its Ideas, and not of *Others*. In this Case you must, according to [Locke], place some of those Ideas, for which you *Have* that native Faculty of Perception, between the Extremes, for the Perception of whose Coherence or Incoherence you have *No* such Faculty: And then the Eye of the Mind will perceive the Difference or Agreement between the Extremes *Themselves*; and all *Actual* Deduction or Inference either in the Mind, or in express Words is *Needless* and trifling. For that supposes the native Eye of the Mind to be very *Dim* and *Weak*, and that the Man wants *Spectacles*; if he hath common Sence he would see *Without* them, and leave it to the Ignorant to draw *Actual* Consequences.

(pp. 423–4)

Browne is pressing Locke's ocular metaphors: are there cases, he asks, where the ranging of intermediaries affords a view of agreements to which we would otherwise be blind? Yet the answer, as my example of the series of coloured shapes suggests, is yes. Our metaphorical eyes suffer, Locke might say, from the very dullness or weakness Browne mentions; were these eyes 'microscopical' – able to zoom in on their objects to any desired degree of resolution – demonstration or illation *would*, as Browne suspects, be superfluous. That the need for demonstration is a mark of our imperfection is a theme not only in Locke, who observes in the *Examination of Malebranche* that God need not bother with demonstration (*Works*, VIII, pp. 250–1), but also in Bentham, who writes that what is 'a *Conclusion* to *Us* may be a *Principle* to (*i.e.* be perceived intuitively by) superior understandings'. 'The difference between Principles and Conclusions', Bentham explains, 'lyes not in the *Nature* of the *things* themselves, *but is relative* to *Us*, according as our perception of a truth is immediate or mediate' (1773, p. 70).

Browne's second objection is more formidable. He argues that we need to make our complex notions – the subject matter of most demonstrations – as clear and explicit as possible. And this can best be done, he claims, by casting our demonstrations in the form of syllogisms. Browne does not share Locke's confidence that we can 'see' all of the complexity we need to; nor is he willing to suppose that disputing parties will always 'see' the same things, especially when the notions at work are complex, and hence more confused and indistinct. To the extent that our private views are doing the work – to the extent that the engine of illation is something locked up (at least for the moment) inside each of us – there is a risk, Browne thinks, of unproductive disagreement. The risk can be eliminated if we make our ideas clear. We can do this by making them explicit, and by making sure that every inferential step is licensed by *the form of whatever we put down on paper*.

Browne's point emerges very forcefully when the reader compares the laborious sorites he presents on p. 431 with the Lockean substitute he provides on p. 432. The latter 'must', he writes, 'stand thus. *Operations of the Mind – Ideas of those Operations – Within us at the same time – No Necessity – Ideas of Reflection*'. To weave these terms into propositions and to restore the generalisations Locke suppresses is to acknowledge the mind's active role. At the same time we reduce the pernicious influence of unnoticed variation in conceptions.

Both Browne and Stillingfleet emphasise the mind's activity – its operations on the ideas or terms in the minor premiss with which it is first presented. Their criticisms are meant to push Locke in a conservative or formalist direction. To restore the suppressed major premiss is to render an inference as safe and secure as anything in Aristotle (Stillingfleet, Browne); to present each inference as a standard-form syllogism is to grant due recognition to illation, which Browne regards as the mind's highest power (pp. 420–1). Hartley and Priestley react to Locke in a radically different way. They are afraid that Locke makes the mind *too* active. It is true that he added a chapter on the association of ideas to the fourth edition of the *Essay*, but Locke appeals to association mainly to account for *unreasonableness* in thinking, which he is willing to describe as a 'sort of Madness' (II. xxxiii. 3). What Locke calls association is a tying together of ideas 'wholly owing to Chance or Custom', by which '*Ideas* that in themselves are not at all of kin, come to be . . . united' (§5). At its best the mind responds to the 'natural Correspondence and Connexion' among ideas. 'It is the Office and Excellency of our Reason to trace these', Locke writes, 'and hold them together in that Union and Correspondence which is founded in their peculiar Beings' (§5). It is as if an inner eye takes stock of mental content and reacts appropriately – as content dictates it should. Hartley and Priestley are opposed to a content-driven logic of this sort. If the driving force is content (or the perception of content) – or if our sensitivity to content cannot be naturalistically explained – we will be left, they fear, with a mysterious homunculus. Hartley and Priestley want the driving to be done by past experience, embodied or recorded in associative tendencies.³⁴

In his *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty, and His Expectations*, published in 1749, Hartley argues that association prevails everywhere in our mental life. In discussing twice two is four, for example, Hartley says that the two names are 'only different Names for the same Impression', and that 'it is mere Association which appropriates the Word Truth, its Definition, or its internal Feeling, to this Coincidence' (1966, p. 325). In the case of larger numbers we rely, he explains, on calculation, but this is merely a method 'of producing this Coincidence of Words' (p. 326). It follows that 'the Use of Words is necessary' in mathematical reasoning (p. 327), but it remains true that 'Association prevails in every Part of the Processes hitherto described'. On p. 328 he takes up the fact that we sometimes accept a proof on authority. But this does not trouble him either: 'the Foundation of Assent' – association – 'is still the same'.

Hartley proposes that we 'make use of Words in the way of mathematical Symbols, and proceed by mathematical Methods of Investigation and Computation in Inquiries of all Sorts' (p. 358). As Hartley understands it, logic covers probability

and improbability as well as certainty. In each case, he suggests, its *summum Genus* is ‘the necessary Coalescence of the Subject with the Predicate’ (p. 359). He then notes how his logic differs from Locke’s: reflection is not, on his view, a distinct source of ideas; and many words do not have immediate and precise ideas, though they do have definitions. On the last point he takes himself to be agreeing with ‘the ingenious Bishop *Berkeley*’ (p. 361). The hazy picture that emerges from all this is a formalist one: in every sort of reasoning we rely on definitions to display a coincidence of names. (In probable reasoning we rely not only on definitions but on empirical evidence and the ‘the Doctrine of Chances’ (see pp. 335–53). Here the coincidence of names will not be necessary.) Formalism is compatible with Hartley’s aggressive associationism because formal relations or operations themselves fall within the scope of our experience: we learn to associate a coincidence of names with the name or ‘feeling’ of truth.³⁵ At times Hartley sounds like an intuitionist. He speaks at one point, for example, of a necessary coalescence of ideas that ‘carries its own Evidence with it’ (p. 359). And on pp. 341–2 he describes intuitive evidence as ‘that instantaneous and necessary Coalescence of Ideas’ which takes place only in mathematics. The appeals to self-evidence, instantaneousness, and necessity all suggest that our recognition of mathematical truth owes nothing to experience. But this is not Hartley’s view. We infer that twice two is four, he writes, from prior instances of having perceived it, as well as ‘from the necessary Coincidence of all these Instances with all other possible ones of 2 and 2’ (p. 342). Hartley seems unaware that on some interpretations, the second kind of evidence makes the first kind superfluous. This may be a sign of residual intuitionism, but it may instead express the view that the perception of coincidence depends on past experience.

In Hartley’s view, the Lockean logician seeks exemption from association. Hartley and Priestley want to make association universal, but if our trains of reasoning run along tracks laid down by past experience (as opposed to the inherent content of the ideas themselves), what difference will there be between demonstrative and probable reasoning? Formalism provides an answer: formal relations can justify conclusions even if arriving at those conclusions is explained by an appeal to association.

Conclusion

Locke’s positive logic is more impressive than his attack on syllogism as a device for ‘making sense’ of demonstration – as something that lays bare its nature and helps to explain why it is justified. His rules for the conduct of the understanding are often stirring, and his eighteenth-century followers, though blander and less probing, do not do too badly themselves. This is especially true of Duncan and Reid. The natural–historical method developed by Locke and Duncan – a method already employed by the ancient moralists – will reappear in writing on human understanding (in Hume’s *Treatise* and *Enquiry*, for example) and in later eighteenth-century writing on ethics (notably Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*).

We are left in the end with three ways of thinking about logic. There is, to begin

with, the formalism Locke opposes. Locke's own position is intuitionist. It is opposed not only by formalists such as Stillingfleet and Browne, who make some persuasive points against it, but by ambitious empiricists such as Hartley and Priestley, who portray the inferring mind as a passive mechanism wholly obedient to past experience.³⁶

Notes

- 1 On the teaching of logic at Locke's Oxford see W.H. Kenney, S.J. 1959, pp. 11–41, 46–87, and 269–76; M. Feingold 1997, pp. 276–306; and P. Schuurman 2000, pp. 52–60. Schuurman's discussion is one part of an extremely valuable survey of the context of the *Conduct*, pp. 15–96. On the early modern curriculum at Oxford see Feingold 1997, pp. 211–357 (on the seventeenth century) and L.S. Sutherland 1986, pp. 469–91, and John Yolton 1986, pp. 565–91 (on the eighteenth century). Hugh Kearney provides a broad overview of British universities in the seventeenth century in Kearney 1970. On the teaching of logic in seventeenth-century Scotland see C.M. King [Shepherd] 1974, pp. 61–111. King chronicles a gradual 'progress from Aristotle via Descartes to Locke' (pp. 96–7).
- 2 Molyneux was responding to Locke's request (letter 1538, 20 September) for his 'advice and assistance', *Correspondence*, IV, p. 522.
- 3 On the fourth unnumbered page of his 1692, Molyneux tells members of the Royal Society, to whom his book was dedicated, that it is now '*full time . . . to begin a Reformation of our Human Literature, by establishing more useful Methods of Education, especially for the Employment of our more tender years*'. 'Logick', he continues, '*has put on a Countenance clearly different from what it appeared in formerly*', an observation he supports by citing the Port Royal *Logique*, Malebranche's *Search after Truth*, and Locke's *Essay*.
- 4 Chillingworth is also recommended in 'Some Thoughts concerning Reading and Study for a Gentleman', in *STCE*, pp. 320–1, where Cicero and others are praised as sources of instruction in both perspicuity and right reasoning.
- 5 Yolton points out that the *Conduct* was widely regarded as a logic in the eighteenth century. See his 1986, p. 570, as well as Schuurman's edition of the *Conduct*, Schuurman 2000, pp. 85–95. For a survey of Locke's account of reasoning in the *Essay* see D. Owen 1999, pp. 30–61. Another very helpful source is M. Ayers 1991, I, pp. 19–25.
- 6 On epistemic individualism or autonomy see A. Neill 1989, pp. 225–45, especially pp. 238–9, and the work by Passmore, Yolton, and Tarcov he refers to there. Neill's resolution of the tension between individual autonomy and the authority of our seniors – a tension closely allied to the one I discuss here – appears on pp. 244–5. The tension between individualism and community is more fundamental, I think, because it afflicts us throughout our lives – for so long as the conduct of the understanding is an issue.
- 7 Though Neill says nothing about the kind of self-criticism I go on to describe.
- 8 See J.G. Buickerood 1985 for Locke's role in the development of what Buickerood describes as a 'facultative logic' whose rules are derived from experience. I follow Buickerood (p. 169) in suggesting that they are derived from an experience already laden with judgments of success or failure. But I think Buickerood is wrong to conclude that Lockean logic is not 'justificatory' (pp. 187–8): it achieves a new and distinctly 'historical' kind of justification, a justification that does not rest on indubitable foundations. The natural–historical character of Lockean logic was clearly recognised by Molyneux, who credited Locke with stating '*Truths, Established on Experience and Observation, for the Direction of Men's mind in the Prosecution of Knowledge, (which I think may be properly term'd Logick)*' (Molyneux 1692, fourth unnumbered page in the dedication). This sentence follows the passage, quoted in footnote 3, where Molyneux praises Arnauld, Nicole, Malebranche, and Locke for their innovations in logic.

- 9 Indifference is also recommended by Chillingworth (1638, preface, second page), who cites Epictetus' requirement of a 'travellers indifference . . . in all that would find the truth'. The stoic sources (Seneca, for example) are probably worth investigating. For indifference in Locke's *Essay* see IV. iii. 18, p. 549, where we are urged to apply ourselves to ethics with 'the same Indifferency and Attention' we bring to the study of mathematics. On indifference as an epistemic virtue see James Tully 1988, especially pp. 16–33. For eighteenth-century praise of indifference see Shaftesbury 1711, 3: 65, in his *Miscellaneous Reflections*:

How can we be said to *intrust* or *use* our Reason, if in any case we fear be to be convinc'd? How are we Masters of our-selves, when we have acquir'd the Habit of bringing Horror, Aversion, Favour, Fondness, or any other Temper than that of mere *Indifference* and *Impartiality* into the Judgment of Pinions, and Search of Truth?

- 10 I do not know whether James Harris had Locke in mind when he criticised those who use mathematics '*not to exemplify LOGIC, but to supply its place*'. Once this is done, Harris warns, it is '*no wonder if LOGIC pass into contempt*' (1751, p. xiv). Mathematics, he admits, is '*the noblest Praxis of LOGIC, or UNIVERSAL REASONING*', because by seeing how the forms of syllogism are exemplified in one domain, '*we may be enabled to apply them of ourselves elsewhere*' (pp. xiii, xiv). Locke agrees with Harris that mathematics is of use – of limited use – in the education of reason. But in Locke's view its utility depends not on the syllogistic forms it exemplifies, but on the habits of mind its study fosters. Harris' professed aim is to '*enlarge the bounds of Science*' (pp. xv–xvi) – to bring subjects other than '*the Predicament of Quantity*' (p. xiii) within the reach of demonstration. Locke recommends the study of mathematics not because he wants to extend the scope of science (on the contrary, he wants our scientific pretensions to contract), but because practice in demonstration fosters habits that are useful even when demonstration is not at stake.
- 11 For the contrast between disputation and 'civil conversation' see *Essay* IV. viii.11, p. 616 and King 1830, I, p. 360.
- 12 Parts of some traditional textbooks shared Locke's 'ethical' orientation. See for example the second appendix to Sanderson 1618.
- 13 The 'Account' also appears in Reid 1863, II, pp. 681–714.
- 14 Writers in this tradition include Seneca (to whom Locke refers), Montaigne, and John Webster, whose *Academiarum examen* was published two years after Locke arrived in Oxford. On Webster see Kenney 1959, pp. 204–7.
- 15 For discussion of Descartes' views on logic and the Cartesian textbook tradition see Schuurman 2000, pp. 61–77.
- 16 Sanderson 1618, 1985. For Howell see his 1956, pp. 282–317, and his 1971, pp. 13–71 and 259–63. (Howell discusses Locke and his influence in chapter 5 of 1971.) For Kenney see 1959, chapters 1 and 2.
- 17 The first edition of de Crousaz's logic was published in 1712, the second in 1720. An English translation of the second edition appeared in 1724. Crousaz was apparently influenced by the *Logic* of Jean Le Clerc; Le Clerc was in turn indebted to Locke's *Essay* (see Howell 1971, pp. 302–6). Wesley's 1756 is a straightforward handbook of forty-two pages. The first thirty-five are a translation of a version of Aldrich's 1692; the final seven are extracts from Sanderson 1618, on the manner of using logic. There is a relatively full discussion of the forms of syllogism, and on p. 25 there is a distinction drawn among the evident (which 'extorts the Assent'), the certain (against which nothing, or nothing of weight, occurs), and the probable. Degrees of evidence are discussed on p. 26, and demonstrative and dialectical syllogisms on p. 29. On grades of evidence in the Lockean logics see the section 'Degrees of evidence; scepticism', p. 000 below. On Aldrich's widely used compendium see Howell 1971, pp. 42–60. Buchanan's *Logica* was published in 1737.

- 18 See also pp. 238 and 240.
- 19 On validity as a function of form (as opposed to content) see Watts 1725, p. 282; Bentham 1773, p. 62 ('adjust[ing] the *Form* of our Reasoning'); and Duncan 1764, p. 268 ('the Form and Structure of a good Argument').
- 20 I give a brief account of their complaints in an unpublished paper, 'Two Conceptions of Reason'.
- 21 An account of probable reasoning is set forth in Willem Jacob's Gravesande's highly Lockean 1737.
- 22 Bentham quotes liberally (and without direct acknowledgement) from the Introduction to the *Analogy of Religion*, where Butler laments the neglect of inductive logic. (Butler's general influence is openly acknowledged on pp. ii–iii.) Bentham does not seem to see a problem. He writes as if he has provided all the logic we need in order 'to join Abstract Reasonings with the observations of Facts, and to argue from such Facts as are known, to others that are like them' (p. 85 in Bentham 1773, lifted from Butler 1813, I, p. 7).
- 23 Duncan's logic is, on the whole, the closest of the four to Locke. Many long passages in the *Elements* are outright borrowings from the *Essay*, a point emphasised by Yolton 1986 but missed by Howell.
- 24 The empirical or natural–historical character of logic is also emphasised by Priestley, whose views are discussed below, in the next section.
- 25 There may well be (as Howell suspects) a disagreement between Locke and Duncan on this score. Duncan 1764 speaks of syllogisms as 'copies' of our reasoning (pp. 200–1), but for Locke they can be no more than retrospective reconstructions.
- 26 Priestley's source is James Oswald's *Appeal to Common Sense in Behalf of Religion*.
- 27 In this section I have not discussed logics that qualify as Lockean because they endorse or develop Lockean accounts of apprehension. A notable example is Francis Hutcheson's *Logicae Compendium*, 1756, reissued by Foulis Press in 1759, 1764, 1772, 1778, and 1787 (see P. Gaskell 1986). Much of Hutcheson's material is cribbed from Henry Aldrich's *Compendium*. This is especially clear in his introductory dissertation on the origin of logic, which borrows its overall structure, virtually all of its facts, and many of its sentences from Aldrich's historical preface. Parallels elsewhere are also numerous, extending even to the choice of examples. (I think it is fair to say that relative to its source, Hutcheson's *Compendium* is significantly *less* original than present-day class notes prepared by non-specialists and based, for example, on I. Copi and C. Cohen's *Introduction to Logic*.) Against this background Hutcheson's departures from Aldrich stand out vividly; they consist almost entirely in borrowings from Locke. Hutcheson enriches Aldrich's history with a brief account of recent innovators in physics (naming Bacon, Descartes, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton) and ethics (naming Grotius, Cumberland, Pufendorf, Pico, Ficino, and Shaftesbury). All of them ('not without great glory', p. 11) marked out or embarked on new roads. In logic and metaphysics he names only one such hero: Locke. In Part I of the *Compendium*, which is devoted to apprehension, Hutcheson offers a highly Lockean account of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities:

The powers of bodies to excite ideas of colours, sounds, odours, tastes, heat, and cold are called secondary qualities, or proper sensibles: we perceive each of these by only one sense. Those which are perceived by more than one sense, that is by vision and by touch – extension, figure, situation, motion and rest – are the primary and true qualities of body, wherefore they fix the power to excite ideas of secondary qualities, to which there is nothing similar in bodies themselves.

(pp. 17–18, all translations of the *Compendium* are my own)

Hutcheson assimilates internal sense to Lockean reflection (pp. 18–19), and he concludes his introductory chapter on the forms of apprehension with the Lockean pronouncement

that ‘all of our ideas take rise from reflection or external sense’ (p. 19). He gives Lockean accounts of the simplicity (p. 20), reality (pp. 21–2), and adequacy (p. 22) of ideas; his remarks on adequacy end with the claim that ‘all of our ideas of substances are inadequate’ (p. 22). His basic account of abstraction closely resembles the sketch provided by Berkeley in §8 of the Introduction to the *Principles* (Berkeley 1948–57, II, p. 28), which in turn resembles some of Locke’s accounts. Hutcheson writes,

When the mind has observed various things that excite complex ideas, and when it has seen them to be mutually similar in certain qualities, and dissimilar in others; by abstracting from those which differ, but retaining ideas of those qualities in which they are similar, it makes a universal idea, denoting them by some designated name.

(p. 23)

Hutcheson’s brief hints on first principles (p. 83) are also Lockean in flavour, but on the whole, the later parts of Hutcheson’s book cleave more faithfully to Aldrich. It is interesting to compare Hutcheson on apprehension to the corresponding sections of Gerschom Carmichael’s 1722. Carmichael’s textbook bears the influence of the Port Royal *Logique*, but it seems to owe little to Locke’s *Essay*.

- 28 ‘The Way of Reason’, writes Stillingfleet, ‘hath always been supposed to proceed upon *General Principles*; and you assert them to be *Useless and Dangerous*’ (Stillingfleet 1698, p. 106). ‘Your Way of *Certainty by Ideas* is so wholly New’, he writes on p. 120, ‘that here we have no *general Principles*; no *Criterion*, no *Antecedents and Consequents*; no *Syllogistical Methods of Demonstration*’. Stillingfleet himself thinks that general maxims ‘are of very great use, and the only proper Foundations of Certainty’ (p. 146). In this he agrees with Aristotle, whose ‘Way of Reasoning, or inferring one thing from another, which he calls *Syllogizing*’, rests on ‘this common Principle of Reason, that what things do agree in a third must agree among themselves’ (p. 116). Aristotle was right to be unhappy with ‘the ordinary *Dialectical Way*’ of reasoning; he ‘attempted to bring in *true Demonstration*. To which he supposes *general Axioms* necessary’ (pp. 117–18). On p. 145 Stillingfleet quotes Locke’s observation that *reason* has several senses, standing sometimes ‘for true, and clear Principles’, and at other times ‘for clear, and fair deductions from those Principles’. Locke proposes to understand it in another way, as the name of ‘a Faculty in Man’ – a faculty ‘whereby Man is supposed to be distinguished from Beasts, and wherein it is evident he much surpasses them’ (IV. xvii. 1, p. 668). (Locke also distinguishes a fourth sense – reason as the cause (particularly the final cause) – but Stillingfleet ignores it.) Stillingfleet then asks why, ‘in a Chapter of *Reason*’, the first two senses are ‘neglected’.
- 29 Duncan’s discussion of enthymemes (1764, pp. 241–3) may be worth a look in this connection. He comes dangerously close to exposing himself to a Lewis-Carroll-like regress, and perhaps the same can be said of Locke. See L. Carroll 1895.
- 30 See §16 (in the 1734 edition) of the Introduction to Berkeley’s *Principles* (Berkeley 1948–57, II, pp. 34–5).
- 31 It was customary to distinguish between a demonstration *that* and a demonstration *why*. I am not sure how Oswald’s point interacts with that. I need to think more about that, and in doing so it may help to consider what Arnauld and Nicole say about *reductio ad absurdum*: it proves that a proposition is true but it does not explain why.
- 32 Henry Lee repeats many of Stillingfleet’s criticisms of Locke in his 1702. See pp. 312 and 313–16, where Lee defends the syllogism against Locke’s attack.
- 33 Browne’s distinction between complex notions and compounded ideas is not entirely clear; some of the more helpful passages appear on pp. 89, 101, and 449 of Browne 1727.
- 34 Hartley’s naturalism is captured in G.S. Brett’s observation that Hartley tried ‘to exhibit man as a microcosm, a world ruled by law and by the laws of the universe outside him’ (p. 440 in Brett 1965).

- 35 Their compatibility would be obvious had Hartley separated the topic of justification from that of the fixation of belief. Justification could then be a formal matter, and belief-fixation a psychological matter, but Hartley does not follow this line of development.
- 36 An earlier version of this chapter was delivered to the Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking, meeting in conjunction with the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association, December 1995. I am grateful to Martha Brandt Bolton and Nicholas Wolterstorff for their thoughtful commentaries. Versions closer to the present one were delivered at the Pacific Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, April 2000, and at the Sydney conference on 'New Work on the Philosophy of John Locke', July 2001. I am grateful to Peter Anstey for his many suggestions.

9 Reason's dim candle: Locke's critique of enthusiasm

Nicholas Jolley

Like a number of other philosophers, such as Hobbes, Locke shows a decided preference for fighting wars on two fronts. This preference is perhaps most clearly visible in Locke's philosophy of the physical world. Against the Scholastics he defends the explanatory virtues of the new corpuscularian hypothesis; against the Cartesians he defends a tentative commitment to atomism while strenuously opposing their dogmatism about the essence of matter. Locke's philosophy of religion conforms to much the same pattern: he upholds the supremacy of reason in this area against two distinct sets of enemies. The Roman Catholics are attacked for their uncritical submission to papal authority and for their commitment to the absurd dogma of transubstantiation. The enthusiasts are attacked for elevating the supposed inner light of private revelation above the God-given faculty of reason. In an unusually eloquent and famous sentence Locke proclaims that '*Reason* must be our last Judge and Guide in every Thing' (*Essay* IV. xix. 14, p. 704).

Such is the form of Locke's philosophy of religion in its final version, but it is not the form which it took on the first publication of the *Essay*. The chapter 'Of Enthusiasm' (IV. xix) was not added until the fourth edition of 1700, the last to be published in Locke's lifetime. In the first edition, apart from one brief aside at the expense of the enthusiasts, Locke directed his polemic exclusively against the Roman Catholics on the religious right. Why, then, did Locke feel the need to escalate the war by mounting a full-scale assault on enthusiasm? The issue has recently been given a new lease of life by Thomas Lennon who argues that Locke's target is more philosophical than sectarian; Locke is less interested in attacking the zealotry of the Puritans than the authoritarianism of the new Cartesians, such as Malebranche and his English disciple, John Norris.

Lennon's claims are provocative, but in my view they cannot be sustained; they overlook key features of both Locke's text and the historical context of the polemic. In the first part of this chapter I draw on recent work about the background to this polemic, and argue that the chapter on enthusiasm serves an important purpose of defending his philosophy against charges of religious unorthodoxy. In the second part of the chapter I argue that Locke characterises the views of the enthusiasts in such a way that the Cartesians cannot possibly be his target. Nonetheless, Lennon is right that the attack on enthusiasm occupies an important place in the wider philosophical project of the *Essay*, for it serves to complete the critique of those who

subscribe to the view that God offers us direct assistance in the quest for knowledge.¹ In opposition to this view Locke argues that, with rare and principled exceptions, God confines his role to endowing us with natural faculties which we have a duty to cultivate to the best of our ability. In the final section I argue that though Locke holds that reason must be our last judge and guide, he is also close to agreeing with the enthusiasts that reason is a ‘dim candle’.² As we shall see, Locke’s commitment to these two claims about the status of reason involves no inconsistency.

Lennon’s challenge

In *The Battle of the Gods and Giants* Lennon mounts an interesting challenge to the received wisdom about the target of Locke’s chapter ‘Of Enthusiasm’. According to standard accounts, Locke’s target in this chapter is the fanaticism of the Puritan sects during the period of the English Civil War and the Commonwealth. Yet, as Lennon points out, by 1695 the behaviour of such sects had long ceased to be topical; it thus becomes mysterious why Locke should go to the trouble of expanding the *Essay* by tilting against these particular windmills (T. Lennon 1993, p. 173). While he does not wholly repudiate the text book account, Lennon believes that it cannot tell the whole story; it is this conviction which leads Lennon to look around for other targets and to suggest that Locke’s fire is chiefly directed against the authoritarianism of the Cartesians.

Lennon’s questions are good ones, but recent scholars have gone some way to answering them by drawing attention to the new religious climate of the Revolution Settlement. It has been observed that in the wake of the Toleration Act of 1689 there was renewed anxiety about the behaviour of the dissenters. M.A. Stewart and Victor Nuovo are able to document specific controversies among the dissenters which may have given cause for concern. Stewart points to the existence of a dispute among Presbyterians and Independents over the issue of whether the Holy Spirit was the only thing that guided the appointment of ministers (2000b, p. 246 n.4). And Nuovo in his turn points to a controversy over the nature of justification which broke out between Presbyterians and Independents in the winter of 1694–5. Indeed, Nuovo suggests that the ‘noise and heat’ of this controversy may have supplied Locke with the motive for composing the chapter on enthusiasm (2000, pp. 195–6). Clearly the religious climate in England in the early years of the Revolution Settlement was very different from what it had been during the years of Locke’s exile in Holland when so much of the *Essay* was composed. During the final years of Charles II’s reign and that of his brother James II, from Locke’s standpoint Roman Catholicism alone was the enemy to be feared.

In this section, however, I wish to focus less on the issue of Locke’s target than on the issue of his purpose. What does Locke seek to achieve through his chapter on enthusiasm? In one way the answer to this question is obvious. As I have indicated, the effect of adding this chapter is to make Locke’s overall philosophy of religion at once more balanced and more systematic: an attack on the Roman Catholic right flank is complemented by an attack on the Puritan left flank.³ The striving for balance and even-handedness was already suggested in the first edition

when in chapter xx of Book IV Locke inveighs against the practice of exalting doubtful propositions to the status of principles:

Take an intelligent *Romanist*, that from the very first dawning of any Notions in his Understanding, hath had this Principle constantly inculcated, *viz.* That he must believe as the Church (*i.e.* those of his Communion) believes, or that the Pope is Infallible; and this he never so much as heard questioned, till at forty or fifty years old he met with one of other Principles; How is he prepared easily to swallow, not only against all Probability, but even the clear Evidence of his Senses, the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*? This Principle has such an influence on his Mind that he will believe that to be Flesh, which he sees to be Bread . . . Let an *Enthusiast* be principled, that he or his Teacher is inspired, and acted by an immediate Communication of the Divine Spirit, and you in vain bring the Evidence of clear Reasons against his Doctrines.

(*Essay* IV. xx. 10, p. 713)

Even in the phrasing there is an obvious striving for balance here. The Roman Catholic believes 'against the clear Evidence of his Senses'; the enthusiast believes 'against the Evidence of clear Reasons'. Nonetheless, in spite of such attempts at balance, in the early editions of the *Essay* it is the claims of the religious right which bear the brunt of Locke's attack. Indeed, in separate chapters, Locke criticises the dogma of transubstantiation on logically distinct and complementary grounds. In the spirit of Tillotson Locke attacks the dogma for requiring us to defy the evidence of the senses; he also attacks it for being contrary to our clear and distinct knowledge. In other words, since the mystery of the Mass is celebrated at the same time in distinct places, the dogma implies that the body of Christ is in two places at once. And in Locke's view this is an evident absurdity.

It is clear, then, that by adding the chapter on enthusiasm Locke is able to achieve an effect of balance in his philosophy of religion that was barely suggested in the early editions; instead of appearing almost exclusively as the scourge of Catholicism, Locke now appears as the even-handed critic of absurdities on the religious left as well as the religious right. But we need not stop with this observation; it is possible to push the enquiry still further by asking *why* it was important to Locke to portray himself in this guise. Here we need to recall another dimension of the context of the *Essay*. It is during these years (the mid 1690s) that the *Essay* was coming under attack for its allegedly heretical or at least unorthodox views. In particular, Locke had to face the assaults of two determined critics in the ranks of the Anglican clergy. In 1695 the intemperate cleric, John Edwards, had attacked Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* as being 'all over Socinianized' by virtue of its credal minimalism and its outright rejection of such orthodox doctrines as original sin (1695, p. 113). A little over a year later Bishop Stillingfleet published his *Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* in the final chapter of which he had attacked Locke for seeking to undermine the Trinity through his destructive critique of the idea of substance.

In rehearsing these familiar facts it is of course important not to be cavalier with the dates. It may be objected that the letter to Molyneux in which Locke announces

his intention of adding a discussion of enthusiasm to the *Essay* was written in March 1695 (*Correspondence*, V, p. 287); it thus precedes the publication of the critiques by Stillingfleet and Edwards by some months at least. Nonetheless, it is still true that these critical assaults antedate not only the actual publication of the polemic but perhaps even the decision to cast it in the form of a new chapter to the *Essay*; in the letters to Molyneux Locke is still toying with the idea of merely adding an extra section to the chapter ‘Of Faith and Reason’. Moreover, by the time of the letter to Molyneux in which the polemic against enthusiasm is first bruited, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* was already completed, or at least nearing completion. Locke would surely have found no difficulty in anticipating both that the publication of this work would arouse a storm of controversy and that his cloak of anonymity would be easily torn aside by his readers.

Critics searching for evidence of Locke’s Socinianism would not have needed to turn to *The Reasonableness of Christianity* or even his doctrine of substance; they could have found it closer to home in ‘Of Faith and Reason’, the chief statement of Locke’s philosophy of religion, at least before the addition of the chapter ‘Of Enthusiasm’. Officially, at least, as we have seen, Locke’s main polemical target in this chapter is the Catholic dogma of transubstantiation; it is here that he criticises the dogma for being contrary to our clear and distinct knowledge (*Essay* IV. xviii. 5, p. 692). But to critics on the trail of Socinian teachings Locke might appear to have an additional, more sinister purpose; his strictures about the absurdity of the Catholic dogma might seem to be intended to apply with equal force to the doctrine of the Trinity (a doctrine which was of course a subject of fierce controversy in the 1690s). Locke’s orthodox critics might be particularly alerted by the fact that Locke makes an issue of the importance of the correct interpretation of Scriptural texts; in examining the credentials of an alleged revelation ‘it still belongs to *Reason*, to judge . . . of the signification of the Words, wherein it is delivered’ (*Essay* IV. xviii. 8, p. 694). In the debates over the Trinity in the 1690s the correct interpretation of the so-called proof texts for the Trinity was a central issue; it was also an issue in which we know that Locke took a keen interest (J. Marshall 2000, pp. 119–31, esp. pp. 125–6). Thus in attacking the dogma of transubstantiation on grounds of absurdity Locke was in a sense playing a dangerous game. It was one thing to attack the dogma for being contrary to the clear evidence of the senses and for requiring a distrust of the senses which would undermine the basis for belief in miracles; it was quite another thing to attack the dogma as contrary to the principles of clear and distinct knowledge. In choosing to fight the dogma on this ground Locke might seem to be using it as a stalking-horse for attacking the doctrine of the Trinity.

The years between Locke’s first thoughts of writing against enthusiasm and the original publication of this chapter were thus the years in which his religious orthodoxy was seriously challenged. Locke responds to this difficult and potentially dangerous situation in an interesting way. As we have seen, in the first edition of the *Essay* Locke had already sown the seeds of a promising strategy of defence by criticising the religious left of his time as well as the religious right. It is this strategy of defence which Locke develops much more fully in the fourth edition of the *Essay* by mounting a full-scale assault on the religious left; as M.A. Stewart observes, the

Puritan or dissenting enthusiasts presented Locke with an entirely safe target (2000b, p. 246). It is true that, under the cover of attacking enthusiasm, Locke makes statements about the supremacy of reason in guiding religious assent which would have had a Socinian ring for his early readers; it is here that Locke proclaims that '*Reason* must be our last Judge and Guide in every Thing'.⁴ Perhaps Locke's aim here is to carry the reader along by his penetrating critique of the safe target of enthusiasm into agreeing with what is in fact a Socinian stance on the role of reason (or indeed to persuade the reader that he or she is implicitly committed to a stance on the role of reason which was considered Socinian). But it is clear that Locke has a ready response to objections that his view of reason is a Socinian one; he can say that his goal is simply to expose the absurdity of the enthusiasts' pretensions, and that this is a goal with which no rational critic could find fault. One of Locke's aims in this chapter thus seems to be to deflect attacks on his own religious heterodoxy by showing that he is as much opposed to the religious radicals as anyone. By virtue of this polemic and his earlier assault on Roman Catholicism, Locke can display his credentials as a moderate and sensible member of the Church of England.

Two kinds of enthusiasm

The chapter 'Of Enthusiasm' thus plays an important role in Locke's strategy of defending the *Essay* against mounting charges of religious unorthodoxy. But the chapter also has an important place in the philosophical project of the *Essay* as a whole. The centrality of the polemic against enthusiasm to the philosophical project of the *Essay* is a thesis which is vigorously defended by Thomas Lennon. We can see that the general thesis is correct while noting that Lennon's own particular defence of the thesis cannot be sustained.

According to Lennon, as we have seen, Locke's real target in the polemic is a philosophical, not a religious or sectarian one; his principal aim is to attack the philosophical enthusiasm of such unorthodox Cartesians as Malebranche and his English disciple, John Norris. In support of this thesis Lennon cites Molyneux's descriptions of these two philosophers in his letters to Locke; Malebranche is 'in some things almost enthusiastical' (Molyneux to Locke, 26 March 1695, *Correspondence*, V, p. 317) while Norris 'is an obscure enthusiastical man' (Molyneux to Locke, 16 March 1697, *ibid.*, VI, p. 41). Lennon also draws our attention to a fact that is indeed striking; Locke was working on his critique of Malebranche's opinion of seeing all things in God at the same time that he was planning, or at least contemplating, his critique of enthusiasm. Indeed, in correspondence with Molyneux, Locke describes the two projects side by side.

There is no doubt that Lennon is correct in claiming that a major aim of Locke's chapter on enthusiasm is to attack a form of intellectual authoritarianism. Locke is clear that one of the main troubles with the enthusiasts is that they assume 'an Authority of Dictating to others, and a forwardness to prescribe to their Opinions' (*Essay* IV. xix. 2, p. 698); in this respect the enthusiasts are guilty of the same vice as the Cartesians. Moreover, there is some evidence in favour of this thesis which

is neglected by Lennon: the phrasing of the chapter ‘Of Enthusiasm’ sometimes suggests the presence of ironic allusions to Malebranche. Locke criticises the enthusiasts for failing to see that on their principles contradictory opinions may equally be ascribed to divine inspiration:

If the Light, which every one thinks he has in his Mind, which in this Case is nothing but the strength of his own Perswasion, be an Evidence that it is from GOD, contrary Opinions may have the same title to be inspirations; and GOD will be not only the Father of Lights, but of opposite and contradictory Lights.

(*Essay IV. xix. 11*, p. 703)

The phrase ‘Father of Lights’ was one which Malebranche often invoked in expounding his own doctrine of vision in God (e.g. *The Search After Truth*, 3. 2. 6, Malebranche 1997b, p. 231). Moreover, according to Locke, the enthusiasts are guilty of claiming ‘Illumination without search’ (*Essay IV. xix. 8*, p. 700), and they have no serious regard for ‘the search of Truth’ (*Essay IV. xix. 1*, p. 697). Here it is possible to see ironic gibes at the expense of the title of Malebranche’s most famous work.

Nonetheless, in spite of such evidence, Lennon’s hypothesis is untenable. For Locke characterises the enthusiasts as holding positions which are wholly remote from anything which Malebranche ever held. In the first place, the enthusiasts are supposed to believe that they are God’s peculiar people; they persuade themselves that they are under the peculiar guidance of heaven in their acts and opinions (*Essay IV. xix. 5*, p. 699); that is, they lay claim to special revelations and inspiration which are denied to the common run of mankind. By contrast, it is an essential tenet of Malebranche’s doctrine of vision in God that all human minds are illuminated by the light of divine ideas; it is not just Catholics or even Christians in general but pagans as well who see all things in God; ‘the eternal Word speaks the same language to all nations, to the Chinese and the Tartars as well as to the French and to the Spanish’ (*Dialogues on Metaphysics*, III. IV, Malebranche 1997a, p. 33). The universality of divine illumination on Malebranche’s theory is well illustrated by one of his favourite scriptural texts: the Word or the second person of the Trinity is ‘the light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world’. Malebranche holds that this light may be more or less obscured by dark and confused sensations, but he does not suggest that some minds are privileged by God at the expense of others. As we shall see, this may be called enthusiasm, but it is enthusiasm of a sort which has no room for private revelations.

Second, Locke describes his enthusiasts as holding reason in low regard. In an important and characteristically ironic passage to which we shall return, Locke explains why the enthusiasts believe themselves justified in setting reason aside:

Would he not be ridiculous who should require to have it proved to him, that the Light shines, and that he sees it? It is its own Proof, and can have no other. When the Spirit brings Light into our Minds, it dispels Darkness. We see it, as

we do that of the Sun at Noon, and need not the twilight of Reason to shew it us. This Light from Heaven is strong, clear, and pure, carries its own Demonstration with it, and we may as rationally take a Glow-worme to assist us to discover the Sun, as to examine the celestial Ray by our dim Candle, Reason.

(*Essay IV. xix. 8, p. 700*)

By contrast, as a good Cartesian in this respect, Malebranche will never disparage the claims of reason. For Malebranche, reason is always Reason, the divine Logos or second person of the Trinity. It is true that for Malebranche the faculties of our own mind are of no cognitive value unassisted by divine illumination. But to say this is not to say that the human mind has a faculty of reason which is eclipsed by the superior light of divine Reason; the point is rather that talk of reason is empty aside from divine illumination; to the extent that there is a human intellect at all, it essentially depends on divine illumination for knowledge of the world. Thus there is no room in Malebranche's system for any characterisation of reason as a dim candle. Indeed, given the identification of reason with divine Reason, such a disparagement would be blasphemous.

An underlying weakness of Lennon's case is that it makes insufficient or at least, uncritical, use of Locke's correspondence with Molyneux. When Locke first floated the idea of adding a critique of Malebranche's theory of vision in God, Molyneux welcomed the suggestion; he also took the opportunity to make a significant distinction between two kinds of enthusiasm:

I should very much approve of your Adding a Chapter in your Essay concerning Malbranches Hypothesis. As there are Enthusiasmes in Divinity, so there are in Philosophy; and as one proceeds from not Consulting, or misapprehending the Book of God; so the other from not reading and Considering the Book of Nature. I look upon Malbranches Notions, or rather Platos, in this particular perfectly unintelligible; And if you will ingage in a Philosophick Controversy, you cannot do it with more advantage than in this matter.

(Molyneux to Locke, 18 April 1693, *Correspondence, IV*, p. 668)

In the light of this distinction between two kinds of enthusiasm we can see that things fall into place; we can understand why it is misguided to try to force Locke's chapter into the alien mould of an attack on Malebranche. Essentially Lennon is making the mistake of confusing enthusiasm in divinity with enthusiasm in philosophy, and these two forms of enthusiasm have significantly different features. Malebranche's doctrine of vision in God is a form of philosophical enthusiasm, and philosophical enthusiasm tends to be universalistic and rationalistic; that is, it is committed to the universality of divine illumination and to an exalted view of the status of reason. The enthusiasm of the Puritan sects which Locke attacks in his chapter is a form of enthusiasm in divinity, and this form of enthusiasm tends to be particularistic and anti-rationalistic; that is, it claims that divine inspiration is

the privilege of a chosen few and it is committed to a low view of reason as a dim candle.

Universalism and rationalism, as we may call them, are thus hallmarks of philosophical enthusiasm, but they are not of course peculiar to the teachings of Malebranche and Norris; indeed, they are features which are inherited from the more famous and more orthodox epistemological thesis which those teachings are intended to replace. The Cartesian theory of innate ideas and principles is similarly universalist; it holds that all human minds have been endowed by God with innate ideas and principles. And like the theory of divine illumination, it holds that the innate ideas and principles have been more obscured in some minds than others. The Cartesian theory is of course also rationalistic; in order to gain access to our God-given endowments we must turn away from the senses and rely on the light of reason. We may, if we choose, say that the Cartesian doctrine is a version of philosophical enthusiasm if we understand this phrase in a broad sense. But whether we choose to call it this matters little. The important point is that both theories subscribe to what we may call the ‘divine direct assistance model’ of knowledge. In the one case, God directly reveals to us his own ideas where ideas are to be understood as logical concepts rather than psychological entities. In the other case, he directly inscribes ideas and propositions on our minds in their very creation.

The lead which Molyneux provides thus suggests a new and much more plausible interpretation of the chapter on enthusiasm. Lennon is indeed correct, I think, to see significance in the fact that Locke was at work on the critique of Malebranche and the polemic against enthusiasm around the same time, and that he even discussed the projects side by side in correspondence with Molyneux. But the moral to be drawn is different from the one drawn by Lennon himself; it is surely that Locke is seeking to complement his critique of Malebranche’s philosophical enthusiasm with an attack on enthusiasm in divinity. The fact that Locke’s target in ‘Of Enthusiasm’ is indeed a group of religious radicals does not mean, as Lennon supposes, that the polemic is devoid of philosophical interest or that it fails to contribute to the central project of the *Essay*; on the contrary, the claims of the religious enthusiasts represent one important version of the thesis that God provides us with direct cognitive assistance. As we have seen, a major aim of the *Essay* is to replace this ‘divine direct assistance model’ of knowledge by the thesis that, aside from the special cases reported in the Bible, God’s role is confined to endowing us with natural faculties which we have a religious duty to cultivate.⁵ The polemic against religious enthusiasm thus complements the critique of the doctrine of divinely inscribed ideas and principles which dominates Book I of the *Essay*.

To emphasise the distinction between philosophical enthusiasm and the enthusiasm of the sects in divinity is not to say that Locke’s distrust of Malebranche’s philosophy is of no relevance to his interests in the sphere of revealed religion (as opposed to philosophical or natural theology). Malebranche’s philosophy is of course the most prominent expression in the early modern period of Christian Platonism; indeed, it takes such Platonism to extreme lengths. And as John Marshall

has shown, such Christian Platonism tended to be suspect to thinkers like Locke who believed that the Platonic tradition in philosophy was one source of the corruption of Christian theology; in particular, the doctrine of the Trinity could be traced to the malign influence of Platonism (2000, pp. 117–30). Here, as elsewhere, the Trinity has a philosophical relevance in this period which we may not always suspect.⁶

The issue of consistency

'Of Enthusiasm' plays an important role in the project of the *Essay* by extending the critique of the 'direct divine assistance' model of knowledge. And despite superficial appearances to the contrary, Locke adopts a stance on the status of reason that is fully consistent with the overall position of the *Essay*.

As a way of approaching this issue, let us return to Locke's ironic characterisation of the beliefs of the enthusiasts: 'This Light from Heaven is strong, clear, and pure, carries its own Demonstration with it, and we may as rationally take a Glow-worme to assist us to discover the Sun, as to examine the celestial Ray by our dim Candle, Reason' (*Essay* IV. xix. 8, p. 700). Beyond the obvious irony in this passage, there is irony of a different sort not intended perhaps by Locke: Locke agrees with, or is at least close to agreeing with, the enthusiasts that reason is a dim candle. Just how close Locke is to the enthusiasts can be seen from the programmatic statement from the Introduction to the *Essay* where the famous image from the Book of Proverbs makes its first appearance; here, as in 'Of Enthusiasm', the candle of reason is contrasted with bright sunshine:

We shall not have much Reason to complain of the narrowness of our Minds, if we will but employ them about what may be of use to us; for of that they are very capable: And it will be an unpardonable, as well as Childish Peevishness, if we undervalue the Advantages of our Knowledge, and neglect to improve it to the ends for which it was given us, because there are some Things that are set out of the reach of it. It will be no Excuse to an idle and untoward Servant, who would not attend his Business by Candle-light, to plead that he had not broad Sun-shine. The Candle, that is set up in us, shines bright enough for all our Purposes.

(*Essay* I. i. 5, pp. 45–6)

Locke may stop short of actually calling the candle dim, but the implication is that a much brighter light than that of human reason is conceivable; we can at least understand that a perfect comprehension of the secrets of nature and of the fundamental ontology of the world would require the possession of much more exalted faculties than those with which human beings have been endowed. Curiously, the image of the candle serves to show that Locke is actually closer to those enthusiasts in divinity than they are to Malebranche. For Malebranche, as we have seen, reason is not to be numbered among our natural faculties at all; it is rather the divine Logos, the second person of the Trinity.

But if Locke is close to agreeing with the enthusiasts that reason is a dim candle, beyond that they clearly part company; they disagree about the lessons which should be learned from this fact. The enthusiasts, as Locke characterises them, refuse to accept that God would leave them with a dim candle; they believe that God has favoured them, his peculiar people, with a greater light, the sunshine of private revelation. For Locke, by contrast, the candle of reason may be dim, but it is still perfectly adequate to enable us to achieve the purposes for which God created and designed us; hence, the dimness of the candle in no way impugns divine benevolence. In *Essay* I. i. 5 Locke criticises those who are inclined to find fault with God on account of the limitations of our natural faculties by comparing them with idle servants. The enthusiasts resemble Locke's idle servants; the charge of laziness is explicitly levelled against them. And in Locke's eyes the enthusiasts are not only idle; they are also vain. Indeed, it is their very vanity which leads them to suppose that God must have given them something better than the dim candle of reason.

Implicitly, then, Locke is close to agreeing with the enthusiasts that reason is a dim candle. But the chapter 'Of Enthusiasm' is famous not just for its ironic characterisation of the beliefs of the Puritan extremists; it is perhaps most famous for its proclamation: '*Reason* must be our last Judge and Guide in every Thing' (*Essay* IV. xix. 14, p. 704). Superficially this bold statement may seem to be inconsistent with, or at least in tension with, Locke's conception of reason as a somewhat dim candle. But such a judgment would be mistaken; on the contrary, the two claims are complementary aspects of Locke's basic position regarding the status of reason and of our natural faculties in general.

One thing that needs to be noted is that Locke's proclamation is not quite as dramatic as it seems. Although, unusually for him, Locke leaves the sentence starkly unqualified, he immediately proceeds to modify, or at least clarify, his position in what follows:

I do not mean, that we must consult Reason, and examine whether a Proposition revealed from God can be made out by natural Principles, and if it cannot, that then we may reject it: But consult it we must, and by it examine, whether it be a *Revelation* from God or no: And if *Reason* finds it to be revealed from GOD, *Reason* then declares for it, as much as for any other Truth, and makes it one of her Dictates.

(*Essay* IV. xix. 14, p. 704)

Locke makes it clear, then, that the role which he envisages for reason in this sphere is an essentially critical one; its function is to do such things as examine the credentials of witnesses and to interpret Scriptural texts with the aid of the best historical and philological tools. In particular, those interpretations of texts are to be preferred which do not impute teachings to their authors which conflict with the principles of our clear and distinct knowledge. Certainly Locke is not reverting to the standpoint of dogmatic rationalism; he is not claiming that by the use of pure reason we may make all sorts of substantive discoveries in metaphysics and natural

theology. It is true that Locke does think that the existence of God may be known in this way, but otherwise he is conspicuously pessimistic about the power of human reason to make discoveries in this area. Indeed, Locke accords to reason just the same critical role as in the earlier chapter 'Of Faith and Reason' which constitutes his main statement of his philosophy of religion in the early editions of the *Essay*. For a careful reading of that chapter indicates that whatever nods Locke may make in the direction of the supremacy of revelation, it is still reason, in its critical role, which occupies the driver's seat, as it were. When we are confronted with some alleged revelation, 'it still belongs to *Reason*, to judge of the Truth of its being a Revelation' (*Essay* IV. xviii. 8, p. 694).

We can appreciate the coherence of Locke's position in the following way. Suppose we ask: why must reason be our last judge and guide in everything? Locke would, I believe, regard this question as a fair one. Locke's answer, in part at least, is suggested by the programmatic statement in the Introduction to the *Essay*. Reason must be our last judge and guide in everything because reason, dim as it is, is the candle which God has given his servants to do his business by. And just as the domestic servant owes a duty to his master to tend his candle while performing his menial tasks, so we, the servants of God, have a religious duty to our master to cultivate reason and our natural faculties in general.

It may be objected that from the fact that reason is the candle which the Lord has given us, it does not follow that it is the best light available to us; thus Locke has not succeeded in proving that reason must be our last judge and guide in everything. Indeed, the objection might run, if Locke tries to justify this last claim by philosophical argument, he is in danger of falling into circularity, for he is attempting to justify reason by reason itself. And it would be highly ironic, as well as philosophically unfortunate, if Locke were to fall into this trap, for it is the charge of circularity which forms the basis for his chief argument against the enthusiasts. As Locke says, 'this Light they are so dazled with, is nothing, but an *ignis fatuus* that leads them continually around in this Circle. *It is a Revelation, because they firmly believe it, and they believe it, because it is a Revelation*' (*Essay* IV. xix. 10, p. 702).

In fact, however, Locke can be acquitted of this charge. In contrast to Descartes, at least as he is sometimes read, Locke is not attempting to defend reason by reason; the reliability of reason in general is never in question in the *Essay*. What is at issue is rather the claim of reason to be regarded as our best and ultimate guide. Locke may indeed rely on reason to show that there is no better guide available to us; reason establishes that the claims of the enthusiasts to private revelation are unfounded just as it establishes the falsity of the hypothesis of innate ideas. But Locke's procedure here need not involve circularity. Consider the analogy with the candle. We might of course have grounds for doubting whether its light is a reliable one; we might have grounds to wonder whether it is not an *ignis fatuus* which induces hallucinations or systematically distorts the appearances of things. But if we know that the light is not delusive, we can legitimately make use of it to show that there is no superior light available. With the aid of the candle, for instance, we might search the room and discover that there is no torch in any of the drawers. With the aid of the candle we might discover that all the bulbs in the electric light fittings

are burned out. Or we might come across a newspaper, read it, and discover that power cuts had been scheduled for that very day.

It is tempting to suppose that Locke's late additions to the *Essay* have little or no organic connection with the overall themes and purpose of the work. It might even be supposed that in his old age Locke simply supplemented the basic text of his masterpiece with a series of 'cursory reflections' on isolated issues of sometimes ephemeral interest. In the case of the polemic against enthusiasm, I believe, such a view would be seriously mistaken. As we have seen, Locke may have had ulterior motives for including this chapter, but he knew that the polemic had a central place in the project of the *Essay*. A major aim of the work is to discredit the 'divine direct assistance' model of knowledge and to replace it by the view which restricts God's role to endowing us with natural faculties. Here of course Locke's prime target was the philosophical version of this model which was both universalist and rationalist in its claims; this version might take the form, as it does in Descartes, of asserting the existence of God-given innate ideas and principles, or it might take the form, as it does in Malebranche and Norris, of asserting that the human mind is directly illuminated by the light of divine ideas. Nonetheless, it was also important to Locke to attack those whose version of the model was at once particularist and anti-rationalist; and in his time this version was represented above all by the sectarian enthusiasts. Here, as elsewhere, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* has much more unity of purpose than is often allowed.⁷

Notes

- 1 Locke's critique of enthusiasm has an important predecessor in the work by Henry More, *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus* (1662). However, there is a major difference of focus between the two critiques. Locke is concerned to offer a critical examination of the claims of the enthusiasts; More, by contrast, is mainly concerned to diagnose enthusiasm as a form of madness and offer a causal explanation in terms of the strength of the imagination. Despite the difference of focus, Locke, like More, does speak of enthusiasm as 'rising from the Conceits of a warmed or over-weening Brain' (*Essay* IV. xix. 7, p. 699). Significantly, the two chapters which Locke added in the fourth edition of the *Essay*, 'Of Enthusiasm' and 'Of the Association of Ideas' (II. xxxiii), are both concerned with forms of madness. Cf. J.P. Wright 1987.
- 2 The image of reason as a candle derives ultimately from Proverbs 20: 27, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord'. The image is prominent in the Cambridge Platonists, especially Nathanael Culverwel. See W.C. de Pauley 1937.
- 3 The striving for balance in the criticism of opposing views is also a conspicuous feature of the work *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, which was originally conceived as an additional chapter of the *Essay*. See, for instance, section 24 (*Works*, III, pp. 246–7), where Locke's critique of those who defer exclusively to the Ancients is complemented by a critique of those who defer exclusively to the Moderns. I am grateful to Peter Anstey for drawing my attention to this aspect of the *Conduct*.
- 4 A sermon by Gilbert Tennent, first published in Philadelphia in 1744, indicates that Locke's stance on the role of reason would have been considered Socinian and that enthusiasm was a safe target of attack:

Reason [cannot] be our *Rule*, as the *Deists* and *Socinians* dream; because it is obscure and imperfect (1 Cor. 2: 14). And the absurd and Contrary Sentiments of those who

had no other Guide, is a sufficient Confirmation of this. Besides, some Things in Religion are Sublime and Mysterious, and so transcend the reach of Reason; yet they are not contrary to it: But tho' on the one hand, we disclaim the *Socinian* Opinion, in making Reason the supream Rule of Faith and Practice; yet on the other we equally detest the Foolry of *Enthusiasts*, who reject it altogether in the Affairs of Religion. Surely Religion is a reasonable service; Reason may and ought to be humbly us'd, in order to understand the meaning of the Rule God has given us. The *Quakers* notion, of the *Spirit* without the *Word* to be our Rule is a dangerous *ignis fatuus*, which may lead men any where.

(Quoted in A.P.F. Sell 1997, p. 14)

- 5 Locke is at pains to argue that the 'holy Men of old' who received direct inspiration from God can be easily distinguished from the enthusiasts of his time; Moses and Gideon, for example, received 'outward Signs' to validate their claims to divine inspiration (*Essay* IV. xix. 15, p. 705). Cf. More who stresses that, unlike Moses or Christ, the enthusiast has 'neither any sound *Reason* nor visible *Miracle* to extort belief'. More 1662, section XV, p. 11.
- 6 See U. Thiel 1983, for the relevance of the debates over the Trinity in the 1690s to Locke's theory of personal identity. Cf. Thiel 2000.
- 7 I am grateful to the participants in the conference, 'New Work on the Philosophy of John Locke', at the University of Sydney, July 2001, for their questions and suggestions. I am particularly grateful to Peter Anstey for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

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