

Chapter 2

Locke's Theology, 1694–1704*

There is indeed one Science (as they are now destinguishd) incomparably above all the rest where it is not by Corruption narrowed into a trade or faction for meane or ill ends and secular Interests, I mean Theologie, which containing the Knowledg of god and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow creatures and a view of our present and future state is the comprehension of all other knowledg directed to its true end, i. e. the honour and veneration of the Creator, and the happynesse of man kinde. This is that noble Study which is every mans duty and every one that can be called a rational creature is capable of. The workes of nature and the words of Revelation displai it to mankind in Characters so large and visible that those who are not quite blind may in them read and see the first principles and most necessary parts of it and from thence as they have time helps and Industry may be inabled to go on to the more abstruse parts of it and penetrate into those infinite depths filld with the treasures of wisdom and knowledg.¹

Or supposing that Hippocrates or any other booke infallibly contienes the whole art of physick would not the direct way be to study read and consider that booke weigh and compare the parts of it to finde the truth, rather than espouse the doctrines of any party; who though they acknowledg his authority have already interpreted and wiredrawn all his text to their own sense the tincture whereof when I have imbibed I am more in danger to misunderstand his true meaning than if I had come to him with a minde unpreposessed by doctors and commentators of my sect, whose reasonings interpretation and language which I have been used to will of course make all chime that way and make another and perhaps the genuine meaning of the author seem harsh straind and uncouth to me.²

Introduction

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

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

¹ *Conduct*, 193.

² *Conduct*, 222–3.

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

Theological Stock-Taking: 'Adversaria Theologica'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹³ MS Locke f. 15, p. 122.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁸ MS Film 77, p. 6.

¹⁹ MS Locke c. 27, fol. 116.

²⁰ MS Locke c. 27, fol. 246.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. We cannot conceive one material atom to think nor any systeme of Atoms or particles to think JL²⁶

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Reasonableness of Christianity

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

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

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

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

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

The Scripture was direct and plain, that 'twas Faith that justified, The next Question then, was what Faith that was that justified; What it was which, if a Man believed, it should be imputed to him for Righteousness. To find out this, I thought the right way was to Search the Scriptures; and thereupon betook my self seriously to the Reading of the New Testament, only to that Purpose....

The first View I had of it seem'd mightily to satisfie my mind, in the Reasonableness and Plainness of this Doctrine; But yet the general Silence I had in my little Reading met with, concerning any such thing, awed me with the Apprehension of Singularity; Till going on in the Gospel History, the whole tenour of it made it so clear and visible, that I more wonder'd that every body did not see and imbrace it; than that I should assent to what was so plainly laid down, and so frequently inculcated in Holy Writ, though systems of Divinity said nothing of it.³⁰

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

³³ *Reasonableness*, I55; *WR*, 199.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

the last judgment, and the final conflagration that would bring the mortal world to an end. These events are given some prominence in the *Reasonableness*.⁴¹ There is no mention, however, of the millennium, the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth foretold by the author of the Apocalypse, who learned about it in a vision shown to him by an angel.⁴² Nor is any mention made of events that were expected to precede it: the ingathering of the fullness of the Gentiles and the conversion of the Jews. That he had an interest in apocalyptic expectations is shown by several manuscripts entitled 'Chronologia Sacra': two of them are dated 1692 and 1695 respectively; the third, which is in Locke's hand, is a compilation of several chronologies and was possibly inscribed in 1693.⁴³ In addition to a calendar of events from creation to the end of the world, it contains various calculations or proofs of their occurrence based upon numerological clues, secret numbers, and meaningful ratios discovered in Scripture and harmonized with biblical prophecies. On the basis of these, it is concluded that, from creation to consummation, the world will endure for 7,000 years, that the ingathering of the Gentiles will be completed in 1702, the conversion of the Jews in 1732. The millennium will begin in 1777 (*anno mundi* 5740) and end in 2777 (AM 6740), and will be followed by the "little season" of Satan's last freedom, mentioned in Revelation 20: 3. It will last 270 years. Absence of a full-blown millenarianism in the *Reasonableness* should not be taken to mean that Locke did not subscribe to this. It could just as well be explained by the fact that apocalyptic expectation was more background than theme of the preaching of the gospel by Christ and his apostles.

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

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

⁴² Rev. 20: 3.

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

⁴⁴ *Essay*, IV. xvi. 14 (667).

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

Interpreting St Paul

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

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

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

⁴⁷ LL 2864 (Locke 9.103–7).

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

Therefore, these notes have to have been made either between 1675 and 1683, or between 1691 and 1704.⁴⁹ Since Locke did not affix a date to his bible notes, assigning one to any of them must depend on other evidence. This is not an exact science, but, thanks to the work of J. R. Milton, ways have been devised to assign dates to many of Locke's notes with a reasonable degree of reliability.⁵⁰ The date of printing of works cited in most cases permits fixing an earliest date. The style of the entry is also informative. Locke used two different conventions for citing Scripture. The first employs arabic numerals to denote chapter and verse (e.g. 'Rom. 5. 3'); the second uses a mixture of roman and arabic numerals, the former to designate chapters, the latter verses ('Rom. V. 3'). It is obvious that the second method avoids ambiguity and it is probable that Locke adopted it for this reason. There is good evidence that he abandoned the first method of citation and took up the second about 1678–9. The evidence consists of the following: Locke's practice of filling up the pages of his commonplace books and interleaved bibles from top to bottom; the fact that citations according to the first method always appear in his bibles above those that employ the second method of citation; comparison with dated entries in Locke journals involving biblical citation. For a while, Locke employed a third method of biblical citation. Beginning in 1677 and continuing until 1680, he put numbers designating chapter and verse respectively before and after the name of the book (e.g. '5 Rom. 3'). He employed this method primarily in harmonies of the Gospels and in chronologies. From the method of citation, one may conclude that 80 of the 99 entries on I Corinthians are early, that is, before 1679.⁵¹ Based on these calculations, it is clear that, prior to 1683, Locke spent considerable time with I Corinthians. His interest in it may have been triggered by the recent publication (1677) of John Lightfoot's commentary. Many of the citations are from this book.⁵² The notes taken from this work, like most of the rest, are historical and philological.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁵³ *Paraphrase*, ii. 616, 621.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, ii. 616, 806.

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

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

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

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

⁵⁵ *Reasonableness*, 120; *WR*, 175.

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

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

Late Theological Reflections

In this penultimate section, I examine Locke's theological reflections represented in two late works: *A Discourse of Miracles* and *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, both published posthumously in 1706.⁵⁸ They were published with Locke's authority, although, as he wrote to his cousin Peter King on 4 October 1704, he regarded neither ready for publication. Locke describes the manuscript of the 'little discourse' [of Miracles] as a first draft. He leaves it to King 'and some other of my judicious friends' to decide whether it should be published and grants him editorial liberty to prepare the work for publication. He writes much the same thing concerning the *Conduct*.⁵⁹ Manuscripts of the latter work survive and a comparison of the first published edition, upon which all subsequent editions of it have until now have been based, shows that King was faithful to their wording even if sparing in the exercise of editorial judgment. Hence, we can be assured that we have access to texts representing Locke's considered opinions imperfectly expressed. What they reveal to us is that Locke's pursuit of broad theological themes continued undiminished until the end.⁶⁰

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁶² *Essay* IV. xvi. 13 (667).

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

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

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

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

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

⁶⁴ *Discourse*, WR, 44.

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

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

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

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

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

Summary and Conclusion

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

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

⁶⁹ *Discourse*, WR, 44.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix A

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

Deus

Unus

Trinus

Omnipotens

Ornisciens

Benignus

Spiritus

Quando creati

Natura

Species

Facultates

Lapsus

Crimen

Supplicium

Potestas

Anima humana

Praeexistentia

Reolutio

Creatio

Traductio

Anima brutorum

Materia

creata

Qualis

Quanta

Mundus aspectabilis

Antiquitas

Systema nostrum

Sol

Planetae

Terra

Homo

Innocens

Lapsus

Intellectus

Voluntas

Libertas

Sensus

Peccatum Adami

quid

quomodo affecit Adamum

posteris eius reatu

imputatione

infectione

post mortem

pseuchopannuchia

Resurrectio

(continued)

Appendix A (continued)

Paradisus

Gehenna

Annihilatio

Christus

Deus

Primus creaturarum

Homo

Redimit

a quo

[quos]

quomodo

pretio

gratia

spiritu

quos

credentes

quae credenda ad salutem

sanctos

quae agenda ad salutem

Spiritus Sanctus

quis

quomodo operatur

in quos

Revelatio

Necessaria

Theopneusta

Modi

Certitudo

Miracula

Biblia

Lex Mosaica

Evangelium

Ethica sive Hominis officium

Erga Deum

Spiritus bonos

malos

Rempubicam

Magistratus

Parentes

Conjuges

Liberos

Affines

Dominos

Servos

Herum

Famulos

Vicinos

Homines

Seipsum

Appendix B

‘Adversaria Theologica’: titles of entries (WR, 23–33)

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

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