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*John Locke and the Greek Intellectual  
Tradition: An Episode in  
Locke's Reception in South-East Europe*

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I

John Locke's first teaching appointment in 1661 at Christ Church, Oxford was to a lectureship in Greek.<sup>1</sup> Although the meticulous care with which he preserved his papers has not brought down to us any evidence that he ever attempted to compose anything in Greek or—like Hobbes—to translate from Greek sources, his intimate familiarity with the language of classical philosophy and literature is attested in many ways. It is first of all reflected in the standard practice of quoting from Greek authors in his writings such as the quotations from Aristotle in the *Essays on the Law of Nature*. It is also illustrated by the extensive allusions to Greek literary sources in the same text and in other works, including the *Two Treatises of Government*. A special dimension of Locke's Greek scholarship was his application of the terms *Φυσική*, *Πρακτική*, and *Σημειωτική* in designating the three branches of knowledge in his threefold typology of the sciences in the *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Locke's sensitivity to the Greek language was not exhausted with these rather formal expressions. His surviving papers include one piece of evidence—unfortunately not in his own hand—which indicates that at least at some stage in his life he possessed an interest in the structure and diversity of Greek, its

For their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter I am indebted to John Rogers and to an anonymous reader for Oxford University Press. I also wish to thank George L. Huxley for his help and encouragement.

<sup>1</sup> Christ Church, Oxford, *Disbursement Book 1660–1661*, 126. John Locke as Lector Graecae Linguae was paid 13s. 4d. per term.

dialects, etymology, and lexical wealth.<sup>2</sup> The most significant and immediate evidence of the extent and depth of his knowledge of Greek, however, comes from the annotations in the interleaved Greek Bibles in his library. In these notes Locke's sense of the language comes together with his profound religious piety to produce an occasionally surprising perceptiveness of the beauty of Greek.

In view of his deep appreciation of the Greek language it is somehow ironic that despite the world-wide propagation of his works and their appearance in languages as diverse and exotic, from the point of view of his own society, as Hindi and Japanese, none of his texts was published in Greek until quite recently. This little fact of cultural history tells us a great deal about the character of the Greek intellectual tradition in the centuries since Locke wrote, and it provides an occasion for considering the broader issue of the reception of Locke's ideas in continental Europe from a perspective that extends beyond the horizon of the European north-west.

In this chapter accordingly I intend to do two things. First—and most significantly—I would like to look at the reception of Locke's ideas in Greek culture as a particular instance of the broader intellectual phenomenon of the dissemination of his thought in the Age of the Enlightenment. Secondly—and more briefly—I would like to look into one particular aspect of this process of intellectual reception, which is graphically illustrated by the Greek evidence—the restricted audience of Locke's political thought on the European continent throughout the eighteenth century.

## II

The conventional view of the reception of John Locke's ideas in European culture connects the spread of his philosophical, educational, and political thought with the expansion and deepening of the movement of the Enlightenment. Locke is justly considered the 'father of the Enlightenment', especially because of the contribution of the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* to the emancipation of modern thought from the Scholastic tutelage.<sup>3</sup> The transmission of Locke's writings, and the new

<sup>2</sup> Bodl. MS Locke f.33, fos. 1-6, 174 rev.-169 rev. on the dialects of ancient Greek (Attic, Ionic, Aeolic, Boeotian) and fos. 29, 47<sup>v</sup>-55, 108 rev.-106 rev., 167 rev.-159 rev. on the etymology of Greek words with examples from Xenophon, Homer, Musaeus, and the Old Testament.

<sup>3</sup> This argument is set out by Paul Hazard, *The European Mind 1680-1715* (New York, 1953), first pub. as *La crise de la conscience européenne* (Paris, 1935). Characteristically this work was translated into German with the more specific title *John Locke und sein Zeitalter* (Hamburg, 1947).



conceptual frameworks they offered, from England to the Continent, and from the great conveyors of British thought, Holland and France, to the rest of continental Europe, is taken to register the steady growth of the Enlightenment in one society after another in the course of the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment meant English intellectual influence, and this was exerted to a significant degree through the medium of Locke's works. Already traceable in Pierre Bayle's interest in English Protestant authors in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* as well as in the substantial reviews of English works that appeared in the cosmopolitan journals of the early Enlightenment in the tolerant environment of the Netherlands,<sup>4</sup> the initial curiosity about England and her intellectual life developed by the middle of the eighteenth century into a mixture of admiration and awe that directed an important part of continental culture toward what Paul Hazard characterized as 'the light from the North'.<sup>5</sup> From Voltaire and Montesquieu to Condorcet and Mounier in the revolutionary decade after 1789, down to Madame de Staël, the English model, English institutions, English ideas, and English values captivated the imagination and the hopes of liberal spirits throughout the Continent. Among authors writing in Greek, admiration for the English as 'the most punctilious and veracious and the foremost among European races for the attention it pays to modern inventions' was voiced in 1781 by Iosipos Moisiodax.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, to love liberty and to engage in the cause of the lights, *les lumières*, essentially amounted to being intellectually oriented towards England. This attitude developed at the height of the Enlightenment into what has been described as 'Anglomania'.<sup>7</sup> It was within this symbolic environment that Locke's writings were canonized as the gospel of the Enlightenment. To remember Alfred Cobban: Locke's influence pervaded the eighteenth century 'with an almost scriptural authority'.<sup>8</sup>

It is time to modify this picture, to add more nuances to it. I do not wish to question the general conclusion of long years of research which has confirmed the centrality of Locke's place in Enlightenment culture. I do want to argue, however, that the reception of Locke's ideas in continental Europe was an embattled and complex process. Locke's philosophy was enthusiastically received in certain milieux, but it was met with scepticism and even hostility in others. Furthermore, his thought

<sup>4</sup> See Elisabeth Labrousse, *Bayle* (Oxford, 1983), 89.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hazard, *The European Mind*, 53–79.

<sup>6</sup> Iosipos Moisiodax, *Theoria tis Geographias* (Vienna, 1781), 162.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, i. *The Rise of Modern Paganism* (New York, 1968), 12 and 383.

<sup>8</sup> Alfred Cobban, *Edmund Burke and the Revolt against the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1960), 16.

was not accepted wholesale but selectively, with considerable degrees of modification imposed upon his central ideas. In addition, its propagation was not a unilinear and straightforward process: the widely held assumption that in Pierre Coste's and David Mazel's early French translations Locke's works became known to the rest of Europe thanks to the predominance of French as the language of the Enlightenment needs also to be revised. Close scrutiny of the facts will reveal considerable regional variation and a remarkable complexity in the levels of transmission of Locke's works as well as in the channels through which his ideas were propagated.

A reconsideration of the conventional view about the structure of Enlightenment thought along the lines proposed above might allow a better grasp of the mechanisms whereby Locke's ideas were received on the Continent; consequently, such a reconsideration might yield a more substantive understanding of the modifications they brought to modes of cultural discourse and social thought. It is precisely by understanding the character and content of these modifications that we can hope to reach a fuller comprehension of the historicity of the Enlightenment as a movement of cultural change and social criticism, beyond the stereotypes of conventional intellectual history.

The way to proceed in this direction can only be by means of case-studies that allow detailed rereadings and reappraisals of the evidence. One such illustration of the propagation of Locke's ideas on the European continent I shall sketch in what follows in order to bring into focus some of the methodological issues I have outlined above, but also in order to assess the broader political implications of the ideological phenomena I will describe. The story I am going to narrate transposes us to the world of Greek culture in the eighteenth century.

The question may still be raised why the focus of such a re-examination should be on Greece, a culture on the distant periphery of European intellectual life in the eighteenth century. There is no doubt that before any revised conclusions could be proffered on the depth as well as the limits of the impact of Locke's ideas on continental thought, a serious re-examination of the evidence of Locke's reception in the main bearers of English influence on continental Europe, Holland and France, would be required. An examination of Greek culture, nevertheless, can provide a useful 'limiting case': First, its distance from the original source may illustrate well the extent of the radiation of Locke's ideas, which could be thus shown to have penetrated well beyond the conventional paths of mainstream Enlightenment culture. Secondly, the mechanisms of transmission and adaptation of Locke's ideas revealed by the particular

case-study, may provide some sense, even through the rough detail of small facts of intellectual history, of the specific content of the dissemination of Western ideas in the pre-modern societies of the broader European periphery. From this point of view the study of the reception of Locke into Greek culture could be interpreted as an instance of the transformation of the Enlightenment, through various adaptations and modifications, into a common European inheritance. Indeed the investigation of the Greeks' reception of Locke possesses, I believe, an intrinsic interest of its own: it constitutes one of the earliest examples of the transfer of ideas emanating from the European north-west into non-Western contexts, which were thus exposed to the challenges of cultural change and intellectual modernization. The ways in which Locke's ideas reached this distant context are connected with the historical logic at the origins of that larger world-wide process.

### III

The earliest instance of interest in Locke's work we can trace in Greek thought takes us back to the cosmopolitan universe of the early Enlightenment. Nicolaos Mavrocordatos, a member of the Phanariot aristocracy and Prince of Moldavia and Wallachia between 1709 and 1730, in his correspondence with Jean Le Clerc in the early 1720s expresses his interest in acquiring John Locke's *Traité de gouvernement civil*, among a number of works by other modern authors.<sup>9</sup> Mavrocordatos was the first Greek author who mentioned Hobbes by name<sup>10</sup> and appears well aware of the philosophy of Francis Bacon<sup>11</sup> and of the views of the French moralists of the seventeenth century.<sup>12</sup> His interest in Locke therefore came as a natural extension of this broader intellectual background. Nicolaos Mavrocordatos was an authentic citizen of the cosmopolitan 'republic of letters' of the early Enlightenment, as his exchanges with and praises by Le Clerc make clear.<sup>13</sup> This initial awareness of the importance of Locke's political theory, coming from the far south-eastern corner of Europe,

<sup>9</sup> The pertinent evidence comes from the papers of Jean Le Clerc at the University Library, Amsterdam. See Fonds Clericus, III F 16/4(f). For this information I am indebted to Jacques Bouchard of the University of Montreal.

<sup>10</sup> See Nicolas Mavrocordatos, *Les Losirs de Philothée*, ed. and trans. Jacques Bouchard (Athens, 1989), 164.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. 126–7, 140, 172.

<sup>12</sup> Esp. La Rochefoucauld. See *ibid.* 120, 194–8.

<sup>13</sup> See Jacques Bouchard, 'Les relations épistolaires de Nicolas Mavrocordatos avec Jean Le Clerc et William Wake', *O Eranistis*, 11 (1974), 67–79.

illustrates well the role of the French Huguenot exiles in Holland as transmitters of British thought to continental European culture at large: Le Clerc's summaries of Locke's works and his biography of the man in his periodicals *Bibliothèque universelle* and *Bibliothèque choisie* were probably the immediate sources that stimulated Mavrocordatos's interest in Locke.

A second instance of interest in Locke's work in Greek thought during the first half of the eighteenth century can be found in another part of the Greek world, in the Venetian-held Ionian islands. During a visit to the island of Zante in 1744 the English traveller Alexander Drummond met several learned men, and among other things he recorded in his impressions the following observation: 'Locke and Clarke they admire.'<sup>14</sup> This interest, moreover, was combined with curiosity about experimental science but also about freemasonry.<sup>15</sup> Among Drummond's interlocutors was a Greek priest, Antonios Katiphoros, who had lived in Amsterdam and in Venice. If it was Katiphoros who expressed admiration for Locke, his image of the English philosopher had probably been formed during his residence in the Dutch capital of the 'republic of letters' sometime between 1740 and 1743. Drummond's travels coincided with the period when Locke's influence on the Continent after Coste's translations and the recession of Christian apologetic polemics against the religious implications of his philosophical empiricism was on the ascendant.<sup>16</sup> Voltaire's propaganda had already established English philosophy as the pinnacle of enlightened thought. Beyond France, where the resistance of Cartesianism to Locke's philosophy was still a force to be reckoned with, interest in Locke was rising in Italy. First in the Neapolitan Enlightenment around mid-century and later on in Venice during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the appeal of Locke's ideas was keenly felt among liberal intellectuals.

I would like to suggest that it was through these two centres of cultural ferment in southern Europe that substantive contacts with Locke's texts themselves were eventually established by Greek thinkers in the course of the eighteenth century. One such contact emanated from the Neapolitan Enlightenment. In the early 1740s Eugenios Voulgaris, a young Greek scholar from the island of Corfu who sought higher education in Venice and Padua, became acquainted with, and was influenced to a degree that

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Drummond, *Travels through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece and Several Parts of Asia* (London, 1754), 95.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 94–5.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Jorn Schøsler, *La Bibliothèque raisonnée 1728–1753: Les réactions d'un périodique français à la philosophie de Locke au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Odense, 1985), 30–53.

has not yet been adequately appreciated, by the thought of the leading light of the Neapolitan Enlightenment, Antonio Genovesi. In the pages of Genovesi's treatise on *Metaphysics* Voulgaris made his first study in Locke's epistemology.<sup>17</sup> This initial acquaintance with Locke through Genovesi's interpretation bore rich fruit in Voulgaris's future intellectual career.<sup>18</sup>

After his studies in Italy Voulgaris returned to a remarkable teaching career in the Greek east, assuming successively positions at leading schools in Ioannina, Kozani, and Mount Athos. In all these places Voulgaris taught modern as well as ancient philosophy, mathematics, and some elements of modern science. Among the sources he translated and used as manuals for his teaching were Genovesi's *Metaphysics*, the *Introduction to Philosophy* of Newton's and Locke's Dutch disciple Gravesande, and Locke's own *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. From the one surviving copy of Voulgaris's original manuscript we know that this translation was an abridgement of the *Essay* as far as chapter ix of Book III.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See *Genousiou Stoiceia tis Metaphysikis*, trans. Eugenios Voulgaris (Vienna, 1806), esp. 168–71 on the source of human ideas, and *passim*. This text was used by Voulgaris in his courses at the schools of Ioannina, Mount Athos, and Constantinople. This is stated on the title-page of the published version. Iosipos Moisiodax, who had been Voulgaris's pupil on Athos in 1754–5, mentions that Voulgaris's translation was based on the first edn. of Genovesi's *Elementa Metaphysicae* (Naples, 1743). See Moisiodax, *Apologia* (Vienna, 1780), 120. The textual evidence we possess in the pages of Voulgaris's translation of Genovesi provides a firmer foundation for a new hypothesis concerning the initial channel through which Voulgaris came in touch with Locke's philosophy. The earlier suggestion by A. Anghelou ('Comment la pensée néo-hellénique a fait la connaissance de l'Éssai de John Locke', *L'Hellénisme Contemporain*, 9 (1955), 231) that Voulgaris was first exposed to Locke's ideas as a pupil of Katiphoros cannot be substantiated. It is based on a rather uncritical acceptance of the testimony of nineteenth-century secondary sources, but it is denied by the biographical facts themselves. In the period up to 1742–3, when Voulgaris returned from Venice to a teaching post in Ioannina, his movements never coincided with those of Katiphoros, except perhaps for a brief period in 1739–40 when they both taught at the Flanginian College in Venice. That was before Katiphoros's residence in Amsterdam where, it would be reasonable to suppose, he became aware of Locke's ideas. The view that Voulgaris's initial contact with Locke's ideas was through Katiphoros is repeated by practically all those who have written on eighteenth-century Greek thought. Apparently no one has noticed the extensive discussion of Locke in Voulgaris's translation of Genovesi's *Metaphysics*. This, combined with Moisiodax's evidence and the statement by Voulgaris himself that he used this text at Ioannina where he taught in the 1740s, should have drawn attention to Genovesi's work as the source for the propagation of Locke's ideas to Italian-trained Greek scholars around the middle of the eighteenth century. The importance of Locke's ideas in Genovesi's 'philosophical formation' has been signalled at great length by Paola Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi* (Naples, 1972), 122–5, 308–19, 340–2, 581–91, 718–20.

<sup>18</sup> See G. P. Henderson, *The Revival of Greek Thought 1620–1830* (Edinburgh, 1970), 41–75.

<sup>19</sup> That Voulgaris had attempted a translation of Locke's *Essay* as far as the end of ch. ix of book III has been recorded by Philipp Stahl, *Das gelehrte Russland* (Leipzig, 1828), 456. The attribution to Voulgaris of MS Codex 1333 of the National Library of Greece, which

Voulgaris quotes two passages from this abridged translation in his monumental treatise on *Logic* which he published at Leipzig in 1766.<sup>20</sup> Thus this first Greek translation of the *Essay* must be dated before 1766 and after the early 1740s when Voulgaris returned to the east from Italy. The attribution of the manuscript, which survives in a later eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century copy in the National Library of Greece, to Voulgaris can be authenticated on the evidence of his own autograph list of his works, which includes an entry on the Greek translation of Locke's *Essay*.<sup>21</sup> Voulgaris's abridgement was based either on Pierre Coste's 1700 French translation of the *Essay* or, more likely in view of his accomplished scholarship in Latin, on one of the Latin translations of the complete original text of the *Essay*.<sup>22</sup> If this hypothesis is accepted, then Voulgaris's Greek abridgement represented a personal attempt at epitomizing Locke's text for readers of Greek. Voulgaris used his Greek version of the *Essay* as a text in the courses on modern philosophy he introduced in the school of Mount Athos in the 1750s.<sup>23</sup>

Voulgaris refers repeatedly to Locke in his *Logic* and he follows him to some extent in his discussion of the sources of human ideas.<sup>24</sup> Specifically he accepts the polemic against innate ideas and insists that the senses are the original source of simple ideas, which are later elaborated by the mind through reflection. Sensation and reflection, however, are not the only sources of human ideas according to Voulgaris: to these he adds revelation, which he accepts as the source of our ideas in matters of religious faith. Later on in his treatise on *Metaphysics*, which was prepared for publication forty years after the *Logic*, Voulgaris still refers extensively to Locke, but he assumes a more critical attitude toward his ontology.<sup>25</sup> His abridged Greek version of the *Essay*, however, was never published.

contains the Greek translation of this part of the *Essay*, was first proposed by I. and A. I. Sakkeliou, *Katalogos ton Cheirographon tis Ethnikis Vivliothikis tis Ellados* (Athens, 1892), 242. The attribution has been confirmed through further research by A. Anghelou, 'Comment la pensée néo-hellénique a fait la connaissance de l'*Essai*', 234-5.

<sup>20</sup> Eugenios Voulgaris, *I Logiki* (Leipzig, 1766), 155-6, 173.

<sup>21</sup> See Stephen K. Batalden, 'Notes from a Leningrad Manuscript: Eugenios Voulgaris' Autograph List of his Own Works', *O Eranistis*, 13 (1976), 7-8.

<sup>22</sup> See H. O. Christophersen, *A Bibliographical Introduction to the Study of John Locke* (Oslo, 1930), 97 for a record of the main Latin versions of the *Essay* that might have been available to Voulgaris: these were the 1709 and 1731 Leipzig edns. and the 1729 Amsterdam edn.

<sup>23</sup> See Philipp Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte des Athosklöster* (Leipzig, 1894), 76.

<sup>24</sup> Voulgaris, *I Logiki*, 139, 155, 159, 173. In his first reference to Locke Voulgaris states: 'the Englishman Locke's work concerning human understanding is admired and drummed into everybody because of its especial contribution to the uprightness of the mind' (p. 139).

<sup>25</sup> Eugenios Voulgaris, *Stoicheia tis Metaphysikis* (Venice, 1805), i. 11, 15, 26-7, 62, 127, 217, iii. 192, 224, 234.

## IV

Eugenios Voulgaris, rightly described by another leading mind of the Greek Enlightenment, the classicist and political theorist Adamantios Korais, as the 'dean' of the Greek intellectual revival,<sup>26</sup> was the effective transmitter of Locke's philosophical ideas into Greek thought. The Hellenized version of Locke's name is ever-present on his authoritative pages, and from among his students at the Athonite Academy emerged two pedagogical theorists who introduced Locke's educational ideas into the thought of the Greek Enlightenment. These two authors were Iosipos Moisiodax and Gabriel Kallonas, both of whom had studied under Voulgaris in the school of Mount Athos in the early 1750s. Moisiodax was a remarkable cultural and social critic, one of the most passionate voices of the Enlightenment writing in the Greek language.<sup>27</sup> Among a number of other important works he published a *Pedagogy* or *Treaties on the Education of Children* in 1779, in which he relied extensively on Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, in order to articulate his own radical critique of the interconnection between education and social practices and values. Following standard contemporary practice, however, he nowhere acknowledged the source of his Greek adaptation of Locke's ideas.<sup>28</sup> Gabriel Kallonas, a clergyman and teacher in the Greek communities of central Europe, left at his death in 1795 another *Pedagogy*, which was published by his nephews in 1800. This work was largely a compilation of selections from Balthasar Gracián's *El Criticón* and Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education*. Like Moisiodax before him, Kallonas did not mention his sources in his book.<sup>29</sup> In these two works on educational theory, nevertheless, we essentially have a Greek equivalent to the work by Jean Pierre de Crousaz, *Traité de l'éducation des enfants*.<sup>30</sup> Crousaz's work, which did more than any other source in popularizing Locke's educational ideas in continental Europe, in all likelihood was the immediate source of the adaptations of Locke's educational ideas by Moisiodax and Kallonas.

<sup>26</sup> See *Mémoire sur l'état actuel de la civilisation dans la Grèce par Coray* (Paris, 1803), 16.

<sup>27</sup> For a general profile, see Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *The Enlightenment as Social Criticism: Iosipos Moisiodax and Greek Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 1992), esp. pp. 153–65 on Moisiodax's pedagogical views and his uses of Locke.

<sup>28</sup> Moisiodax's use of Locke's *Some Thoughts concerning Education* was first identified by Emmanuel Kriaras, 'I Paidagogia tou Moisiodakos kai i schesi tis me to paidagogiko syggramma tou Locke', *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher*, 17 (1943), 135–53.

<sup>29</sup> See Emmanuel Kriaras, 'Gavriel Kallonas, metaphrastis ergon tou Locke kai tou Gracián', *Ellenika*, 13 (1954), 294–314.

<sup>30</sup> The work was first published in two volumes at The Hague in 1722. See Christophersen, *A Bibliographical Introduction to the Study of John Locke*, 126.

The gravitation of Greek thought to Locke's ideas had not produced by the last decade of the eighteenth century a printed Greek edition of any one of Locke's works, despite the many French and Italian editions that had accompanied the spread of the Enlightenment in continental Europe. This lacuna was filled as a result of the second direct contact of the Greek Enlightenment with Locke's work through Italian cultural channels. This time the contact was effected amidst the radicalization observable in Venetian culture in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. It was in this period that Giovanni Scola was propagating a radical reading of Locke's epistemology, primarily in the pages of the *Giornale enciclopedico*.<sup>31</sup> A telling indication of the upsurge of interest in Locke's philosophy was the appearance between 1785 and 1807 of five 'Venetian editions' of Francesco Soave's Italian translation of Wynne's abridgement of the *Essay*. In the decade between 1785 and 1794 three Venetian editions of the abridged text of the *Essay* made their appearance. This was the immediate background of the first and only—before 1990—Greek edition of any work by John Locke. A Greek version of Soave's Italian translation of Wynne's abridgement was published in Venice in 1796.<sup>32</sup> The Greek edition follows closely the previous Venetian editions of Soave. Although Soave's commentaries, notes, and appendices are omitted, the Greek translation follows faithfully the main body of the text. The respective tables of contents are identical and the Greek translator always uses Greek cognates of the Italian terms in rendering the work.

The Greek text appeared anonymously, but on the basis of a contemporary testimony the translator can be identified with Ioannis Litinos,<sup>33</sup> a lesser Greek scholar from the island of Zante, where Drummond half a century earlier had noticed awareness of, and even admiration for, Locke's work. We thus somehow come full circle—and this is almost the whole story. Not another of Locke's works was ever translated in Greek in the following centuries, and the 1796 edition seems to have had a limited readership. Another English traveller who toured Greece in 1809 and 1810 noted: 'A romaic translation of Locke's *Essay* may be found in Greece,

<sup>31</sup> See Franco Venturi, *Settecento Riformatore*, v-2. *La Repubblica di Venezia 1761-1797* (Turin, 1990), 238-9.

<sup>32</sup> The translation appeared under the title *Egcheiridion Metaphysiko-Dialektikon i Epitomi Akrivestati tou Deigmatos tou Kyriou Lockiou perivoutou Philosophou peri tis Anthropolis Dianoias* (Venice, 1796). Victor Cousin, *Philosophie de Locke* (Paris, 1861), 60, notes the Greek edn. as an indication of the wide dissemination of Locke's ideas on the Continent.

<sup>33</sup> See *Epistolí Apologitiki* . . . (Venice, 1802), 111. *Epistolí Apologitiki* was anonymously published as well, but it is attributed to Ioannis Donas.



but I never saw it.<sup>34</sup> It seems that a decade and a half after its publication the translation was falling out of sight.

The obviously limited readership of the *Essay* in Greek society was indicative of the narrow social basis of the movement of the Enlightenment as a whole. In intellectual circles, however, Locke's philosophy held its own until the last phase of the Greek Enlightenment. Locke remained an important presence in the thought of the foremost philosophical mind in the Greek Enlightenment, Benjamin of Lesbos (Benjamin Lesvios), who published a major work on *Metaphysics* in 1820, just as the twilight of the Enlightenment seemed to invite the owl of Minerva to fly again in Greek culture.<sup>35</sup>

Lesvios was a remarkable philosopher. He conceived his intellectual role in Greek culture not simply as that of the transmitter of West European philosophical theories into a tradition dominated by neo-Aristotelianism until the end of the eighteenth century, but he attempted to develop also a critical perspective on what he gleaned from Western philosophy. Such had been his attitude towards Locke as well. The major themes in Locke that attracted his attention and found a place in his *Metaphysics* included the discussion of the sources of human knowledge in which he rejected innate ideas and adopted an empiricist posture that is clearly Lockean in inspiration. On the whole question of sense perception he even translates from the *Essay*, Book II, chapter viii.<sup>36</sup> He also stresses Locke's contribution in establishing the meaning of the term 'idea' in modern philosophy by noting that he, Locke, had made this a commonly accepted term in the 'republic of scholars'.<sup>37</sup> Lesvios identifies the concept of idea with that of quality and goes on to juxtapose to Locke's distinction of primary and secondary qualities his own distinction

<sup>34</sup> John C. Hobhouse, *A Journey through Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia, to Constantinople, during the years 1809 and 1810*, 2nd edn. (London, 1813), 573. The Greek edn. of the abridged *Essay* was also noted by two other British visitors to the Greek east at about the same time: William Martin Leake, *Researches in Greece* (London, 1814), 96, lists the translation among books in modern Greek of unknown authorship, while William Haygarth, *Greece: A Poem in Three Parts* (London, 1814), 286, attributes the translation to 'a Zantiot priest', which indicates that the authorship of the translation was known and discussed by contemporaries.

<sup>35</sup> See Veniamin Lesvios, *Stoicheia tis Metaphysikis* (Vienna, 1820). For a general appraisal of Lesvios's philosophical stature, see Henderson, *The Revival of Greek Thought*, 127-41, and for a systematic study of Lockean ideas in his works see Myrto Dragona-Monachou, 'Scholia stis anapophores ston Locke sta Stoicheia Metaphysikis tou Veniamin', *Proceedings of the Symposium Veniamin Lesvios* (Athens, 1985), 147-57. My analysis in the following paragraph draws on her important article.

<sup>36</sup> Lesvios, *Stoicheia tis Metaphysikis*, 31-33.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 53.

between general and particular ideas. In his discussion of the will Benjamin translates Locke's definition from the chapter 'Of Power' (*Essay*, Book II, ch. xxi), but he believes that in his own devotion to the freedom of the will he had gone well beyond Locke and other European philosophers.<sup>38</sup>

In the same period Locke's epistemology and philosophy of language were echoed in the philosophical writings of another important Enlightenment figure, Daniel Philippides, a disciple of Moisioudax and thus indirectly a distant heir to Voulgaris. Philippides made contact with Locke's ideas through Condillac, whose *Logic* he translated in Greek.<sup>39</sup> In the years 1811–19, just on the eve of the Greek War of Independence, references to Locke were frequent in the pages of the leading Greek literary journal of the time, the *Learned Mercury*, which was published in Vienna and mirrored what was most lively in Greek intellectual life.<sup>40</sup>

The prestige in which Locke's philosophical work was held in Europe during the Enlightenment was recorded epigrammatically in a short survey of the history of philosophy by Constantine Koumas, a German-trained Greek educator. Koumas noted that Locke's 'psychological researches, his rules on Method and his work on education are things which cause eternal glory to the English philosopher. His philosophy received a great reception in England and France and to some extent in Germany as well.'<sup>41</sup> There could hardly be a more classic appraisal of the place of Locke in European culture. Coming as it did in a Greek source this evaluation reflected the extent to which Europe was developing a shared philosophical outlook as a result of the propagation of the Enlightenment, which brought together the major centres of the civilization of modernity with more remote and distant outposts of cultural life. The three elements of Locke's thought that were praised in particular by Koumas formed major themes in the shared mental world of enlightened Europe at the dawn of the nineteenth century.

## V

Thus from Nicolaos Mavrocordatos to Constantine Koumas over exactly a century of intellectual change and cultural conflict, Greek thought was

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 289 and 303–7.

<sup>39</sup> Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, trans. Daniel Philippides as *I Logiki i ai Protai Anaptyxeis tis Technis tou Stochazesthai . . . para tou Condillac* (Vienna, 1801).

<sup>40</sup> See e.g. *Ermis o Logios*, 1 (1811), 8, 115; 2 (1812), 280, 303; 8 (1818), 36, 192, 429, 644, etc.

<sup>41</sup> Constantinos Koumas, *Syndagma Philosophias* (Vienna, 1818), i. 21.

exposed to Locke's philosophical and educational ideas. What is strikingly absent from this story of intellectual transmission, despite Mavrocordatos's original interest in the *Treatise of Civil Government*, is Locke's political thought. Up to the Greek War of Independence contact with Locke's ideas remained limited to his theories of knowledge and language and to his views on education. The political thought of the Greek Enlightenment remains stubbornly silent as far as Locke is concerned. Whereas the ideas of Montesquieu and Rousseau played a noteworthy role in the development of Greek and more generally Balkan political radicalism at the time of the French Revolution,<sup>42</sup> Locke's views on legitimate authority and his theory of resistance remained foreign to Greek political thought. Although the *Second Treatise* had been Locke's first work to be translated in French and it was reprinted nine times in the course of the eighteenth century, and there had been as well an Italian translation in 1773, it seems that it never attracted the attention of Greek radicals. How else could we explain the curious fact that no Greek patriot ever quoted Locke's argument in paragraph 192 of the *Second Treatise* in favour of the right of 'the Grecian Christian descendants of the ancient possessors of that country' justly to 'cast off the Turkish yoke which they have so long groaned under'? Greek silence on precisely this point is significant of the extent of ignorance about Locke's political thought in the Greek intellectual tradition. When a theory of resistance was needed in the 1790s it was readily found in French revolutionary documents. There was a Lockean resonance in Rhigas Velestinlis's revolutionary proclamation of 1796–7, when he urged his compatriots to take up arms against their tyrants, to 'appeal to heaven' in view of the usurpation of their legitimate rights.<sup>43</sup> The source of this, however, was in the French revolutionary literature of the period; it represented only an indirect contact with Locke, whose arguments in the *Second Treatise* constituted an important source of all theories of resistance in the eighteenth century. The one instance in which Locke's political ideas, especially his concepts of the law of nature, natural rights, and property, appear to have been

<sup>42</sup> Cf. the survey of Balkan radicalism at the time of the French Revolution in Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *I Galliki Epanastasi kai i Notioanatoliki Evropi* (Athens, 1990), 111–38.

<sup>43</sup> For the identification of this Lockean element in Rhigas's political thought, see P. M. Kitromilides, 'Tradition, Enlightenment and Revolution: Ideological Change in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Greece' (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1978), 303. Locke's affirmation of the right of the 'Grecian Christians' to cast off their yoke nevertheless did fulfil its ideological function in the arguments of British philhellenism during the early nineteenth century. See Steven Schwartzberg, 'The Lion and the Phoenix', 1. 'British Policy toward the Greek Question 1831–1832', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 24 (1988), 145.

incorporated into a Greek synthesis of moral philosophy was in the *Elements of Ethics* by Benjamin of Lesbos.<sup>44</sup> Characteristically, however, this work has remained unpublished to the present day.

Locke remained persistently absent from Greek political thought for the remainder of the nineteenth century. Although his successors in the British liberal tradition, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, made transient but substantial appearances in the drama of Greek political thought during that century, Locke seems to have been completely unknown to Greek publicists and Greek political writers. In the proceedings of the National Assembly of 1862–4, which drafted the liberal Greek Constitution of 1864, despite wide-ranging references to European political writers from Machiavelli to Proudhon, including Adam Smith, Bentham, John Stuart Mill, and Macaulay, not one mention of Locke is to be found.<sup>45</sup> This is not surprising, however. The transient impact of British liberal thought on Greek political ideology in this period could transmit only the oblivion into which Locke had fallen in Victorian England. It might be relevant to remember that Macaulay, who enjoyed considerable prestige in Greece at the time,<sup>46</sup> refers to Locke only once and in passing in the *History of England*.<sup>47</sup>

The first instance in which the basic principles of Locke's political thought can be traced in Greek nineteenth-century literature does not come until the closing decade of the century. At that time—at last—a brief but remarkably rounded survey of Locke's political ideas, from his arguments on toleration to his theories of property and resistance, found its way into the general history of political philosophy published by Neocles Kazazis, Professor of Jurisprudence in the Faculty of Law at the University of Athens.<sup>48</sup> Presumably Kazazis also taught Locke in his courses on the 'Philosophy of Law and the State' at the university, but his teaching generated no particular interest that might have inspired a Greek translation of Locke's political writings.

<sup>44</sup> Two chapters of this text, dealing with 'natural rights' and 'natural obligations', have been published by A. Vakalopoulos, *Archeion Philosophias kai Theorias ton Epistimon*, 10 (1939), 471–82.

<sup>45</sup> See P. M. Kitromilides, 'European Political Thought in the Making of Greek Liberalism: The Second National Assembly of 1862–1864 and the Reception of John Stuart Mill's Ideas in Greece', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 8, pt. 1 (June 1988), 11–21.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. e.g. the biographical profile by the historian Constantine Paparrigopoulos in *Pandora*, 1 (1850–1), 82–3.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II* (London, 1849), ii, 9.

<sup>48</sup> N. Kazazis, *Philosophia tou dikaïou kai tis politeias* (Athens, 1891), i. 255–7.

## VI

It is time now to wind up this part of the story by returning to some of the methodological issues noted at the beginning of this investigation. The consideration of the Greek evidence is, I think, useful because it prompts us to reconsider three aspects of the reception of Locke's ideas in continental Europe. These concern the pattern of transmission, the media of transmission, and the selective reception of Locke's thought. As to the pattern of transmission, it must be recognized that Locke's reception was not an easy and triumphal process. The acceptance of his ideas encountered serious resistance on the Continent: in France from Cartesianism, in Germany from the philosophical tradition of Leibniz and Wolff, in Italy especially from the grip of Catholic theology on philosophical thought.<sup>49</sup> To this pattern of resistance to Locke must be added Greek neo-Aristotelianism, which, as the established philosophical doctrine in Greek schools in the eighteenth century, opposed, in many cases effectively, the introduction of modern philosophy until quite late in the century. An additional source of opposition in the Greek east was the spiritual influence of the Orthodox Church. Orthodox doctrine formed the outer limit of Voulgaris's initial acceptance of the basic principles of Locke's epistemology. Thus the pattern of the transmission of Locke's ideas was equally one of acclaim and resistance, which forced philosophical compromises in the continental version of Lockeanism.

When we turn to the media of transmission we will appreciate that despite the existence of full editions of Locke's original texts in the major European languages, the broad impact of his thought was to a larger degree due to the summaries, abridgements, and popularizations of his writings which circulated widely on the Continent rather than to the texts themselves. Locke's reception in Greek thought illustrates how Wynne's abridgement and Crousaz's popularizations had worked in promoting his philosophical and educational ideas in the distant environment of south-eastern Europe. Furthermore, it should be remarked that Italian cultural channels supplemented French ones as media of transmission. The Greek reception illustrates well the role of Italian culture as a conduit of Locke's ideas. We may thus talk of successive levels through which Locke's ideas were transmitted from the north-western cultural centre of Europe to the south-eastern periphery of the Continent.

<sup>49</sup> The critique of Locke by the representative of 'enlightened Catholicism' Lodovico Antonio Muratori is a case in point. See Alberto Vecchi, 'La critica del Muratori al Locke', *Divus Thomas*, 54 (1951), 213-22.

The most important aspect of the transmission of Locke's ideas on the Continent had to do with the selectivity that marked the reception of his thought. In this respect the Greek story is very similar to the German case of the reception of Locke's ideas: although Locke's epistemology and pedagogical theory and, in Germany, even his biblical scholarship did attract interest, his political thought was marked in both instances by almost 'universal insouciance'.<sup>50</sup> Here is one further example of this. In September 1798 a correspondent of the Leipzig literary journal *Allgemeiner litterarischer Anzeiger* was debating whether Locke's work on government had ever appeared in its entirety in either a French or a German edition, and admitted that he had only seen the Amsterdam French edition of 1691 but not the German edition of 1718.<sup>51</sup> So what is significant about the reception of Locke's ideas in central and south-eastern Europe appears to be a general silence about his politics. The silence, however, is eloquent: Locke is significant by his absence, as it were. This absence can be taken to illustrate the weakness at the source of the liberal tradition in the regions in question, and as such it can be connected with the explanation of a broad range of nineteenth- and twentieth-century forms of political expression.

## VII

It must be noted, furthermore, that the eclipse of Locke's political thought in continental Europe during the eighteenth century parallels a similar phenomenon in the English-speaking world in the same period. Despite widely held assumptions of European cultural history, more recent research has shown that in both England and America interest in Locke's politics was rather limited<sup>52</sup> and tended to be confined to radical circles.<sup>53</sup> A similar conclusion has been drawn from a consideration of the case of Ireland as well: a rather surprising finding in view of the acclaim of Locke by Molyneux as a great political writer as early as 1698.<sup>54</sup> The pattern is

<sup>50</sup> Klaus Fischer, 'John Locke in the German Enlightenment: An Interpretation', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 36 (1975), 441.

<sup>51</sup> *Allgemeiner litterarischer Anzeiger*, 3 (1798), col. 1464.

<sup>52</sup> John Dunn, 'The politics of Locke in England and America in the Eighteenth Century', in John Yolton (ed.), *John Locke: Problems and Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1969), 45–80.

<sup>53</sup> See esp. Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth Century Commonwealthman* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 234, 285, 306–8, 318, 325–6, 348, 383.

<sup>54</sup> Patrick Kelly, 'Perceptions of Locke in Eighteenth Century Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 89C/2 (1989), 17–35.

broadly similar in continental Europe. Despite the prestige of Locke's epistemological and educational ideas, his political views in the eighteenth century were somehow forced into the background. Although the conventional view saw the author of the *Two Treatises* as merely the ideological apologist of Whiggism,<sup>55</sup> genuine interest in and awareness of the import of his political thought could be traced only in the radical circles of the cosmopolitan world of the Enlightenment.<sup>56</sup>

The affinity of Locke's ideas with the radical expressions of the Enlightenment was grasped quite perceptively by some contemporaries. Thus the abbé de Brizard, in his memorial 'éloge' to the abbé de Mably in the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, ranged Locke with Montesquieu, Beccaria, Rousseau, and the abbé de Mably among those who had restored to humanity its lost natural rights.<sup>57</sup> This would certainly appear rather strange company to Locke's twentieth-century socialist critics, such as Harold Laski and C. B. Macpherson.

The kind of radicalism which the abbé de Brizard had in mind when he aligned Locke with Mably and Rousseau was alien to the political tradition of central and south-eastern Europe, and this can explain the persistent silence about Locke's politics in those regions of the European Continent before 1789. When new forms of radical political thought and social criticism made their appearance under the impact of the French Revolution, Locke's presence had been pushed aside in European politics by the new dynamism of Jacobinism and its violent nationalist outgrowths. The future was to be shaped by them, not by the principles of Locke's inheritance, which emphasized toleration and the privacy of conscience. Furthermore, the general indifference to Locke in nineteenth-century England itself suggests why, during the age of the greatest prestige of British liberalism, in the rest of Europe there is such a curious forgetfulness about the political thought of its founder. The eclipse of interest in Locke in Britain and the condescension with which his thought was appraised whenever he was remembered in France (by Victor Cousin, for instance) explains why the cultural influences which emanated from London and Paris and shaped the intellectual life of the European periphery

<sup>55</sup> This was stated as early as 1717 in the work *Histoire du whiggisme et du torisme*, published in Leipzig by M. de Cize. See Paul Hazard, 'Note sur la connaissance de Locke en France', *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, 17 (1937), 705-6.

<sup>56</sup> See e.g. Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London, 1981), 58, 84-6, 228, 236-7, and 'In the Aftermath of Revolution: Rousset de Missy, Freemasonry and Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*', *L'età dei Lumi: Studi storici sul settecento Europeo in onore di Franco Venturi* (Naples, 1985), i. 489-521.

<sup>57</sup> See *Œuvres complètes de l'abbé de Mably* (Toulouse, 1793), i. 36.

contained nothing that might rescue Locke from oblivion. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Greek culture was a distant mirror of these intellectual developments. Essentially a cultural province of France in the later nineteenth and in the early twentieth century, Greece was a rather unfavourable place for Locke's ideas to generate any interest.

In this connection it might be appropriate to note one final instance of the treatment of Locke by a major nineteenth-century Greek philosopher whose work was the product of a confluence of some of the main currents of continental philosophy. Petros Vrailas-Armenis taught philosophy at the Ionian Academy at Corfu in 1854–64 under the British protectorate and later served as Greek Ambassador to London. His major philosophical text, *An Essay of First Ideas and Principles*,<sup>58</sup> reflects the profound influence of continental philosophy. Descartes and Leibniz and Kant loom large in his pages and, although he often remembered Bacon and Hume when he wanted to criticize the failings of empiricism, British philosophy for him was primarily represented by Thomas Reid. Locke was relegated to a rather humiliating role: he was remembered infrequently and then in order to be scorned for his empiricism, his neglect of first principles, and his 'ridiculous observations' on the principle of identity.<sup>59</sup> Locke's name is absent from Vrailas's political philosophy,<sup>60</sup> but it returns as a watchword for empiricist epistemology in a work on cognitive psychology he drafted during his residence in London in the 1860s.<sup>61</sup> In this practice Vrailas-Armenis reflected the general attitude toward Locke adopted by the philosophical schools that shaped his own general outlook, Victor Cousin's eclecticism<sup>62</sup> and Italian Hegelianism.

Thus Locke's marginal presence in nineteenth-century Greek philosophy—in contrast to the prestige his name enjoyed during the previous century—replicated a broader pattern marking European philosophy. From this point of view the derivative nature of the philosophical tradition taking shape in modern Greece provides useful evidence concerning the way the topoi of European philosophy were established and transmitted as the common ground of a shared philosophical culture. To the historian of ideas who seeks to appraise the extent and character of intellectual

<sup>58</sup> Corfu, 1851.

<sup>59</sup> P. Vrailas-Armenis, *Philosophika erga*, i, ed. E. Moutsopoulos and A. Dodou, (Thessaloniki, 1969), 117, 122, 128, 148.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. 453 ff.  
<sup>61</sup> Appropriately entitled by the editors 'Opus Londinense'. See *ibid.* iii, ed. E. Moutsopoulos and N. C. Banacou-Caragouni (Athens, 1976), 24, 37, 41.

<sup>62</sup> In his essay 'Of Logical Principles', Vrailas-Armenis actually refers to Cousin's criticism of Locke. See *ibid.* iv, pt. 1, ed. E. Moutsopoulos and A. Glykophrydou Leontsini (Athens, 1973), 83.



influences in a cross-cultural perspective, this could supply clues of some importance in recovering and interpreting a whole context of philosophical life. In this methodological sense what can be gleaned from the reception of Locke's ideas in a rather remote context, such as that of Greek thought, not only renders a better-integrated picture of the extent of his influence on European thought and education as a whole, but also provides hints for an understanding of the historicity of philosophical discourse. Let me then conclude with a final comment along this line of reasoning.

The conflicts of multiple forms of authoritarianism that dominated the political and intellectual life of twentieth-century Greece, and the pre-dominance of German influences in the academic life of the country, can easily explain the marginal and incidental presence of Locke in the course of our waning century as well.<sup>63</sup> Since the publication of the Greek version of Wynne's abridgement of the *Essay*, no other text by Locke has ever made its appearance in Greek. It was against this background and in order partly to rectify some of its least attractive features that, at the tercentenary of the first edition of the *Two Treatises*, a translation of the *Second Treatise*<sup>64</sup> was published in Athens in the contemporary version of the language which Locke first taught at Christ Church in 1661.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. e.g. the treatment of Locke in such major sources of 20th-cent. Greek scholarship as Theophilos Voreas, *Eisagogi eis tin Philosophian* (Athens, 1935), 276, 309, and E. P. Papanoutsos, *Gnosiologia* (Athens, 1962), 144-6, 392-3.

<sup>64</sup> John Locke, *Defteri Pragmateia peri Kyverniseos*, trans. with intro. and commentary by P. M. Kitromilides (Athens, 1990).

