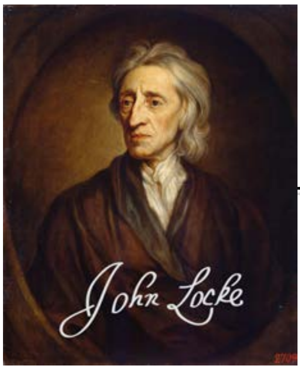

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Christian Antiquity and the Anglican Reception of John Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 1707–1730

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Abstract:

The study of John Locke's theological thought has yet to be combined with the growing historical research into the apologetic uses of Christian antiquity in the post-1660 Church of England. This article addresses this historiographical lacuna by making two related arguments. First, I contend that Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* (1705–7) marked a definitive shift in his critique of the appeal to Christian antiquity. Before 1700, Locke had primarily contested these references to the precedent of the early Christian church by making a narrowly *philosophical* case against arguments from authority in general. However, the controversial reception of Locke's theological writings in the 1690s compelled him to develop *historical* arguments in the *Paraphrase* against the witness of the church fathers. Secondly, I argue that Locke's repudiation of the witness of Christian antiquity was a primary motivation for the diverse responses to the *Paraphrase* by early eighteenth century Anglican writers, such as Robert Jenkin, Daniel Whitby, William Whiston, Winch Holdsworth, and Catharine Cockburn.

Keywords: John Locke, Edward Stillingfleet, Robert Jenkin, Isaac Watts, Daniel Whitby, William Whiston, Winch Holdsworth, Catharine Cockburn, patristics, Anglicanism, toleration

1. Introduction

On October 28, 1704, John Locke died in the chair of his study while his close friend, Damaris Masham, was reading the Psalms. A few months later, Awnsham and John Churchill posthumously published the first volume of Locke's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* (1705–7). Locke's *Paraphrase* was a work of systematic biblical criticism and the culmination of the central project of his later years: explicating a plain, reasonable, and minimalist Christianity.[1] Consequently, the *Paraphrase* was defended and critiqued by several significant Anglican biblical scholars, including William Whiston, Robert Jenkin, Daniel Whitby, Winch Holdsworth, and Catharine Cockburn.[2] Yet a short section in Arthur Wainwright's introduction to the Clarendon edition of the *Paraphrase* is the only modern discussion of the Anglican reception of Locke's final theological work.[3] This scholarly neglect is unwarranted. For the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase* in the early eighteenth century reveals stark tensions within the Church of England, between a tradition of Reformed biblicism and a growing reliance on the precedent of Christian antiquity.

Locke's *Paraphrase* marked a definitive shift in his critique of the Church of England's legitimising appeals to the church fathers and the general councils of the first five centuries AD. Prior to 1700, Locke's published writings had largely contested these references to the precedent of the early Christian church by making a narrowly *philosophical* case against the contention that the virtue, learning, and impartiality of the fathers provided a probable reason to accept their account of church government and apostolic teachings. Locke's published works before 1700 rarely presented *historical* arguments against the idea that the fathers, as witnesses to the first age of the church, possessed greater contextual knowledge of, and more immediate access to, the uncorrupted meaning of Scripture.

By continually appealing to patristic witness, Locke's critics in the 1690s exploited his reluctance to publicly tackle the controversial issues surrounding Christian antiquity. In response to these tracts, Locke renewed his engagement with the issues of early church history. The Reformed biblicism of Jean Daillé, an influential Huguenot scholar, had already been a significant influence on Locke's earlier unpublished critical analyses of the primitive church, especially MS. Locke c. 34, his manuscript response to the *Unreasonableness of Separation* (1680) and the *Mischief of Separation* (1680), both by Edward Stillingfleet, the Bishop of Worcester. Therefore, when Locke's *Paraphrase* outlined methodological and historical arguments against evidence from Christian antiquity, these claims were, once again, indebted to Daillé's *De Usu Patrum* (1656). Crucially, Locke propounded the Dailléan

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[1] Victor Nuovo, "Locke's Theology, 1694–1704," in *English Philosophy in the Age of Locke,* ed. M. A. Stewart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 183–215.

[2] I use the term "Anglican" broadly to denote communicant members of the Church of England.

[3] Arthur Wainwright, introduction to *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, by John Locke, 2 vols., The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 1: 61–65. For the Dissenting reception, see Arthur Wainwright, "Locke's Influence on the Exegesis of Peirce, Hallett, and Benson," in *Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics: Conscience and Scripture,* ed. Luisa Simonutti (Dordrecht: Springer, 2019), 189–205.

argument that the interpretations of the church fathers had been corrupted by their adherence to ancient philosophy.

This distinctive shift in Locke's published approach to Christian antiquity, in turn, influenced the reception of the *Paraphrase*. Locke's repudiation of the witness of Christian antiquity provoked both admirers and critics of the *Paraphrase*. These discussions of the *Paraphrase* often stemmed from the context of fraught theological debates around the status of patristic testimony within the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Within these institutions, Locke's critique of the church fathers was inextricably connected with his apparently heterodox biblical interpretations, which were swiftly embroiled in contemporary divisions over the Trinity, the Resurrection, and the satisfaction of Christ. Anglican clergymen and writers were concerned to either vindicate or refute the methodology and intellectual resources of the *Paraphrase* in order to shape the structure of theological education. As such, the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase* must be situated within earlier seventeenth century scholarly debates around the precise methodological role that the writings of the church fathers should have in the study of the Bible.

This article also provides a cautionary note to modern research into the emergence of an "Enlightenment" historiography by foregrounding these earlier seventeenth century traditions of historical thought. For Locke's philosophical ideas have been interpreted as providing a crucial impetus to such new theories of history.[4] Yet Locke's own historical thought remained firmly wedded to the Reformed biblicist tradition. His opponents, meanwhile, primarily sought to defend the guiding assumptions of the linguistic and historical method of Henry Hammond, a prominent Royalist-Episcopalian biblical scholar. In this way, the reactions provoked by Locke's *Paraphrase* illustrate both the continuing vitality of these historical traditions and the varied nature of biblical scholarship in the early eighteenth century.

2. John Locke and Christian Antiquity, 1650–1705

The study of Locke's theological thought has yet to be combined with emerging research, led by Jean-Louis Quantin, into the uses of Christian antiquity in the seventeenth century Church of England.[5] Combining these two areas of research illustrates two new historical points. The first is that Anglican clergymen often argued that the flawed approach to primitive Christianity among religious nonconformists demonstrated that they were not making evidentially justified claims of conscience. These philosophical claims were often tied to wider arguments against religious toleration—Locke's central concern. The second is that Locke adapted his

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[4] Centrally, J. G. A. Pocock, "Historiography and Enlightenment: A View of their History," *Modern Intellectual History* 5, no. 1 (April 2008): 83–96, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244307001540.

[5] For example, John Spurr, "'A Special Kindness for Dead Bishops': The Church, History, and Testimony in Seventeenth-Century Protestantism,'' *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, no. 1–2 (March 2005): 313–34, https://doi.org/10.1525/hlq.2005.68.1-2.313; Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Dmitri Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science: Histories of Philosophy in England, C. 1640–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

argumentative strategy against this appeal to Christian antiquity. Locke's pre-1700 published works largely relied on philosophical refutations of appeals to authority to contest references to the church fathers. Locke's *Paraphrase,* however, made a methodological and historical case against the admissibility of evidence from early Christian writings; an exposition that was indebted to Daillé's scholarly ideas.[6] In doing so, Locke threatened a significant weapon in the arsenal of Anglican apologetics.

Locke's shifting intellectual approach to the precedent of the primitive church arose in opposition to the growing theological status of patristics within Anglican biblical studies from the 1650s onwards.[7] According to Quantin, the Puritan divines who attacked patristic studies during the Civil War and the Interregnum definitively shifted the Church of England's approach to Christian antiquity. Reacting against this critique, a group of Royalist, Arminian theologians, including Henry Hammond, John Fell, George Bull, and Herbert Thorndike, drew on the witness of the church fathers. They referenced St. Cyprian, St. Irenaeus, and St. Ignatius to support national churches, episcopacy, and ceremonialism, ecclesiological ideas that became central features of the post-1662 settlement of the Restoration Anglican Church.[8] As Mark Goldie has shown, Anglican clergymen also defended religious intolerance against dissenters from this ecclesiastical settlement by continually alluding to St. Augustine's justification for coercing the Donatist heretics.[9]

The central justifications for the appeal to Christian antiquity analysed by Quantin[10] are exemplified in *The Good Old Way* (1680) by Edward Pelling, the vicar of St. Martin, Ludgate. Pelling made two distinct arguments for why the fathers were authoritative witnesses to the correct Christian teachings. His first justification was that the virtue, learning, and impartiality of the fathers provided a probable reason to accept their account of church government and apostolic teachings. In contrast to Roman Catholic doctrine, Pelling claimed that there were only probable, not infallible, reasons to adhere to the practice of the early church. Pelling's second argument was that the fathers, having witnessed the first, purest age of the church, possessed greater contextual knowledge and more immediate access to the uncorrupted teaching of the

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[6] This theme is hardly considered in John Marshall, *John Locke: Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) or Victor Nuovo, *John Locke: The Philosopher as Christian Virtuoso* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[7] On the long European reception of the church fathers, see Irena Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1997). For a recent case study in their Renaissance reception, see Anthony Grafton, "Mixed Messages: The Early Modern Reception of Eusebius as a Church Historian," in "The Reception of the Church Fathers and Early Church Historians in the Renaissance and Reformation, c. 1470–1650," eds. Andreas Ammann and Sam Kennerley, special issue, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 27, no. 3 (September 2020): 332–60, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12138-019-00547-x.

[8] Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 203–312.

[9] Mark Goldie, "The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England,'' in *From Persecution to Toleration: the Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, eds. Nicholas Tyacke, Ole Grell, and Jonathan Israel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 332–68.

[10] Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 333.

apostles. Pelling explicitly distinguished this argument from the Roman Catholic claim that there was an independent tradition of apostolic teaching distinct from Scripture.[11]

Both of Pelling's justifications had originated in shared Renaissance ideas about what made witnesses, in both law and in history, credible.[12] After all, the virtue of a witness provided a reason to accept their testimony as well as their spatial and temporal positioning. However, as we shall see, these arguments were often treated differently by their opponents, particularly Locke. References to the virtue and learning of past scriptural commentators often appeared to be straightforward appeals to authority, which could be challenged by philosophical and methodological arguments from the contradictions between authorities, the nature of intellectual assent and the sufficiency of Scripture. Arguments that the fathers had privileged access to apostolic teaching due to their spatial and temporal positioning, however, required more historically focused refutations. The fathers had to be dethroned from their privileged position in relation to pure, undiluted apostolic teaching. Hence, the fathers were often denigrated for their corrupting adherence to ancient philosophy or for lacking knowledge of the practice of the whole ancient church. Over the course of his published theological writings, Locke shifted from the philosophical to the historical critique of the use of the fathers.

Locke found it necessary to critique these appeals to Christian antiquity because patristic arguments increasingly delineated Anglican orthodoxy in the later seventeenth century. Anglican clergymen also used the neglect of the fathers by religious nonconformists to argue that dissenters were not making evidentially justified claims of conscience. Many Restoration Anglicans analysed religious nonconformity as a form of moral error: the sinful passions of the dissenters had led them to violate the proper rules of conscientious action.[13] Miles Barne, a patristics scholar and fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, declared in a 1675 sermon that one of these rules of conscience was to use the writings of the primitive church as a "guide" to the meaning of Scripture. By ignoring the testimony of the fathers, the nonconformists had revealed their insufficiently conscientious approach to religious issues.[14] For Barne, it was absurd that the "Consent of the Catholick Apostolick Church" should be subjugated to ''the *Dictates* of a private'' interpretation, when clearly "the Apostles best knew the mind of their Master."[15] This disobedience to the guide of Christian antiquity demonstrated the moral disorder of nonconformists who

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[11] Edward Pelling, *The Good Old Way* (London, 1680), 5–8.

[12] For instance, see Richard Serjeantson, "Testimony and Proof in Early-Modern England,'' *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Part A* 30, no. 2 (1999): 195–236, https://doi.org/10.1016/S0039-3681(98)00050-8.

[13] For example, see Roger L'Estrange, *Toleration Discuss'd* (London, 1663), 82.

[14] Miles Barne, *A Sermon Preached Before the King* (London, 1670), 5.

[15] Barne, *A Sermon*, 28.

raised private opinions above the "most Important Duties of *Godliness, Righteousness,* & *Sobriety*."[16]

For many Anglican writers, the necessity of studying the history of the early church also supported appeals to the guiding authority of the modern, learned clergy. An indicative example of this justification for clerical authority is the pseudonymous tract *Plain-dealing* (1675), a critique of the argument for religious toleration made in *A Treatise of Humane Reason* (1674) by Martin Clifford, the radical headmaster of Charterhouse School. Responding to Clifford's insistence on the duty to follow the private judgements of reason, *Plain-dealing* highlighted a series of instances in which reason ought to submit itself to certain authoritative guides.[17] According to *Plain-dealing*, an individual ought to be guided by the modern, learned clergy because only they had the expertise to investigate the meaning and context of the original scriptural languages through the study of patristics and the authoritative general councils of the church.[18] In this way, Christian antiquity was used both to delineate the inadequacies of nonconformist claims of conscience and to justify the privileged position of the modern Anglican clergy.

Thus, Anglican uses of patristics impinged on the central Lockean issues of conscience, toleration, and ecclesiology. It is unsurprising, therefore, that Locke's *oeuvre* manifested an increasingly furious repudiation of this Anglican appropriation of the witness of Christian antiquity. This rejection of the witness of the primitive church was rooted in the religious context of Locke's early life. He was brought up in a Presbyterian household and educated at Christ Church, Oxford under its Puritan Dean, John Owen. This theological background was evident in Locke's 1661 essay "Infallibility," which critiqued the Roman Catholic notions of an infallible interpreter of Scripture while contending that the central doctrines of Scripture were so plain that they needed no interpreter.[19]

Locke's emphasis on Scripture as the rule of faith reflected common Protestant assumptions. However, Locke's essay "Infallibility" was also highly dismissive of the witness of any Christian group, even the early church, to aid the interpretation of apparently obscure scriptural passages.[20] In Locke's later works, this approach to biblical interpretation was often supported by an antagonistic narrative that elided modern, clerical attempts to dictate religious opinions with the spurious claims to authority made by priests in the primitive church.[21] Thus, Locke's early approach to

[16] Barne, *A Sermon*, 48.

[17] Martin Clifford, *A Treatise of Humane Reason* (London, 1674), 16.

[18] A. M. a Countrey Gentleman [pseud.], *Plain-dealing, or, A Full and Particular Examination of a Late Treatise, entituled, "Humane Reason"* (London, 1675), 49; see also, Lancelot Addison, *A Modest Plea for the Clergy* (London, 1677), 21–22.

[19] John Higgins-Biddle, "John Locke's Essay on Infallibility: Introduction, Text, and Translation," *Journal of Church and State* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 317–23.

[20] Higgins-Biddle, "Infallibility," 321–27.

[21] For example, John Locke, "Adversaria 1661," in *An Essay concerning Toleration and Other Writings on Law and Politics, 1667–1683*, eds. John Milton and Philip Milton, The Clarendon Edition

biblical interpretation was already in tension with, for instance, Hammond's insistence that patristic discussions of New Testament linguistic usages could inform interpretations of apparently obscure scriptural passages.[22]

After joining the household of the radical Whig, Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury, Locke began challenging appeals to the witness of other Christian writers as part of his increasing concern for religious toleration. Yet it is notable that Locke's arguments largely relied on making general philosophical claims about appeals to authority, rather than discussing the historical particulars of the early church. In his *Essay concerning Toleration* (1667), Locke simply claimed that no authority ought to dictate "speculations & religious worship" because these were purely individual pursuits "between god & me."[23] In a 1679 journal entry "*Toleratio*," Locke added that disagreements between "different pretenders" to authority demonstrated that learned men could not provide a certain guide to religious truth.[24]

Nevertheless, Locke understood the central controversies about the primitive church. The sources and content of his perspective on the early church were interestingly revealed in his manuscript reply in MS. Locke c. 34 to Stillingfleet's *Mischief of Separation* (1680) and the *Unreasonableness of Separation* (1680).[25] Stillingfleet's *Unreasonableness* had discussed the role of episcopacy in the ancient Church as well as appealing to the expertise of modern learned divines.[26] Probably as a response to these tracts, Locke, for the first time, bought and read the works of several church fathers, including Lactantius, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian between 1680–81.[27] Consequently, Locke's response to Stillingfleet made several *historical* critiques of *de jure divino* episcopacy as well as reiterating his usual argument about contradictory authorities.[28]

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of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 312–13. On Locke's distaste for priestcraft, see Mark Goldie, "John Locke, the Early Lockeans, and Priestcraft," in "Priestcraft: Early Modern Variations on the Theme of Sacerdotal Imposture. A Special Issue in Honor of Professor Justin Champion," eds. James A. T. Lancaster and Andrew McKenzie-McHarg, special issue, *Intellectual History Review* 28, no. 1 (2018): 125–44, https://doi.org/10.1080/17496977.2018.1402444.

[22] For a discussion of Hammond's interpretative method, see Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 269–73.

[23] Locke, *Essay concerning Toleration*, 276 and 272.

[24] Locke, *Essay concerning Toleration*, 389.

[25] John Locke, "Critical Notes upon Edward Stillingfleet's *Mischief* and *Unreasonableness of Separation*," MS. Locke c. 34, Oxford, Bodleian Library, 1–170.

[26] Edward Stillingfleet, *The Unreasonableness of Separation* (London, 1681), xi; vi–x; 226.

[27] Locke's new acquisitions are noted in John Marshall, "John Locke in Context: Religion, Ethics and Politics," (PhD diss., John Hopkins University, 1991), 565.

[28] Locke, "Critical Notes," 87.

Some of these historical arguments were clearly indebted to Daillé's *De Usu Patrum* (1656), which Locke owned and read.[29] Like Daillé, Locke insisted that the writings of the fathers of the third and fourth century, such as St. Augustine and St. Cyprian, could not provide evidence for the "primitive institution" of forms of church government, such as episcopacy, because they were written so long after Christ's life.[30] Locke supported this claim with the argument that St. Cyprian's comments on the clerical corruption and unscrupulous disputes over jurisdiction problematised evidence from his era of church history.[31] Locke also propounded one of Daillé's central arguments: that the statements of the fathers often only applied to their particular churches, rather than the whole church. For instance, Locke contended that Stillingfleet's arguments for why Carthage under St. Cyprian was governed by a "Diocesan Episcopate" only proved that there was one bishop in one city.[32] In support of this claim, Locke continually reiterated that individual ancient churches were largely independent.[33] Furthermore, in a similar manner to Daillé, Locke noted how the ambiguity of the language of the church fathers made it difficult to discover their true meaning with regard to church government.[34] Thus, Locke's manuscript response to Stillingfleet reveals his early adherence to Dailléan Reformed biblicist accounts of Christian antiquity as well as a developing sense that such historical arguments were necessary to justify religious toleration.

Nevertheless, Locke did not apply his developing historical interest in the early church to his published works, which continued to rely almost entirely on philosophical refutations of arguments from authority. In the *Letter concerning Toleration* (1689), Locke repeated his standard arguments about contradictory authorities and the private, individual interest in salvation.[35] Similarly, Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1689) made an epistemological case against arguments from authority. For Locke, knowledge was the certain, demonstrative

[29] John Harrison and Peter Laslett, eds., *The Library of John Locke*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), no. 908, 119. Locke also possessed the works of church fathers, such as Clement of Alexandria (nos. 743–45), Eusebius (no. 1076), Justin the Martyr (no. 1603), Origen (nos. 2139–40) and Tertullian (no. 2859).

[30] Locke, "Critical Notes," 89; cf. Jean Daillé, *A Treatise concerning the Right Use of the Fathers*, trans. Thomas Smith, 2 vols. (London, 1651), 1:3–4.

[31] Locke, "Critical Notes," 89.

[32] Daillé, *Treatise*, 1: 141; Locke, "Critical Notes," 88.

[33] Daillé, *Treatise*, 1: 136–49; Locke, "Critical Notes," 90.

[34] Daillé, *Treatise*, 1: 70–97; Locke, "Critical Notes," 99. These broad Dailléan arguments were supported by Locke's own reading of the church fathers and *The Naked Truth* (1675) by Herbert Croft, Bishop of Hereford: see Marshall, "Locke in Context," 514–54, esp. 524.

[35] John Locke, *A Letter concerning Toleration and Other Writings*, ed. Mark Goldie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010), 15 and 28.

association between intuitively self-evident ideas derived from sense impressions.[36] These "certain and indubitable Proofs" were the only sure basis for intellectual assent. Beyond this, there should be no "blind resignation to an Authority, which the Understanding of Man acknowledges not."[37] The arbitrary, indeterminate nature of language, moreover, ensured that men should be "less magisterial, positive, and imperious, in imposing our sense and interpretations" of religious texts.[38]

Significantly, none of Locke's published writings up to 1695 had challenged the idea that the early church provided additional testimonial *evidence* of the original meaning of Christ's teachings. Like Locke's earlier works, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695) simply asserted the superiority of the "*sole Reading of the Scripture*" to "*Systems of Divinity*."[39] Yet Locke's central thesis—that the belief that Christ was the Messiah was sufficient to make someone a Christian[40]—relied on the assumption that the witness of Christian antiquity could not determine the proper interpretation of apparently unclear passages in Scripture. For instance, Locke's minimalist understanding of the Christian religion appeared to make the more elaborate exposition of the nature of the Trinity in the Athanasian Creed inessential. Yet, if the doctrine and practice of the primitive church could be used to clarify scriptural meaning, such fundamental statements as the Athanasian Creed would have to be understood as essential dogmas.

Consequently, several Anglican responses to the *Reasonableness* targeted Locke's under-justified assumption that arguments from the witness of Christian antiquity did not require historical refutations. John Edwards, a Reformed Calvinist, focused on distinguishing the biblical meaning of the Messiah from the divine nature implied by the title of "Son of God." Edwards's four critiques (1695, 1696, 1697, 1697) used the fact that Locke insisted only on Christ's supposedly non-divine title of "Messiah" to label him as a Socinian—someone who denied the divinity of Christ and suggested that he only possessed delegated authority from God.[41] Edwards also referenced the evidence of the "Primitive Church" to defend a more expansive conception of the articles of faith in *A Brief Vindication* (1697).[42] Once again, Locke did not directly challenge this historical argument. His two vindications (1695, 1697) simply reasserted

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[36] John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), IV.ii, 530–38.

[37] Locke, *Essay*, IV.xvi.4, 660.

[38] Locke, *Essay*, III.ix.23, 490.

[39] John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures*, ed. John Higgins-Biddle, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 3.

[40] Locke, *Reasonableness*, 23.

[41] John Edwards, *Some Thoughts concerning the Several Causes and Occasions of Atheism* (London, 1695), 105; idem, *Socinianism Unmask'd* (London, 1697); idem, *The Socinian Creed* (London, 1697), 120–31; idem, *A Brief Vindication of the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith* (London, 1697).

[42] Edwards, *Brief Vindication*, 62.

his view that only truths plainly stated in Scripture could be articles of faith, while reiterating his typical philosophical objections to arguments from authority.[43]

Other Anglican critics of the *Reasonableness* utilised the evidence of Christian antiquity. A crucial argument of the anonymous *Animadversions* (1697) was that Locke's *Reasonableness* opposed "the anciently received Doctrine of the Church."[44] In 1696, William Payne, a royal chaplain, argued that the ancient heretics had accepted that Christ was the Messiah, but "St. *Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius* and the earliest Writers" had renounced communion with them. Hence, the belief that Christ was the Messiah could not be the sole article of faith.[45] The pseudonymous *Free but Modest Censure* (1698), similarly, argued that Locke's view of the fundamentals of Christianity contradicted "all the wise, intelligent, and godly Christians in all Ages since the foundation of that Holy Institution."[46]

Indeed, the doctrine and practice of the early church was invoked in a variety of critiques of Locke's other works. For instance, Stillingfleet's *Vindication of the Trinity* (1696) sought to demonstrate the heterodoxy of Locke's understanding of the Trinity by opposing it with ideas of the church fathers; a strategy that Stillingfleet repeated in his second critique of Locke's *Essay*.[47] In this way, the doctrines, practices, and witnesses of the early church became a significant part of the reception of Locke's theological ideas in the 1690s.

As a result of the developing prominence of these historical issues in the debates surrounding his theological works, Locke gradually began to contest the evidence of Christian antiquity differently from appeals to authority in general. Jonas Proast's second critique (1691) of Locke's *Letter concerning Toleration* stimulated the first indicative shift. For Proast, a fellow of All Souls, Oxford, miracles had ceased after Christianity had become the state religion of the Roman Empire because civil coercion was then able to replace divine dispensation as an efficacious means of conversion.[48] In response to this argument, Locke sent letters to several friends asking for evidence about the role that miracles had played in the early church and when they had ceased.[49]

[43] John Locke, *Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity*, ed. Victor Nuovo, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 11 and 62.

[44] [Richard West], *Animadversions on a Late Book Entituled, "The Reasonableness of Christianity"* (London, 1697), 1.

[45] William Payne, *The Mystery of the Christian Faith and of the Blessed Trinity Vindicated* (London, 1697), 3.

[46] F. A., MA of Cambridge [pseud.], *A Free but Modest Censure* (London, 1698), 9.

[47] Edward Stillingfleet, *A Discourse in Vindication of the Trinity* (London, 1696), 270; idem, *The Bishop of Worcester's Answer to Mr. Locke's Second Letter* (London, 1698), 44; 84; 99. For more on this debate, see John Yolton, *John Locke and the Way of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 124–28 and 132–40.

[48] Jonas Proast, *A Third Letter concerning Toleration* (Oxford, 1691), 4–7.

[49] For example, John Locke to Philippus van Limborch, 29 February 1692, *The Correspondence of John Locke*, ed. Esmond S. de Beer, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), no. 1473, 4:399–403.

Building on these discussions, Locke's *Third Letter for Toleration* (1692) referenced evidence from St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome to suggest that miracles had not ceased until long after Christianity had become the religion of the Roman Empire.[50] More significantly, in some manuscript reflections on St. John's Gospel, probably written between 1695–99, Locke engaged with the writings of the church fathers to argue against the notion that St. John had a Trinitarian intent in writing the Gospel. Locke also criticised several church fathers, such as St. Jerome, for corrupting the simplicity of St. John's Gospel by interpreting it allegorically according to Platonic philosophy.[51]

This developing engagement with the historical issues surrounding the use of the church fathers culminated in Locke's *Paraphrase*. In his preface to the *Paraphrase* (1705–7), Locke applied this argument—that the fathers had moulded their scriptural interpretations according to ancient philosophical systems—to challenge their exegesis of St. Paul's Epistles. Locke outlined these new historical arguments as part of a systematic, methodological exposition of the proper way of interpreting the Epistles.

Locke's *Paraphrase* aimed to explicate the "*very plain, intelligible, and instructive*" practical doctrines in the Epistles. To expound St. Paul's miraculous purpose, Locke highlighted the necessity of overcoming several widely recognised internal difficulties in interpreting the Epistles, such as the Hebrew "*Idiom*" of St. Paul's Greek. Additionally, Locke resolutely directed his discussion of two "*external*" problems in reading the Epistles towards appeals to Christian antiquity and modern learned authority. The first external problem was the division of the Epistles "*into Chapters and Verses,*" which lost "*the Thread and Coherence*" of St. Paul's argument and fuelled religious controversies supported by out of context quotations.[52]

The most important external problem, however, was that men interpreted St. Paul's Epistles, according to "*the Articles or Interpretations of the Society he is engaged in*." Part of Locke's refutation of this method rested upon a reiteration of his earlier philosophical argument against appeals to authority. He highlighted the interpretative differences between two great modern authorities of biblical study: Henry Hammond and Theodore Beza, a titan of French Calvinism. In doing so, Locke sought to demonstrate that their authority could not be relied upon to understand Scripture.[53]

Locke also outlined new methodological objections to relying on authorities, such as the idea that "*The Apostle writ not by that Man's System, and so his Meaning cannot be known by it*." Locke was strongly committed to searching for textual

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[50] John Locke, *A Third Letter for Toleration* (London, 1692), 266–69.

[51] John Locke, "Some General Reflections upon the beginning of St. John's Gospel," MS. Locke e. 17, Oxford, Bodleian Library, 173–224. For the date, authorship, and content of the manuscript, see Marshall, "Locke in Context," 1217–35. For the wider context of debates around the Platonism and St. John's Gospel, see Paul Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 272–312.

[52] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:103–6 passim.

[53] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:107–8.

intention. He read each Epistle through in one sitting and then repeated the process until he understood "*the Apostle's main Purpose in writing the Epistle*." Locke always endeavoured to "*make St.* Paul *an Interpreter to me of his own Epistles*."[54] In other words, the meaning of St. Paul's Epistles had to be explicated with reference to other statements within the Epistles and the overall internal logic of the text.[55] The implication was that the proper interpretation of Scripture could not rely on the explications of the church fathers.

However, Locke realised that these philosophical and methodological arguments had to be supported by historical refutations of the position of the primitive church as a privileged witness to uncorrupted Christian practices and doctrines. In a radical break with his previous published thought, Locke made a *historical* case against the *evidence* from Christian antiquity by reiterating Daillé's argument that the ante-Nicene and post-Nicene fathers had been corrupted by the ancient philosophies of Platonism and Aristotelianism.[56]

Echoing Daillé, Locke's central historical claim was that "*the Christian Writers after the Age of the Apostles*" had interpreted the New Testament according to "the Philosophy they were tinctured with."[57] When "*Platonism prevailed*," Christian converts had "*interpreted Holy Writ according to the Notions they had imbib'd from that Philosophy*." Aristotelianism had a similar impact, with interpreters imposing "*the Doctrine of Aerial and Ætherial Vehicles*" on the first verses of 2 Cor. 5. This philosophical corruption meant that the church fathers had explained "*the Apostles meaning by what they never thought of*," which prevented us from painting their "*very Ideas and Thoughts in our Minds*."[58] In this way, Locke marshalled the intellectual resources of Reformed biblicism to refute the appeal to Christian antiquity that had been a problematic aspect of the reception of his earlier theological works.

Such historical critiques of the witness of the church fathers would elicit several critical responses in the early eighteenth century. This controversy arose in part because Locke's methodological and historical arguments were perceived to be inextricably connected to the ostensibly heterodox content of the *Paraphrase*. This heterodox interpretation of the *Paraphrase* was influenced by the controversies surrounding Locke's earlier theological works, which were consistently read into it. In

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[54] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:107–13 passim.

[55] For more on Locke's reading of the Bible see Justin Champion, "'An Intent and Careful Reading:' How John Locke Read His Bible," in *Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics: Conscience and Scripture*, ed. Luisa Simonutti (Dordrecht: Springer, 2019), 143–60.

[56] Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, 447–541; see also Diego Lucci, "Ante-Nicene Authority and the Trinity in Seventeenth-Century England," in "Priestcraft: Early Modern Variations on the Theme of Sacerdotal Imposture. A Special Issue in Honor of Professor Justin Champion," eds. James A. T. Lancaster and Andrew McKenzie-McHarg, special issue, *Intellectual History Review* 28, no. 1 (2018): 101–24, https://doi.org/10.1080/17496977.2018.1402443.

[57] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:114; Daillé, *Treatise*, 1:83–91. Locke's argument was also likely influenced by tracts from the Trinitarian debates of the 1690s, such as, Stephen Nye's *A Brief History of the Unitarians* (London, 1687).

[58] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:114.

An Account of Mr. Lock's Religion (1700), John Milner, a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, had suggested that Locke held several heterodox, Socinian opinions on Christ's satisfaction for our sins, the Trinity, the damnation of Adam, and the resurrection of the same body.[59]

Locke's *Paraphrase* was often interpreted as promoting precisely these heterodox theological opinions, and much of the reception of this work centred on a few specific points of scriptural exegesis. His most controversial interpretations focused on passages that had typically been referenced to support the Trinity (1 Cor. 12:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rom.9:5), the resurrection of the same body (1 Cor. 15:53; Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:21; Eph. 1:19; 2 Cor. 5:3), and Christ's satisfaction for our sins (Rom. 8:3; Rom. 3:24). His interpretations had the political connotations of undermining the doctrine of passive obedience (Rom. 13:1–2.) and challenging ministerial authority (Eph. 3:7).

The apparently unorthodox textual readings in Locke's *Paraphrase* partly reflected the fact that it had been refined by manuscript and intellectual exchange among heterodox scholars in the early 1700s. It is notable that Isaac Newton, the renowned natural philosopher and antitrinitarian biblical scholar, was a significant influence on the final form of the *Paraphrase.* According to a letter sent by Newton to Locke on the 15 May 1703, he had read over and corrected the manuscript *Paraphrase* twice. He approved of the *Paraphrase*, commenting that the work displayed "great care and judgement."[60] Crucially, Kim Parker has argued, on the basis of a newly discovered manuscript, that Newton's comments on Rom. 9:5 influenced Locke's final interpretation of this passage. Locke's original manuscript had interpreted this passage as a declaration of Christ's divinity. However, after reading Newton's comments, Locke analysed the passage as an ethical discussion of how Christ's spirit predominated over the flesh.[61] The antitrinitarian implications of Locke's final interpretation of this passage would later become deeply controversial, indicating how Newton's own heterodoxy influenced the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase*.

Significantly, Locke's cousin Peter King, a Presbyterian writer on the primitive church, was the only other scholar with whom Locke had significant epistolary discussions about the content of the *Paraphrase*.[62] These exchanges with King and Newton indicated the extent to which the *Paraphrase* was moulded in a different intellectual context from most Anglican biblical scholarship.[63] Both admirers and critics of the *Paraphrase* would connect Locke's ostensibly heterodox biblical readings

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[59] John Milner, *An Account of Mr Lock's Religion* (London, 1700), 22–25; 34–38; 54–59; 148–53.

[60] Isaac Newton to John Locke, 15 May 1703, in *Correspondence*, 8:1–2.

[61] Kim Ian Parker, "Newton, Locke and the Trinity: Sir Isaac's Comments on Locke's A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 62, no. 1 (February 2009): 40–52, https://www.doi.org/10.1017/S0036930608004626.

[62] Peter King to John Locke, 26 January 1703, in *Correspondence*, 8:3–4; Locke to King, 28 January 1704, *Correspondence*, 8:181–82; King to Locke, 16 August 1704, in *Correspondence*, 8:380.

[63] Locke also owned Peter King's two works on the primitive church: see Laslett and Harrison, *Locke's Library*, nos. 1636–37, 166. The works were: *An Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church* (1691) and *The History of the Apostles Creed* (1702).

with his forceful rejection of the witness of Christian antiquity, thereby provoking the controversial reception of the *Paraphrase* in the early eighteenth century.

3. The Anglican Reception of Locke's *Paraphrase*, 1705–1730

Locke's repudiation of the witness of primitive Christianity in the *Paraphrase* occurred at a moment of intense instability and crisis for the Church of England. After the Revolution of 1688, numerous churchmen had refused to swear the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary. Reacting against the Toleration Act of 1689, many Anglican clergymen published polemics against the sin of schism.[64] In the early eighteenth century, these internal tensions were exacerbated by a series of intense controversies around the powers of the Convocation of the Clergy and the practice of occasionally conforming to the Church of England.[65] These quarrels culminated in Henry Sacheverell's "Church in Danger" sermon (1709), which led to nationwide controversy, riots, and eventually a Tory victory in the general election of 1710. In this feverish atmosphere, even Thomas Tenison, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was not immune from accusations of promoting religious heterodoxy and Socinianism.[66]

These fraught national debates about religious heterodoxy were particularly prominent within the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, institutional centres that were also a crucial context for the reception of the *Paraphrase*. Both universities were sites of heated theological controversy over the respective boundaries of reason and revelation and the proper method of interpreting Scripture. Within Oxford and Cambridge, patristics were regularly used to shore up orthodox perspectives on the central mysteries of Christianity, such as the Trinity.[67] A central example of these theological debates was the controversy surrounding Samuel Clarke's account of the Trinity. In 1710, when Clarke, an alumnus of Gonville and Caius College and chaplain to Queen Anne, returned to Cambridge to obtain his doctorate in divinity, he was suspected of heterodoxy regarding the Trinity by Henry James, the presiding Regius Professor. Clarke's published defence of his position in 1712 resulted in years of bitter controversy and his censure by the Lower House of Convocation of Clergy in 1714.[68] Significantly, this debate centred around the position of the primitive church and the

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[64] For example, John Norris, *Christian Blessedness* (London, 1690), 177–201.

[65] Gareth Bennett, *The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688–1730: The Career of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 47–97.

[66] Ann Thomson, *Bodies of Thought: Science, Religion, and the Soul in the Early Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 39–40.

[67] Gareth Bennett, "University, Society, and Church, 1688–1714," in *The Eighteenth Century*, eds. Lucy Sutherland and Leslie Mitchell, vol. 5 of *The History of the University of Oxford*, eds. T. H. Aston, Lucy Sutherland and Leslie Mitchell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 359–401; John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 115.

[68] Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment*, 118.

proper way of interpreting the Bible, theological points that were central to the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase*.[69]

Oxford and Cambridge fellows, moreover, were often particularly concerned about the impact of Locke's writings in general on established orthodoxy. In the 1690s, churchmen who held institutional positions at Oxford and Cambridge had propounded many of the most significant critiques of Locke's views on epistemology, religious toleration, and the ends of the Christian religion.[70] Not only was Locke's thought forcefully critiqued by Oxford and Cambridge dons, but some writers were also specifically concerned about Locke's influence within the universities. Henry Lee, a former fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, dedicated the preface of *Anti-Scepticism* (1702) to his sons at the universities. He hoped that his sons, and presumably other students, would read his critique of the *Essay* and come to understand its supposed errors without having to read Locke's work themselves.[71] Even those thinkers who admired Locke's philosophy often warned against the heterodoxy of his religious writings. Daniel Waterland, a fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge and supporter of Locke's *Essay*, cautioned against Locke's "faulty" religious writings in his 1710 *Advice to a Young Student*.[72]

Locke's works sparked a particularly vehement reaction at Oxford. There was a concerted institutional campaign against the teaching of his philosophical and theological ideas. In 1703, several the heads of College at Oxford decided to provide "private Instructions" to tutors to discourage the reading of Locke's works.[73] This attack on Locke's ideas was further revived in 1705. On 9 October 1705, William Lancaster, the former Provost of Queen's College, accepted the position of Vice-Chancellor with a speech denouncing Locke's works as among the "ill & pernicious books," which disgraced "Learning & Religion" and were "written on purpose to ruin both . . . Church & university."[74] Furthermore, in the early eighteenth century, it remained popular for Oxford fellows to write polemics against the apparent Lockean foundations of modern heterodox religious beliefs. For instance, William Lupton, a fellow of Lincoln College, in 1711 charged Locke's *Essay* with undermining the doctrine of the resurrection of the same body in a sermon before the university.[75]

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[69] Robert Ingram, *Reformation without End: Religion, Politics and the Past in Post-Revolutionary England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 45–57.

[70] For example, Jonas Proast, fellow of All Souls, Oxford; John Milner, a fellow of St John's College, Cambridge; John Edwards, a former sizar at St John's College, Cambridge who returned to the university in 1697.

[71] Henry Lee, preface to *Anti-Scepticism* (London, 1702), B3r.

[72] Ingram, *Reformation without End*, 31–32.

[73] James Tyrell to John Locke, 17 April 1704, in *Correspondence*, 8:269–70.

[74] Thomas Hearne, *Remarks and Collections*, eds. C. E. Doble, David Watson Rannie, and Herbert Edward Salter, 11 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885–1921), 1:293.

[75] William Lupton, *The Resurrection of the Same Body* (Oxford, 1711), 14–15.

Thus, Locke's *Paraphrase* propounded methodological and historical critiques of the use of Christian antiquity during a period in which these theological issues were particularly prominent within Oxford and Cambridge. It is unsurprising, therefore, that most of the Anglican responses to the *Paraphrase* were written by thinkers, such as William Whiston, Robert Jenkin, and Winch Holdsworth, who held academic positions at both universities. These thinkers critiqued or defended Locke's *Paraphrase* to justify their own preferred method and legitimate sources of biblical study to the next generation of divinity students.

These theological themes were an immediate and significant feature of the public reception of Locke's *Paraphrase*. In September 1708, an anonymous review in the periodical, *The History of the Works of the Learned*, summarised Locke's "Preface" to the *Paraphrase*, bringing Locke's methodological critique of learned commentators and the orthodox clergy to the forefront.[76] Soon after this review, William Whiston, the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, appropriated Locke's *Paraphrase* in his *Sermons and Essays* (1709) to support a heterodox, antitrinitarian theological project. He included Locke's *Paraphrase* in a program of theological education that focused on the earliest, uncorrupted Christian texts. Whiston, unlike Locke, continually utilised the witness of the ante-Nicene Fathers. But Whiston's broader religious enterprise was supported by Locke's dismissal of learned authority, his textualist focus, and his critique of the corruption of the post-Nicene church. Strikingly, Whiston's *Sermons and Essays* also led to his expulsion from Cambridge for heresy on 30 October 1710.[77]

In "Sermon X. Advice for the Study of Divinity," Whiston presented a vehement critique of the modern method of theological study. He attacked the focus on prejudiced, controversial writings by modern divines, such as Stillingfleet, as well as the corrupted church councils and fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries.[78] To counter the "Bitter Controversies" resulting from this method of study, Whiston proposed an alternative program of historical enquiry. Whiston argued that the solution to these disputes was to take "the same Sacred Word of God for their proper Rule of Faith and Practice; and commonly appeal to the same Primitive Antiquity for their surest secondary Guide."[79] According to Whiston, the post-Nicene fathers were unreliable because of the "Uncertainty, Contradiction and Partiality" of that era.[80] Striking at the heart of the Church of England's confessional identity, Whiston

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[76] Review of *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, in *The History of the Works of the Learned* 10, no. 15 (September 1708): 556–60.

[77] Eamon Duffy, "'Whiston's Affair': The Trials of a Primitive Christian 1709–1714," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 27, no. 2 (1976): 129–50.

[78] William Whiston, *Sermons and Essays* (London, 1709), 242–45.

[79] Whiston, *Sermons and Essays*, 235–36.

[80] Whiston, *Sermons and Essays*, 246–47.

declared the superiority of a "single Opinion of Justin Martyr" to "the United Determination of all the General Councils in the World."[81]

Whiston associated this new method of biblical study with the approach of Locke's *Paraphrase*. For Whiston, Locke was an excellent example of this focus on the earliest Christian texts because "in his latter Days" he had "exactly and diligently apply'd himself to and compleated the Exposition of so many of St. *Paul's* Epistles." In focusing on a close reading of the text, Locke had "proceeded with an uncommon degree of Impartiality, Judgment and Sagacity." Whiston drew out the anti-clerical implications of Locke's "Example," stating that it was a "tacit Reproach to us of the Clergy," who lacked the same diligence. Whiston complemented King's study of the primitive church as "Learned and Impartial" on the same page, highlighting the connection between Locke's views and other Reformed Protestant scholars.[82] Thus, Whiston's review of Locke's *Paraphrase* linked its methodology with biblical scholarship that supported some of his own heterodox interpretations, even though Whiston differed from Locke on the reliability of the ante-Nicene fathers. He also interpreted Locke's *Paraphrase* as supporting his project of focusing theological pedagogy on the study of Scripture and the earliest church fathers.

However, Robert Jenkin, the Master of St John's College, Cambridge after 1711, had spent his clerical career using all the evidence from Christian antiquity to defend the Church of England. Jenkin's *Remarks* (1709) on the *Paraphrase* reflected both this commitment to informing biblical study with the full range of patristic texts and the general reception of Locke's religious works within Cambridge. St John's College was at the centre of the attack on Locke's religious writings, with John Milner and John Edwards both writing critiques from that institution. Indeed, some features of Jenkin's response to the *Paraphrase*, such as his attack on Locke's intellectual arrogance in propounding a new "Scheme" of religion, were common within the universities.[83]

Nevertheless, Jenkin had not engaged with Locke's writings before 1709, except for a brief, charitable comment in 1698 on his ideas about thinking matter in the *Essay*.[84] The most likely explanation for Jenkin's decision to publish a systematic refutation of the *Paraphrase* was that Locke's work had challenged a fundamental feature of his approach to biblical studies, namely the use of the church fathers. From the 1680s onwards, Jenkin had appealed to the early church in his critique of Roman Catholicism and his explications of the duty of passive obedience.[85] After the Revolution of 1688, Jenkin had utilized the evidence of the primitive church against the apparently rising

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[81] Whiston, *Sermons and Essays*, 248.

[82] Whiston, *Sermons and Essays*, 254–55.

[83] Robert Jenkin, *Remarks upon Some Books Lately Publish'd. viz. Mr. Basnage's "History of the Jews," Mr. Whiston's "Eight Sermons," Mr. Locke's "Paraphrase and Notes on St. Paul's Epistles," Mr. Le Clerc's "Bibliothèque Choisie"*. (London, 1709), 122.

[84] Robert Jenkin, *The Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (London, 1700), 1:xxix.

[85] Robert Jenkin, *An Historical Examination of the Authority of General Councils* (London, 1688), 14; 15–18; 25; 62; idem, *A Defence of the Profession* (London, 1690), 13; idem, *The Title of an Usurper after a Thorough Settlement Examined* (London, 1690), 7.

threats of atheism, deism, and Socinianism in *The Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion* (1698).[86] In the context of increasing concerns about Locke's theological influence in the universities, it is likely that Jenkin critiqued the *Paraphrase* in order to demonstrate to students of divinity the superiority of studying the Bible in a manner informed by patristics.

This explanation of Jenkin's intention is supported by the fact that the *Remarks* were not solely directed at Locke's *Paraphrase*. For Jenkin also challenged several new works of biblical exegesis for the same underlying reason as the *Paraphrase*: that they had all failed to pay sufficient attention to the witness of the church fathers.[87] The works critiqued by Jenkin were Jacques Basnage's *History of the Jews* (1708), Whiston's *Eight Sermons* (1708), Locke's *Paraphrase*, and Jean Le Clerc's *Bibliographie Choisie* (1705–13). It is notable that Jenkin did not regard any of these works as straightforwardly deistic or even explicitly heretical. After all, Basnage was a prominent French Protestant and Whiston's *Eight Sermons* were published before his prosecution for heresy. Jenkin's *Remarks* even conceded that Locke's *Paraphrase* had a "sense of Religion" that distinguished him from those who used "his Name and Authority to patronize their Errors."[88]

Jenkin's central concern, therefore, was the careless scholarship and flawed approach to the early church that underpinned the interpretative errors of these works. He believed that these works exhibited the characteristics of "superficial and talkative" early eighteenth century "Learning."[89] Jenkin lamented that few writers pursued "the old and necessary Methods for attaining to solid Learning, when with a little French, and less Latin, and a tolerable Faculty of Talking and Writing in their Mother Tongue, by the help of Abstracts, Novelles, and Bibliotheques, Men can set up for universal Knowledge."[90] For Jenkin, this cheapening of knowledge led directly to the "Diabolical Sins of Pride, Malice, Calumny, Envy, and Contempt of Authority" in *The Rights of the Christian Church* (1706) by Matthew Tindal, the Deist writer, and *A Letter concerning Enthusiasm* (1708) by Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury.[91] Petty scribblers with "superficial Knowledge" had given rise to these irreligious works by writing "themselves into a Reputation enough to do hurt; only because their Errors were not in time detected."[92] The implication was that the errors of Locke and the other writers had to be refuted, lest they inadvertently contribute further to the rise of deism.

[86] For instance, Jenkin, *Reasonableness and Certainty*, 1:iv; 1:257; 1:310; 1:339; 1:401–2; 1:451; 2:113–24; 2:135–40; 2:501–2.

[87] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 1–2; 51; 123; 176.

[88] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 173.

[89] Jenkin, *Remarks*, A2r.

[90] Jenkin, *Remarks*, A2v.

[91] Jenkin, *Remarks*, C1r.

[92] Jenkin, *Remarks*, C2r.

Jenkin regarded Locke's methodological statements in his preface as an example of this superficial modern learning. Some of Locke's statements were simply perplexing. Jenkin ridiculed Locke for writing "as if no Commentator had read a whole Epistle at once, or considered it, as one continued Discourse."[93] He argued that the Epistles were only divided into chapters and verses for scholarly discussion and pastoral use. Passages had always been contextualised and had never been taken for "*distinct Aphorismes*."[94] Locke's intellectual pride meant that "Few Men perhaps ever wrote upon St. *Paul's* Epistles, who took less pains to understand them, than Mr Lock."[95] Locke's method was specious: "He read them over divers times, made a Paraphrase, wrote a few Notes, good or bad, partly his own, and partly taken from former Commentators."[96] Throughout the *Remarks*, Jenkin highlighted how Locke's *Paraphrase* lacked the features of a truly scholarly work. Jenkin accused Locke of having an inadequate grasp of the ancient languages.[97] He noted that Locke's exegesis lacked scholarly consistency, translating the Greek χᾰ́ ρῐς as both favour and grace.[98]

More importantly, Jenkin lambasted Locke's *Paraphrase* for neglecting the most vital way of resolving divergent interpretations: the witness of Christian antiquity. For Jenkin, Locke's reliance on private interpretation would impose "two hundred Meanings" on Scripture. Locke, moreover, exaggerated the divisions among Christians, who were united on moral duty, the declarations of the Creeds, and even the view that "difficult places of Scripture are to be expounded with Analogy to those Doctrines, in which *Christians* of all Ages and Nations have generally agreed." This consensus of the ancient church could resolve Hammond's and Beza's divisions on episcopacy and absolute predestination. Hammond's opinion was clearly better justified because "there never was any *Christian* Church without Bishops for above Fifteen hundred Years; and the Doctrine of Absolute Predestination was never taught at all in the Eastern Churches, nor known in the West till the end of the Fourth Century." To defend the appeal to Christian antiquity, Jenkin reiterated the standard justification that the early church was a witness to the practice and doctrine of the apostles. After all, who would not declare the "first Preachers of the Gospel, and Expositors of Scripture, who lived some of them with the Apostles, and many of them soon after, to have been best qualified to give their true sense and Meaning?" This defence raised the problem of Locke's critique of the Platonism of the church fathers. Jenkin challenged Locke's argument by declaring that the newly translated *Answer to*

93 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 126.

94 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 119–20.

95 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 123.

96 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 123.

97 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 128–29.

98 Jenkin, *Remarks*, 130.

Fontenelle (1709) by Jean Baltus, a French Jesuit theologian, had confuted "that Accusation, which their Adversaries of these Times alledge."[99]

Although Jenkin's criticisms of Locke's specific scriptural interpretations rarely commented on the fathers, they were still informed by patristics. Several of Jenkin's exegeses were concise summaries of more extended arguments that had been made in the *Paraphrase* (1653) of Henry Hammond, whom Jenkin regularly referenced.[100] Hammond's interpretations were, in turn, continually informed by the writings of the church fathers. As Hammond's "Advertisement to the Reader" stated, his commentary relied on the "the *Glossaries* of the best *Grammarians*" and "the testimonies of the Antients" to analyse the context and linguistic usages of the New Testament.[101]

Hence, Jenkin's refutations of Locke's exegesis were often implicitly reliant on patristic evidence through the influence of Hammond's more extended arguments about the proper linguistic readings of St. Paul's Epistles. For instance, Jenkin critiqued Locke's refusal to interpret Rom. 9:5 as a declaration of Christ's divinity for ignoring the grammatical "Evidence" that the phrase "God blessed for ever" was directly related to Christ. But Jenkin's argument was only a summary of the grammatical ideas outlined in Hammond's *Paraphrase*, which was, in turn, underpinned by references to St. Proclus's interpretation of the linguistic meaning and context of the passage.[102]

Several of Jenkin's other critiques of Locke's exegesis were also influenced by Hammond's linguistic and contextual scholarship. Locke had interpreted 2 Cor. 5:3 ("If so be that being cloathed, we shall not be found naked") as revealing how St. Paul believed that the coming of Christ would overtake him in this life. Jenkin averred that St. Paul's use of the Greek third person plural meant that he was conjecturing that: "if the last Judgment should overtake the present *Living*," they would undergo a bodily resurrection. Jenkin's final interpretation closely echoed Hammond's commentary on the passage.[103]

Locke had also interpreted St. Paul's discussion of the ordination of the powers that be and the damnation of those who resist in Rom. 13:1–2 as simply outlining a prudential maxim that disobedience would lead to punishment by the temporal powers. Jenkin argued that Locke's translation of the Greek as punishment contradicted the fact that it always signified "damnation" in the New Testament; an analysis that Hammond had derived from Hesychius of Alexandria, a fifth century Greek grammarian.[104]

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[99] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 124–27 passim.

[100] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 125–26; 129; 132; 138; 140; 146; 171.

[101] Henry Hammond, *A Paraphrase, and Annotations upon all the Books of the New Testament* (London, 1653), A3r. For a more detailed account of Hammond's approach to the fathers, see Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 269–73.

[102] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 163; Hammond, *Paraphrase*, 484–86.

[103] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 151–52; Hammond, *Paraphrase*, 577.

[104] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 168; Hammond, *Paraphrase*, 499–500.

Of course, Jenkin was an able scholar and his arguments were not always indebted to Hammond's exegesis. Yet Jenkin's arguments were notably similar in structure to the linguistic and contextual analyses propounded by Hammond. For instance, Jenkin made a Hammond style refutation of Locke's interpretation of 1 Cor. 15:53 ("For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality") as denoting that mortal men would be raised again to life. For Jenkin, Locke's exegesis conflicted with the linguistic context that the apostle was speaking specifically of the human body in his wider discourse. Hence, Jenkin contended that this passage must refer to the resurrection of the same body.[105] By critiquing Locke's linguistic and contextual scholarship, Jenkin sought to provide a consummate demonstration of how the Bible ought to be studied to students of divinity. In this way, Jenkin's methodological critique of Locke's disregard for the witness of Christian antiquity was supported by scriptural exegeses that were greatly influenced by Hammond's research.

Jenkin's critical reading of the *Paraphrase* may even have influenced Isaac Watts, a Congregationalist writer of popular hymns and a significant figure in the development of rational dissent.[106] Watts was an admirer of Locke. Before the publication of Jenkin's *Remarks*, Watts had written a 1704 poem praising Locke's "wond'rous Mind"[107] and a separate 1706 poem on how he "had a Soul as wide as the Sea."[108] After the publication of Jenkin's *Remarks*, however, Watts added an extended poetic critique of the *Paraphrase* to the 1709 edition of *Horae Lyricae.* This critique focused on two points that Jenkin had highlighted: Locke's discussions of Rom. 3:25 and Rom. 9:5, which, according to Watts, had led "*some Readers*" to doubt Locke's belief in the "*Deity and Satisfaction of Christ*."[109]

In common with Jenkin, Watts believed that Locke had arrogantly refused to display the proper reverence towards the Christian mysteries. After depicting the inadequacies of reason in comparison to revelation, Watts discussed how reason in her "Pride" could not

descend to own
Her Maker stooping from His Throne

The poem ended with Locke recanting his heterodoxy and declaiming that his

" mere Mortal Pen mistook

[105] Jenkin, *Remarks*, 149.

[106] Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780,* 2 vols., Cambridge Studies in Eighteenth-Century English Literature and Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991–2000), 1:64–80.

[107] Isaac Watts, *Horae Lyricae* (London, 1706), 118.

[108] Watts, *Horae Lyrica*, 119.

[109] Isaac Watts, *Horae Lyricae*, 2nd ed. (London, 1709), 207.

" What the Cælestial meant![110]

This critique of the *Paraphrase* was coherent with Watts's wider theological strategy of distancing himself from radical deist and Socinian heterodoxy while acting to reconcile the remaining Christian denominations.[111] That Watts echoed Jenkin's critique of Locke's supposedly arrogant valorisation of his private interpretation of Scripture indicated the far-reaching resonance of concerns about the subversive tendencies of Locke's interpretative methodology.

A year later, Daniel Whitby, a Whig clergyman who had previously supported Lockean causes such as toleration, propounded a critique of Locke's *Paraphrase* that derived from a different context from the theological disputes within Oxford and Cambridge. Unlike Jenkin's *Remarks*, Whitby's *Additional Annotations* (1710) were provoked by a longstanding debate with Locke, though this work was also influenced by Hammond's scholarly method. On 11 January 1699, Whitby had sent a letter and a manuscript commentary to Locke, taking exception to his discussion of the resurrection of the body in his Second Reply to Stillingfleet.[112] Locke responded on the 17 January, claiming that he had merely aimed to show that Stillingfleet had not demonstrated that he held a position contrary to the resurrection of the same body. At the same time, Locke stated that he was unconvinced by Whitby's argument.[113] Whitby responded by including a "preface" to his own *Paraphrase* (1700), which refuted Lockean positions on the resurrection of the same body. Although Locke was not mentioned by name, Whitby later stated in response to an epistolary complaint by Locke in 1702 that he "had expressd in your good English what the Socinians had in substance sayd before in Latin, they being perfectly of your opinion."[114]

In keeping with post-1660 Anglican traditions of biblical criticism, Whitby's defence of the resurrection of the same body had extensively utilised the witness of the church fathers, such as St. Irenaeus, alongside extensive, scholarly scriptural exegesis.[115] Whitby's *Annotations* focused on responding to Locke's criticisms of his treatment of original sin in Rom. 12–19 and the resurrection of the body in Rom. 8 in the *Paraphrase*.[116] Yet Whitby's critique was significantly less polemical than Jenkin's *Remarks*. Whitby and Locke both adhered to some aspects of Arminian theology. Unsurprisingly, therefore, Whitby commented that it was "well observed'' by Locke

[110] Watts, *Horae Lyricae*, 2nd ed., 206–7.

[111] Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment*, 177.

[112] Daniel Whitby to John Locke, 11 January 1699, in *Correspondence*, no. 2533, 6:545.

[113] Locke to Whitby, 17 January 1699, in *Correspondence*, no. 2536, 6:548–49.

[114] Whitby to Locke, 28 October 1702, in *Correspondence*, no. 3203, 7:697.

[115] Daniel Whitby, *A Paraphrase and Commentary upon all the Epistles of the New Testament* (London, 1700), 103–8.

[116] Locke, *Paraphrase*, 1:524 and 2:552.

that Rom. 8:33–34 had the strong sense that nobody should attempt to identify God's elect, other than Christ himself.[117]

In a similar way to Jenkin's *Remarks*, Whitby's *Annotations* critiqued other heterodox scholars, such as Whiston, while appealing continually to Christian antiquity and modern learned authority.[118] As with Jenkin's *Remarks*, Whitby's critiques of Locke's perspective on the resurrection of the same body and Christ's satisfaction for our sins were indebted to Hammond's linguistic scholarship, which was, in turn, informed by his studies of the early church. According to Whitby, Locke's interpretation of Rom. 8:11 as a discussion of the gift of spirit to Christians conflicted with the fact St. Paul always used "quickening" to mean the raising of the dead—an analysis that echoed Hammond's *Paraphrase*.[119]

Locke had interpreted Eph. 1:19 ("And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power") as expressing a wish that the power of God might bring the Ephesians to have faith. Yet, according to Whitby, God's miracles had already induced the Ephesians to believe in him, so St. Paul must have been praying that they might know their final hope, the resurrection of the dead.[120] Hammond, similarly, argued that this passage expressed a hope of "raising us sinners, first to a new, and then to an eternal life."[121]

Whitby's *Annotations* also contained its own distinctive refutations of Locke's apparently heterodox interpretations. For instance, Locke had interpreted Rom. 8:3 ("and by a Sacrifice for Sin condemned Sin in the Flesh'') to mean that sin was put to death in Christ, who had been tempted but was without sin. For Whitby, this conflicted with the fact that sin could not have been put to death in Christ in whom it never lived. Thus, this passage had to declare his atonement for our sins.[122] In this way, Whitby's critique of the *Paraphrase* outlined his own technical refutations of the interpretative errors in Locke's *Paraphrase*, alongside a series of readings that were often deeply indebted to Hammond's patristically informed biblical scholarship.

In the next decade, a discussion of Locke's *Paraphrase* occurred that exemplified the extent to which divergent perspectives on Christian antiquity underpinned the contested reception of this work. Winch Holdsworth, a fellow of St John's College, Oxford, sought in his *Sermon preached before the University of Oxford* (1719) to defend the "Light and Force of Truth and Antiquity" against Locke's heterodox religious doctrines about the resurrection of the same body.[123] This was a university sermon, which was heard "*with Favour by that Learned Audience*," an indication that

[117] Daniel Whitby, *Additional Annotations to the New Testament* (London, 1710), 64.

[118] For example, Whitby, *Annotations*, 63.

[119] Whitby, *Annotations*, 62–63; Hammond, *Paraphrase*, 473–74.

[120] Whitby, *Annotations*, 103.

[121] Hammond, *Paraphrase*, 615.

[122] Whitby, *Annotations*, 61.

[123] Winch Holdsworth, *A Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford at St. Mary's on Easter-Monday, 1719* (Oxford, 1720), A4r.

this work stemmed from wider concerns about the influence of Locke's theology within Oxford.[124] In a similar way to Jenkin's *Remarks*, Holdsworth's forceful defence of the use of patristics sought to promote a method of studying the Bible to students of divinity that would enable them to avoid Locke's interpretative errors.

Holdsworth's sermon elicited a response in 1726 by Catharine Trotter Cockburn, a pre-eminent philosopher. She had already written an eloquent defence of Locke's *Essay* in 1702, for which she had received Locke's personal thanks.[125] As early as July 1705, Cockburn was "very desirous to meet with" Locke's *Paraphrase* for precisely the reason that Holdsworth would later find objectionable: that Locke would treat Paul's Epistles "in some peculiar way, or with a different view from other commentators."[126]

Holdsworth's *Sermon* focused on refuting Locke's declaration in his Second Reply to Stillingfleet that the resurrection of the same body was not an article of faith. For Holdsworth, an Aristotelian who held that an *embodied* soul defined personal identity, this seemed to threaten the doctrine of the resurrection of the human person *in toto*.[127] The philosophical debate between Holdsworth and Cockburn was an extended exercise in talking past each other. Holdsworth held that the same body had to be raised according to the vulgar notion of sameness: as constituted by the same ordering principle. Cockburn claimed that Locke had never denied that the same bodies would be raised according to the vulgar notion of sameness but had only raised doubts about whether the bodies would be constituted by the same numerical particles.[128] Throughout this debate, Holdsworth first interpreted Locke's ideas about the resurrection of the body and then his wider doctrinal heterodoxy as a reflection of his Socinianism.[129]

For our purposes, the important question is: what defined Holdsworth's and Cockburn's disagreements about particular passages of Scripture and historical methodology? Holdsworth's *Sermon* was on John 5:28–29, which Holdsworth interpreted as an account of Christ declaring that he was invested with the power to raise the dead.[130] However, this passage did not specify that the *same* bodies would be raised. To this end, Holdsworth referenced seventeen different early church texts by the "Ancients," who had interpreted the Resurrection as relating to the same body. He

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[124] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, A3v.

[125] John Locke to Catharine Trotter, 30 December 1702, in *Correspondence*, no. 3234, 7:730–31. For further detail on Cockburn's *Defence*, see Jessica Gordon-Roth, "Catharine Trotter Cockburn's Defence of Locke," *The Monist* 98, no. 1 (January 2015): 64–76, https://doi.org/10.1093/monist/onu008.

[126] Catharine Cockburn to Thomas Burnet, 19 February 1704, in *The Works of Mrs. Catharine Cockburn*, ed. Thomas Birch, 2 vols. (London, 1751), 2:189.

[127] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 17.

[128] Catharine Cockburn, *A Letter to Dr Holdsworth Occasioned by His Sermon* (London, 1726), 34.

[129] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 11.

[130] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 3.

hoped that this strategy would clear "the open Scepticism, and Secret Infidelity" of Locke.[131]

Holdsworth then critiqued the interpretations of Locke's *Paraphrase* that challenged notions of the resurrection of the same body. He repeated Whitby's contention that Rom. 8:12 could not denote spiritual aid, as Locke had argued, because St. Paul always applied the words "raise" and "quicken" to the resurrection of mortal bodies. In contesting Locke's interpretation of Phil. 3:21 and 1 Cor. 15:53, Holdsworth again relied on the "the general Current of Ancient Writers, Preachers and Commentators" who had interpreted these passages as relating to the resurrection of the same body. Holdsworth supported his scriptural defence of the resurrection of the same body with the typical learned grammatical argument that Scripture made no distinction between the dead and the bodies of dead.[132]

Holdsworth supported these specific arguments with a systematic critique of Locke's rejection of the witness of the church fathers. In common with Jenkin, Holdsworth denied that "a competent Knowledge of the *Original* Languages, and *sufficient* Abilities of Understanding" were adequate qualifications for the interpretation of Scripture.[133] According to Holdsworth, it was necessary to rely on "the Sense of the *Ancient* Church, in its most *primitive* Writers, and *Councils*."[134] Holdsworth reiterated the usual defence of the use of the fathers as privileged witnesses to "the Earliest, and Purest Ages of it, nearest to the Times of Them, that wrote the Scriptures, and from the immediate Successors of the Apostles."[135] He repeated Hammond's argument that, as the modern Greek "*Lexicons*" did not provide a sense of New Testament's general linguistic usage, it was necessary to rely on the contextual interpretations of the ancient church.[136]

Cockburn's 1726 reply to Holdsworth sought to vindicate the "*great and worthy*" Locke from the charges of being "*a* Socinian, *Heretick, an Enemy, an Underminer or Religion*."[137] To this end, much of her argument focused on showing that Locke had not explicitly denied the key articles of the Church of England. She strongly contested Holdsworth's claims that Locke had valorised reason, arguing that the *Essay* took "great Pains and Care to fix the Bounds" of reason.[138] She utilised the evidence of the *Paraphrase* to demonstrate that Locke held doctrines contrary to the Socinians. For instance, she highlighted that Locke's discussions of Rom. 8:2 and 2 Cor. 8:1 asserted

[131] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 9.

[132] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 10 and 12–13.

[133] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 23.

[134] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 24–5.

[135] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 141.

[136] Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 25–6.

[137] Cockburn, *Letter*, v–vi.

[138] Cockburn, *Letter*, 67.

"the Inability of Man to work out his own Salvation, the Necessity of Grace, and the Efficacy of the Spirit of God."[139]

When discussing the Resurrection of the same body, Cockburn's central tactic was to repeat Locke's interpretations and suggest that they threw doubt upon the issue. For instance, she simply criticised Holdsworth for not fully countering Locke's reasoning in the interpretation of Rom. 8:2.[140] Cockburn's continual assertion that these uncertain passages could not define articles of faith fed directly into her Lockean repudiation of Christian antiquity. Yet in this reply to Holdsworth, Cockburn largely did not engage with the historical particulars of the issues surrounding the early church. She simply asserted that Locke's refusal to declare his belief in the resurrection of the same body reflected that "the Scriptures have not determined the Matter, and therefore Men are left at Liberty to dispute and exercise their Wit about it."[141] In this way, Cockburn's defence of Locke was based on the minimalist view that individuals only had to believe doctrines that were clearly and explicitly stated in Scripture.

Throughout the rest of the debate, Cockburn contrasted her doctrinal minimalism with Holdsworth's view that the witness of the ancient church could determine the meaning and importance of scriptural passages that *appeared* unclear to *modern* readers. In his 1727 *Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Same Body,* Holdsworth was willing to concede that Locke's doctrine of grace was not Socinian and that his philosophical system did not clearly exalt reason above revelation.[142] However, Cockburn's discussion of Locke's wider works provided Holdsworth with an opportunity to depict him as a heterodox, Socinian writer. Holdsworth claimed that Locke was Socinian in his refusal to outline the conventional Trinitarian interpretations of 1 Cor. 8:6, 1 Cor. 12:3, and Rom. 11:5 and that Locke's interpretation of Rom. 3:24 was directly contradictory to the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for our sins.[143]

More importantly, Cockburn's response compelled Holdsworth to justify why the witness of the church fathers ought to guide scriptural interpretation. To this end, Holdsworth presented a more systematic justification: that the indeterminacy of "General Words" had to be "limited to a particular Meaning" by the consensus of the Christian church before any adequate interpretation of Scripture could be made.[144] He even asserted that the creeds only contained short summaries of doctrine, which had to be explicated by the ancient writers of the purest ages of the church.[145] Holdsworth argued that Locke's complaint—that every sect set up different fundamentals—was

[139] Cockburn, *Letter,* 19.

[140] Cockburn, *Letter,* 45–46.

[141] Cockburn, *Letter,* 25.

[142] Winch Holdsworth, *A Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Same Body* (London, 1727), 104 and 269.

[143] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 54–58 and 108–10.

[144] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 124.

[145] Holdsworth, *Defense,* 141–42.

ultimately solvable by attending "to the perpetual Reception" of "the Catholick Church, and what Doctrines were always admitted as Fundamental in it."[146] For Holdsworth, the only alternative to this method was for every immodest "Man to prefer His own private Interpretation of the Scriptures to That of the Universal Church."[147]

Holdsworth practised these principles of biblical exegesis. He referenced the church fathers in both his defences of the divinity of Christ and the resurrection of the same body.[148] For instance, Locke had appeared to summarise Rom. 9:5 as a general benediction to the God the Father rather than as a declaration of the divinity of Christ. To refute this exegetical claim, Holdsworth propounded the linguistic argument that whenever the words "*Blessed forever. Amen*" were used in St. Paul's writings, they declared that "Person antecedent, whom they relate to, must be God."[149] Therefore, the benediction in Rom. 9:5 must refer to Christ as God. Yet, for Holdsworth, the strongest justification for his interpretation was that it was the analysis of "*Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Hilary and Crysostom*," who had privileged access to the principles of New Testament Greek.[150]

Similarly, Holdsworth renewed his defence of the resurrection of the same body by appealing to countless weighty quotes from the fathers, who were "Unswerable Witnesses of the Faith, and Doctrine of the Church of Christ."[151] He argued that Locke's vague linguistic interpretations of "Latitude and Ambiguity" contrasted sharply with the "primitive simplicity" of the fathers, which had led them to "express their Faith distinctly."[152] For instance, Holdsworth used the grammatical understanding of the fathers to refute Locke's specific interpretation of 1 Cor. 15:53 ("For, This Corruptible must put on Incorruption, and This Mortal must put on Immortality"). Locke had interpreted this passage as a general declaration that the Resurrection would occur. For Holdsworth, however, the grammatical structure of the sentence in Greek meant that "This Mortal" implied mortal bodies. Hence, Holdsworth believed that this passage declared the resurrection of the same body, a conclusion that he reinforced by referring to the "Ancient Writers," who "did so understand it."[153] In this way, Holdsworth's methodological and historical defence of the use of the church fathers supported his interpretations of the New Testament's linguistic meaning.

Cockburn's second reply, published posthumously in 1751, realised that Holdsworth's critique of Locke's *Paraphrase* primarily rested on the appeal to Christian antiquity. As such, Cockburn situated Locke's doctrinal minimalism within

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[146] Holdsworth, *Defense,* 51.

[147] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 131.

[148] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 44–49; 58; 272.

[149] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 59.

[150] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 58.

[151] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 137.

[152] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 132.

[153] Holdsworth, *Defense*, 207–10 and 208.

the traditions of the Church of England. She continually referenced modern Anglican writers, such as Bishop Pearson, to defend Locke from the imputation of Socinianism.[154] Cockburn connected Locke's dislike of "presumptuous imposing" to the ideas of William Chillingworth, a fellow of Trinity College, Oxford and author of the famous *Religion of Protestants* (1638).[155]

Much of Cockburn's case against Holdsworth's appeal to Christian antiquity relied on arguments that were not directly related to the historical particulars of the early church. For instance, Cockburn repeated Locke's philosophical argument from contradictory authorities, declaring that: "The church of *England*, the *Papists*, the *Arians* &c. will each of them give him a different *set of fundamentals,* and all of them pretend an equal claim to the faith of *primitive Christianity*."[156] She supported this argument from contradictory authorities with an extended account of what a Protestant ought to believe about the interpretation of Scripture. She contemptuously described Holdsworth's use of Christian antiquity as a fallacious appeal to "*human authority*," which could not define the essential articles of Christianity because Scripture was the "rule of faith." Cockburn caricatured Holdsworth as violating these Protestant principles by relying entirely on "the judgment of the fathers for the sense of Scripture."[157] She even appeared to suggest that Holdsworth held crypto-Papist principles by declaring that "an implicit faith in any human authority whatsoever is contrary to the very spirit of the Reformation."[158]

Cockburn did, however, realise that a complete refutation of Holdsworth's views required historical arguments against his appeal to the witness of the primitive church. She reminded Holdsworth that the ancient church had once universally accepted the false doctrines of the necessity of the Eucharist for infants and millenarianism. If the works of the fathers were riddled with errors, the doctrines of the primitive church could only be accounted as mere "*opinion*."[159] As such, only Scripture could discover "what primitive faith ought to have been."[160] For Cockburn, the mistakes of the fathers demonstrated that Locke had adopted the correct method of following "our Saviour and his Apostles step by step."[161] In this way, the debate between Holdsworth and Cockburn terminated in a discussion of the most controversial aspect of Locke's *Paraphrase*, his rejection of the witness of Christian antiquity.

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[154] Catharine Cockburn, *A Vindication of Mr Locke's Christian Principles*, in *Works of Mrs. Cockburn*, 1:174.

[155] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:258.

[156] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:193.

[157] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:270.

[158] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:258.

[159] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:256.

[160] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:193.

[161] Cockburn, *Vindication*, 1:194.

4. Conclusion

Thus, the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase* in the early eighteenth century was significantly influenced by his historical and methodological rejection of the church fathers as witnesses to the pure, uncorrupted practice and doctrine of the apostles. Locke's critique of the Platonism of the fathers in the *Paraphrase* was, in turn, the product of an encounter between the intellectual heritage of Reformed biblicism and the religious polemic of the seventeenth century. Locke's published writings before 1700 had primarily relied on philosophical arguments against the use of Christian antiquity. He had labelled references to patristic doctrines as an erroneous and contradictory appeal to authority.

Yet Locke's unpublished response to Stillingleet in the 1680s[162] had already displayed an adherence to Daillé's historical critique of the fathers. Hence, when the contentions around the *Reasonableness* and the debate with Stillingfleet raised issues about the early church, Locke began to reconsider the historical challenges to the evidence of Christian antiquity. These intellectual developments culminated in the *Paraphrase*. Much of the controversy surrounding this work derived from the fact that Locke had underpinned apparently heterodox interpretations with a Dailléan critique of how the fathers had interpreted St. Paul according to the alien ideas of ancient philosophy.

These facets of Locke's theological project ensured that the *Paraphrase* provoked a particularly vehement response from within Oxford and Cambridge, where both patristic witness and Locke's apparently heterodox theology had been matters of fraught intellectual debate. Whiston appropriated Locke's work to support his own anti-trinitarian program of theological education. Jenkin sought to demonstrate the proper way of studying the Bible by critiquing the *Paraphrase*'s rejection of the witness of Christian antiquity, while utilising Hammond's scholarly methodology to refute Locke's particular scriptural interpretations. Hammond was also a significant influence on Whitby's critique of Locke. Holdsworth and Cockburn's dispute over the usefulness of the witness of the church fathers and the proper method of interpreting the Bible reflected the defining tendencies of the debate on Locke's *Paraphrase*. For Locke and his critics were crucially divided between the scholarly legacies of Daillé and Hammond.

But if this significant early eighteenth century biblical debate was determined by the divisions between two venerable traditions of the seventeenth century scholarship, what does this imply about the notion of a distinctive "Enlightenment" historiography? For the pattern of scholarly debate around the *Paraphrase* can be contrasted with John Pocock's influential account of "Enlightenment" history, which takes Locke's philosophical ideas as its starting point. According to Pocock, the origins of this history stemmed from Jean Le Clerc's creative engagement with Locke's *Essay*, which led him to analyse the past through the "historically changing and imperfectly controlled languages in which humans had tried to organize their ideas."[163] The result, for Pocock,

[162] Locke, "Critical Notes," 1–170.

[163] Pocock, "Historiography," 86.

was the study of the Bible as the history of the attempt to express the experience of God through imperfect language; the history of theology as a human endeavour.[164]

However, Locke's *Paraphrase* did not outline such a history of theology as a human endeavour, which indicates that there was no essential, or even natural, inference from the epistemology of the *Essay* to this "Enlightenment" historiography. Rather, Locke's understanding of church history and his overall biblical methodology was fundamentally indebted to the older Reformed ideas of Daillé's *De Usu Patrum*. The debate around Locke's *Paraphrase* was determined by the competing—to use a Pocockian phrase—languages of seventeenth century biblical studies. The discussions of Locke's *Paraphrase*, whether they were related to the New Testament's linguistic usages or the testimony of the fathers, were markedly similar in conceptual structure to the post-1660 debates analysed in Quantin's *Christian Antiquity*.[165]

Hence, the reception of Locke's *Paraphrase* illustrates the continuing vitality of these scholarly traditions and a varied picture of biblical criticism in the early eighteenth century. Pocock may be correct that there were inklings of a new method of historical enquiry in Le Clerc's works, but if this was the case, these innovations remained a comparatively intellectual minor matter in the first twenty years of the eighteenth century. The vehement Anglican reaction to Locke's methodology, moreover, illustrates the superfluity of positing a new "Enlightenment" historical consciousness to explain the crises of faith that beset Europe in the early eighteenth century. For the controversy around Locke's *Paraphrase* simply reflected how a Reformed scriptural rigorism, lacking any communal means of adjudicating textual meaning, was a perennial threat to hierarchically regulated orthodoxy.[166]

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[164] Pocock, "Historiography," 83–96.

[165] For instance, compare Holdsworth, *Sermon*, 25–26 to Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 269–73.

[166] I am very grateful to Dr. Dmitri Levitin for his helpful advice on the first drafts of this work. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their constructive comments.

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